

American Indian Do's and Don'ts

Based in part on recommendations from the Council on Interracial Books for Children.



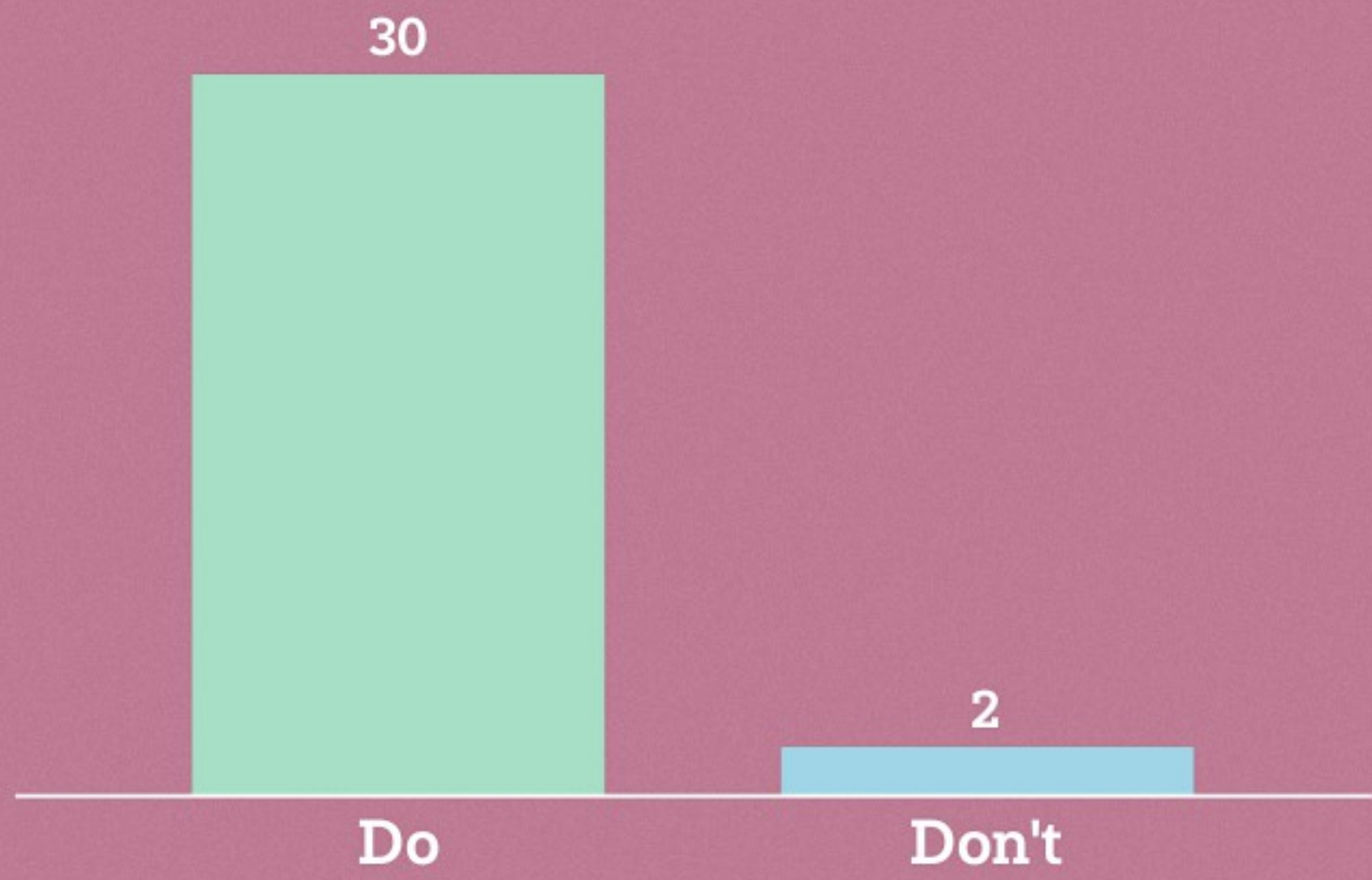
Equate Indians with "things." For example, if alphabet cards say, "A is for apple, B is for ball, ... I is for Indian."



