

Schools expect textbooks to be a valuable source of information for students. My research suggests, however, that textbooks that address the place of Native Americans within the history of the United States distort history to suit a particular cultural value system. In some textbooks, for example, settlers are pictured as more humane, complex, skillful, and wise than Native American. In essence, textbooks stereotype and deprecate the numerous Native American cultures while reinforcing the attitude that the European conquest of the New World denotes the superiority of European cultures. Although textbooks evaluate Native American architecture, political systems, and homemaking, I contend that they do it from an ethnocentric, European perspective without recognizing that other perspectives are possible.

One argument against my contention asserts that, by nature, textbooks are culturally biased and that I am simply underestimating children's ability to see through these biases. Some researchers even claim that by the time students are in high school, they know they cannot take textbooks literally. Yet substantial evidence exists to the contrary. Two researchers, for example, have conducted studies that suggest that children's attitudes about particular culture are strongly influenced by the textbooks used in schools. Given this, an ongoing, careful review of how school textbooks depict Native American is certainly warranted.

1. Which of the following would most logically be the topic of the paragraph immediately following the passage?
 - (A) Specific ways to evaluate the biases of United States history textbooks
 - (B) The centrality of the teacher's role in United States history courses
 - (C) Nontraditional methods of teaching United States history
 - (D) The contributions of European immigrants to the development of the United States
 - (E) Ways in which parents influence children's political attitudes
2. The primary purpose of the passage is to
 - (A) describe in detail one research study regarding the impact of history textbooks on children's attitudes and beliefs about certain cultures
 - (B) describe revisions that should be made to United States history textbooks
 - (C) discuss the difficulty of presenting an accurate history of the United States
 - (D) argue that textbooks used in schools stereotype Native Americans and influence children's attitudes
 - (E) summarize ways in which some textbooks give distorted pictures of the political systems developed by various Native American groups
3. The author mentions two researchers' studies (lines 22-25) most likely in order to
 - (A) suggest that children's political attitudes are formed primarily through textbooks
 - (B) counter the claim that children are able to see through stereotypes in textbooks
 - (C) suggest that younger children tend to interpret the messages in textbooks more literally than do older children
 - (D) demonstrate that textbooks carry political messages meant to influence their readers
 - (E) prove that textbooks are not biased in terms of their political presentations

4. The author's attitude toward the content of the history textbooks discussed in the passage is best described as one of
- (A) indifference
 - (B) hesitation
 - (C) neutrality
 - (D) amusement
 - (E) disapproval
5. It can be inferred from the passage that the researchers mentioned in line 19 would be most likely to agree with which of the following statements?
- (A) Students form attitudes about cultures other than their own primarily inside the school environment.
 - (B) For the most part, seniors in high school know that textbooks can be biased.
 - (C) Textbooks play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes and beliefs of students.
 - (D) Elementary school students are as likely to recognize biases in textbooks as are high school students.
 - (E) Students are less likely to give credence to history textbooks than to mathematics textbooks.
6. The author implies that which of the following will occur if textbooks are not carefully reviewed?
- (A) Children will remain ignorant of the European settlers' conquest of the New World.
 - (B) Children will lose their ability to recognize biases in textbooks.
 - (C) Children will form negative stereotypes of Native Americans.
 - (D) Children will develop an understanding of ethnocentrism.
 - (E) Children will stop taking textbooks seriously.