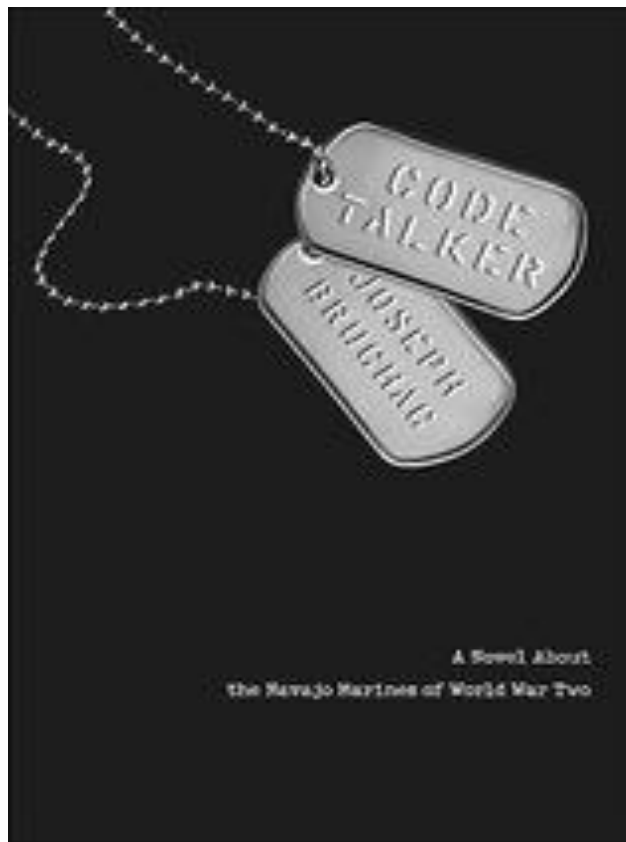


Lesson Plan
7th & 8th Grade
Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo
Marines of World War Two
Author: Joseph Bruchac



Wreaths Across America

Lesson Plan

Teacher:	Date:
Grade: 7 th & 8 th	Lesson: Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two; Veterans Day; American Indian Heritage Month