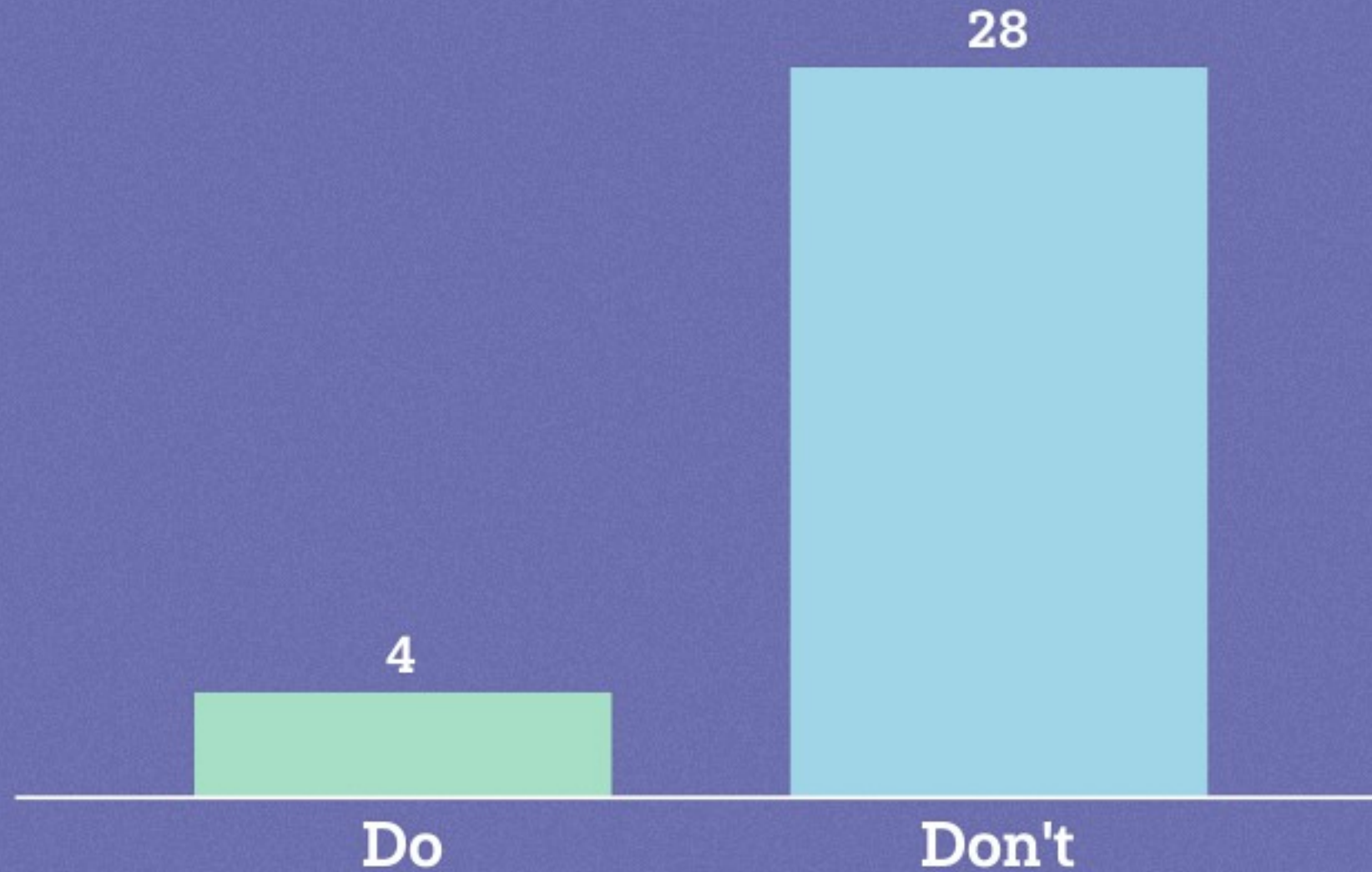
Instead...

Pick a different word so that Indian people are not presented as objects.

