

Library of Congress
Teaching with Primary Sources
Michigan Council for History & Wayne RESA
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Navajo Code Talkers



Big Ideas of the Lesson: Impact of World War II affecting American society

Lesson Abstract: (summary of main points)

Using LOC's History of American West and Veteran History Projects students will begin to understand Navajo contemporary culture and their contributions during World War II. Class reading of "Code Talker: a novel about the Navajo Marines of World War II by Joseph Burchac and using the class wiki students will write their ideas and reflections online. The guiding questions for this project are "Who are the Navajo code talkers, and what was their importance to the U.S. military during the Second World War?"

Content Expectations or Standards

- USHG ERA 7– THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II (1920 -1945)
 - 7.2 World War II Michigan Social Studies, 9-12 (2007) 9,10,11,12 Examine the causes and course of World War II, and the effects of the war on United States society and culture, including the consequences for United States involvement in world affairs.
 - 7.2.3 - Impact of WWII on American Life – Analyze the changes in American life brought about by U.S. participation in World War II.
- English & Language Arts, 9-12 (2006) 9,10,11,12 Standard 3.2 Read and respond to classic and contemporary fiction, literary nonfiction, and expository text, from a variety of literary genres representing many time periods and authors (e.g., myth, epic, folklore, drama, poetry, autobiography, novels, short stories, philosophical pieces, science fiction, fantasy, young adult literature, creative non-fiction, hypertext fiction)

Integrated GLCEs

- AASL 2009 21st Standards 1.1.5 Evaluate information found in selected sources on the basis of accuracy, validity, appropriateness for needs, importance, and social and cultural context.
- Technology 2005 Communication Tools - 2. use available technologies (e.g., desktop conferencing, e-mail, groupware, instant messaging) to communicate with others on a class assignment or project (4)

Key Concept(s) cryptology, Navajo Indians, U.S. Veterans

Equipment/Manipulative

1. “Code Talker: a novel about the Navajo Marines of World War II” by Joseph Bruchac
2. Internet Access
3. Familiar setting up a class wiki and online learning: <http://navajocodetalkers.pbworks.com/>

Teacher, Student, Instructional Resources

1. What are Primary Documents:
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>
2. Sound Recording Analysis Worksheet:
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/sound_recording_analysis_worksheet.pdf
3. Photograph Analysis Worksheet
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf
4. Motion Picture Analysis Worksheet
http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/motion_picture_analysis_worksheet.pdf
5. Code Talkers Recognition Act of 2009 http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ420.110
6. Library of Congress’s Veteran History Project <http://www.loc.gov/vets/> (search Navajo Code Talkers Project)

Lesson Sequence

Lesson 1: Introductions (55 min class period)

1. Introduce the lesson, wiki and what are the expected outcomes of this project
2. Introduce students to Library of Congress website and the American Memory collections: <http://loc.gov>
3. Explain “What are primary sources?” by using Library of Congress's website:
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>
4. Continue reading “Code Talker” and submit reflections online using the class wiki.

Lesson 2: Review & explore

1. Review earlier lesson then demonstrate “What do you see?” to model photo analysis and have students complete Photo Analysis Worksheet using LOC's:
<Http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/01/indian/index.html>
2. Understanding the Navajo Culture: Have students begin looking LOC' History of the American West focusing on the Navajo: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/codhtml/hawphome.html>
3. Continue reading “Code Talker” and submit reflections online using the class wiki.

Lesson 3 & 4: Oral History & Writing Connection 2 class periods

1. Veterans History Project: oral histories use Sound Recording analysis sheet and Motion Picture Analysis Worksheet
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/search?query=Navajo+Code+Talker%27s+Project+>
2. Compare and contrast the Code Talkers novel to veteran's experiences: What did you find similar or different?
3. Recognition Act 2009 – Leading question: Why did it take so long for the Navajo Indians to be recognized for their contributions to World War II

Assessment

Student assessment will be based upon wiki participation from the novel and submitted analysis worksheets.