

Indigenous Literature as a Window into Social and Emotional Learning

Using Our Power to Become Good Ancestors

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Context

My name is Emily Leahy and I am a 2nd grade teacher at Lura Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School in Flagstaff, Arizona. I have been teaching elementary aged students for nine years. I have lived in Flagstaff for four years. Upon moving to Flagstaff, I looked for an opportunity to teach a diverse student population and have the privilege to learn about the rich cultures they bring to school. I have been grateful for the opportunity to work with the students and families at Kinsey. I am passionate about implementing culturally responsive pedagogy and am a member of the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee at Kinsey. Our efforts focus on intentionally centering the voices and experiences of historically marginalized students and teachers at Kinsey to provide an intentional, anti-racist, gender inclusive, and healthy environment for teaching and learning. I joined the Diné Institute to not only learn more about the Diné culture but become a better teacher for my Diné students. As a teacher who is not Diné herself, through the program I have learned a great deal from my seminar peers who have shared their cultural knowledge and experience to help me write my curriculum unit. For them I am grateful.

This curriculum unit is written for the students and families of 2nd grade students at Lura Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School in Flagstaff, Arizona. Kinsey is a magnet school that serves 391 students from preschool to 5th grade. At Kinsey, 48% of students identify as coming from a Native American background with 25% and 21% identifying as White and Hispanic respectively. Most Native American students are either primarily from Navajo or Hopi families, with students coming from families with a wide range of adherence to cultural traditions: some very traditional and some much less so. Students that come from low-income families make up 55% of our student population.

Kinsey is a public school in the Flagstaff Unified School District. Kinsey is a magnet school that offers place-based learning to their students and families. The Kinsey magnet program's goal of place-based education is to provide learning experiences to students that help them to understand the environment, culture, and community of Northern Arizona. Through public school funding and specialized grants, we can provide many unique learning experiences for our students. Experiences range from learning excursions to various places in Flagstaff and beyond such as Red Rock State Park, kayaking on the Verde River, hiking in Walnut Canyon, and working with the Arizona Trail Association to complete trail work. Learning excursions support teaching and learning, and we are able to extend the learning beyond the classroom. Students also participate in Discovery Day, which is a block of time where students self-select a specific class offered by grade level teachers to learn about something new outside of their normal curriculum. Discovery Day classes range from cooking to weaving, from drama to creating nature art, to even learning how to care for and train raptors.

Through the Kinsey magnet program, students learn not only about their "place", but the importance of caring for it. Stewardship and being a good steward of your place is an idea taught to students starting at a young age. This concept is introduced to young students as how to take care of one's classroom and that smaller classroom community. It extends to the larger contexts of school, city, and world as students grow and begin to explore those places outside of their classroom. Kinsey has invested in project-based learning as a teaching method to actively

engage students in their learning. The goal is to involve students in learning through projects to help them develop as citizens who can positively impact the different places and contexts that they are a part of. Kinsey works to create community within the school, “so that students embrace a sense of responsibility for the greater good and for helping to create a place where all affirm each other’s assets” (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020, p. 44.)

This unit is written for students in a 2nd grade classroom that possess various reading levels ranging from reading at grade level to reading well below. The students also have various writing skills ranging from students who are most likely able to write detailed stories with complex sentences to some non-writers. The unit offers accommodations for students who may possess learning disabilities or need assistance if a nonreader or nonwriter. This unit is intended to be taught during the whole group language arts instruction block. In my classroom, the stories will be read aloud to students and discussed with students during a 25 minute whole group time. After whole group time, students will work in small groups or independently in centers and with the teacher. This unit can be taught essentially at any time of the year.

Rationale

As a result of the recent pandemic, students come to school with many challenges. These challenges manifest themselves in the classroom in various ways. Specifically, my Navajo students have had many trying experiences during the pandemic that have tested their willingness to persevere. Those challenges include moving households, losing family members, switching to remote learning, and navigating the difficulties of returning to school. When students come to school, teachers need to make a sustained effort to conscientiously teach social emotional skills and build upon the strengths of students to empower them. Teachers must also purposefully embed the culture, language, and knowledge of their students within their lessons. In doing so, they will ensure that students feel welcomed, safe, and a sense of belonging in their classroom. It is important to remember that *how* we teach is just as important as *what* we teach (Berman et al., 2018). It is crucial to frame our understanding of trauma around how we can create a safe and affirming classroom environment, otherwise teachers run the risk of possessing a deficit view of students. When the behavior or academic failure is the focus of children with trauma, we as teachers might distance ourselves from the responsibility, we have, to dismantle the systems and conditions that keep inequity going (Venet, 2021). Rather, teachers should hold space for critical discussions that consider the “complex cognitive, political, and social ecologies dominated by Eurocentric bias (Mahfouz and Anthony-Stevens, 2020, p. 59). Thus, viewing the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy and social-emotional learning as crucial is a necessity to address the needs of students.

