

Approved for use in all levels of Senior or A. P. Senior

Summary of the Work:

In Leslie Marmon Silko's novel, *Ceremony*, the main character Tayo must come to terms with himself and his environment upon his return from World War II. He is suffering from a sort of posttraumatic stress disorder, which has affected him physically as well as emotionally because he has survived as a prisoner of war in Japan. Consequently he must deal with all of the horrific memories when he returns to live with his family on the Laguna Pueblo reservation in New Mexico. To compound his problems, Tayo is half-Caucasian and half Native American, so he must also deal with the added pressures of bi-cultureless. He is torn between the Native American world and the white world, and is unable to feel a secure security or belonging. Tayo's friends and family believe that they know the nature of and antidote for Tayo's illness and depression; however it is only the Native American ceremonies, which will truly help him.

Rationale:

Ceremony offers our college bound students a chance for a complex read both in subject matter and narrative structure. It also offers students a chance to view historic and psychological events from a minority viewpoint. *Ceremony* is also a multi genre piece. It weaves together narrative, myth, and poetry and challenges students to interpret the interconnectedness of events and spirituality.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Ceremony. Literature and Its Times: Profiles of 300 Notable Literary Works and the Historical Events that Influenced Them. From *Kirkus Reviews*, February 1, 1999

SELECTED REVIEWS FOR ALMANAC OF THE DEAD

From *Kirkus Reviews*, August 15, 1991

- * Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.
- * Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- Grant from National Endowment for the Arts and poetry award from *Chicago Review*, both 1974
- Pushcart Prize for poetry, 1977
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation grant, 1981.

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 890
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption: 2006

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Because of the non-linear plotline and the adult issues of violence, alcoholism, and post-traumatic stress syndrome, this book is recommended for mature readers.

Connection to the Curriculum:

This book fits well with units on World War, 1939-1945 Veterans Fiction, Laguna Indians Fiction, Western stories. It also offers our students a glimpse into Pueblo Indian culture and spirituality as part of our Indian Education for All goals.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)