

## **This Land**

Under the crust of that part of the earth called the United States of America are buried the bones, villages, fields, and sacred objects of the first people of that land—the people who are often called American Indians or Native Americans. Their descendants, also called Indigenous peoples, carry memories and stories of how the United States came to be the nation we know today. It is important to learn and know this history, but many people today lack that knowledge and understanding because of the way America's story has been taught.

Like most people, Americans want to think well of themselves, their ancestors, their history, and what they and their leaders do. As advanced technology makes the experiences of Indigenous peoples around the world more readily available, it is necessary that Americans learn to think more completely and more critically about their own history, because it can help them be better citizens of the world. Part of that critical thinking involves recognition that "America" is a name given to two land masses by European colonizers. Indigenous peoples had, and have, words for the land in their own languages.

*From the introduction to *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz*