

**Reemergence of the “Vanishing Americans” -  
Native Americans and World War II**

*“War Department officials maintained that if the entire population had enlisted in the same proportion as Indians, the response would have rendered Selective Service unnecessary.”*

*– Lt. Col. Thomas D. Morgan*

**Overview**

During World War II, all Americans banded together to help defeat the Axis powers. In this lesson, students will learn about the various contributions and sacrifices made by Native Americans during and after World War II. After learning the Native American response to the attack on Pearl Harbor via a PowerPoint centered discussion, students will complete a jigsaw activity where they learn about various aspects of the Native American experience during and after the war. The lesson culminates with students creating a commemorative currency honoring the contributions and sacrifices of Native Americans during and after World War II.

**Grade**

11

**NC Essential Standards for American History II**

- AH2.H.3.2 - Explain how environmental, cultural and economic factors influenced the patterns of migration and settlement within the United States since the end of Reconstruction
- AH2.H.3.3 - Explain the roles of various racial and ethnic groups in settlement and expansion since Reconstruction and the consequences for those groups
- AH2.H.4.1 - Analyze the political issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted
- AH2.H.7.1 - Explain the impact of wars on American politics since Reconstruction
- AH2.H.7.3 - Explain the impact of wars on American society and culture since Reconstruction
- AH2.H.8.3 - Evaluate the extent to which a variety of groups and individuals have had opportunity to attain their perception of the “American Dream” since Reconstruction

**Materials**

- Cracking the Code handout, attached (p. 6)
- Cracking the Code answer key (p. 7)
- Native Americans and World War II PowerPoint, available in the Database of K-12 Resources (in PDF format)
  - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click “View” in the top menu bar of the file, and select “Full Screen Mode”
  - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to [cnorris@unc.edu](mailto:cnorris@unc.edu).
- Native Americans and World War II Notes, attached (p. 25 – 26)
- Jigsaw activity handouts (attached):

- Group instructions (for each student) (p.8)
- Excerpt readings and corresponding question sheets (each group will be assigned one of the following readings; each student in that group should receive a copy)
  - Group 1: Code Talkers (p. 9-12)
  - Group 2: Ira Hayes (p. 13-16)
  - Group 3: Native Americans and Discrimination (p. 17 – 20)
  - Group 4: Native Americans Post-World War II (p. 21 – 24)
  - **Teacher Note:** If possible, print each of the four readings on four different colors of paper – this will make the excerpts easier to decipher as well as make the transition to the second group easier.
- Commemorative Currency Handout, attached (p. 27)

### Essential Questions:

- How did Native Americans respond to Pearl Harbor?
- How did World War II affect Native Americans?
- What types of discrimination did Native Americans experience before, during, and after World War II?
- What contributions did Native Americans make to the war effort?
- How has the Native American experience during World War II mirrored the Native American experience throughout history?

### Duration

- 90 minutes (can be split over two class periods)

### Student Preparation

- Students should have a general understanding of the US Government’s treatment of Native Americans throughout history (e.g. Trail of Tears, American Indian Wars, Dawes Act, Wounded Knee, Sioux Wars, etc.).
- Students should have a basic understanding of the major events of World War II before completing this lesson.

### Teacher Preparation

- Although not necessary, it would be helpful to read “Native Americans in World War II” by Thomas D. Morgan, to get a general sense of the Native American experience before and after World War II. It is available online: [http://www.shsu.edu/~his\\_ncp/NAWWII.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/NAWWII.html)

### Procedure

#### Warm Up: Cracking the Code

1. As a warm up, project or distribute the attached “Crack the Code” handout. Instruct students to silently work on solving the secret phrase using the information provided. (Teachers can optionally offer a prize to the first student to accurately solve the code.) After 5 – 10 minutes, review the secret code and pose the following questions to the class:
  - What was the key to solving the code?
    - Letters A-M were sequential even numbers from 2 – 26. Letters N-Z were sequential odd numbers from 1 – 25.

- What are secret codes used for?
- Why do you think the Army (or any other military/national security branch) would be interested in secret codes?
- What role do you think secret codes played in World War II?
- Do you think secret codes of any sort are still utilized today? Explain.
- Do you know anything about the Navajo Code Talkers? Who are the Navajo Code Talkers and how are they related to World War II?

### **Native Americans and World War II Power Point Discussion**

2. Inform students that they are going to learn about the Native American experience during World War II through a PowerPoint discussion and short readings. The PowerPoint is designed to be used as a means of facilitating class discussion and prompting student questioning rather than a straight lecture. Use the questions and information below to foster a class discussion.
3. Before starting the discussion, distribute the attached “Native American and World War II Notes” handout and instruct students to write down information from the PowerPoint and discussion that they find interesting or think is important, in the appropriate section.
  - Slide 2: Front Page of *Seattle Star*
    - Describe what you see here.
    - What event just occurred? How do you think Americans felt about this event?
    - Are there any sections of this front page that jump out at you? If so, which ones? Why?
    - What is the headline for the story at the bottom of the page? Who do you think the “40,000 Needed for Defense” refers to?
    - If you were alive when this happened, how would you react? What would you do?
  - Slide 3: Answer the Call
    - What do these statistics tell you about the American reaction to Pearl Harbor?
    - Were you surprised by the number of people who enlisted, rather than wait to be drafted? Did you think the number would be higher or lower?
    - Were you surprised at the number of Native Americans in the United States? Did you think it would be higher or lower?
  - Slide 4: Will Rogers Quote
    - What does this quote tell you about the US Government’s treatment of Native Americans?
    - Can you give examples from the history of the United States that support Will Rogers’ quote?
    - How do you think Native Americans will respond to the attack on Pearl Harbor?
  - Slides 5 - 6: Nazis & native Americans
    - Why do you think the Nazis went to so much trouble to prevent Native Americans from helping the US war effort?
    - How are the Nazi swastika and Native American symbol different?
      - *Nazi swastika is clockwise and the Native American symbol is counter-clockwise.*

- Slides 7 – 15 – The Native American Response
  - What does this quote tell you about the Native American response to Pearl Harbor?
  - What's Selective Service? (*The draft*)
  - Can you compare the Native American response to Pearl Harbor to other groups in the United States?
  - How did the experience of Native American women compare to other groups of women?
  - Why do you think Native Americans responded to Pearl Harbor the way they did?

