

[Instructor: 2 versions of the pre-reading Q are included: ELMO & handout – at end of file]

Suggestion: Explain “talking circles” and bring a natural object (stick, stone) for ELLs to use as they discuss the questions.]

Pre-reading Discussion Questions

“But, it’s just history! So what?”

1. Does your country have a “dark chapter” in its history? Explain.

2. Is that information taught in schools? Why not? If yes, how is it addressed?

3. Some people think, “*My generation didn’t do this, so why should I care?*”

Ex: Hitler vs. Jewish & blind & deaf & mentally challenged people

4. When did you learn about South Africa in your previous educational experience?

What was the main problem between 1948 and 1994 in South Africa?

5. Who were the key people in “correcting” that situation?
6. What did they establish to address the issue in South Africa? (This process has been used as a model for other countries).
7. List the “dark chapters” of Canadian history which are similar to South Africa’s history.
8. Should the Canadian government “*right this wrong*”? Explain your view. If yes, how?

Canadian Gov’t vocabulary:

Chamber: place the government meets

Speaker: When a person speaks, s/he must address the speaker - not the others directly. (proper parliamentary procedure)

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Statement of Apology June 11, 2008

Here are excerpts from the text of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's statement of apology on Wednesday, as released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). French sections, which repeat the English text, have been excluded.

- Read the complete text once to get the general idea.
- Then, choose the best AWL Sublist 1 – 10 word from the Choice Hints .
- You may need to change the word form.

Part A: Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to offer an apology to former students of Indian residential schools. The treatment of children in Indian _____¹ schools is a sad _____² in our history.

In the 1870's, the _____³ government, partly in order to meet its obligation to educate aboriginal children, began to play a _____⁴ in the development and _____⁵ of these schools.

Two _____⁶ objectives of the residential schools system were to remove and _____⁷ children from the influence of their homes, families, _____⁸ and cultures, and to assimilate them into the _____⁹ culture.

These objectives were based on the _____¹⁰ that aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal.

Indeed, some _____¹¹, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child."

Part A Choice Hints

administration	assume	chapter	dominate
federal	isolate	primary	resident
role	seek	tradition	

Part B: Today, we recognize that this _____¹ of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country.

Most schools were operated as "joint ventures" with Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian or United churches.

The government of Canada built an educational system in which very young children were often forcibly _____² from their homes, often taken far from their communities.

Many were _____³ fed, clothed and housed.

All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and _____⁴.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were _____⁵ in these schools. Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools and others never returned home.

The government now recognizes that the _____⁶ of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly _____⁷ and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging _____⁸ on aboriginal culture, heritage and language.

While some former students have spoken _____⁹ about their experiences at residential schools, these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, _____¹⁰ and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities.

Part B Choice Hints

adequately	community	consequence	impact	negative
physical	policy	positive	prohibit	remove

Part C: The legacy of Indian residential schools has _____¹ to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today. It has taken extraordinary courage for the thousands of _____² that have come forward to speak publicly about the abuse they suffered.

It is a testament to their resilience as _____³ and to the strength of their cultures.

Regrettably, many former students are not with us today and died never having received a full apology from the government of Canada. The government recognizes that the absence of an apology has been an impediment to healing and reconciliation.

Therefore, on _____⁴ of the government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you, in this chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to aboriginal peoples for Canada's _____⁵ in the Indian residential schools system.

To the _____⁶ 80,000 living former students, and all family members and communities, the government of Canada now recognizes that it was wrong to forcibly _____⁷ children from their homes and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant _____⁸ and traditions, that it _____⁹ a void in many lives and communities, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, in separating children from their families, we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for _____¹⁰ to follow, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, far too often, these _____¹¹ gave rise to abuse or neglect and were _____¹² controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you.

Part C Choice Hints

approximately	behalf	contribute	create	culture
generation	inadequate	individual	institution	remove
role	survivor			

Part D: Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry. The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country.

There is no place in Canada for the _____¹ that inspired the Indian residential schools system to ever again prevail.

You have been working on _____² from this experience for a long time and in a very real sense, we are now joining you on this journey.

The government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

We are sorry.

In moving towards healing, reconciliation and _____³ of the sad legacy of Indian residential schools, _____⁴ of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement agreement began on September 19, 2007.

Years of work by survivors, _____⁵ and aboriginal organizations culminated in an agreement that gives us a new beginning and an opportunity to move forward together in _____⁶.

A cornerstone of the settlement agreement is the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation _____⁷.

This commission presents a _____⁸ opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian residential schools system.

It will be a _____⁹ step in forging a new relationship between aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward together with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will _____¹⁰ to a stronger Canada for all of us.

Part D Choice Hints

attitude	commission	community	contribute	implement
partnership	positive	recover	resolve	unique

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's statement of apology

June 11, 2008

Learner Answer Page

Part A	Part B
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10
11	

Part C	Part D
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10
11	
12	

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