When looking at the 2nd grade English Language Arts curriculum, the collection of stories studied and to be read by students are lacking Indigenous voices. Specifically, they are lacking stories about present day Indigenous peoples. In a search of the Children’s Literature Database in March of 2006, 36 of the 42 books about American Indians published in 2000 are works of historical fiction. In children’s books, American Indians are not always represented as people in the present, but rather as people of the past (Reese, 2007). In a 2011 study by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center, out of approximately 3,400 books only 8.8% were multicultural, written and/or illustrated by people of color, and only 28 books had American Indian themes,

topics or characters (Hughes-Hassell, 2013). There are new and current stories about and by Indigenous authors out there; however, they are lacking in the curriculum used by my school. It is my responsibility to bring these stories into the classroom, so that my students can see themselves in the characters. Upon analyzing Aimsweb Data from the end of the 2021-2022 last school year, 64% of the incoming 2nd graders are labeled as Moderate to High Risk regarding Early Literacy skills. The measures that are administered are Oral Reading Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency. This data implies that students will need systematic and explicit small group phonics instruction paired with the use of rich texts during whole group shared reading. Students will need and benefit from exposure to culturally responsive rich texts that develop their language skills to ultimately build vocabulary to aid in word recognition when ready to decode more complex texts.

The inclusion and study of multicultural literature serves multiple purposes within my classroom context. One of those purposes involves using multicultural literature as a form of counter-storytelling. As mentioned by Hughes-Hassell (2013), counter-storytelling is defined as “a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not told” (p. 214). These types of stories or counter-stories can show us what we believe is inaccurate and point out practices and policies that are exclusionary. As previously stated, there are Navajo, different tribally affiliated, and non-native students in the classroom. All students benefit from the study of multicultural literature and counter-stories. The students in the traditionally marginalized group benefit from these stories in various ways. They can become familiar and begin to heal from oppression and victimization that has taken place historically, understand that they are not alone, be relinquished from self-blame regarding their marginal position, and add to counter-stories that challenge the controlling story. Alongside the marginalized group, the members of the majority group can also benefit from these stories being told. An ethnocentric view or the idea that their way is the only way can be overcome (Hughes-Hassell, 2013). Additionally, the use of multicultural literature is crucial in the classroom because these texts are used as mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. Certain students use these books as mirrors and their culture is reflected to them. They can see themselves in the characters, setting, and events. Multicultural books are also used by some students as windows, meaning that they use the books to view and understand people different from themselves. Most importantly, multicultural literature should be used as sliding glass doors. A metaphor coined to invite the idea that books should be used to reconstruct power and identity (Botelho, 2021).

This reading and writing curriculum unit supports ideas discussed by Daniel Heath Justice in *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter*. This unit explores one of the four guiding questions that the book explores: *How do we become good ancestors?* Justice (2018) questions, “How do we create the kind of world and relationships that will nurture those who come after, and give them cause to thank us rather than curse or grieve our destructive selfishness? What does literature do to help guide this work?” (p. 28). These questions are not too difficult for 2nd grade students to explore. This unit supports a larger project-based learning unit around the theme of power with the driving questions: *How can we as students use our power to become good ancestors? How do wind and water use their power to shape our Earth?* The unit explores how people have power to make decisions individually and collectively, and what can be accomplished when we use our power to become good ancestors. This project lends itself to many of the social-emotional skills that we want our students to develop. Children’s agency, or their “ability to

influence the world around them, is materially governed by their identity” (Frey et al., 2019). This includes but is not limited to, children’s ability to believe in oneself and a growth mindset that is charged by perseverance and grit. Additionally, in the Frey et al., model of social emotional learning, public spirit is identified as “the way that people contribute to and steward their communities” (2019). Ways in which children build their public spirit is by using social justice work to improve the lives of others, understand one’s own ethical responsibility, and utilize service learning. The intentional learning of and careful integration of teacher moves into daily instruction will ensure that students develop the necessary skills to help them be their best selves.

Content Objectives

Social-Emotional Learning

There are many different frameworks that educators can utilize when considering the development and implementation of social-emotional learning (SEL) skills in the classroom. One of the frameworks was developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). These social-emotional learning skills include self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, self-management, responsible decision making. Their research and resources provide a framework to use evidence based SEL strategies within communities and local context. (casel.org). Another framework that can be utilized when considering SEL skills and strategies is the Anchor Competencies Framework developed by the Center for Reading and Teaching the Whole Child. This framework outlines seven anchor competencies that is an academic intervention that is crucial to both student learning and to students’ and teachers’ ability to grow. What is unique about this framework is that it takes into account race, class, and culture. The seven anchor competencies are to build trusting relationships, foster self-reflection, foster growth mindset, cultivate perseverance, create community, promote collaborative learning, and respond constructively across differences. (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020). A final framework to consider when implementing social-emotional learning in the classroom is the Frey et al., (2019) equity driven model of integrated SEL. These researchers organize their big ideas into five broad categories. These include identity and agency, emotional regulation, cognitive regulation, social skills, and public spirit with many factors, skills, and behaviors falling into each individual category (Frey et al., 2019). As one can see, there is much research out there surrounding social-emotional learning. Each framework has value that it adds to the conversation about engaging students and making them feel safe within their communities. However, the various categories and skills can be overwhelming when considering all that is out there.

