

# Indigenous Literature as a Window into Social Emotional Learning

Hózhó

Tanya Chischilly

Diné Institute for Navajo Educators (DINÉ)

2022

## Author Note:

Tanya Chischilly is a seventh-grade teacher at Window Rock Unified School District. Correspondence about this curriculum unit can be addressed to Tanya Chischilly. P.O. Box 312, Window Rock, Az, 86515. Email contact: [tanya.chischilly@gmail.com](mailto:tanya.chischilly@gmail.com)

## “Hózhó”

“With beauty before me I walk, with beauty behind me I walk, with beauty above me I walk and with beauty all around me I walk” Navajo Philosophy

### Introduction

When I think about social and emotional learning it makes me think of the word Hózhó. Hózhó in the Diné culture means, sense of balance, harmony, or peace. We live in a fast-paced world where a lot of changes occur daily, and new information can be retrieved and learned in seconds or minutes. This can make it difficult for students to find the Hózhó (balance) they need to help them go through life in a more positive way. When I was young, I would spend summers with my grandma, she lived in a rural area with one grocery store and a gas station. My grandma was a talented and well-known weaver. When she was not weaving, she was attending to her sheep, visiting family or extended relatives. Some of her summertime months would be spent preparing for shows. She would showcase her rugs she had woven, and my uncles would showcase their paintings, and jewelry, or my aunt would demonstrate how weaving is done. These shows brought people in from across the country and she appreciated learning about other people and making people aware of who she was as a Diné woman. She was always so busy but one thing that kept her grounded was her traditional ceremonies. The teachings that were taught in the ceremonies brought her back to “Hózhó.” She instilled these traditional teachings with her children and grandchildren. She knew that having balance, harmony and peace was the key to a successful and healthy life.

Over the years Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a major priority for some schools. The need for more services after the Covid-19 pandemic is due to the negative impact and disruption it has caused in the lives of many American households today. World-wide, each year approximately 800,000 individuals die by suicide, with 75% of all suicides occurring in low- and middle-income countries (World Health Organization, n.d). We have mental health and school counselors available in schools, but data shows there is a need for more support and effective programs to address this critical issue.

It is also important to note how the impact of Covid-19 resulted in many Americans losing their jobs which put a financial and emotional toll on families across the country. Because of this students and families are facing a variety of changes and must adapt to these new changes. We need to start thinking about the importance of implementing effective SEL programs in schools; to help students cope with change in a more positive way. To thrive in a social world, students must learn social and emotional skills, such as controlling their impulses, interpreting, and understanding emotions, motivating themselves, and developing positive attitudes toward school and community (Pianta & La Paro, 2003; Raver, 2002).

This curriculum unit will look back at past philosophers and their theories to inform readers of how their theories still contribute to what research has proven today regarding why SEL is so crucial. It will highlight what research has been conducted and the benefits of implementing a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program within schools. The curriculum will also give

insight to the Navajo philosophy and teachings and how it aligns with past theorists regarding social and emotional learning. The unit will end with the Navajo literature that aligns with SEL components which will have activities that teachers could implement with their students. Having knowledge of why SEL is essential and understanding the benefits will ensure that schools implement a successful program, for students and families they serve.

## **Context**

### **School Demographics**

I currently teach within the Window Rock Unified School District which is in a rural part of the Navajo reservation. The district has seven schools servicing the following communities: Fort Defiance, St. Michaels, Oak Springs, Sawmill, Red Lake and Window Rock. These schools are within a 65-mile radius and are in the Apache County. Our schools are located around Fort Defiance and in Window Rock. The student body at the schools served by Window Rock Unified District is 0.1% White, 0.1% Black, 0.2% Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.6% Hispanic/Latino, 99% American Indian or Alaska Native. The schools combined also have 47% of their students that are female and 53% of students that are male. The schools in Window Rock Unified School District show that 98% of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced-price meal program. Within Window Rock Unified District, 97.3% of teachers are licensed, and 89.7% have three or more years of experience. The student-to-teacher ratio is lower than the state average, at 16:1. The district has 4 full-time counselors on staff.