OBJECTIVES: NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS for SOCIAL STUDIES: 1. Culture 4. Individual Development & Identity 5. Individuals, Groups & Institutions 6. Power, Authority & Governance 10. Civic Ideals & Practices	STRATEGIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Write/Pair/Share <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Questions <input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Large Group
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MATERIALS: :	Computer/laptop; internet (with access to YouTube); Smart Board; Copies of Write/Pair/Share Activity; Copies of Code Talker Reflection Questions (Excerpts-BCSCR, Colorado, New Mexico); Copies of Instagram Character Activity; Copies of the Book Analysis Navajo Code; Copies of the Navajo Code Talker Word Search Puzzle; Copies of the Terms in English and Navajo Language; Copies of the Decoding the Navajo Code Worksheet
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Engage: Hook the students	Play the two YouTube clips from <i>Code Talker-A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War II</i> https://youtu.be/1VJs6D7yu0s Preface: Listen My Grandchildren (4:42) https://youtu.be/UYzh9gOa0cM Chapter 1, Sent Away (11:21) Hand out Write/Pair/Share Activity. Students will have 5 minutes to analyze the following two passages: "I was only six years old and I was worried." (p. 5) "My heart sank. I really was going to be sent away." (p. 6) Write how you would have felt to be sent away from home at such an early age. At the end of 5 minutes, you will be paired with a partner, you will read your answer to your partner and they will read their response to you. Write on the back if necessary.
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Explore: Students make sense of a concept through observations.	Teacher Note: If you wish to have students listen to parts of this book as homework, independent listening or during class time, the following YouTube link will carry you to Kristy Loveday (the reader) YouTube page with all of the chapters: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0GPlt8EjiB6uGQH7XVsPQ/videos The time for each video is listed in parenthesis beside the title to help with planning! https://youtu.be/ZtzXxuArDIU Chapter 2, The Boarding School (11:04) https://youtu.be/OR8W411HqS0 Chapter 3, To Be Forgotten (6:52) https://youtu.be/9Ty3dE09KvU Chapter 4, Progress (6:58) https://youtu.be/-c1-c5V8f88 Chapter 5, High School (7:09) https://youtu.be/6fd1EE5v8nc Chapter 6, Sneak Attack (7:18) https://youtu.be/5p43QpFZc3M Chapter 7, Navajos Wanted (10:36) https://youtu.be/Y4OeF2_pj0Q Chapter 8, New Recruits (8:08) https://youtu.be/AZnvG-8XddA Chapter 9, The Blessingway (10:51) https://youtu.be/t4cy02ggwV4 Chapter 10, Boot Camp (16:30) https://youtu.be/TpF2cJnzig0 Chapter 11, Code School (12:51) https://youtu.be/FKiSrpE25bA Chapter 12, Learning the Code (14:34) https://youtu.be/yXcAAu1i-Ao Chapter 13, Shipping Out to Hawaii (15:44) https://youtu.be/qMu_n10dgY Chapter 14, The Enemies (3:57) https://youtu.be/dGv7i4WCV1U Chapter 15, Field Maneuvers (12:00) https://youtu.be/unlj2c7_gvc Chapter 16, Bombardment (12:26) https://youtu.be/ca_7L9ahYiA Chapter 17, First Landing (11:14) https://youtu.be/0JsTCpp7CLc Chapter 18, On Bouganville (23:37)
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	https://youtu.be/JyAYO7WfC6o Chapter 19, Do You Have a Navajo (8:41) https://youtu.be/SOPyhBVQJ8I Chapter 20, The Next Targets (8:39) https://youtu.be/mRAYCzvW71o Chapter 21, Guam (20:23) https://youtu.be/T79vUNCKUhg Chapter 22, Fatigue (6:25) https://youtu.be/aGqR1prxAGY Chapter 23, Pavavu (15:19) https://youtu.be/pERR7iW4ZiA Chapter 24, Iwo Jima (5:39) https://youtu.be/bSopT_aCsqw Chapter 25, In Sight of Suribachi (11:40) https://youtu.be/DDBySqpBX_M Chapter 26, The Black Beach (19:37) https://youtu.be/73B_tv4vW9k Chapter 27, Okinawa (13:54) https://youtu.be/ljIF_jycFXM Chapter 28, The Bomb (3:50) https://youtu.be/SqUsF4Opya8 Chapter 29, Going Home (12:32) Students will complete the following: Code Talker Reflection Questions (Excerpts-BCSCR, Colorado, New Mexico), Instagram Character Activity, Book Analysis Navajo Code, Code Talker Word Search Puzzle, Decoding the Navajo Code Worksheet
Explain: Teacher introduces formal vocabulary and language to students.	mortar Long Walk amphibious draft hogan exile dialect Americanism reservation dunce cap sanction Axis Powers Allied Powers boot camp corn pollen classified illiterate scuttlebutt shrapnel howitzer censor battle fatigue fox hole echelon bivouacs
Elaborate: Students apply what they have learned.	Students will examine the life of Navajo Code Talkers and how they responded to challenges during their lives. Students will also evaluate the contributions of Code Talkers during World War II.
Evaluate: assessment.	Teachers should choose which activities to use as formal/informal assessment.
Enrichment/Service-Learning Project	Students will brainstorm a way to serve their local community in honor of the Navajo Code Talkers. See a list of potential projects on the last page.

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Name _____

Write-Pair-Share

You will have **5 minutes** to analyze the following two passages: “I was only six years old and I was worried.” (p. 5) “My heart sank. I really was going to be sent away.” (p. 6) Write how you would have felt to be sent away from home at such an early age. At the end of 5 minutes, you will be paired with a partner, you will read your answer to your partner and they will read their response to you. Write on the back if necessary.

---cut here-----cut here-----cut here---

Name _____

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Name _____

Instagram Character Analysis Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War

Directions: Create an Instagram profile for Ned Begay. In the space provided create a social media handle. In the circle, draw a picture of what you think his profile picture would look like. Fill in his Bio information. In the 6 “posts” boxes, draw 3 different images representing scenes from the novel. In the other 3 boxes, write comments Begay would post about each scene.