Diné Life Guiding Principles

A way in which to recenter and refocus these many frameworks is to apply them to the Diné Life Guiding Principles. One can use this framework to compartmentalize the many teaching moves and student skills we want our students to practice. These principles were introduced to our seminar group by another teaching fellow, Diné teacher Tiffany Tracy as well as in a lecture by Elder Paul Long Sr. During one seminar, Tracy drew the traditional Navajo hogan on the chalkboard for herself and the other teachers. She first placed a fire in the middle of the hogan,

which she labeled as the standards because that is the central focus of student learning. She labeled the four cardinal directions with the four guiding principles: Nitsáhákees (East)-thinking, Nahat'á (South)-planning, Iná (West)-collaboration, and Sih Hasin (North)-self-reflection. Within these she placed four different types of demands students are being asked to perform during each principle or part of the continuous cycle: emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual respectively. This can be used when evaluating where you as a teacher can implement teaching moves to support the specific principle that your students may be in during a given lesson, unit, or phase of learning. For example, a teacher may engage students with a quote to evoke their emotions and spark their interest in the Nitsáhákees or thinking phase of a lesson. Then, the teacher may model a strategy or various strategies for a specific skill and students determine which strategy works best for them in the Nahat'á or planning phase. Next, students are grouped together using collaborative structures to share their strategy with other members of their team during Iná or collaboration principle. Finally, the teacher offers feedback to students. Students are given time to reflect upon misconceptions they had and if they are ready for the next lesson in the Sih Hasin or self-reflection principle. It is important to consider that these principles are circular and continuous and note that in the final phase, one should consider how the learning can continue (Tracy, 2022; Long, 2022). This may not be something that you explicitly share with students but is rather a guide when thinking about social-emotional teaching moves and how instruction is delivered.

Expository or Informational Writing

A part of this unit includes writing about the texts that we read as a class. Students are asked to think about what happened in each story and draw upon the ideas that were discussed. After each reading, using the release of responsibility model, an expository paragraph will be written explaining how each character used their power to become a good ancestor. Students will be encouraged to draw pictures to accompany their writing. When children are given the opportunity to add drawings to their writing, children can visualize and improve the quality of their writing (Christianakis, 2011). It is crucial to include the various parts that make “good writing” and model those for students. A 2001 study of second grade students found that the students placed a much higher importance on handwriting as a determiner of what makes a “good writer” or when asked why a specific student was a good writer, they could not articulate why. It is equally important to include a wider variety of facets of good writing into writing instruction. These parts include idea generation, organization, ownership and audience, handwriting, spelling, and mechanics. Idea generation can be modeled for students using various brainstorming techniques such as idea webs, brain dumps, or creating lists. Organization should be modeled for students using the four-square method of writing later discussed in the teaching strategy section. Ownership and audience should be discussed with students and can be modeled discussing mentor texts. For example, it should be stated that students are writing to teach others about how to be a good ancestor as well as to teach others about the book they read. Handwriting, spelling, and mechanics all can be modeled and practiced using classroom tools such as peer editing, word walls, and student dictionaries (Kos & Maslowski, 2001).

The way in which the following content objectives are organized are by the specific text titles used within the unit. Each text will include cultural teaching and/or histories, literacy, and social-emotional objectives that can be taught using the book.

Beauty Beside Me by Seraphine Yazzie

There are specific content objectives that will be taught while reading Seraphine Yazzie's *Beauty Beside Me*. Culturally, the Navajo women's skirt is a large focus of this text. Within this book, the narrator (a young Navajo girl) learns about the many things that her grandmother uses her traditional skirts for. Uses include practices that are important to Navajo culture such as cooking, planting, weaving, picking herbs and nuts, herding sheep, making cedar beads, going into town, napping, dancing and singing traditional songs, and lighting fires (Yazzie, 2011). The reading literature content objectives that can be taught using this text include asking and answering questions and describing how words and phrases supply rhythm and meaning. Yazzie repeats specific phrases in the text that draws the reader's attention to how the narrator's grandmother shares her "knowledge, wisdom, and love". Drawing students' attention to these important phrases will open a discussion about what we can learn from our elders and how it is important to learn traditional practices, so that we can carry them on. Building trusting relationships and fostering self-reflection are two social-emotional competencies that can be explicitly taught while reading this book with students (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020).

We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom

The content objectives taught while reading *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom focus on issues of environmental injustice and water quality. This book is inspired by many Indigenous led movements calling for protection of sacred sites and for clean water (Whyte, 2018). The story begins by suggesting the various important significances that water holds: it is the first medicine, we come from it, and it nourishes us (Lindstrom, 2020). There is a threat to the people that hold that water sacred: the black snake, or the Dakota Access Pipeline. The reading literature content objectives that can be taught using this text include asking and answering questions, describing how words and phrases supply rhythm and meaning, and understanding how characters respond to challenges. Specifically, the author repeats the words "We stand... With our songs... And our dreams... We are still here" several times throughout the text. When analyzing with students, previous content and reading literature skills can be drawn upon to discuss the meaning and importance of these words. Additionally, understanding how characters respond to challenges can be introduced as a reading skill using this text. Students should become familiar with the content objective terms of character, challenge, and respond. Discussion can take place about what challenge the main character and her people face and how they respond to it by taking a stand for what they believe is right. Two social-emotional anchor competencies that can be taught using this text are to cultivate perseverance and create community. Specifically with this text, the characters and real-life people affected by the Dakota Access Pipeline are faced with a large challenge and noticing how they respond to this can demonstrate to students how one can embrace productive struggle in one's own life. Similarly, the challenge faced by the Standing Rock Sioux in the text demonstrates the necessity to create community. This can lead students to questions and attend to status issues regarding who has the right to clean water and why it seems that some do not have access to it (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020). Students learn that it is important to protect things and become stewards of places that are important.