For the 2022 school year, Window Rock Unified School District served 1,939 students. The districts average testing ranking for 2020-2021 was based off the school report card accessed through the Arizona Department of Education. Window Rock Unified School District's ELA scores are as follows: 71% are minimally proficient, 3% partially proficient, 20% proficient and 6 % highly proficient. In math 76% are minimally proficient, 14% partially proficient, 7% proficient and 3% highly proficient. The districts mission and vision statement is as follows: Mission: We exist to ensure relevant learning for all students to be successful in a multicultural society. Vision: To be an exemplary student-centered learning organization reflecting the Diné values of lifelong learning.

For school year 2021-2022 I was a special education teacher, teaching at Scouts Pride which is an Ed-P program designed to meet the needs of students with emotional and behavioral challenges. Scouts Pride is designed to meet the needs of students who are in kindergarten through twelfth grade. This past school year I had 11 students on my caseload that were in grades 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. Our goal is to facilitate academic and emotional growth and ultimately reintegration for students back into the least restrictive environment. Last school year was my first-year teaching in this capacity.

### **Community Demographics**

Window Rock Unified School District is in Fort Defiance and in Window Rock. Window Rock is the capital of the Navajo reservation. It is also 50 miles west of a nearby town called Gallup where most people shop for food and other goods. The Navajo Nation spans across 17,544,500

acres of land which is equal to 27,413 square miles. The reservation sits in four states, which are New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado. The Navajo Nation has a variety of breathtaking terrain which includes, mountains, desert, forest, plateaus, and mesas. Some families today still lack the basic needs of having running water or electricity. In addition, some families do not have internet access which makes it sometimes difficult for students to continue to learn at home. The community does not have a lot of resources for the youth to be a part of. In Fort Defiance the Tsehootso Medical Center has a Wellness Center for the surrounding community members or for people who work within the community to utilize. Participants must be 16 years to participate with using the facility. They offer health and wellness classes, and healthy cooking classes. Another program that is in Fort Defiance is Rez Refuge. They have a team of young Indigenous workers who work directly with families, the youth, local school districts, and other entities to create a collaborative community for students who reside or around the Fort Defiance community. Rez Refuge is an after-school program that was established so that local youth could have a safe place to hang out. The team recognized the need for personal healing and development, from various social expectations and historical trauma amongst the youth. Collaboration with a variety of partners focused on the behavior health field to establish expectations when assessing community youth. We do need more programs for students to take advantage of.

### History of the Community

Fort Defiance was first noticed by U.S. military Colonel John Washington. On September 18, 1851, Colonel Edwin Sumner established Fort Defiance, so he could create a military presence in Navajo territory. The fort was built on valuable grazing land which the federal government prohibited the Navajos to use. The Navajos had livestock to raise and needed grazing land for their livestock. Once the U.S. military was established, they were allowing white settlers to live on the land. This upset the Navajos which created raids and conflict between the Navajos and U.S. military.

When the Civil War occurred, the military had abandoned Fort Defiance. Raids continued within the area, so Brigadier General James H. Carleton sent Kit Carson to impose order. The fort was reestablished in 1863 for Carson's operation against the Navajos. General Carleton's solution was harsh and his plan forced thousands of Navajos off the reservation. The Navajo's endured a 450 mile walk to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. This walk is known as the "Long Walk." In 1864 the fort was abandoned once again. Eventually a treaty was established between the Navajos and U.S. military, "The Navajo Treaty of 1868" allowed Navajos to return to their homeland and Fort Defiance was reestablished (Wood, 1991). The first day school was in 1869, the first boarding school was 1871, and the first public school was established in 1894 (Donovan, 2018).

### Past and Present Education

The Navajo Treaty of 1868 required the government to provide education to Navajo children. Eventually boarding schools were created; the first off reservation Indian boarding school was in an old army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879. Boarding schools forced parents to have their child receive an education off the reservation away from the families. Native Americans were forced to have an education because past presidents wanted to civilize the "red man". The

phrase “Kill the Indian, save the child,” was what the white man believed would have been a better lifestyle for all Native American children. Not all students had a positive experience while attending boarding schools. The intentions of having boarding schools were to assimilate Native Americans across the country to Western teachings and beliefs. Some students were mistreated and still carried the trauma with them after leaving the boarding schools. Some students were able to adapt to their new lifestyle and then there were some who could not. While attending boarding school some students never were able to return home and the ones who did had a difficult time readjusting to their home and family life. Parenting was difficult for some because they were away from their child for many years. While attending the boarding schools a child’s Native language and culture was forbidden.

