Native American Values

Stereotypes have long characterized the portrayal of Native Americans in our culture. Early explorers’ and settlers’ lack of knowledge about Native American ways colored their written accounts, while later writers indulged in blatant “cowboys and Indians” stereotyping. Yet by reading the literature written by Native American groups, both past and present, one can move past the stereotypes to gain a clearer understanding of the Native American experience.

Writing to Synthesize

Make a list of the things you have in common with the Native Americans you’ve read about in this section—the things that connect us all as people. Then write one paragraph describing something that Native American valued in the past that many people still value today and one paragraph describing something they found objectionable with which you might also agree

Consider

* The theme of each selection
* Passages that shed light on traditional Native American values
* Characters who are portrayed as “good” or “bad” and what they reveal about the culture