



NAME: _____

CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT

THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT

VOCABULARY

Directions: Frontload (introduce and review) these vocabulary words with your students to facilitate their understanding of the topic and coinciding resources:

1. **Tribal Sovereignty** (n.): the ability of an Indian tribe to govern itself, protected by the United States Constitution
2. **Native American boarding schools** (n.): schools run by the federal government from 1819 through the 1960s that enrolled Indian children who were often forcibly removed from their homes and subjected to educational programming that placed white cultural identity over children's tribal and linguistic traditions
3. **Indian Child Welfare Act** (n.): 1978 federal law designed to uphold the principle of tribal sovereignty and act in the best interests of the child (defined as maintaining ties to a child's family and culture)
4. ***Brackeen v. Haaland*** (n.): a Supreme Court case involving a couple in Texas that wants to be able to adopt a foster child whose family wants to raise him and believes that the Indian Child Welfare Act gives them the legal right to do so.
5. **Standing** (n.): the legal principle that establishes who may bring challenges to a law before the court

CURRENT EVENT ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Directions: As you read through news and other resources about TOPIC, consider the following questions:

- What is tribal sovereignty?
- Where did the principle of tribal sovereignty originate, and why is it so vital to Indian tribes?
- What circumstances and events in the historical relationship between Indian tribes and the U.S. government contributed to the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act?
- Which key parties claim standing in *Brackeen v. Haaland*, and what is the basis for each individual's/group's claims?
- Why is the classification of Indians by race vs. nation so central to whether *Brackeen v. Haaland* may overturn the Indian Child Welfare Act?
- In your opinion, how should the Supreme Court appropriately balance the needs of the child, the interests of the prospective adoptive family, and the principle set forth in ICWA that gives custodial priority to families and Indian tribes in child welfare cases?