Despite the difficulties and obstacles, Diné have faced over the years, education and the perseverance of language and culture has always been a priority. The way education is approached today is not the same from long ago and we have a different set of expectations with the Diné teachings in mind. We need to ensure that our students have teachers who are willing to provide students with the extra support that they need socially and emotionally to be academically successful. It is needed now more than ever due to the recent pandemic which has affected many families. As educators we need to be more mindful in the way we deliver our instruction to our students. It is imperative that we teach them to persevere through the difficult times they may face in the future. Although we are going through all of this as a nation, we are still trying our best to promote and advocate for the importance of social and emotional learning despite the resources we lack on the reservations.

## **Rationale**

Culture and language are a way to identify us as Diné people. Our culture and language can keep us grounded knowing that we have a place we can always call home no matter how far we move away from the reservation. Our grandparents fought and prayed for where we live today. After the Long Walk the Diné people were released to go back to their homes. They returned back to the Navajo reservation and did what they could to adapt with what they had. The Diné people endured a lot and had to reestablish themselves despite all the hardships and barriers they experienced. The Diné were able to preserve their culture, language, oral stories, sacred ceremonies, and the clan system. When a baby is born, some Navajos will keep the umbilical cord and bury it near their home which symbolizes the connection they still have to the Navajo reservation.

The Diné people value, “K'é” which means family. Navajos have a clan system in place, we each have four clans that we introduce ourselves with. The first clan is from the mother, the second clan is the father’s, the third is the maternal grandfather’s and the fourth is the paternal grandfather. Our clans help us identify and shape who we are as individuals. Our clans can extend us to other members we are related to and based on the clans we can refer to them as brothers, sisters, moms, dad, uncles, aunts, cheii or masani. When a Diné goes out into the world they are never alone because their clan unifies them with their extended family. It is important for students to realize these connections especially when students are feeling lonely, depressed, neglected and emotionally insecure. Diné children need to be familiar with their clans so they grow up aware that they have other relatives out in the world that they can

make connections with. My grandparents and parents were part of the boarding school movement but had different experiences. Their stories of resilience, perseverance of language and culture always goes back to them holding onto their clans, culture and language. Their clans grounded them on who they were as Diné people and allowed them to share their stories of where they came from.

## The Need For SEL

Trauma can cause a sense of unpredictability in individuals. These traumatic events can occur in unpredictable ways which means educators have to be flexible in how they approach their students. Once impacted by trauma, children become highly attuned to cues of danger, and their stress-response systems are activated more easily (Venet, 2021).

Highlighting and understanding how the Navajo philosophy and Western theorists view SEL will inform educators of the need for a SEL program. Human development has four main domains of development they are physical, cognitive, social and emotional. Past philosophers have addressed the importance of developing healthy relationships all these years. Children need positive exposure, teachings and experiences for a healthy development in all areas of their life to occur. The way a child is exposed to the experiences of development is vital in why social and emotional learning is needed for children. Students need to be taught social and emotional learning strategies to thrive in this everchanging society. Navajo philosophy of Hózhó and other life lessons lays the foundation for one's life. If we are stressing Ke' then we need to help our children in the schools. We should not think of them as just students in our school system we need to address them as our brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, cheiis, and masanis.

Social and Emotional topics need to be addressed and because our stories were told orally, in this unit I want to bring in Navajo literature and align my lessons and activities with the six anchor competencies by Markowitz and Bouffard (2020): Building trusting relationships, Foster self-reflection, Foster growth mind set, Cultivate perseverance, Promote collaborative learning, and Respond constructively along differences. The Navajo philosophy has always stressed these competencies so I will embed and highlight them with the lessons as well. These connections of tying in culture and language with social and emotional learning lessons would allow for a more meaningful experience that students could benefit from. Using stories to build a strong foundation of SEL that will positively impact a child's social and emotional needs is important. Good stories hold the power to change, how we think, and how we feel (Haven, 2007; Heath & Heath, 2008).