The Water Lady by Alice B. McGinty

The content objectives that are taught in Alice B. McGinty's *The Water Lady* examines issues of access to water and water quality on the Navajo Nation. This narrative non-fiction book details the heroine Darlene Arviso who hauls water to members of the Navajo Nation. Access to safe drinking water is limited on the reservation and ground water is contaminated due to Uranium mining (Grytdal et al., 2018). The reading literature standards that will be taught while reading this text include asking and answering questions and understanding how characters respond to challenges. Students will be asked who, what, when, where, and why questions about the characters, setting, and events of the story. Additionally, students will be explicitly taught how to identify challenges characters face and consider how the characters respond to the challenges. The social-emotional competency that can be taught with this text includes cultivating perseverance. Specifically, examining how Darlene Arviso did not give up helping her people can provide an example to students that they should take responsibility for themselves, and it is okay to regroup and start over (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020).

Stolen Words by Melanie Florence

The content objectives taught alongside the reading of *Stolen Words* by Melanie Florence will explore the effects of residential boarding schools on language dissolution. The book details a relationship between a girl and her Cree grandfather who has lost his language due to being forcibly enrolled in an Indian boarding school when he was a child. This book presents this historical trauma in a manner that is accessible for younger students to understand the impact of boarding schools on passing down language. The reading literature standards that will be taught using this text include revisiting how characters respond to challenges and how readers use information gained from illustrations to understand the characters and plot. Both characters in the story respond to the challenges of language loss. The young girl wants to speak the language with her grandfather and when he cannot remember the words, she seeks out a Cree language book from the library. The grandfather responds to the challenge of not remembering his language by practicing humility and vulnerability when sharing his experience with his grandchild (Griffith, 2017). Readers can use the illustrations to provide information about emotions, noting that the color changes when the grandfather is talking about his experience in the boarding school. Readers can use the change in color to understand his feelings and the events in a deeper way. The social-emotional competencies that are developed using this text include building trusting relationships and cultivating perseverance. The relationship between the granddaughter and grandfather demonstrates the necessity of building trusting relationships thus emulating that when such a relationship is built, one can lower stress and increase one's ability to learn and grow. Additionally, cultivating perseverance can be taught through the experiences of the granddaughter and grandfather ultimately communicating that a community of learners succeeds and struggles together (Markowitz and Bouffard, 2020).

Teaching Strategies

Interactive Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary will be an important focus, as students will be learning the meaning and using new words with each text used in the unit. Vocabulary is related to both language comprehension and contributes directly to word recognition thus to reading through that word recognition (Duke and Cartwright, 2021). Children need to have access to the meaning of words in the text they are reading, or it can negatively affect their comprehension of the text, their ability to reason, make inferences, and make connections with the background knowledge they may already possess (Rupley, 2012). Therefore, vocabulary will be explicitly taught and discussed each day during whole group reading. It is important that not only the meaning of the word is supplied, but that students have multiple interactions with the words to solidify their meaning and recognition. Interactions with words should be carefully planned ahead of time, so that students have the opportunity to reason about the word and make connections to background knowledge. If studying the words *famished* and *eager*, teachers can ask questions such as what is something that you would want if you were *famished*? Children should not be initially asked what is something you would be *eager* to do? Rather, students should be given choices to help them process the word. It is better to do this after multiple exposures of a word (McKeown, M. G., 2019).

Dialogic Shared Reading

Dialogic reading is a conversation between children and an adult about a book, rather than just reading a book aloud cover to cover. Each text will be read at least two times with students. Students can comprehend a text in a deeper way if they are given more opportunities to engage with it. There is also more room for a child to try out a new strategy or practice a new vocabulary word if the story is a familiar and safe place. Doyle and Bramwell examined different theories of researchers, including research related to the idea that children asked more questions and were more engaged in dialogue when they listened to repeated readings of the same story (2006). Additionally, it is important to develop students' listening comprehension and their capacity to understand spoken language. This is crucial because it exposes children to new ideas, language structures, vocabulary, and concepts through interactions with rich texts. Teacher read-aloud helps students access this in their current level of reading until they have the decoding skills to access more complex texts themselves (Burkins and Yates, 2021).