### Native Americans and World War II Jigsaw

4. Once you have finished discussing the PowerPoint, inform the students that they are going to learn more about Native American experience during World War II through a jigsaw activity in which they first work with a group to become experts on a topic (Part I) and then teach a second group about what they learned, while also learning additional information from the other group members (Part II).
5. Part I: Place students into one of four “expert” groups by counting off – assigning a student a number from one to four and then instructing students with the same number to sit together. Once students have grouped up, distribute the attached reading and question handouts to each student in the group. Groups will ideally be comprised of 4 students, so teachers with larger classes may assign more than one group the same topic if needed.
  - Group 1 – Code Talkers
  - Group 2 – Ira Hayes
  - Group 3 – Native Americans and Discrimination
  - Group 4 – Native Americans Post-World War II
- **Teacher Note:** If possible, print each of the four readings on four different colors of paper – this will make the transition into Part II of the group work easier.
6. Teachers should assign one student in each group to be the “Facilitator.” This student will be responsible for keeping the group on track and facilitating the discussion of the reading. Give groups approximately 20 minutes to read and answer the attached questions together.
7. Part II: After all groups are finished, ask the students to “jigsaw,” so that new groups are re-formed with one person representing each excerpt in every group. (If the four excerpts were copied on different colors of paper, each new group will have at least one person with each color of paper.) Once students are settled in their new groups, give each group 15-20 minutes (4-5 minutes per topic) to teach their group members what they have learned. Students should take notes on their “Native Americans and World War II Notes” handout.

### Commemorative Currency

8. After the allotted time, provide each group with a copy of the attached “Commemorative Native American Currency” handout. Review the instructions as a class and assign a project due date before allowing students to use the remaining class time to work on their projects.

9. On the day that the projects are due, teachers can choose to have students present their projects in one of the following ways:
  - Have students hang their work around the room and then allow approximately 15 minutes for a gallery walk, in which students rotate among the projects and take notes on what they see. (Teachers may want to number each project with a Post-it so that students can easily refer back to the various projects during the debrief.) Students should take note of what they learned regarding Native Americans from the currency and what they like (artistically speaking) regarding the currency. After the gallery walk, allow students to share their feedback on the various pieces of currency with the class. Culminate by providing students with pieces of paper and allow the class to hold a secret ballot vote on which currency they feel best represents Native Americans during World War II. After the students have voted, tally the results and declare a winner.
  - Have students get into groups of 5-6 students and instruct each student to take a turn presenting their project to their group. After each group member presents, the remainder of the group can take 1-2 minutes to ask the presenter questions regarding his/her currency design as well as provide positive feedback. Once all students have presented, each group can vote on one piece of currency (via secret ballot) that is then presented to the entire class.
10. To debrief, discuss the following questions:
  - What did you find most interesting, inspiring, and/or upsetting regarding what you learned about the Native American experience during World War II?
  - Why do you think the sacrifices and heroism of many Native Americans isn't well known by most Americans?
  - Do you think Ira Hayes' life was representative of the way Native Americans were treated throughout history? Why or why not?
  - Why is it important to acknowledge the contributions of Native Americans and other minority groups to the World War II effort?

### **Resources**

- Indian County Diaries
  - [http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/interactive\\_map.html](http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/interactive_map.html)
- American Indian Movement
  - <http://www.aimovement.org/>
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - <http://www.bia.gov/>
- Official Site of the Navajo Code Talkers
  - <http://www.navajocodetalkers.org/>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Crack the Code

**Directions:** You've been recruited by the US Army for a special mission. In order to determine if you're up to the task, you'll need to crack the code below and decipher the secret message. To crack the code, you need to figure out what numbers correspond with the alphabet. Aside from the information already provided, the only other hint you'll receive is that the answer is related to World War II. Good Luck!



Key:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
			8								24					7					17				

Secret Code:

1	2	17	2	20	3		6	3	8	10		13	2	24	22	10	9	11							

## Crack the Code Answer Key

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25

<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>O</b>		<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>		<b>T</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>
1	2	17	2	20	3		6	3	8	10		13	2	24	22	10	9	11

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Native Americans & World War II Group Instructions



### First Group Instructions

- 1. Read:** Carefully read the handouts provided to you on Native Americans and World War II. Your group will be responsible for reading and becoming experts on one of the topical readings below:
  - Group 1: Code Talkers
  - Group 2: Ira Hayes
  - Group 3: Native Americans and Discrimination
  - Group 4: Native Americans Post-World War II
- 2. Take Notes:** Each group member will be responsible for teaching a new group about this reading in the second part of this activity; likewise, you will be learning about the information provided in the other readings not assigned to your group. To help you prepare to teach this material to others, mark the text as you read:
  - Underline any parts of the excerpt that you think are most important or that stick out to you.
  - If you are confused by any part of the excerpt, write a question mark by that line or section. You can also write out questions on the text.
  - If anything surprises you or evokes a strong emotional response from you, you can write an exclamation mark by the line or section.
  - If a particular thought pops in your head that connects to the reading, write it in the margins.
  - Circle any words that are unfamiliar to you.
- 3. Discuss & Determine Best Answers:** After you have finished the reading, your group's Facilitator will lead your group through discussing the questions at the end of the reading. Be sure to take detailed notes in preparation to teach others about what you learned.