## Content Objective

### Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning involves five interrelated competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2013). For this unit I chose to use Markowitz and Bouffard's, "Teaching with a Social, Emotional, and Cultural Lens Framework". The competencies that I will be focusing on are Building trusting relationships, Foster self-reflection, Foster growth mind set, Cultivate

perseverance, Promote collaborative learning, and Respond constructively along differences. I will align them with the Navajo Philosophy of how SEL is viewed in the Diné culture.

## Statistics

A meta-analysis that was published in 2011, during the early stages of research in SEL gathered results from 213 school based SEL programs in grades k-12<sup>th</sup>. In this study 270, 000 students who participated in universal SEL programs demonstrated more enhanced social-emotional skills and positive behavior as well as lower levels of emotional distress (Durak, 2011). This study also revealed an 11 percent gain in their achievement which suggest that SEL may strengthen a student's academic success. Another meta-analysis conducted in 2012 took 75 studies that participated in universal social-emotional and behavioral programs also showed an increase in social skills, and a decrease in anti-social behavior (Durak, 2011).

A report retrieved from (Respected\_CASEL.fcis.org) reported that in 2018 the perspectives of high school youth regarding social-emotional learning showed 89 percent of current high school students from strong SEL schools got along with one another compared to 46 percent of schools that had less developed SEL programs. The study also noted that 83 percent of the students reported their school doing "great" or "pretty good" for preparing them for success after high school compared to 13 percent of students from the less effective programs.

In the Fall of 2011 a Youth Risk Behavior Survey was conducted by the Navajo Nation Health Education Program (NNHEP). The NNHEP had 10,055 students in 46 public high schools on and near the Navajo reservation complete a survey. The school response rate was 87%, the student response was 67%, and the overall response rate was 58%. The results are representative of only those students who completed the questionnaire. This survey included 49.3% females and 50.7% males. The grades that participated in the survey were 27.7% 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 26.3% 10<sup>th</sup> graders, 24.1% 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 21.5% 12<sup>th</sup> graders. The student's race also was noted, 0.7% were African American, 11.6% Hispanic/Latino, 79.3% Native American, 4.0% Caucasian, 1.3% were of another race and 3.1% were of multiple races. The survey indicated that 91% of students were more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year, 29.7% more likely have made a suicide plan in the last year and 15.2% more likely to have seriously considered suicide in the past year.

These statistics support why there is such a need for social and emotional learning programs in our schools. Schools across the Navajo Nation should make SEL programs a priority and do their best to align it with culture as well so students can relate to previous cultural teachings. The goal of Navajo cultural identity is to reinforce the teachings of Navajo forefathers and foremothers and to make life unique and beautiful so that Navajo individuals may see the corn pollen road of life and walk on the Holy Peoples Path of Life (Aronilth, 1991, p. 20).

## Benefits of SEL

Research has shown that children have experienced positive impacts from well-organized SEL programs. SEL has been beneficial for schools who are servicing underserved students. These underserved groups include children living in single parent homes; children in foster care;

adjudicated youth; homeless children and transient families; children living in poverty and children from culturally diverse backgrounds, including Native Americans, Asian American/Pacific islanders, Latinos, and African Americans (Cauce et al., 2002; CDC, 2013; Marrast, Himmelstein, & Woolhandler, 2016; NCCP, 2014; Padilla-Frausto et al., 2014). The four benefits of SEL I want to highlight are the decrease of behavior problems in schools, the fostering of positive relationships, the increase in student achievement and then highlight how effective cultural awareness can be beneficial in SEL.

### Decreased Behavior Problems

Schools across the nation have trouble with behavior which can impede a child's academic achievements, leading to suspension or expulsion, or in some cases a change in placement in schools which could be alternative schools. School administrators can conduct need assessment surveys to address behavior problems. Collecting this type of data can help with aligning behavior concerns with developed plans done by schools. It also can be useful in helping with finding SEL programs that meets their student's needs. These surveys will help educational leaders see and address the root cause to why behavior occurs. This will also help inform all members of a team to work through those needed strategies. Boredom, alienation, school disengagement and disconnection from meaningful purpose in life among youth are not signs of mental illness in most cases, but rather signs of a deficiency in positive development abilities (Larson, 2000).