@

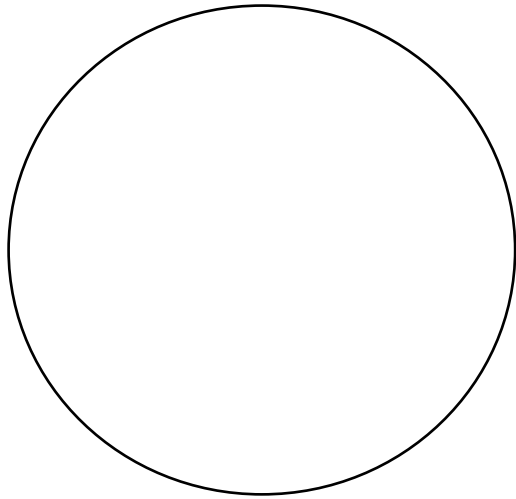
post

followers

following

Name:

Bio:



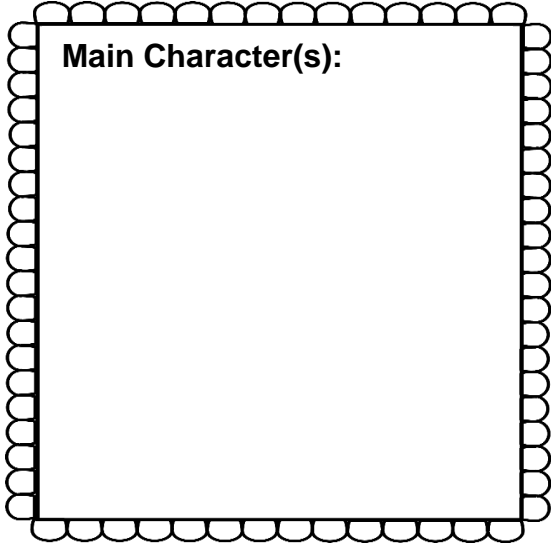
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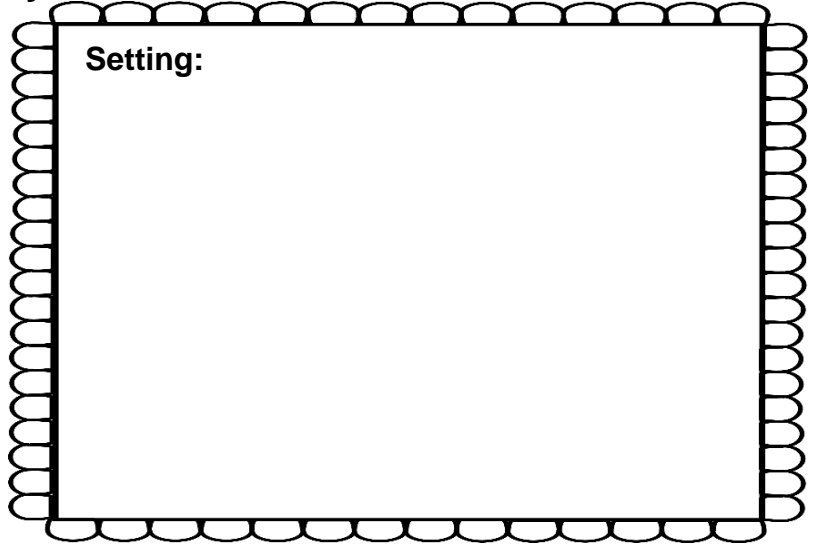
Name _____

Book Analysis –Code Talker

Main Character(s):

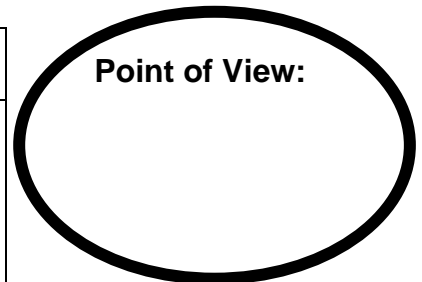


Setting:

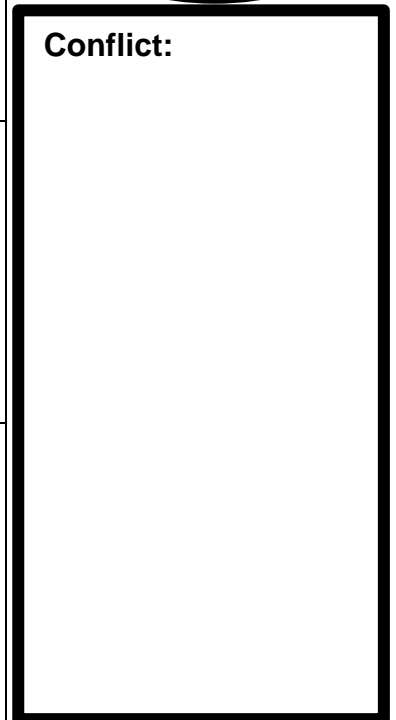


Character Trait	Evidence:

Point of View:



Conflict:



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Resolution:


Author's purpose for writing the text:

Author's overall message?

What did you like about the book?



What did you dislike about the book?



Wreaths Across America

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Reflection Questions *Code Talker-A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War II* (Excerpts-BCSCR, Colorado, New Mexico)

Preface: Listen, My Grandchildren & Chapter 1 Sent Away

1. Who is the narrator of this story?
2. Who is the author speaking to?
3. The main character is surrounded by people who love him. After listening to Chapter 1, cite evidence to support that claim.
4. Why, if the main character is so loved, do his parents decide to send him away to boarding school? What part did his uncle play in the main character's departure from his home?
5. Summarize the Long Walk. Why do you think the Long Walk is important to the novel?

Chapter 2 Boarding School & Chapter 3 To Be Forgotten

1. "There is no word for goodbye in Navajo." What does this tell you about the Navajo culture?
2. Write some examples of customs and beliefs in Navajo culture that are different from your culture. Why are beliefs and customs so important to our society?
3. Principal O'Sullivan said, "Navajo is no good, of no use at all. Only English will help you get ahead in this world." Why is this statement false? Why is it cruel?

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4. Cite examples of how the Navajo children were mistreated in boarding school.
5. What is racism? How does the word racism tie in directly to how the Navajo children were being treated?
6. Why were so many Native Americans given the last name Begay?
7. How would you feel if someone took away your belongings and gave you a new name? How would you feel if you could no longer speak your native language?
8. Why do you think the author titled Chapter 3, *To Be Forgotten*?

Chapter 4 Progress

1. Chapter Four begins with this quote, "Tradition is the enemy of progress." What does this mean to you? Do you think this quote is true or false
2. What happened to "Ned" when he spoke the polite Navajo greeting, the way his parents had always taught him? How does his education differ from yours? How is it the same?
3. What happened to the children who refused to give up their native language? In your opinion, why did they refuse to quit speaking Navajo?
4. How is one's language connected to their culture?

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5. "John Roanhorse was taken into the cold stone basement and chained in a dark corner." ... "I think part of his spirit was left down in that cold, dark place." Analyze these two passages. What is meant by part of his spirit was left?

6. What impression do you have of his teachers?

Chapter 5: High School & Chapter Six: Sneak Attack

1. "Most of those teachers expected very little of us and that was just what some of us gave back in return." How are expectations sometimes related to what people do?

2. "Neddie, you're almost as bright as a little white child." Make an inference. What were his teachers really saying to Ned?

3. Why were sports important to some of the children? How does this compare with your experience?

4. "Someday, I said to myself, I will become a teacher, one who does not just teach, but also shows respect to all his Indian students and expects the best of everyone." Why is showing respect an important part of teaching?

5. Summarize the good things Ned liked about high school?

6. "Soon after that, we students at Navajo High School had our own food drive for the poor, hungry Japanese." Why did the students hold a food drive for the Japanese? What does this tell you about their character? What made this act so significant?

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8. Ned reflects, “Did I really have to give up everything Navajo to succeed in the modern world?” What is your opinion on this topic?

Chapter 7: Navajos Wanted Chapter 8: New Recruits

1. Many Native Americans wanted to fight for their country. Does this surprise you? Why or Why not?

2. “You can tell a lot about a man by the way he speaks and the way he carries himself.” What does this mean?

3. How did being a Navajo prepare Ned and other recruits for the military? Cite textual evidence.

4. How does Ned feel about becoming a marine? What are his expectations?

5. Why did Navajo men not know how far away Pearl Harbor was?

Chapter 9: The Blessingway

1. What is the significance of the Blessingway ceremonies?

2. How did the ceremonies give Ned strength?

3. Some people called Ned “Ant”. Why do you think they used this expression?

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5. The author foreshadows events to come by telling stories of non-Native Americans trying to use their language, but unsuccessfully doing so. Why, in your opinion, does the author do this? Predict what may happen based on this foreshadowing.

Chapter 10: Boot Camp & Chapter 11: Code School

1. "I think it was probably harder for young white men to be abused like that by their drill sergeants than it was for us Navajos." Why does Ned think this?

2. How did Ned's drill instructors teach him to swim? If you can swim, how did you learn?

3. Contrast Ned's experience with the boot camp food with his non-Indian Marines.

4. What surprised Ned about Georgia Boy?

5. "I was stunned. The idea of a Navajo being a teacher was new to me." Why did the narrator think this way?

6. Describe the duties of a Code Talker

7. Many people thought that Phillip Johnson developed the code. Why was this not true? Why do you think people thought that Phillip Johnson developed the code instead of the Navajos?

Chapter 12: Learning the Code

1. How did Ned feel about their secret duty and how their sacred language would be used? Why?

2. What happened when three white men wanted to become code talkers? Why did they fail? What does this imply about the importance of language fluency?

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3. Compare Ned's training now to his early education at the boarding school. Why was Ned happy with his training now?
4. "Now, grandchildren, when I say we were proud, I do not mean that we became self-important. We did not go around thinking we were better than everyone else." Why did the Navajos think this way? What does that say about their character?
5. Why did Ned take the corn pollen pouch with him during the war?

Chapter 13: Shipping Out to Hawaii

1. How was Ned's dream about becoming a marine different from the reality?
2. Write about traditions you and your family have. Why are traditions important to a culture?
3. Summarize how the teams were set up to use the code.
4. Why did the code talkers know more about what was actually going on in the war than others did?
5. What happened when the code talkers broadcast the first practice message? How did they keep it from happening again?
6. Compare the speed of Navajo code vs. the "white code" and why might this matter to the military?

Chapter 14: The Enemies, Chapter 15: Field Maneuvers & Chapter 16: Bombardment

1. What is the Navajo's perspective on death/dead bodies? How did they overcome their anxieties?

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2. “When we saw them, we realized that our enemies were just human beings.” How does this passage support one of the themes of this novel?

3. Ned and his Indian comrades know how to stay hydrated in the desert without drinking their canteen water. At one point, Ned offers his water to the Lieutenant, and the Lieutenant states, “No, that wouldn’t be fair.” Why does the Lieutenant say this? What does this tell the reader about the Lieutenant?

4. Compare the native people on these islands to the Native Americans. Why did Ned speak to them more than the white Marines?

5. When Ned has an encounter with Gene---Gene. Ned states, “It was one of the best conversations I ever had.” Why? What is unique about this conversation?

6. “One of the strange things about war is the way it brings people together.” Why does Ned say this?

Chapter 17: First Landing Chapter 18: Bougainville

1. What are the reactions of Solomon Islanders to military bombings?

2. Describe the narrator’s description of the terrain at Bougainville.

3. Why did Ned spit out the malaria pills?

4. What event led to Harry Tsosie’s death?

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5. Describe Ned's observation of the first Japanese soldier he sees. What is the comparison he makes? How do you think this affects Ned?

6. Why did the radio operators and code talkers have to keep moving?

7. Smitty had a duty that was necessary. What was this particular duty?

Chapter 19: Do You Have a Navajo? Chapter 20: The Next Targets

1. There is a high demand for code talkers, but a lack of trust on the part of the commanders. Why is this?

2. How did Ned save his squadron from friendly fire?

3. What did the generals write about the Navajo code talkers? How did this make Ned feel? How did their comments differ from what he'd been told in the boarding schools? Why are these attitudes so different?

4. Ned is reflecting on his relationship with Georgia Boy and Smitty. He relates, "But I no longer thought of them as Bilagáana strangers." Why did he feel this way?

5. What was the effect of war on some Marines?

6. The narrator states, "...war is a sickness that must be cured." What does he mean by this? Why does he feel this way? Does his Native American culture lend to his way of thinking?

7. What are Ned's thoughts on home, family, and being Navajo? What is the importance of Ned's identity? How did his identity help him to survive?

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8. What is your identity? What characteristics about your identity might help you survive a similar situation?

9. What happened at Saipan?

10. What happened to the Japanese civilians? What did they do? Why?

11. How are respect and appreciation formed after people get to know one another? Write about a time you thought differently about a person once you got to know him/her.

Chapter 21: Guam & Chapter 22: Fatigue

1. What did the Navy do to Guam?

2. To what does Ned compare the Japanese? Why?

3. What happened to Charley Begay? Why was it necessary for another soldier to put his dog tag in his mouth? How does the author's use of flashback help tell this story?

4. What significance does Monster Slayer have? Which three monsters survived? Why do you suppose these three survived?

5. What is the purpose of the Enemy Way Ceremony?

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Chapter 23: Pavavu & Chapter 24: Iwo Jima

1. Describe the duty of a Japanese kamikaze pilot.
2. "...the ordinary American people didn't know about kamikazes." Why didn't they know?
3. Compare and contrast Japanese vs. European rules of war and the treatment of prisoners.
4. Who were the other Indians in the war? Why were they all given the nickname "Chief"?
5. What does Sam Littlefinger call white soldiers? What was his point in doing so?
6. What is the significance of the songs?

Chapter 27: Okinawa & Chapter 28 – The Bomb

1. Ned is reflecting back on Okinawa. He says, "It seemed like it would never end." Why does Ned say this? How does he describe it?
2. What was The Thought Police?
3. What effects does the bomb have in Nagasaki and Hiroshima?
4. Compare what Emperor Hirohito says to what the Supreme Military Council says. Who had power? Was this power used for the good of the Japanese people?

Chapter 29 – Going Home

1. Why didn't the code talkers go home right away?

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2. How did the New Zealanders and Australians treat the American Indians? Why?

3. The code talkers had difficulty finding work after the war. Why?
4. Compare how Ned was treated in San Francisco to how he was treated in Arizona. What does Ned realize after someone called him a stupid Navajo?

5. “Although I had changed, the things that made me feel sad and ashamed when I was a child had stayed the same. It didn’t matter that I had fought for America. It didn’t matter that I had made white friends who would have sacrificed their lives to save me...” There are many injustices in this world, and how Ned was treated is an injustice. How does he overcome the many injustices he faces?

6. What does Ned have to do after coming home from the war? How does this help him?

7. Ned tells the reader how the Enemy Way Ceremony helped him get back into balance. What does getting back into balance mean?

8. What was discriminatory about the GI Bills? Why would the government let this happen?

9. “But more important than any praise was the fact that we could now tell this story. We could tell our children and our grandchildren about the way our sacred language helped this country.” Why is the importance of language, culture, and storytelling crucial to our society?

10. Depending on relationships; and appreciating people for who they are, not the color of their skin are some themes of this novel. In your opinion, would Ned be a successful survivor of the war without those relationships?

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Navajo Code Talker Word Search

Q	A	Z	M	U	D	C	L	A	N	W	S	X	B
E	P	E	A	R	L	H	A	R	B	O	R	O	E
D	C	R	R	E	H	T	A	F	D	N	A	R	G
E	F	V	I	T	G	B	Y	H	N	R	U	A	J
S	M	I	N	K	O	L	P	Q	D	A	Z	D	U
E	L	D	E	R	S	E	D	I	C	R	F	I	N
N	V	T	S	G	B	Y	N	A	V	A	J	O	I
A	H	N	U	H	O	G	A	N	J	M	I	K	F
P	P	P	A	O	S	N	W	O	R	B	Q	A	O
A	Z	W	S	C	L	A	N	X	E	D	C	R	R
J	F	V	H	T	G	B	Y	H	N	U	J	M	M
I	C	O	D	E	T	A	L	K	E	R	S	J	S
M	O	I	I	N	T	E	R	P	R	E	T	E	R
L	O	N	G	W	A	L	K	P	Q	A	Z	W	S

boarding school	clan	Long Walk	Japanese
Pearl Harbor	brown soap	Marines	Navajo
uniforms	Code Talkers	Mud Clan	hogan
interpreter	radio	elders	Grandfather