### Second Group Instructions

- 4. Switch:** When told to do so, you will be assigned to a second group of four students. Each person in your second group will have read a different reading regarding Native Americans and World War II. Each person in the second group will take turns teaching about their reading. As you listen and learn more about Native Americans and World War II, you should take notes on the worksheet provided to you.
- 5. Teach:** When it is your turn to teach your new group members, you will take approximately 5 minutes to summarize your reading, sharing the main points and most important topics from your excerpt that relate to Native Americans and World War II.

Group 1: Code Talkers

Secure and rapid communications are essential to effective operation on the battlefield, and military forces are working constantly to develop communications systems, methods, and techniques which will insure that an enemy does not gain access to friendly intentions. While cryptography is one of the standard means of maintaining security, it takes time — a critical element in military operations — to encode and decode messages from prearranged codes, and codes are subject to being broken. The most desirable method is direct and open on-the-spot transmission by voice over telephone or radio, and such a procedure must recognize that the enemy is always listening in.

To confound the enemy, American forces in both World Wars used Native American personnel and their unique languages to insure secure communications. In World War I in France, the 142d Infantry Regiment had a company of Native Americans who spoke 26 different languages or dialects, only four or five of which had been reduced to writing. Two Native American officers were selected to supervise a communications system staffed by Choctaw Native Americans. They were used in the regiment's operations in October 1918, in the Chufilly-Chardeny zone, transmitting in their native tongue a variety of open voice messages, relating to unit movements, which the enemy, who was completely surprised in the action, obviously could not break.

Adolf Hitler knew about the successful use of code talkers during World War I. He sent a team of some thirty anthropologists to learn Native American languages before the outbreak of World War II. However, it proved too difficult for them to learn the many languages and dialects that existed. Because of Nazi German anthropologists' attempts to learn the languages, the U.S. Army did not implement a large-scale code talker program in the European Theater. Fourteen Comanche code talkers took part in the Invasion of Normandy, and continued to serve in the 4th Infantry Division during further European operations. Comanches of the 4th Signal Company compiled a vocabulary of over 100 code terms using words or phrases in their own language. Using a substitution method similar to the Navajo, the Comanche code word for tank was "turtle", bomber was "pregnant airplane", machine gun was "sewing machine" and Adolf Hitler became "crazy white man".

Two Comanche code-talkers were assigned to each regiment, the rest to 4th Infantry Division headquarters. Shortly after landing on Utah Beach for the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, the Comanches began transmitting messages. Some were wounded but none killed.

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In 1989, the French government awarded the Comanche code-talkers the Chevalier of the National Order of Merit. On November 30, 1999, the United States Department of Defense presented Charles Chibitty with the Knowlton Award.



Arthur L. Money presents Charles Chibitty with a cased American flag that was flown over the capitol during ceremonies in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes. The 78-year-old Chibitty is the last surviving World War II Army Comanche "code talker." Money is the assistant secretary of defense for command, control, communications, and intelligence. Photo by Staff Sgt. Robert Broils, USA.

In the Pacific, a group of 24 Navajos was assembled to handle telephone communications, using voice codes in their native tongue, between the Air Commander in the Solomon Islands and various airfields in the region. The U.S. Marine Corps also used Navajo code talkers extensively in the Pacific Theater. And in Europe, the 4th Signal Company of the Army's 4th Infantry Division was assigned 16 Comanches for employment as voice radio operators to transmit and receive messages in their own unwritten language.

The Armed Services ran special training courses both in the United States and in the operational theaters to instruct Native Americans in the basic communications techniques and to develop standard military phraseology and common military terms for the languages and dialects where such words may never have existed. The

success of the experiment in using Native American code talkers is attested to in the reports of military units and commanders in the several services.

Alphabets (English)	Code Language (English)	Code Language (Navajo)	Modern spelling
A	Ant	Wol-la-chee	Wóláchíí'
B	Bear	Shush	Shash
C	Cat	Moashi	Mósi
D	Deer	Be	Bijh
E	Elk	Dzeh	Dzeeh
F	Fox	Ma-e	Má'ii
G	Goat	Klizzie	T'ízi
H	Horse	Lin	Łíí'
I	Ice	Tkin	Tin
J	Jackass	Tkele-cho-gi	Téłiicho'í
K	Kid	Klizzie-yazzi	T'ízi yázhí
L	Lamb	Dibeh-yazzi	Dibé yázhí
M	Mouse	Na-as-tso-si	Na'asts'qqsí
N	Nut	Nesh-chee	Neeshch'íí'
O	Owl	Ne-ash-jsn	Né'éshjaa'
P	Pig	Bi-sodih	Bisóodi
Q	Quiver	Ca-yeilth	K'aa' yeiltijh
R	Rabbit	Gah	Gah
S	Sheep	Dibeh	Dibé
T	Turkey	Than-zie	Tázhii
U	Ute	No-da-ih	Nóóda'í
V	Victor	a-keh-di-glini	Ak'ehdidliní
W	Weasel	Gloe-ih	Dl'ó'ii
X	Cross	Al-an-as-dzoh	Alná'ázdzh
Y	Yucca	Tsah-as-zih	Tsá'ászi'
Z	Zinc	Besh-do-gliz	Béésh doot'ízh

Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Peleliu, Iwo Jima: the Navajo code talkers took part in every assault the US Marines conducted in the Pacific from 1942 to 1945. They served in all six Marine divisions, Marine Raider battalions and Marine parachute units, transmitting messages by telephone and radio in their native language — a code that the Japanese never broke.

The idea to use Navajo for secure communications came from Philip Johnston, the son of a missionary to the Navajos and one of the few non-Navajos who spoke their language fluently. Johnston, reared on the Navajo reservation, was a World War I veteran who knew of the military's search for a code that would withstand all attempts to decipher it. He also knew that Native American languages — notably Choctaw — had been used in World War I to encode messages.