Having all students engaged with activities within their classroom is important. Teachers should understand their students' learning needs and understand their cultural background as well. The teachers understanding of his or her students will let them know what can trigger a child and this knowledge will help when developing lessons and activities so all students can be successful in their classroom. Sometimes a child's emotions can cause them to become upset and the consequences can lead them to be taken away from their peers. Understanding and being aware your students will allow students to thrive in the least restrictive environment.

### Foster Positive Relationships

SEL can create positive social interactions in schools because students feel safe and comfortable interacting with their peers. Providing students with the strategies needed to be successful and establishing healthy relationships is crucial. Students who receive consistent and clear classroom expectations are most likely to develop prosocial behavior and maintain positive relationships with their teachers and peers (Reinke & Herman, 2002, Witt, VanDerHeyden, & Gilbertson, 2004). When teachers develop strong SEL strategies this helps with ensuring that a successful, organized classroom is created so that teachers can attend to their students' individual academic and socioemotional needs. This also allows them to develop strong teacher student relationships and create an overall healthy classroom climate for all their students they serve.

### Increase Academic Success

SEL can increase academic success of students. Ensuring that students are receiving the skills needed to make those crucial decisions only sets them up for success. It comprises disciplinary



knowledge, specialized knowledge of the content that informs instructional decision-making, knowledge of students' thinking, instructional strategies, and pedagogical tools that supports effective instruction. (Baumert et al, 2010; Hill et al., 2008). Research has shown the benefits of what a well-organized social and emotional program can bring to schools but most importantly how it can make all students successful academically, socially, and emotionally.

### Aligning Culture to Social and Emotional Learning programs

Some schools have a diverse group of students. Acknowledging diversity and knowing that we must be culturally aware of all students that are a part of our schools and classrooms is imperative. If we are trying to meet the needs of our students, then we need to try to understand and be knowledgeable of where our students are coming from and how we need to prepare for that change. For middle-income children, expectations for interactions with adults are typically aligned among home, school, and larger society however, for working class and poor children, families' expectations for adult child interactions tend to vary from what is expected in school and other institutions (Lareau, 2011).

Social and emotional learning curriculums need to be aligned with a child's culture. As Diné people we have words and phrases that align with the categories that Markowitz and Bouffard (2020) address: Building trusting relationships K'eh bee alká'adiilwol: Working together to achieve a positive and trusting relationship by way of our Diné culture system. Foster self-reflection Hwiani' dóó Hwiat'é bee adá akóijilzin: Knowing and being aware of your thoughts and feelings to which lead to the outcome of your behavior. Foster growth mind set Yá'át'ééhgo Nitsáhakees Bít Há'ot'éegi: Acknowledging and following a clear and positive mindset for yourself to help with your choices. Cultivate perseverance Siihwíidindzin: To strive and develop a clear and positive focus for yourself and to establish a positive self-holistic foundation. Promote collaborative learning Na'nitin dóó Ohoo'aah bee Alk'í'adeest'íí': To promote and encourage a positive teaching and learning process. Respond constructively along differences K'é bee Athíidolzin: Keeping an open perspective with others to help establish and maintain a positive relationship.

Mr. Johansen LaPahe a mental health counselor and Quintana Jensen a para-educator who assists with teaching Navajo culture helped with translating the SEL categories into Navajo. It is important for schools to ensure that one's culture is taken into consideration when we are teaching lessons. Our Diné culture has so many teachings in their oral stories that are told. In this way it is critical that children's social emotional competence be viewed considering not only the sociocultural demands of the dominant culture but also the sociocultural expectations of their families (Chen and French 2008; Graves and Howes, 2011).

### The Importance of Social and Emotional Learning

We live in a diverse world and need to be accepting of all cultures. It is also important to ensure that we are aligning our teachings to celebrate and embrace our own culture as Diné people. Early social-emotional competencies, such as behavioral regulation, attentional skills, and the ability to problem solve, are critical to children's academic outcomes (Blair, 2002; Diamond & Lee, 2011).