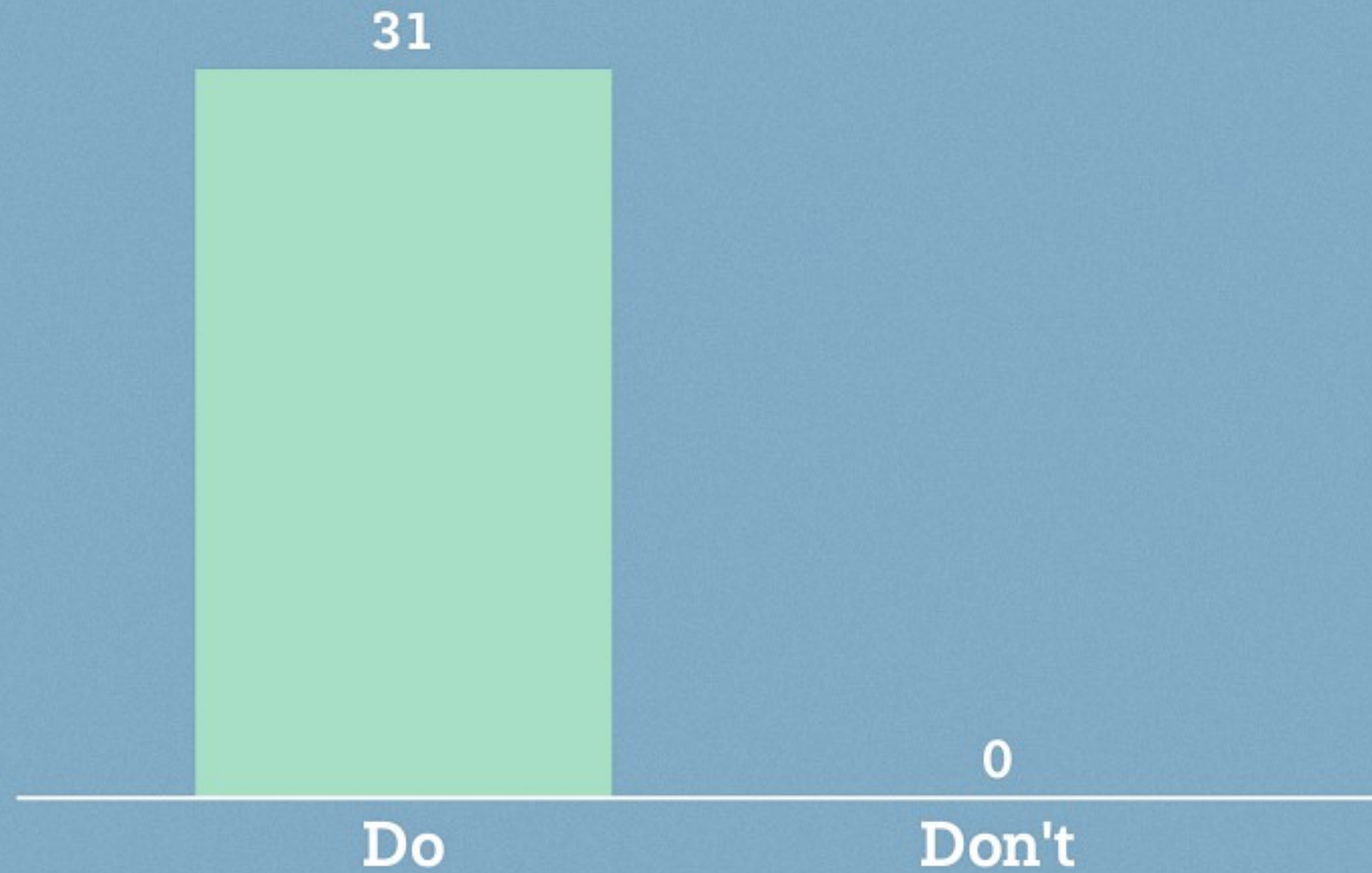
Highlight the Native American philosophy of respect for every form of life and for living in harmony with nature.



Highlight that a relatively few Europeans defeated thousands of Indians in battle.