Johnston believed Navajo answered the military requirement for an indecipherable code because Navajo is an unwritten language of extreme complexity. Its syntax and tonal qualities, not to mention dialects, make it unintelligible to anyone without extensive exposure and training. It has no alphabet or symbols, and is spoken only on the Navajo lands of the American Southwest. One estimate indicates that less than 30 non-Navajos, none of them Japanese, could understand the language at the outbreak of World War II.

Early in 1942, Johnston met with Major General Clayton B. Vogel, the commanding general of Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet, and his staff to convince them of the Navajo language's value as code. Johnston staged tests under simulated combat

conditions, demonstrating that Navajos could encode, transmit, and decode a three-line English message in 20 seconds. Machines of the time required 30 minutes to perform the same job. Convinced, Vogel recommended to the Commandant of the Marine Corps that the Marines recruit 200 Navajos.

In May 1942, the first 29 Navajo recruits attended boot camp. Then, at Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California, this first group created the Navajo code. They developed a dictionary and numerous words for military terms. The dictionary and all code words had to be memorized during training.

When a Navajo code talker received a message, what he heard was a string of seemingly unrelated Navajo words. The code talker first had to translate each Navajo word into its English equivalent. Then he used only the first letter of the English equivalent in spelling an English word. Thus, the Navajo words "wol-la-chee" (ant), "be-la-sana" (apple) and "tse-nill" (axe) all stood for the letter "a." One way to say the word "Navy" in Navajo code would be "tsah (needle) wol-la-chee (ant) ah-keh-di- glini (victor) tsah-ah-dzoh (yucca)."



Most letters had more than one Navajo word representing them. Not all words had to be spelled out letter by letter. The developers of the original code assigned Navajo words to represent about 450 frequently used military terms that did not exist in the Navajo language. Several examples: "besh- lo" (iron fish) meant "submarine," "dah-he- tih-hi" (hummingbird) meant "fighter plane" and "debeh-li-zine" (black street) meant "squad."

Once a Navajo code talker completed his training, he was sent to a Marine unit deployed in the Pacific theater. The code talkers' primary job was to talk, transmitting information on tactics and troop movements, orders and other vital battlefield communications over telephones and radios. They also acted as messengers, and performed general Marine duties.

Praise for their skill, speed and accuracy accrued throughout the war. At Iwo Jima, Major Howard Connor, 5th Marine Division signal officer, declared, "Were it not for the Navajos, the Marines would never have taken Iwo Jima." Connor had six Navajo code talkers working around the clock during the first two days of the battle. Those six sent and received over 800 messages, all without error.

The Japanese, who were skilled code breakers, remained baffled by the Navajo language. The Japanese chief of intelligence, Lieutenant General Seizo Arisue, said that while they were able to decipher the codes used by the US Army and Army Air Corps, they never cracked the code used by the Marines. The Navajo code talkers even stymied a Navajo soldier taken prisoner at Bataan. (About 20 Navajos served in the US Army in the Philippines.) The Navajo soldier, forced to listen to the jumbled words of talker transmissions, said to a code talker after the war, "I never figured out what you guys who got me into all that trouble were saying."

In 1942, there were about 50,000 Navajo tribe members. As of 1945, about 540 Navajos served as Marines. From 375 to 420 of those trained as code talkers; the rest served in other capacities.

Navajo remained potentially valuable as code even after the war. For that reason, the code talkers, whose skill and courage saved both American lives and military engagements, only recently earned recognition from the Government and the public.

**Adapted and edited by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following sources:**

<http://www.defense.gov/specials/nativeamerican01/code.html>; <http://www.navajocodetalkers.org/photos/>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Group 1: Code Talkers Reading Questions

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

1. Why were “Code Talkers” needed during World War II?
2. What tribes did they come from?
3. What was a Code Talkers primary job on the battlefield?
4. Was the Navajo code ever broken? If not, why?
5. What role did the Code Talkers play in the success of the United States in defeating the Japanese during World War II?
6. Using the chart provided, write your name using the Navajo Code in the space below:

### Group 2: Ira Hayes

Ira Hamilton Hayes is a full blood Pima Native American and was born in Sacaton, Arizona, on the Pima Reservation on Jan 12, 1923. His parents Joe E., a veteran of World War I, and Nancy W. Hayes were both farming people.

As a child, Hayes was shy and quiet, but very bright. He learned English at a young age, despite the fact that many Pimas were not literate in English. Although he had a normal childhood on his reservation, his life changed dramatically when war broke out and he joined the Marine Corps. When he enlisted in the Marine Corps, he had hardly ever been off the Reservation. His Chief told him to be an "Honorable Warrior" and bring honor upon his family.



After he completed courses under the U.S. Marine Corps Parachutist School at San Diego, California, he was lovingly dubbed "Chief Falling Cloud." Ira Hayes was assigned to a parachute battalion of the fleet Marine Force. Ira was a dedicated Marine. Quiet and steady, he was admired by his fellow Marines who fought alongside him in three Pacific battles.

On March 14, 1943, Hayes sailed for New Caledonia with the 3rd Parachute Battalion. Hayes served a tour of duty there and first saw combat in the Bougainville Campaign in the South Pacific.

The Marine Corps parachute units were disbanded in February 1944, and Hayes transferred to Company E, 2nd Battalion, 28th Marines, U.S. 5th Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, California. Hayes agreed to serve a second tour of duty, and sailed to Hawaii in September 1944.

By the beginning of 1945, he was part of the American invasion force that attacked the Japanese stronghold of Iwo Jima. On Feb. 23, 1945 to signal the end of Japanese control, Hayes and five other's raised the U. S. flag atop Mount Suribachi on the island of Iwo Jima. This heroic act was re-staged and photographed by Joe Rosenthal, and it transformed Ira Hayes' life forever. The photograph subsequently became one of the most iconic and recognizable images of World War II. Overnight, Hayes became a national war hero, along with the two other survivors in the famous photograph, Rene Gagnon and John Bradley.



*Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima, Joe Rosenthal*

Ira Hayes is pictured on the far left.

When Iwo Jima was secured by U.S. forces, Hayes was ordered to Washington, D.C. Together with the Navy Pharmacist's Mate John Bradley and Marine Private First Class Rene Gagnon, he was assigned to temporary duty with the Finance Division, U.S. Treasury Department, for appearances in connection with the Seventh War Bond Drive.

At the White House, President Truman told Ira, "You are an American hero." But Ira didn't feel pride. As he later lamented, "How could I feel like a hero when only five men in my platoon of 45 survived, when only 27 men in my company of 250 managed to escape death or injury?" Later, they were shuttled from one city to another for publicity purposes with questionable sincerity on the part of the American military. Ira Hayes asked to be sent back to the front lines, stating that "sometimes I wish that guy had never made that picture".

The Bond Tour was an ordeal for Ira. He couldn't understand or accept the adulation . . . "It was supposed to be soft duty, but I couldn't take it. Everywhere we went people shoved drinks in our hands and said 'You're a Hero!' We knew we hadn't done that much but you couldn't tell them that."

At the conclusion of World War II Ira went back to the reservation attempting to lead an anonymous life. But it didn't turn out that way . . . "I kept getting hundreds of letters. And people would drive through the reservation, walk up to me and ask, 'Are you the Native American who raised the flag on Iwo Jima'"

After returning home from the war, Hayes remained troubled that one of his friends, Harlon Block, one of the flag raisers who was killed in action days after, was mistaken for another man, Hank Hansen. Hayes later hitchhiked 1,300 miles from the Gila River Native American Community to Edward Frederick Block, Sr.'s farm in Weslaco, Texas in order to reveal the truth to Block's family. He was instrumental in having the controversy resolved, to the delight and gratitude of the Block family.

Ira Hayes appeared in the 1949 John Wayne film, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, along with fellow flag raisers John Bradley and Rene Gagnon. All three men played themselves in the film. Wayne hands the flag to be raised to the three men. (The actual flag that was raised on Mount Suribachi is used in the film.)

Hayes' disquiet about his unwanted fame and his subsequent post-war problems were first recounted in detail by the author William Bradford Huie in *The Outsider*, published in 1959 as part of his collection *Wolf Whistle and Other Stories*. *The Outsider* was filmed in 1961, directed by World War II veteran turned film director Delbert Mann and starring Tony Curtis. Folk singer, Peter LaFarge, wrote "The Ballad of Ira Hayes" which told the tale of a tortured soul looking for a place in the world.

The 2006 film *Flags of Our Fathers*, directed by Clint Eastwood, suggests that Hayes suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder.

Ira tried to drown his "Conflict of Honor" with alcohol. Arrested as drunk and disorderly, his pain was clear . . . "I was sick. I guess I was about to crack up thinking about all my good buddies. They were better men than me and they're not coming back. Much less back to the White House, like me."

He was never able to get his life back in balance again. Ira Hayes died of exposure at the age of thirty-three on Jan, 24th 1955. He was memorialized by the Pima people and characterized as "a hero to everyone but himself". He is buried in Arlington Cemetery. He never married.

On November 10, 1993, the United States Marine Corps held a ceremony at the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Memorial) commemorating the anniversary of the Corps. Of Ira Hayes, USMC Commandant General Carl Mundy said:

One of the pairs of hands that you see outstretched to raise our national flag on the battle-scarred crest of Mount Suribachi so many years ago, are those of a Native American ... Ira Hayes ... a Marine not of the ethnic majority of our population.

Were Ira Hayes here today ... I would tell him that although my words on another occasion have given the impression that I believe some Marines ... because of their color ... are not as capable as other Marines ... that those were not the thoughts of my mind ... and that they are not the thoughts of my heart.

I would tell Ira Hayes that our Corps is what we are because we are of the people of America ... the people of the broad, strong, ethnic fabric that is our nation. And last, I would tell him that in the future, that fabric will broaden and strengthen in every category to make our Corps even stronger ... even of greater utility to our nation. That's a commitment of this commandant ... And that's a personal commitment of this Marine.



**"The Ballad Of Ira Hayes"  
By Peter LaFarge**

Ira Hayes,  
Ira Hayes

Among the men who held it high  
Was the Native American, Ira Hayes

[CHORUS:]

Call him drunken Ira Hayes  
He won't answer anymore  
Not the whiskey drinkin' Native American  
Nor the Marine that went to war

[CHORUS:]

Ira returned a hero  
Celebrated through the land  
He was wined and speeched and honored; Everybody  
shook his hand

Gather round me people there's a story I would tell  
About a brave young Native American you should  
remember well  
From the land of the Pima Native American  
A proud and noble band  
Who farmed the Phoenix valley in Arizona land

But he was just a Pima Native American  
No water, no crops, no chance  
At home nobody cared what Ira'd done  
And when did the Native Americans dance

[CHORUS:]

Down the ditches for a thousand years  
The water grew Ira's peoples' crops  
'Till the white man stole the water rights  
And the sparklin' water stopped

Then Ira started drinkin' hard;  
Jail was often his home  
They'd let him raise the flag and lower it  
like you'd throw a dog a bone!