Think Alouds

Think alouds is a teaching strategy in which a proficient reader stops to model verbally his or her thinking as he or she approaches the text. The reader reports orally what reading strategies are being used and how the text is being processed. The goal is for students to understand the cognitive processes associated with the reading skill and use those skills when reading with guidance or independently. This is an important teaching strategy because it can scaffold a comprehension strategy for students by supplying them with the language, potential steps, and context (Ness and Kenny, 2016). Think alouds should be used throughout the unit during daily read alouds. Teacher think-alouds should involve the reading strategies students are being asked to do in addition to the reading skills students are being asked to demonstrate such as asking and answering questions, analyzing illustrations, analyzing how characters respond to challenges, and identifying words that supply meaning to the text. Think-alouds can and should be well thought out and pre-planned. A preparation strategy is to read through the text with sticky notes

at hand to mark the text where you yourself as the reader make connections, ask yourself questions, become confused, and make inferences. In order to be clear and succinct, it will require the teacher to consider the metacognition behind the stopping point. Asking yourself questions such as what did my brain do? Why did I stop? What was the internal conversation I had with myself? What do I want students to be able to emulate? A think aloud while reading *We Are Water Protectors* could sound like this: “I read on this page that the author is talking about *the four-legged and the two-legged*, this makes me think of animals that I have seen before. It makes me think of animals like deer, bears, chipmunks, and crows around Flagstaff. This makes me think of how they could be hurt if their water was poisoned. This kind of connection is a text to world connection because I am thinking about something in the world.”

Writing Using the Four-Square Writing Model

Since students will be writing to demonstrate their comprehension of the text read aloud during the whole group's shared reading time, certain teaching strategies will be used to help students become independent writers. Studies have found that engaging students in extended writing activities has a positive effect on reading comprehension, more so than question-answering (Duke et al., 2021). However, students need to have guidance, modeling, and explicit instruction regarding the organization of their ideas. Specifically, the Four-Square model of writing organization will be used with students. In the Four-Square model, the paper is divided into four sections with one box in the middle. The intention is to use the middle box for an introduction sentence, the first, second, and third quadrants for details, and the final quadrant for a conclusion sentence. The idea behind it is for students to understand that they have an introduction, conclusion and supporting details. It is a way for them to visually organize or group their ideas in a logical way (Gould, 1999).

Sentence Stems

Students will also be given sentence stems to help with the syntactic structure of their sentences. We know that sentence stems are entry points for students to become involved in discussion and writing. Sentence stems are a known tool for English Language Learners; however, all students can benefit from this support provided to them. Not all students may need them, but they can make the choice rather of whether or not the support will be used when writing (Rodriguez and Briceño, 2018). Students will be given stems such as *The narrator in Beauty Beside Me was.... First, the narrator.... Also, she... Finally, she... In conclusion, the narrator....* These sentence stems will be used consistently and frequently with students for each text read, so that students can build independence and eventually use them in their final writing project. Sentence stems can be developed to meet different language demands as students progress and become proficient using them. For example, the sentence stem of *First, ...* can be developed later by the use of *In the beginning...* Teachers should consider the language function or the purpose and that will help teachers to develop the sentence stems that students can use while discussing and writing (Rodriguez and Briceño, 2018).

Classroom Activities:

Day 1: Whole Group Introduction of Unit (25 min)
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Vocabulary:	ancestor	
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (10 min)	-Show students a photograph of a Navajo family from long ago. Use Observe, Reflect, Question Protocol -Introduce the word ancestor : a person who was in someone’s family in past times	Engage in Structured Social Conversations to <i>Promote Collaborative Learning</i>
During Reading (10 min)	-Read and project the poem “Being” by Tanaya Winder Poetry Foundation , discuss author -Identify the word ancestor in the poem, what are other words that are related to ancestor? Write these on the board. -Read the poem a final time with students and show the illustration that goes along with it.	2.L.5
After Reading (5 min)	-Ask students, do you have ancestors ? Are you an ancestor ? How would you become one someday? -Write the driving question on the board to be displayed for the unit. How do we use our power to become good ancestors?	Explore Identity to <i>Foster Self-Reflection</i>

Day 2: First Reading of <i>Beauty Beside Me</i> (25 min)		
Vocabulary:	purpose, wisdom	
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (5 min)	-Review the word ancestor from the previous day. -Share an idea of something you (teacher) like to do with your family or loved ones. - <i>What is something you like to do with your family?</i> Students share what their partner likes to do with another student.	Practice Reciprocal Vulnerability to <i>Build Trusting Relationships</i> Explore Identity to <i>Foster Self-Reflection</i>

During Reading (15 min)	<p>-Look at the cover, read the title and the author’s name. Show students a picture of Seraphine Yazzie.</p> <p>-After the first page, ask students to identify the meaning of the word <i>purpose</i>. Supply meaning the if needed: reason.</p> <p>-Tell students the grandmother will use the skirt for many reasons. Let’s look out for each reason.</p> <p>-Ask <i>how is the Grandchild feeling throughout the story? Can you name the emotion she has?</i></p>	Recognize and manage emotions to <i>Foster Self-Reflection</i>
After Reading (5 min)	-Ask <i>What were some of the purposes or reasons that the grandmother wore her skirt?</i>	2.RL.1

Day 3: Second Reading of *Beauty Beside Me* (25 min)