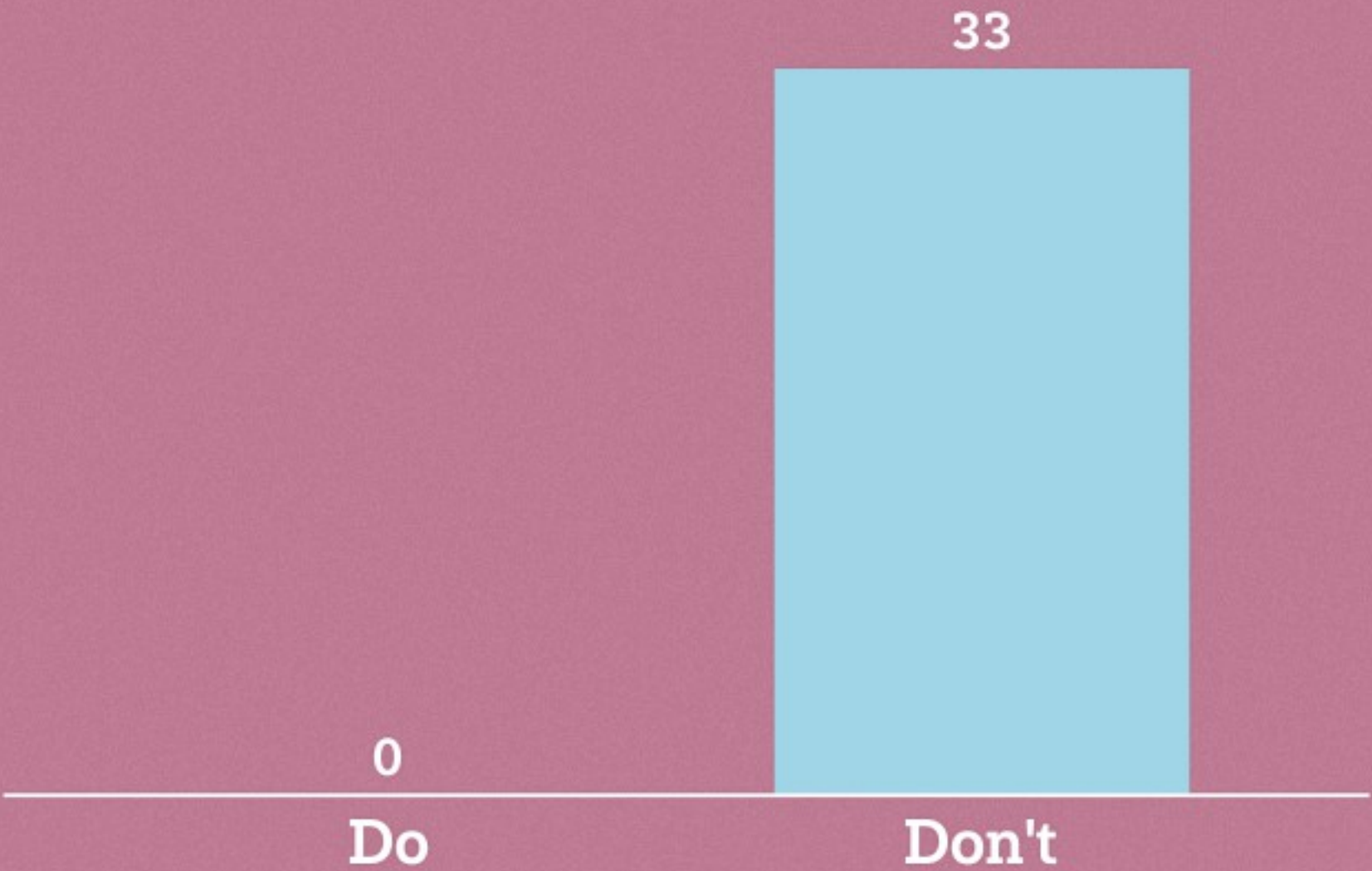
Discuss a variety of Indian nations.



Because...

over 700 tribal nations, such as Hopi, Lakota, and Navajo, exist in the present day United States today. Rather than lumping all Native Americans together, explain that each nation has its own name, language, and culture.