Now Ira's folks were hungry  
And their land grew crops of weeds  
When war came, Ira volunteered  
And forgot the white man's greed

He died drunk one mornin'  
Alone in the land he fought to save  
Two inches of water in a lonely ditch  
Was a grave for Ira Hayes

[Chorus]

There they battled up Iwo Jima's hill,  
Two hundred and fifty men  
But only twenty-seven lived to walk back down again

[CHORUS:]

Yeah, call him drunken Ira Hayes  
But his land is just as dry  
And his ghost is lyin' thirsty  
In the ditch where Ira died

And when the fight was over  
And when Old Glory raised

Adapted and edited by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following sources: <http://www.defense.gov/specials/nativeamerican01/flag.html>;  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ira\\_Hayes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ira_Hayes); <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/johnnycash/theballadofirahayes.html>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Group 2: Ira Hayes Reading Questions

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

1. Did Ira Hayes enlist in the military or was he drafted? What do you think this says about his character?
2. What made Ira Hayes famous?
3. How did Hayes respond to his newfound fame?
4. Why do you think Hayes had difficulty adjusting to post-War life?
5. What ultimately happened to Hayes?
6. Do you think the song “the Ballad of Ira Hayes” is an accurate representation of his life? Add your own verse to the song below.

**Group 3: Native Americans and Discrimination**

Despite the strong support from Native Americans, the US government continued to exploit the Native American populace and deny them many fundamental rights.

In 1940, the United States Congress passed the Nationality Act, which granted citizenship to Native Americans. Despite their citizenship status and ability to be drafted, many Native Americans were denied voting rights in many states. Six states officially barred Native Americans from voting citing illiteracy, non-residency, non-taxation status (many Native Americans living on reservations were not required to pay federal taxes), among other reasons.

In the South, Native Americans experienced the same obstacles to voting faced by African Americans. In North Carolina, a judge told a Cherokee who held a Master of Arts degree from UNC that, "You couldn't read or write to my satisfaction if you stayed here all day."

Anticipating the drafting of young Cherokee men into the army, the North Carolina Cherokee Tribe issued the following statement:

"We, as a people, have been unjustly deprived of our right of franchise by the election boards in these counties, even our college graduates being refused by the local county boards, the fundamental right, to register and vote in elections held in the state.... We feel that any organization or group that would deprive a people of as sacred a right as the right of suffrage would not hesitate to deprive them of other constitutional rights, including the three inalienable rights – life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The Cherokee's statement, especially the denial of three inalienable rights, proved to be accurate in subsequent years.

The federal government designated some Native American lands and even tribes themselves as essential natural resources, appropriating tribal minerals, lumber, and lands for the war effort. After the war, Native Americans discovered that their service for the war effort had depleted their resources without reward. Native American lands provided essential war materials such as oil, gas, lead, zinc, copper, vanadium, asbestos, gypsum, and coal. The Manhattan Project used Navajo helium in New Mexico to make the atomic bomb. The war effort depleted the Blackfeet's tribal resources of oil.

In 1942, without consulting the inhabitants, the federal government established concentration camps for Japanese Americans on two Native American reservations in Arizona: the Gila Native American Reservation and the Colorado River Native American Reservation (Mohave and Chemehuevi).

With regard to the Colorado River Native American Reservation, the government promised that the land would be returned to the tribes substantially improved for future agricultural use. The tribes opposed the concentration camp, but understood that if they refused the government's demands they would lose the land. The tribe did not respond to the government. On the other hand, non-Native American business people in nearby Parker saw the concentration camp as a good thing. According to the local business association:

"The project's going to be good for the country. It will develop a lot of land, bring in irrigation, so white farmers can use it. White men can't work out on the reservation now."

In response to Japanese aggression in the Aleutians, U.S. authorities evacuated 881 Unangax from nine villages. They were herded from their homes onto cramped transport ships, most allowed only a single suitcase. Heartbroken, Atka villagers watched as U.S. servicemen set their homes and church afire so they would not fall into Japanese hands.

The Unangax were transported to Southeast Alaska and there crowded into "duration villages": abandoned canneries, a herring saltery, and gold mine camp-rotting facilities with no plumbing, electricity or toilets. The Unangax lacked warm winter clothes, and camp food was poor, the water tainted. Accustomed to living in a world without trees, one open to the expansive sky, they suddenly found themselves crowded under the dense, shadowed canopy of the Southeast rainforest. For two years they would remain in these dark places, struggling to survive. Illness of one form or another struck all the evacuees, but medical care was often nonexistent, and the authorities were dismissive of their complaints. Pneumonia and tuberculosis took the very young and the old. Thirty-two died at the Funter Bay camp, seventeen at Killisnoo, twenty at Ward lake, five at Burnett Inlet. With the death of the elders so, too, passed their knowledge of traditional Unangan ways.

Despite their poor treatment at the hands of the U.S. government, the Unangax remained a fiercely patriotic people. Twenty-five Unangan men joined the Armed Forces. Three took part in the U.S. invasion of Attu Island, and all were awarded the Bronze Star. At their camps, the Unangax surreptitiously voted in Territorial elections. Through exposure to the outside world, they had come to understand the importance of their participation in the democracy by which they were governed, and they desired participation with the full rights of citizens. The next generation of Unangan leaders spent their formative childhood years in these camps, and they would never forget the injustices they saw there.

Among the many sacrifices which Native American Nations made during World War II was to give up reservation land for the war effort. Some 876,000 acres of Native American land was used for the war effort.

In 1942, the army expanded Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. No thought was given to the forced relocation of the Cherokee who were living on the land taken by the army. The Cherokee had already planted their gardens and would not have food for the winter if they were removed. None of the Cherokee who were to be relocated had transportation and the army told them that it did not have any available trucks to help them. The Native Americans had to rely on friends and relatives to help them move.

In South Dakota, the U.S. Army Air Corps "borrowed" part of the Oglala Sioux's Pine Ridge Reservation for a gunnery range with the understanding that it would be returned after World War II. The army notified 128 tribal members that they had to evacuate their homes within thirty days. Some Native Americans reported that they were told they would be shot if they did not cooperate.

In another incident, more than 250 Oglala Sioux families were given 10 days' notice to leave their homes on the Pine Ridge Reservation so that the land could become a bombing range.

In Idaho, the federal government under the War Powers Act condemned 2,100 acres of the Shoshone and Bannock Fort Hall Reservation to be used as an airport. While the land was worth \$100 per acre, the government paid the tribes only \$10 per acre.