Vocabulary:	purpose, wisdom	
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (5 min)	<p>-Review purpose with vocabulary interaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the purpose of a freezer to make things hot or cold? • Is the purpose of a cage to keep things in or out? • What is the purpose of a coat? <p>-New Vocabulary: wisdom-when you have experience about something and know a lot about it</p> <p>-Say to students, <i>Good readers notice when authors repeat words or phrases (a group of words). Authors do this because the words are important, and they want the reader to notice. This time when we read our book, let’s notice if the author repeats any words. If you hear the author repeat any words, then put your thumb in the air.</i></p>	Create a culture of engagement to <i>Create Community</i>
During Reading (15 min)	<p>-Read <i>Beauty Beside Me</i> again with students. Notice if students are putting their thumbs up at specific times.</p> <p>-Ask <i>Which words does the author repeat? What is important about these words? Why does the author want us to notice them?</i> (Grandmother’s skirt swayed</p>	2.RL.4

	back and forth back and forth, as she... She shared her knowledge, wisdom, and love when she wore her beautiful <i>color</i> skirt.)	
After Reading (5 min)	-Think-Pair-Share: <i>What does the author want us to think about when these words are repeated? What is the author trying to teach us?</i> -Ask students, <i>who would usually have more wisdom- a baby or an elder?</i>	Engage in Structured Social Conversations to Promote Collaborative Learning

Day 4: Writing-Using the 4-Square Model to Write a Paragraph (25 min)		
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Writing (5 min)	-Review with students the four-square model and draw together on a large piece of anchor chart paper. -Remind students that this will be our first writing activity in our unit and one day students can write about the book on their own. It is okay if they are not quite ready yet, because I will be writing, and the students will help me. -Look at <i>Beauty Beside Me</i> together and tell students they will be writing about what the narrator did to become a good ancestor.	Shift to Positive Self-Talk to <i>Foster Growth Mindset</i>
During Writing (15 min)	-Model for students thinking out loud about the introduction sentence. Say to students <i>I want to make sure the reader knows who and what I am talking about, so I will make sure I use the name if it was said in the text and the title of the book. I think I will write...</i> The narrator in <i>What was the title of the book? <u>Beauty Beside Me</u>... What was she being? A good ancestor</i> <i>Ok, now I will put that all together.</i> The narrator in <i>Beauty Beside Me</i> was a good ancestor. -Ask students to help you remember details about what she did and how she was using her power to become a good ancestor. (She spent time with her elders, she helped her Grandmother, she remembered things she taught her etc.) -Use one idea for each detail box of the four-square. -Repeat the think-aloud process with a conclusion sentence.	2.W.2
After Writing (5 min)	-Read the paragraph together and ask if anything should be revised.	Provide Self-Regulation or Processing Feedback

	-Offer up feedback for students about their self-regulation (i.e., managing behavior during shared writing time) or about process (effort or perseverance)	to <i>Foster Self-Reflection</i>
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Day 5: First Reading of *We Are Water Protectors* (25 min)

Vocabulary:	protector, courage, stewards	
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (5 min)	-Ask students, <i>what are some different ways that we use water? Where can we find water? What would happen if you didn't have any water?</i>	Explore identity to <i>Foster Self-Reflection</i>
During Reading (15 min)	-Read <i>We Are Water Protectors</i> with students. Ask students, do you notice anything while we are reading that we practiced last week when we read <i>Beauty Beside Me</i> ? -Remind students that authors repeat words to draw our attention because they are important. -Discuss the importance of “We stand... With our songs... And our dreams... We are still here”. -Supply a short meaning of vocabulary words during reading: courage -able to do something that scares you steward -to take care of something or someone who takes care of something	2.RL.4
After Reading (5 min)	-Ask questions to clarify understanding of the plot such as, <i>what are they trying to protect? Why are they trying to protect the water?</i>	2.RL.1

Day 6: Second Reading of *We Are Water Protectors* (25 min)

	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (5 min)	-Review vocabulary of protector, courage using vocabulary interactions. Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would I protect a cracker or a butterfly? 	2.L.4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would I protect a butterfly by making sure its wings aren't wet or by stepping on it? • Would I need courage to ride a rollercoaster or kick a ball? • What is something else that I would need courage to be able to do? 	
During Reading (15 min)	<p>-Say to students, <i>today we will read our text a second time. Good readers notice when characters go through a challenge meaning something difficult or hard and how the character responds meaning how they choose to go about them. Sometimes we can tell what kind of person they are by how they respond to a challenge. Today when we read our text, let's look out for if our character goes through a challenge and notice how she responds to this challenge.</i></p> <p>-Read <i>We Are Water Protectors</i> with students. Stop after the pipeline is introduced and ask students if they can identify the challenge that the characters are going through.</p> <p>-At the conclusion of the story, ask students <i>how did the characters respond? What did they say or do? (Stand up, protest, not give up) What does that tell us about what type of people the characters are?</i></p>	2.RL.3
After Reading (5 min)	-If being a steward means taking care of something, what could we be stewards of in our school community? Decide as a class an area of the school that we will practice being stewards of.	Practice Building Consensus to <i>Promote Collaborative Learning</i> 2.L.4

Day 7: Writing-Using the 4-Square Model to Write a Paragraph		
	Instruction	Literacy Standards & SEL Competencies
Before Reading (5 min)	<p>-Set a goal with students for writing by saying, which goal should we set for our writing today? Remind students a goal could be about <i>what we write</i> (content) or about <i>how we write</i> (process).</p> <p>-Draw a 4-square model on a blank piece of anchor chart paper to be used for whole group writing.</p>	Set and Monitor Goals to <i>Cultivate Perseverance</i>
During Reading (15 min)	-Say to students, <i>Let's brainstorm how the people in We Are Water Protectors used their power to become</i>	Engage in Social and Academic Conversations

	<p><i>good ancestors. First, I am going to give you 2 min to brainstorm on your own.</i></p> <p>-Divide students into groups of 4. Once students are in their groups, remind students of the question and display visually for students: How did the people in We Are Water Protectors use their power to become good ancestors?</p> <p>-As students are discussing, walk around the room and give each student a numbered card 1-4. Tell students that when the timer goes off (5 min.) you will pull a random number and whoever has that number will share for their group.</p> <p>-Display the number and write down ideas that students express on individual sticky notes. Reason with students if any of them are too similar or could be combined.</p> <p>-Finally, write three different ideas in the four-square model to explain how the people used their power to become good ancestors. (Answers could vary from: they did not give up, they made signs, they protected the water, they worked together... etc.)</p>	<p><i>to Promote Collaborative Learning</i></p> <p>2.SL.1 2.SL.2</p> <p>2.W.2</p>
<p>After Reading (5 min)</p>	<p>-Read the final piece of writing together in order.</p> <p>-Reflect upon the writing goal set by the class, <i>did we meet our writing goal for today?</i> If not, <i>what could we change for next week to help us meet this goal?</i></p>	<p><i>Set and Monitor Goals to Cultivate Perseverance</i></p>

Student Assessment Plan

Assessment of students includes classroom observations during discussion and shared reading. Anecdotal notes can be taken regarding which students are participating and the types of responses that are given when discussing in small groups or partners. Anecdotal notes will aid in understanding whether students are making progress are the specific reading comprehension skills. Additionally, since this unit will be taking place during whole group reading time, the same reading comprehension skills can be observed when working with students during small group reading which is a separate time than whole group.

An assessment will be given at the end of the unit that will require students to listen to a new story read aloud. Students will then answer questions that will assess their understanding of the main reading literature standards including analyzing illustrations, analyzing how characters respond to challenges, describe how words and phrases supply rhythm and answering who, what, when, where why questions.

Their final piece of writing will also be assessed using the Arizona writing standards. In that specific assessment, the different parts of the standard will be looked for in student writing including a topic introduction, facts and/or definitions, and a concluding statement. Students can

add illustrations to their writing. Handwriting, spelling, and mechanics can also be assessed at this time to observe student progress.

Sample Rubric:

Standard:	4-Exemplary	3-Proficient	2-Progressing	1-Struggling
2.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The student includes an introduction with many ideas that are organized and support the topic and purpose as well as a concluding statement or section. -The student uses facts and/or definitions. -The student uses complex and complete sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The student includes an introduction with ideas that are organized and mostly support the topic and purpose as well as a concluding statement or section. -The student uses facts. -The student uses complete sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The student includes an introduction with few ideas that are organized and support the topic and purpose as well as a concluding statement or section. -Few facts are included. -The student uses run-on or incomplete sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The student includes an introduction with one or two unrelated details. -The student does not include facts. -The student uses many fragments or run-ons.

Alignment with Standards

Diné Character Building Standards:

I will develop and apply critical thinking to establish relationships with the environment.

Concept 3- I will have self-respect.

PO 1: I will identify respectful terms.

PO 2: I will demonstrate self-respect.

PO 3: I will demonstrate and express kindness.

PO 4: I will speak kindly to others.

Reading Literature Standards:

2.RL.1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

2.RL.4 Describe how words and phrases supply rhythm (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

2.RL.3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

2.RL.7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Vocabulary and Acquisition Use Standards:

2.L.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

2.L.5 Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Writing Standards:

2.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

Speaking and Listening Standards:

2.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups

2.SL.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media

Resources

Teacher Background Reading

Arizona Department of Education. (2016, December). K-12 Standards Section ELA. Retrieved from <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=585aa8a3aadebe12481b8435>.

This is where to find the second grade ELA standards for Arizona.

Berman, S., Chaffee, S., & Sarmiento, J. (2018). The practice base for how we learn: Supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development. *Aspen Institute, National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development*. This is an article about how social-emotional learning links to academic development.

Burkins and Yates, 2021. *Shifting the Balance: 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom*. This is a book about best practices for bringing the science of reading into a balanced literacy classroom.

Christianakis, M. (2011). Children's Text Development: Drawing, Pictures, and Writing. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 46(1), 22–54. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23050588>
This article describes how drawing pictures can lead to better student writing.

Diné College, 2022. https://www.dinecollege.edu/about_dc/educational-philosophy/

Department of Diné Education. (n.d.). Pre K-3rd Diné Character Building Standards. Retrieved from Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education: http://www.navajonationdode.org/uploads/FileLinks/0af6457a581b4ac6a25fd65b2c014e7b/K_3DinéCharacterBui.expert_8.11.12_2.pdf. This is where to find the second grade Diné standards on character building.

Duke, N. K., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The Science of Reading Progresses: Communicating Advances Beyond the Simple View of Reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(1), S25–S44. <https://doi-org.libproxy.nau.edu/10.1002/rrq.411> This article explains how students develop word recognition and acknowledges new research beyond the simple view of reading.

Duke, N. K., Ward, A. E., & Pearson, P. D. (2021). The Science of Reading Comprehension Instruction. *Reading Teacher*, 74(6), 663–672. <https://doi-org.libproxy.nau.edu/10.1002/trtr.1993>. This article describes how vocabulary is essential to word recognition in early readers.

Frey, N., Fisher, D. & Smith, D. (2019). *All learning is social and emotional: Helping students develop essential skills for the classroom and beyond*. ASCD.

Gould, J and Gould, E. (1999) *Four Square Writing Method: A Unique Approach to Teaching Basic Writing Skills for Grades 1-3*. This book details how to use the four-square writing method as an organizational tool for writing instruction.

Griffith, J. (2017). Of linguisticicide and resistance: children and English instruction in nineteenth-century Indian boarding schools in Canada. *Paedagogica Historica*, 53(6), 763–782. <https://doi-org.libproxy.nau.edu/10.1080/00309230.2017.1293700> This is a resource that explains the history and repercussions of Indian boarding schools.

Grytdal, S. P., Weatherholtz, R., Esposito, D. H., Campbell, J., & Reid, R. (2018). Water quality, availability, and acute gastroenteritis on the Navajo nation – a pilot case-control study. *Journal of Water and Health*, 16(6), 1018. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2166/wh.2018.007> This study examines the amount of water and the quality of it available on the Navajo nation.

Hazelton Area School District

<https://www.hasdk12.org/cms/lib3/PA01001366/Centricity/Domain/5/Four%20Square%20Writing%20Technique.pdf> This is a resource developed by a school district demonstrating how to use the four-square method beginning with very young children.

Hughes-Hassell, S. (2013). Multicultural young adult literature as a form of counter-storytelling. *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy*, (83)3, 212-228. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/670696> This article explains what counter-storytelling is and why it is an important idea in children’s literature.

José Botelho, M. (2021). Reframing Mirrors, Windows, and Doors: A Critical Analysis of the Metaphors for Multicultural Children’s Literature. *Journal of Children’s Literature*, 47(1), 119–126. This resource explains the necessity of including multicultural literature in the classroom and how it can benefit all students.

Justice, D. H. (2018). Preface and Introduction. "Stories that wound, stories that heal." In *Why Indigenous literatures matter*. Laurier. pp. xvii-32. This part of the text is where the idea was generated for the entire unit.

Kos, R., & Maslowski, C. (2001). Second Graders' Perceptions of What Is Important in Writing. *The Elementary School Journal*, 101(5), 567–584. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1002124> This study examines what second graders perceive as important in their writing and the implications for writing in the classroom,

Long, P, personal communication, June 22, 2022

Mahfouz and Anthony-Stevens (2020). Why trouble SEL? The need for cultural relevance in SEL. *Occasional Paper Series*, 2020 (43), 59. <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/occasional-paper-series/vol2020/iss43/6> This article explains the responsibility teachers have to include SEL teaching to counter ethnocentric bias in the classroom.

Markowitz, N. L. & Bouffard, S. M. (2020). *Teaching with a social, emotional, and cultural lens: A framework for educators and teacher educators*. Harvard Educational Press. This resource details the anchor competencies for social-emotional teaching and learning including teacher moves for classroom use.

McKeown, M. G. (2019). Effective Vocabulary Instruction Fosters Knowing Words, Using Words, and Understanding How Words Work. *Language, Speech & Hearing Services in Schools*, 50(4), 466–476. https://doi-org.libproxy.nau.edu/10.1044/2019_LSHSS-VOIA-18-0126 This resource provides ideas for effective vocabulary instruction to improve reading comprehension.

Ness, M., & Kenny, M. (2016). Improving the Quality of Think-Alouds. *Reading Teacher*, 69(4), 453–460. This article discusses how teachers can improve think-alouds to improve student reading comprehension.

Reese, D. (2007). Proceed with Caution: Using Native American Folktales in the Classroom. *Language Arts*, 84(3), 247. This article presents best practices for choosing Native American literature to use in the classroom.

Rodriguez, M. C., & Briceño, A. (2018). Sentence Stems That Support Reading Comprehension. *Reading Teacher*, 72(3), 398–402. This article discusses how sentence stems can be used to support reading comprehension and how teachers can develop their own stems for student use.

Rupley, W. H., Dee Nichols, W., Mraz, M., & Blair, T. R. (2012). Building Conceptual Understanding through Vocabulary Instruction. *Reading Horizons*, 51(4), 299–320. This article expands on best practices for vocabulary instruction and how teachers can use it to build upon conceptual understanding.

Tracy, T. personal communication, June 27, 2022

Venet, A. S. (2021). *Equity-centered trauma-informed education*. W. W. Norton and Company.
This book provides insight into equity-centered trauma-informed education as it relates to social-emotional learning

Whyte, K. (2018). Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice. *Environment and Society*, 9, 125–144. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26879582> This article explains the effects of settler colonialism on the environment.

Student Reading

“Being” by Tanaya Winder. The Poetry Foundation. 2021

Beauty Beside Me. By Seraphine Yazzie. Illustrations by Baje Whitethorne Sr. 2011. Salina Bookshelf Inc.

Stolen Words by Melanie Florence. 2017. Second Story Press.

The Water Lady: How Darlene Arviso Helps a Thirsty Nation. By Alice B. McGinty. Illustrations by Shonto Begay. 2021. Schwartz and Wade Books.

We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom. 2020. Roaring Brook Press.