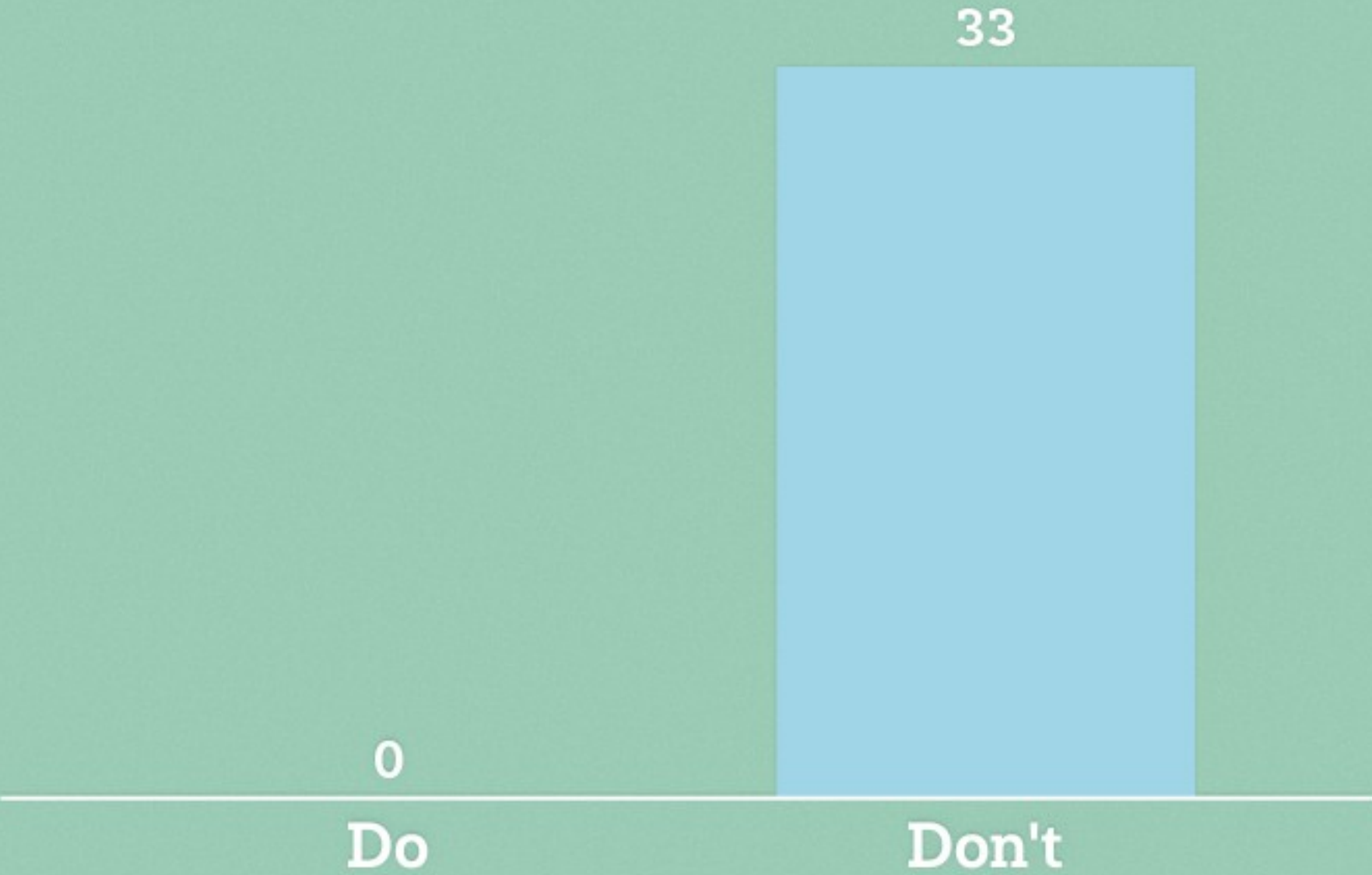
Speak of Native Americans exclusively in past tense.



Because...

there are nearly one million Native people in the U.S. today, yet many books and videos still have titles such as "How the Indians Lived".

Let children to imitate Indians with stereotypes such as one-word sentences ("Ugh," "How"), Hollywood-style grammar, or gestures (tomahawk chops).