In 1942, the Wanapum fishing villages near the White Bluffs on the Columbia River were closed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a part of a top secret war project called the Gable Project (later called Hanford Engineering Works). The Hanford Nuclear Reservation closed access to an area sacred to the Yakama. Treaty rights were less important than national security.

A shortage of doctors and nurses on reservations developed in 1942 as medical personnel joined the armed forces. Commissioner of Native American Affairs John Collier warned of the potential for a complete breakdown of medical services on the reservations.

The need for office space in Washington, D.C. to support the war effort resulted in moving the Bureau of Native American Affairs (BIA) to Chicago. The move reduced BIA influence with Congress and other federal agencies. The BIA budget was slashed and New Deal programs for Native Americans were dropped.

On the home front, many Native American men and women left the reservation to work in defense-related industries. A wave of Native American migration from the rural reservations to urban areas was sparked by employment opportunities in the defense industries. Many worked temporary or seasonal jobs, retaining their home base on the reservation. However, many Native Americans found that they received less money for the same work when compared with non-Native Americans. Native Americans working at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, for example, did not receive the same pay as non-Native American workers. The Navajo tribal council asked:

"We do not understand how a Navajo can be a member of a union paying dues to secure the same benefits and be forced to accept a lower pay rate."

Despite the terrible treatment of Native Americans by the country they were fighting for, some non-Native Americans did fight for Native American equality. John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, reminded Congress about the rate at which Native Americans contributed to the war effort and urged "states should do the American thing and grant the Indians the franchise [right to vote]. All over the world we are preaching democracy and should grant a little more of it at home."

Sources: [http://www.nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/609/world-war-ii-american-Native\\_Americans-the-home-front](http://www.nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/609/world-war-ii-american-Native_Americans-the-home-front);  
<http://www.nps.gov/aleu/historyculture/unangan-internment.htm>; [http://www.shsu.edu/~his\\_ncp/NAWWII.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/NAWWII.html); <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1409252>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Group 3: Native Americans and Discrimination Reading Questions

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

1. Why were Native Americans denied voting rights?
2. Where do the words “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” originate? Why do you think the Cherokee chose to use these words in their statement protesting their lack of voting rights?
3. What happened to the Unangax tribe? How did they respond? How would you respond in that situation?
4. What did the US Government do with the land that they confiscated from Native Americans? Were they justly compensated? How does the US Government’s treatment of Native American lands relate to the Will Rogers quote from the PowerPoint presentation?
5. How was Native American labor exploited?
6. Despite their overwhelming support during the War, why do you think Native Americans were treated so poorly during World War II?

**Group 4: Native Americans Post-World War II**

World War II changed both the Native Americans and the reservation. Following the war, veterans returned to their reservations. In many cases they returned as warriors, victorious warriors, and unwilling to accept the secondary status assigned to them by the larger society. They faced discrimination in housing, employment, education, land rights, water rights, and voting.

Like other veterans, many Native Americans took advantage of the GI Bill to attend colleges and universities. As a result, a new generation of Native American leaders, many of whom now held degrees in law, medicine, engineering, and other fields, began to emerge. No longer were Native American nations reliant on non-Native Americans to provide many of the technical skills required in the twentieth century.

While the GI Bill provided many Native American veterans with an opportunity for higher education, the bill's housing provisions could not be applied on reservations. Banks would not loan money for houses to Native Americans on reservations. The problem was that the Bureau of Native American Affairs would not sign a waiver to the title to the land as Native American reservations were lands which are held in trust by the federal government. There was no way to secure a loan, even under the GI Bill, without this waiver.

Native American veterans returned home with different expectations about how they were to be treated. While they had fought tyranny in Europe and in the Pacific and had been treated as equals during this fight, they returned home to find that they were still second-class citizens (and in some states, the recognition of their citizenship lacking). The Native American veterans expected to be able to vote and when states attempted to deny them that right, they took their case to the courts. Throughout the country, barriers to Native American voting began to fall.

Even though Native Americans had been granted citizenship in 1924 and then again in 1940, it was common for many states in the 1940s to refuse to allow Native Americans to register to vote.

In New Mexico, the path to obtaining the right to vote was started when Miguel Trujillo, Sr. (Laguna), a teacher, attempted to register to vote in 1947 and was refused by the recorder of Valencia County. Rather than just walking away and accepting non-citizenship, he filed suit to obtain his voting rights. The Court found that New Mexico had discriminated against Native Americans by denying them the vote, especially since they paid all state and federal taxes except for private property taxes on the reservations. The federal judge remarked:

"We all know that these New Mexico Native Americans have responded to the needs of the country in time of war. Why should they be deprived of their rights to vote now because they are favored by the federal government in exempting their lands from taxation."

In Arizona, Frank Harrison and Harry Austin, both Mohave-Apache at the Fort McDowell Native American Reservation, attempted to register to vote and were not allowed to register. The Arizona Supreme Court overturned an earlier decision and agreed with the plaintiffs that their Arizona and United States constitutional rights had been violated.

The New Mexico and Arizona cases are often cited in history textbooks as the point at which American Native Americans finally received the right to vote. Unfortunately this was not the case and Native Americans had to continue that fight. It wasn't until 1957, when Utah became the last state to grant Native Americans suffrage, that a fundamental right had been restored for all Native Americans.

In the last half of the 20th Century, a government program that was little known at the time and is largely forgotten today created the largest movement of Native Americans in American history. The final scope and meaning of this massive social experiment is still impacting native peoples today.

World War II changed American society and profoundly affected the lives of Native Americans. The U.S. was becoming much more urban:

- In the 1940 Census, a little over half of all Americans (56.5 percent) were living in cities.
- In 1940, only around 8 percent of Native Americans were living in cities.