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Answer Key

Navajo Code Talker Word Search

Q	A	Z	M	U	D	C	L	A	N	W	S	X	B
E	P	E	A	R	L	H	A	R	B	O	R	O	E
D	C	R	R	E	H	T	A	F	D	N	A	R	G
E	F	V	I	T	G	B	Y	H	N	R	U	A	J
S	M	I	N	K	O	L	P	Q	D	A	Z	D	U
E	L	D	E	R	S	E	D	I	C	R	F	I	N
N	V	T	S	G	B	Y	N	A	V	A	J	O	I
A	H	N	U	H	O	G	A	N	J	M	I	K	F
P	P	P	A	O	S	N	W	O	R	B	Q	A	O
A	Z	W	S	C	L	A	N	X	E	D	C	R	R
J	F	V	H	T	G	B	Y	H	N	U	J	M	M
I	C	O	D	E	T	A	L	K	E	R	S	J	S
M	O	I	I	N	T	E	R	P	R	E	T	E	R
L	O	N	G	W	A	L	K	P	Q	A	Z	W	S

boarding school	clan	Long Walk	Japanese
Pearl Harbor	brown soap	Marines	Navajo
uniforms	Code Talkers	Mud Clan	hogan
interpreter	radio	elders	Grandfather

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Terms in English and Navajo Language

Alphabet (English)	Code language (English)	Code language (Navajo)
A	Ant	Wol-la-chee
B	Bear	Shush
C	Cat	Moashi
D	Deer	Be
E	Elk	Dzeh
F	Fox	Ma-e
G	Goat	Klizzie
H	Horse	Lin
I	Ice	Tkin
J	Jack	Tkele-cho-gi
K	Kid	Klizzie-yazzi
L	Lamb	Dibeh-yazzi
M	Mouse	Na-as-tso-si
N	Nut	Nesh-chee
O	Owl	Ne-ash-jsn
P	Pig	Bi-sodih
Q	Quiver	Ca-yeilth
R	Rabbit	Gah
S	Sheep	Dibeh
T	Turkey	Than-zie
U	Ute	No-da-ih
V	Victor	a-keh-di-glini
W	Weasel	Gloe-ih
X	Cross	Al-an-as-dzoh
Y	Yucca	Tsah-as-zih
Z	Zinc	Besh-do-gliz

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Grade: 7 th & 8 th	Lesson: Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two; Veterans Day; American Indian Heritage Month

Name _____

Decoding the Navajo Code Activity

Directions: This was a message sent between the Navajo Code Talkers in the Pacific. This is only part of the message. On a separate sheet of paper, decode the following message, using the code breaker on the page with the code chart. New words are capitalized in the message and it does contain some punctuation. If a word has a dash (-), then the connected words are one Navajo word. Be careful!