## Navajo Philosophy

Philosophers in the Navajo language can be portrayed as medicine men or elders who have had oral stories that were told to them from their grandparents through traditional songs, prayers, or teachings. A Navajo medicine man is known as Hataai, he is a reverent person who holds the sacred songs and prayers that have been passed down from generation to generation and is the one that connects the past to the present. A lot of stories and history of who we were as Diné people were told orally and rarely written in books. This makes our history and stories very valuable because it is a record of our existence and who we are as Diné people. Diné teachings have been preserved and have been aligned with a variety of organizations mission, or vision statements.

## Western Theorists

Theorists like Eric Erickson, Urie Bronfenbrenner, and Abraham Maslow all have theorized how we are influenced by someone or something. Erickson believed a person's identity formation is a lifelong developmental process. He said humans' personalities continued to develop past the age of 5 and believed personality depended directly on the resolution of existential crises like trust, autonomy, intimacy, individuality, and integrity (hunt & Maher, 2002). Bronfenbrenner believed that influences on children's behavior and development extend from the immediate family to schools, friendship networks, relatives, neighborhoods, communities, and geographical locations (Lukenchuk, 2013). Abraham Maslow an American psychologist believed in the hierarchy of needs and believed that people could not move on until they have met the needs in the level of the hierarchy he created (Echstein-Koas, 2021).

Unit Design and Important Topics to be discussed for SEL

## Teaching Strategies

*KWL Chart:* Students will be asked about what they know about Social and Emotional Learning. Gathering background knowledge will be important. This will allow teachers to be informed on how much they need to teach to students.

*Read Aloud:* This strategy will allow students to build their fluency, self-confidence, and motivation in reading. During read aloud students will read aloud sections of the text. We want to ensure that student engagement is established from all members of the group.

*Annotations:* Annotating a text and making notes within a book or on paper is a great way for students to interact with the story. It prepares them for high school and beyond and allows them to find important information quicker when you look back and review your text. Annotations provide a way to begin engaging with ideas and issues directly through comments, questions, associations, or other reactions that occur to you as you read. Annotations can be highlighting/underlining, paraphrase/summary of main ideas, descriptive outline, and comments/responses with symbols.

**Circulation:** This strategy is to ensure students are focused and staying on task. Teachers should walk around the classroom to help as needed and make sure students are following through with assignments given. Holding students accountable for their assignments is important.

**Check for Understanding:** This strategy can be done while circulating the room. It is a way to assist students and clarify directions that they may have missed. It also sets the student up for success and ensures that they are understanding the content given.

**Vocabulary and Literacy:** Vocabulary is important. Going over unfamiliar words in their text will help them to understand the text they are reading. It will enhance their knowledge of unfamiliar words and give them the opportunity to comprehend the text as well.

**Think and Share:** This strategy allows students to reflect on the reading and let their peers and teachers know what they think, learned, or felt. It allows student the opportunity to share their knowledge and get a different respective of how words are point of views are interpreted.

**Power Point Presentations:** (If time permits) Students will get to write their stories of what it was like to spend time with their grandparents and share their presentation with their peers. Students will use pictures to give their peers/audience a visual of where they went.

### Summary of the Story

Healer of the Water Monster is about a young boy named Nathan who spends the summer in Church Rock, New Mexico, with his Nali, (his Father's mother). At the beginning of the story Nathan has some personal stuff he is struggling with like his parents' divorce, his low self-esteem and dealing with being bullied and not having much friends. He was supposed to spend his summer vacation with his dad but changes his mind because his dad wants to spend some of his time with his girlfriend as well. Nathan decides to spend the summer with his Nali. Nathan must make some changes and get used to his Nali's home environment because she does not have running water or electricity. While living with his Nali he starts to realize the effects of alcohol and some other demons that are affecting his uncle Jet. He befriends a Water Monster who is also sick and Nathan promises to help him along with other Holy Beings he meets. Nathan must help his Nali with a making sure uncle Jet participates in a Navajo Enemy Way Ceremony so he can get healed.

### **Classroom Activities**

#### Week 1- Pre-Assessment and Introduction

**Day 1:** A pre-assessment will be given to demonstrate prior knowledge of what students know about SEL. Understanding their own knowledge of their emotions will be good to know as well and give the teacher feedback on how they can assist or drive their instruction.

**Introduction:** Students will learn about the SEL competencies and how it is interpreted in

Navajo. They will use the competencies throughout the book study and identify how the characters in the story related to each competency and what they did to establish it or overcome a situation.

1. Building trusting relationships: K'eh bee alká'adiilwol: Working together to achieve a positive and trusting relationship by way of our Diné culture system
  - Communication
  - Social engagement
  - Working cooperatively
  - Resolving Conflict
  - Building relationships
  - Helping or seeking help
2. Foster self-reflection: Hwiani' dóo Hwiat' é bee adá akójlzin: Knowing and being aware of your thoughts and feelings to which lead to the outcome of your behavior.
  - Identifying emotions
  - Self-perception or identity
  - Recognizing strengths or weaknesses
  - Self confidence
  - Self-worth
3. Foster growth mind set: Yá'át'ééhgo Nitsáhakees Bíł Há'ot'éegi: Acknowledging and following a clear and positive mindset for yourself to help with your choices.
  - Self-motivation
  - Perseverance
  - Goal setting
  - Self-discipline
4. Cultivate perseverance: Siihwídindzin: To strive and develop a clear and positive focus for yourself and to establish a positive self-holistic foundation.
  - Follow through with goals
  - Stay focused
  - Don't give up
5. Promote collaborative learning: Na'nitin dóo Ohoo'aah bee Ałk'í'adeest'íí ': To promote and encourage a positive teaching and learning process.
  - Communicate with others
  - Work with others to solve problems
  - Share ideas
6. Respond constructively along differences: K'é bee Ałhídolzin: Keeping an open perspective with others to help establish and maintain a positive relationship.
  - Appreciate and respect others
  - Be positive with your words
  - Work through problems in a positive way

Chapter Readings and Activities: With every chapter read students will do the following and keep all their information in a composition book.

- *Vocabulary words Diné & English*

8.RL.4 - Students will make note of the vocabulary words in English and Diné so they can have a better understanding of what they are reading.

RL.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text

- *Reading Fluency:*

8.RL.10 – Students will proficiently and independently read aloud and comprehend literature in a text by reading aloud during the group reads.

RL.11-12.10- read text complexity band independently and proficiently.

- *Cite Textual Evidence:*

8.RL.1- Students will answer comprehension questions in each chapter. This will check for understanding and ensure students are focused and engaged with the text.

RL.11-12.10- Read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems

- *Identifying and Aligning SEL to text: (Diné Standard Concept 1: Nitsahakees PO1)-*

8.RL.3 - Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

RL.11-12.5 -Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

Students will identify how the characters in the story related to each competency and what they did to establish it or overcome a situation.

1. Building trusting relationships -K'eh bee ałká'adiilwol:

2. Foster self-reflection-Hwiani' dóó Hwiat'é bee adá akójlzin

3. Foster growth mind set-Yá'át'ééhgo Nitsáhakees Bíł Há'ot'éegi.

4. Cultivate perseverance -Siihwídindzin

5. Promote collaborative learning-Na'nitin dóó Ohoo'aah bee Ałk'í'adeest'íí '

6. Respond constructively along differences-K'é bee Ałhídolzin

- *Points of View: 6 (Diné Standard Concept 2: Nahat'a PO2)*

8.RL. -The author purposefully controls the flow of information to various characters, and even to the reader, for a reason.

RL.11-12.6 - Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really mean

Different characters and/or the reader may be aware of certain knowledge that is hidden to others. Students will identify the points of view of the characters. Possible questions to ask in each chapter:

- ❖ How are character 1 and character 2 perceiving this situation differently? Why?

- ❖ How may you as a reader perceive this situation differently from the character? Why?

- ❖ What makes this part funny, sad, serious, or suspenseful?

Extended Activity- Power Point Presentations (If time permits)- 8.RI.3 (Diné Standard Concept 4: Siihasin PO1) Students will get to write their stories of what it was like to spend time with their grandparents and share their presentation with their peers. Students will use pictures to give their peers/audience a visual of where they went. This could include 6-8 slides.