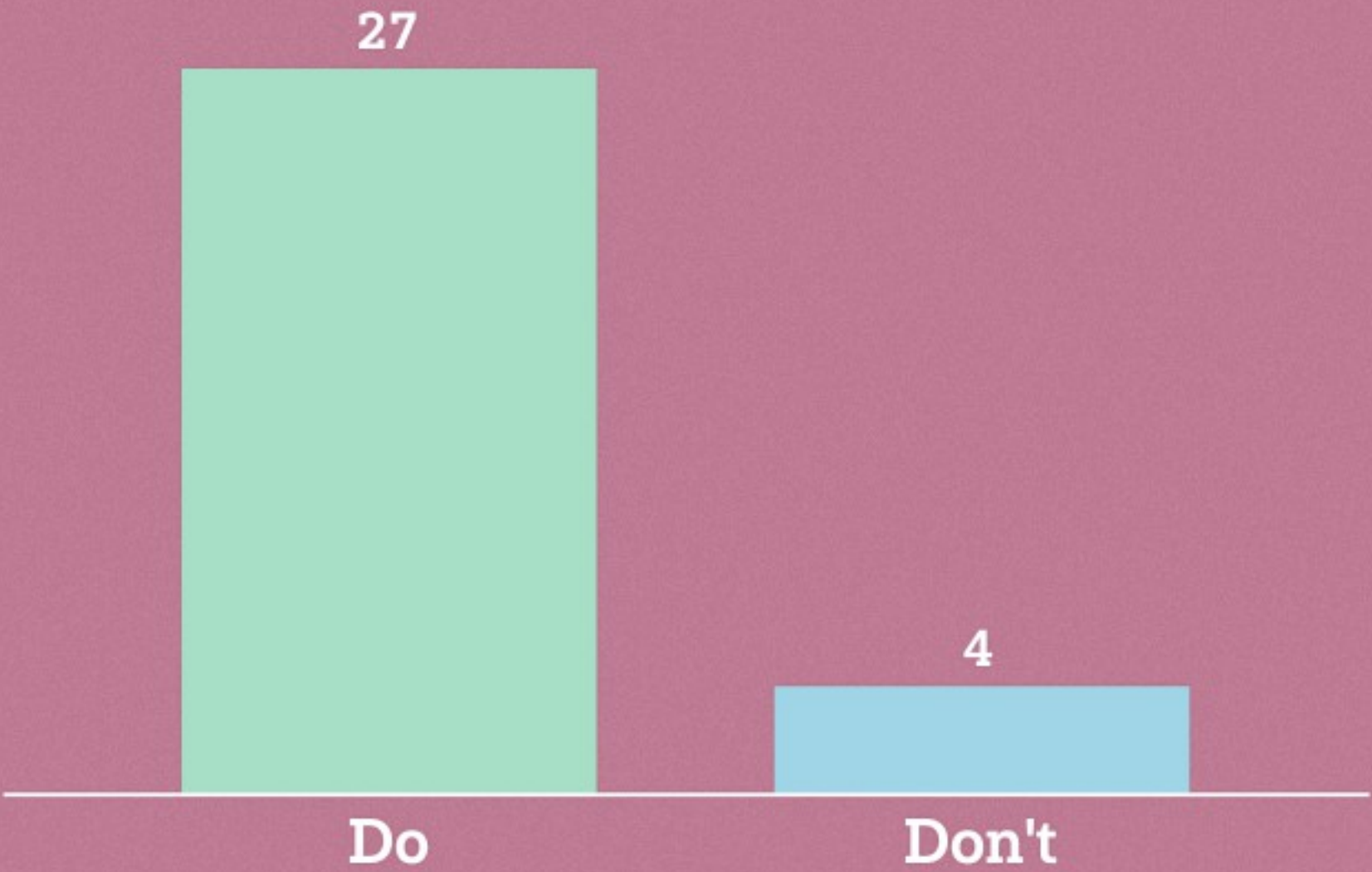
Understand that Native American children are not always aware of their heritage.



Remember...

Native children sometimes know more about "TV Indians" than about their own heritage, and they should not be singled out to provide a Native perspective or asked to recount Native history.

