

Warning: Think through this lesson before you present it to students. This lesson is based on sensitive material, especially for students who have suffered trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and/or for those who may have family members who attended a Native American boarding school.

Meet Keith Secola!

Name _____

This assignment due _____

Keith Secola is an ambassador of Native music. Critics have called him the Native versions of both Neil Young and Bruce Springsteen. “NDN Kars” (Indian cars), his most popular song, is considered the contemporary Native American anthem. It has been the number one requested song on tribal radio since the 1992.

Born in 1957 in Cook, Minnesota, Keith Secola is affiliated with the Anishinaabe tribe. He graduated from Mesabi Community College with a degree in Public Service in 1979, and completed a Bachelor’s degree in American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota in 1982. He makes his home now in Phoenix.



Keith is an accomplished artist—musician, singer, songwriter, composer, and producer. He is highly skilled with the guitar, flute, mandolin, banjo, harmonica, and piano, and has played in venues from the halls of the Chicago Urban Indian Centre, to the walls of the bottom of the Grand Canyon. Keith has also performed at the Olympic Games in Atlanta 1996 and Salt Lake City 2002, the Grand Opening Gala of the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, at The Kennedy Center, and on several European tours. A seven-time Native American Music Award winner, Secola has earned NAMMYS not only for his music, but also his abilities as a producer. In 2011, Keith Secola was inducted into the Native Music Hall of Fame.

(<https://www.secola.com>)

“Say Your Name” by Keith Secola

Context

A. Think about Native American boarding schools using a KW chart:

What do you KNOW about boarding schools?	What do you WANT TO LEARN about boarding schools?

- B. Read the accompanying article from **MNO**PEDIA, a resource from Minnesota Historical Society: “Native American Boarding Schools” by Dr. Denise K. Lajimodiere

Possible questions to begin small group discussions about the article

1. What thoughts or feelings do you have when reading about these boarding schools?
2. Before reading this article, had you heard about these boarding schools in Minnesota?
3. Do you know anyone who attended one of these boarding schools? Have they shared anything about that experience?

- C. View this artwork by Native MN artist Laura Youngbird – *Three Quarter* (2003), mixed media



*This artwork started with a photograph of Laura’s mother and her mother’s cousin.
Her mother is the chubby baby sitting on the floor.
In the background is a Native American boarding school.*

- What do you notice?
- What does it remind you of?
- How do you feel?
- What questions does it raise?
- Speculate

I can explain how music connects to personal, societal, and cultural contexts

View this video of "Say Your Name" at least two times:

<https://youtu.be/1UftaoCvMxc> (3:58)

Verse 1

"Say your name
Show your faith
Leave no trace
Of your shame
Tears come falling
500 years
Prayers of our children"

Verse 2

"Late at night
Down the hall
Monsters scream
Roam and crawl
Don't tell no one
You'll get bad dreams
Prayers of our children"

Verse 3

"Say their names
Show their faces
Leave no traces
of their games
Tears stop falling
500 years
Prayers of our children
Prayers of our children
Take these tears"

Keith Secola wrote and recorded this song during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada for Residential School survivors. Now it's the United State's turn to acknowledge their federal policy of taking American Indian and Alaskan Native children far from home, prohibiting their language and culture, and forcing assimilation and forced conversion. Permission to use this video for the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition given by Keith Secola. "Say Your Name" is from Keith Secola's *Life is Grand* album. This video features the artwork of Liz Amini-Holmes from the books *Fatty Legs* (Annick Press 2010) and *A Stranger at Home* (Annick Press 2011) about residential school survivor Margert Pokiak-Fenton, written by Christy Jordan-Fenton.

Final thoughts

4. For people who did not experience it firsthand, how does this song and artwork bring to life the trauma experienced by children at the Native American boarding schools?
5. Might this song be relevant to experiences of other marginalized cultures? Explain.