

Title: *Code Talker*

by Joseph Bruchac

(Published in July 2006)

Approved for use in

Summary of the Work:

As a boy, Navajo tribal member Ned Begay attends an American-run boarding school, where he discovers that speaking the Navajo (Diné) language is forbidden. Students who are caught speaking it are punished, and in time some lose their ability to speak Navajo. While learning English and excelling in school, Begay determines to never forget his native language. Later, he and other young Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become code talkers charged with sending secret messages in Navajo during World War II. Ned Begay demonstrates that adherence to his culture—including the Navajo language, values, spirituality, and worldview—gives him the strength and courage to fulfill his duties as a code talker while simultaneously inspiring him to pass these cultural traditions on to younger generations.

Rationale:

Codetalkers is a non-fictional text that highlights the important role that Navajo Indians played during World War II. This book allows readers to experience the Navajo language, culture and traditions while also learning about the war in the Pacific during World War II. This text is important because war in the Pacific is often overlooked, as are Native American contributions to the war effort. Students also revisit Native Americans and their struggles post assimilation.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Kirkus Reviews. "Code Talker: A unique, inspiring story by a member of the Great Generation."

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/joseph-bruchac/code-talker/>

* 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:

Readability

- Lexile Score: 910
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: ([link](#))

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

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

Connection to the Curriculum:

This book is based on true events during World War II, which is also covered in 8th Gr social studies. The OPI created a model teaching unit for middle school ELA that also incorporates IEFA.

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Additional Connections:

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

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