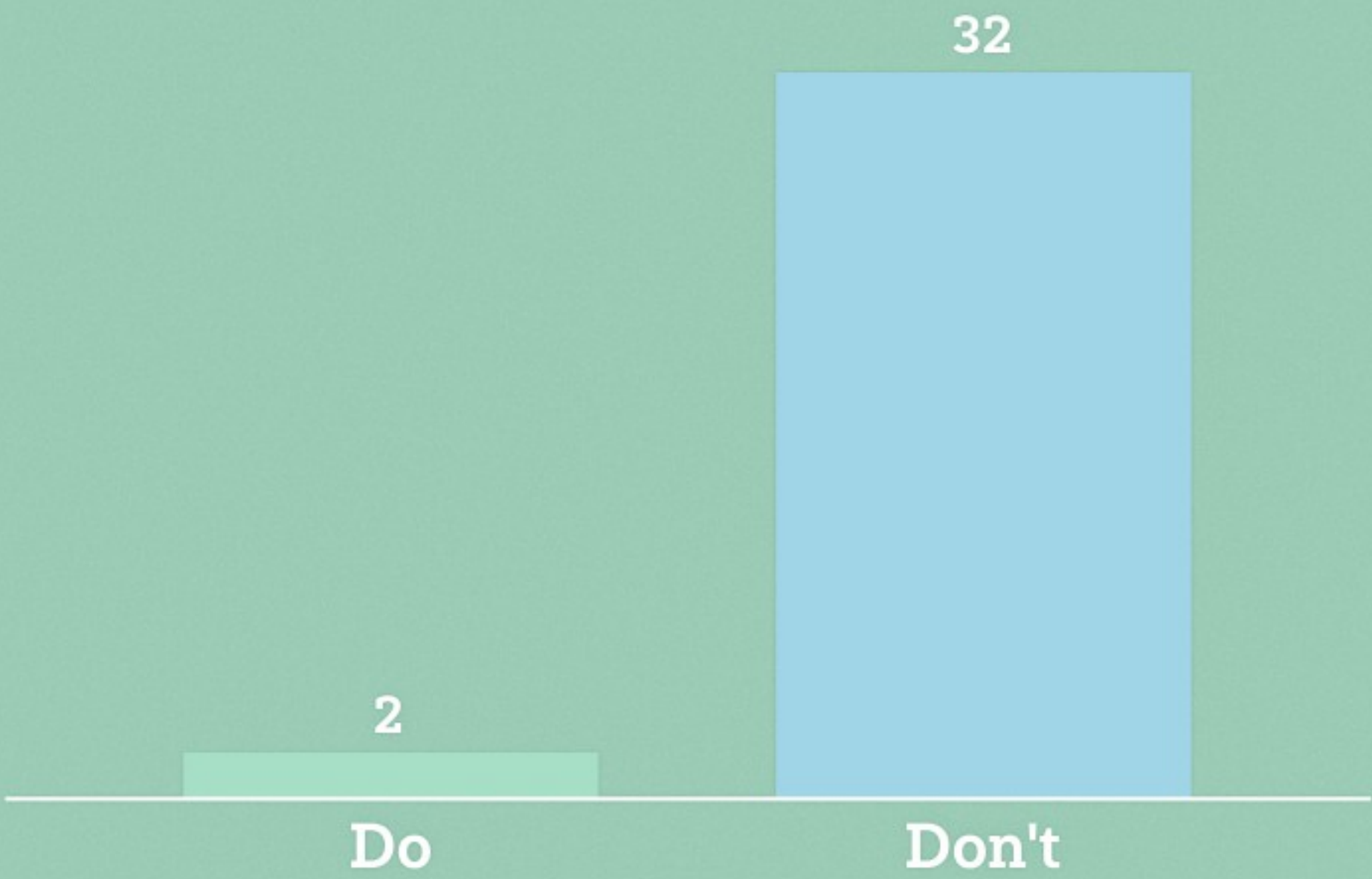
Challenge TV and movie stereotypes of Native Americans.



While you're at it...

discuss the meaning of stereotypes and help others understand that indigenous Americans were no more savage than others who fought to defend their homes and community.