Government policy all through the 1700s and 1800s had been designed to make Native Americans into "yeomen farmers." The lawmakers who wrote these policies were forgetting that the first European settlers would have starved without the benevolent help of native farmers. They also were forgetting that indigenous plant breeders gave the world corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, potatoes, peanuts, avocados, artichokes, chocolate, vanilla, tobacco and many other indigenous crops. In return, native tribes were given the worst land primarily in the semi-arid plains. Now, the 20th Century rush to the city was bypassing Native Americans, and reservation tribes suffered huge levels of unemployment and poverty.

In 1950, the average Native American on a reservation earned \$950. The average black person earned \$2,000, and the average white person earned almost \$4,000 — over four times more than Native Americans.

So, in 1952, the federal government initiated the Urban Native American Relocation Program. It was designed to entice reservation dwellers to seven major urban cities where the jobs supposedly were plentiful. Relocation offices were set up in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Dallas. Bureau of Native American Affairs (BIA) employees were supposed to orient new arrivals and manage financial and job training programs for them. Other BIA officials recruited prospective "Relocates" from many of the reservations around the country.

Randy Edmonds — now a pow wow announcer in LA and featured in *A Seat at the Drum* — grew up in Anadarko, Oklahoma, and is Caddo and Kiowa. He remembers how the BIA agent recruited him.

"I was kind of hanging around the corners and, you know, drinking with the boys. And my aunt, my Kiowa aunt, she said she wasn't too pleased with that. And her husband was the BIA Relocation Project Officer, so he put out an APB on me. And when I got there he scolded me, of course, and said, you know, 'You're better than this. You shouldn't be hanging around with all those winos you know. You need to go somewhere and change your lifestyle.' He said, 'I have these seven cities that you have a choice to go to.' "

Randy and his wife chose Los Angeles and boarded the train with their infant daughter and a basket of fried chicken. When they arrived, Randy had to catch a cab to the BIA office.

Relocates were supposed to receive temporary housing, counseling and guidance in finding a job, permanent housing, community and social resources. The new migrants also were given money to tide them over on a sliding scale based on the number of children in the family. A man, his wife and four children got \$80 a week for four weeks.

That's what they were promised. Some found that the promises were not kept. Not every relocatee found a job, and those that did were generally at the lower end of the economic ladder. Others succumbed to alcohol and those who were accustomed to drinking in public on their home reservations got into trouble with the law when they drank on city streets. Many more were simply homesick so far away from their families and familiar landscapes.

Still more decided to return to their reservation. But over the years, it's estimated that as many as 750,000 Native Americans migrated to the cities between 1950 and 1980. Some came through the Relocation Program. Others came on their own.

Those who stayed eventually found other Native Americans although they usually were members of another tribe. By now inter-tribal marriages created a new generation of Native Americans whose identity was split between two or more tribes. But still more came.

- In the 2000 Census, 79 percent of all Americans were living in cities.
- For American Native Americans, the urban population had risen to 64 percent — a huge increase over the 1940 urban population of 8 percent.

While Native Americans still lagged behind non-Native Americans in economic power, in the 1960s urban Native Americans found a new political activism. They developed a sense of identity that was less tied to the reservation or tribe and more connected to the vast array of tribes in the cities. Their orientation was pan-Native American and urban, and this often translated into a strong commitment to the cause of self-determination for Native American people.

Adapted and edited by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following sources: <http://www.pbs.org/NativeAmericancountry/history/relocate.html>; <http://www.nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/623/wwii-and-american-Native-Americans-after-the-war>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Group 4: Native Americans Post-World War II

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

1. How did the GI Bill help Native Americans?
2. Why were the housing provisions of the GI Bill not extended to Native Americans? Do you think this is just? Why or why not?
3. Who is Miguel Trujillo and why is he a significant figure in the fight for Native American Civil Rights?
4. Why do you think Native Americans were so poor compared to other groups in the United States? Do you think it has something to do with the history of their treatment by the United States Government?
5. What was the Urban Native American Relocation Program and why was it created?
6. How does the story of the Urban Native American Relocation Program relate to the wider story of the treatment of Native Americans throughout the United States' history?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use this handout to record what you learned from the Native Americans and World War II PowerPoint, readings, and group work.

**Answer the Call**

**Nazis & Native Americans**

**The Native American Response**

**Group 1: Code Talkers**

**Group 2: Ira Hayes**

**Group 3: Native Americans & Discrimination**

**Group 4: Native Americans Post-World War II**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Commemorative Native American Currency

Congratulations! You have been hired by the US Mint to design a series of commemorative coins or dollar bills. Since many Americans are unaware of the heroism and sacrifices made by many Native Americans during World War II, the US Mint has decided to release a new series of money that educates the public about the Native American experiences and contributions during World War II.

You must make a coin or dollar bill for **one of the following topics**:

- The Native American Response to World War II
- Code Talkers
- Ira Hayes
- Native Americans and Discrimination
- Native Americans Post-World War II

After choosing your topic, brainstorm ideas for your coin/dollar bill:

- What is most important for people to know about your topics? Why should your topic be remembered and honored?
- How will your coin/dollar bill encompass and illustrate some of the struggles faced by Native Americans throughout the World War II period and beyond?
- What people, symbols, words, etc. represent the ideas you want to convey?
- Regardless of the topics you choose, your currency must include a word written in the Navajo Code. It can be a word or phrase that is on real US currency or it can be a word or phrase that conveys something about the Native American experience during World War II.

Once you have thought through your ideas, create a detailed sketch of your coin or dollar bill to submit to the US Mint. Your sketch must be two sided – front and back – and must look like real US currency. Once you have created your sketch, label the various parts to explain what the various symbols, words, people, etc. represent.

4. For each coin/dollar bill, you must also turn in a paragraph in which you provide an explanation for why you chose to represent the Native American experience during World War II the way you did.

5. You will present the finished product to the US Mint (aka your classmates) on the due date.

**DUE DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_