“Than-zie lin dzeh No-da-ih nesh-chee tkin than-zie dzeh be Dibeh than-zie wol-la-chee than-zie dzeh dibeh Ma-e dibeh-yazzi dzeh dzeh than-zie Gloe-ih tkin dibeh-yazzi dibeh-yazzi Wol-la-chee than-zie than-zie wol-la-chee moashi klizzie-yazzi Na-as-tso-si tkin be gloe-ih wol-la-chee tsah-as-zih Tkin dibeh dibeh-yazzi wol-la-chee nesh-chee be Ma-e no-da-ih dibeh-yazzi dibeh-yazzi Ma-e ne-ash-jsn gah moashi dzeh Tkin nesh-chee Than-zie gloe-ih ne-ash-jsn Gloe-ih dzeh dzeh klizzie-yazzi dibeh Than-zie tkin na-as-tso-si dzeh. Gloe-ih dzeh Gloe-ih tkin dibeh-yazzi dibeh-yazzi Nesh-chee dzeh dzeh be Wol-la-chee dibeh Na-as-tso-si no-da-ih moashi lin Na-as-tso-si tkin dibeh-yazzi tkin than-zie wol-la-chee gah tsah-as-zih Bi-sodih dzeh gah dibeh ne-ash-jsn nesh-chee nesh-chee dzeh dibeh-yazzi Wol-la-chee dibeh Moashi wol-la-chee nesh-chee Shush dzeh Dibeh bi-sodih wol-la-chee gah dzeh be, Wol-la-chee dibeh Gloe-ih dzeh dibeh-yazzi dibeh-yazzi Wol-la-chee dibeh Wol-la-chee nesh-chee Tkin nesh-chee moashi gah dzeh wol-la-chee dibeh dzeh Tkin nesh-chee Na-as-tso-si dzeh be tkin moashi wol-la-chee dibey-yazzi Dibeh no-da-ih bi-sodih bi-sodih dibeh-yazzi tkin dzeh dibeh, Klizzie-yazzi Gah wol-la-chee than-zie tkin ne-ash-jsn nesh-chee dibeh, Gloe-ih dzeh wol-la-chee bi-sodih ne-sh-jsn nesh-chee dibeh, Wol-la-chee nesh-chee be Wol-la-chee na-as-tso-si na-as-tso-si ne-ash-jsn. Than-zie lin tkin dibeh Tkin dibeh Than-zie ne-ash-jsn bi-sodih Dibeh dzeh moashi gah dzeh than-zie. Wol-la-chee debeh-yazzi debeh-yazzi Lin wol-la-chee nesh-chee be dibeh Ne-ash-jsn nesh-chee Be dzeh moashi klizzie-yazzi. Than-zie lin wol-la-chee nesh-chee klizzie-yazzi Tsah-as-zih ne-ash-jsn no-da-ih Ma-e ne-ash-jsn gah Tsah-as-zih ne-ash-jsn no-da-ih gah Moashi ne-ash-jsn ne-ash-jsn bi-sodih dzeh gah wol-la-chee than-zie tkin ne-ash-jsn nesh-chee.”

Wreaths Across America

Lesson Plan

Teacher:	Date:
Grade: 7 th & 8 th	Lesson: Code Talker: A Novel About the Navajo Marines of World War Two; Veterans Day; American Indian Heritage Month

ANSWER KEY

Decoding the Navajo Code Activity

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Message in English: “The United States fleet will attack Midway Island full force in two weeks’ time. We will need as much military personnel as can be spared, as well as an increase in medical supplies, K-rations, weapons, and ammo. This is top secret. All hands-on deck. Thank you for your cooperation.”

Wreaths Across America

Lesson Plan

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Find A Way To Serve

- Help an elderly neighbor with yard work.
- Volunteer at your local library.
- Create “Survival Back-Packs” for the homeless with socks, caps, gloves, toothpaste, a toothbrush and other toiletries to be distributed to homeless people in your community.
- Organize a Checkers, board game or card game tournament at your local nursing home. Coordinate with the nursing home staff and plan a fun afternoon for the residents and students alike!
- Write letters to be included in soldier care packages. [Operation Gratitude](#) sends over 250,000 packages to Servicemen and Women, and First Responders annually, the link above provides guidelines for participation in their program.
- Collaborate with teachers, students, administration, and parents to create a food “Back-Pack” pantry at your school for students who may have food insecurities at home. Twenty-two million children receive free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program and the National School Breakfast Program. For many of these children, school meals may be the only meals they eat during the day.
- Make a “New Student Kit” for students who are new to your school. Create a list of school clubs, a calendar of events, school lunch menus, map of the school, and something with the school mascot to help the student feel like they are welcome.
- Organize a Zoom Meeting between your class at school and local nursing home residents. Discuss what their childhoods were like growing up, what kind of classes they took in school. Did they live in town or in the country, what kinds of chores and activities did they participate in when they were your age. Document their responses and share with other classes in your school. If some of your interviewees have a talent like singing or playing the piano, maybe they could share those talents with the class the next time you Zoom. Once you have met the residents, select a “pin-pal” you can correspond with by letter every few weeks.
- Be a companion to a senior citizen in a local nursing home. Make cards, surprise them with visits around their birthday or sing carols for them around the holidays.
- Organize a coat drive in your school/community that collects new and slightly used coats as part of [ONEWARMCOAT.org](#)
- Use AARP’s [Create the Good Guide](#) to start recycling events in your community.