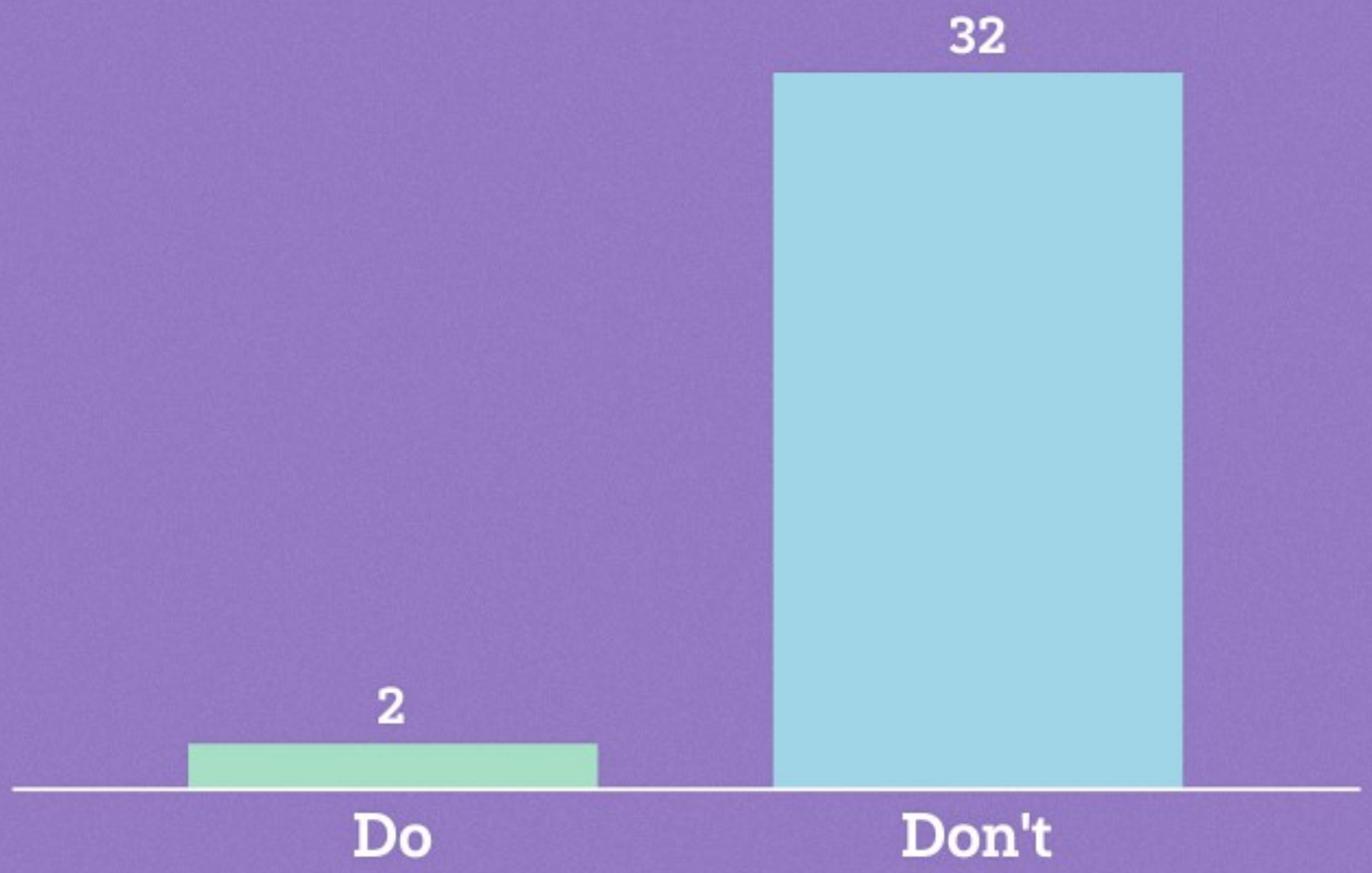
Divide Indians and non-Indians into "us" and "them."



Instead...

**explain that Indians were the first Americans and that today Indians
are American citizens with the same rights as all Americans.**

Encourage children to dress up as Indians for Halloween.



Watch

My Culture is Not a Costume:

[<https://www.teenvogue.com/video/watch/my-culture-is-not-a-costume/>]

One Minute Break

What is the QFT?

The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) is a simple step-by-step, rigorous process that helps all people — students and adults — formulate, work with, and use their own questions.

Rules for Producing Questions: (Write in NB)

- **Ask as many questions as you can.**
- **Do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer the questions.**
- **Write down every question exactly as it is stated.**
- **Change any statement into a question.**

Instructions for QFT

- In your project groups, pick one person to be the "scribe" to write for the group.
- You will have 5 minutes to ask as many questions about your tribal nation. The scribe will copy them down as you go.
- (Follow the QFT Rules for Producing Questions)

Open vs. Closed Questions: (Write in NB)

- Closed-ended questions can be answered with yes, no, or with one word.
- Ex. Does the tribal nation we are studying live near a river?
- Open-ended questions require an explanation and cannot be answered with yes, no, or with one word.
- Ex. How does living near a river impact the culture of our tribal nation?

Instructions for altering questions:

- Reread your list of questions as a group.
- Then, go through and tag each question as "open" or "closed".
- Begin altering your "closed" questions to "open" questions.