Slide 1: Introduction Slide (your name, a picture and grade you're in)

Slide 2: Your clan and picture of you and grandparent/grandparents

Slide 3: Describe your grandparents and where they live, include picture.

Slide 4: Describe the things you do when you are with them.

Slide 5: Tell a story of something you would do on your own (make up stories, go hiking or play)

Slide 6: Share one or more ways the SEL competencies were learned while there.

Slide 7-8: Share more information of our choice and conclusion slide.

### *Week 9– Post-Assessment and Presentations*

A post-assessment will be given to demonstrate knowledge learned about SEL. Their work from the activities could also be gathered and their presentation of their pow point could also used as an assessment.

### **Student Assessment Plan**

<b>Learning Goal</b>	<b>Type of Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment Format</b>
Students will be given a pre and post-test based on their knowledge of what they know about social and emotional learning.	Formative Assessment	Teacher Created Pre and Post Test
Students will present their stories and how it ties in with SEL.	Summative Assessment	Student Created presentation based on a Rubric.
Students will show progress and understanding by scoring 80% or above on assignments given.	Informal Assessments	Student assignments

### **Alignment with Standards**

Arizona’s English Language Arts Standards – 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade  
Reading Standards for Literature

#### Key Ideas and Details

8.RL.1 & 12. RL.1 - Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

8.RL.3 & 12. RL.3 - Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

#### Craft and Structure

8.RL.4 & 12. RL. 4- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

8.RL.6 & 12. RL. 6 - Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

#### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

8.RL.10 & 12. RL. 10 – By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 8.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3 & RL.12.3](#)

Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

Navajo Standards

Concept 1: Nitsahakees- I will recognize and value my thoughts and personality.

- PO1: I will engage in activities that will increase my sense of self-worth.

Concept 2: Nahat'a – I will apply and practice the Diné way of life through planning.

- PO2: I will compare the usage of kinship terms with today's society.

Concept 3: Siihasin- I will apply and practice the Diné way of life with confidence

- PO1: I will live by the fundamental standards of living in harmony.

## Resources

### Assessment and Activity Assignments

1. Students will use their notebook to put their vocabulary words as they read each chapter
    - *Vocabulary words Diné & English:* 8.RL.4 & 12. RL. 4- Students will make note of the vocabulary words in English and Diné so they can have a better understanding of what they are reading.
  2. Students will each receive a copy of their book, “Healer Of The Water Monster” by Brian Young
    - *Reading Fluency:* 8.RL.10 & 12. RL. 10 – Students will proficiently and independently read aloud and comprehend literature in a text by reading aloud during the group reads.
  3. Students will use a teacher created worksheet
    - *Cite Textual Evidence:* 8.RL.1 & 12. RL. 1- Students will answer comprehension questions in each chapter. This will check for understanding and ensure students are focused and engaged with the text.
    - *Identifying and Aligning SEL to text:* 8.RL.3 & 12. RL. 3 (Diné Standard Concept 1: Nitsahakees PO1)-Students will identify how the characters in the story related to each competency and what they did to establish it or overcome a situation.
1. Building trusting relationships -K’eh bee alká’adiilwol;
  2. Foster self-reflection-Hwiani’ dóó Hwiat’é bee adá akójlzin
  3. Foster growth mind set-Yá’át’ée’hgó Nitsáhakees Bíł Há’ot’ée’gi.
  4. Cultivate perseverance -Siihwíidindzin
  5. Promote collaborative learning-Na’nitin dóó Ohoo’aah bee Alk’í’adeest’íí ‘
  6. Respond constructively along differences-K’é bee Alhíidolzin
- *Points of View:* 8.RL.6 (Diné Standard Concept 2: Nahat’a PO2) -The author purposefully controls the flow of information to various characters, and even to the reader, for a reason. Different characters and/or the reader may be aware of certain knowledge that is hidden to others. Students will identify the points of view of the characters. Possible questions to ask in each chapter:
    - ❖ How are character 1 and character 2 perceiving this situation differently? Why?
    - ❖ How may you as a reader perceive this situation differently from the character? Why?
    - ❖ What makes this part funny, sad, serious, or suspenseful?



## Citations

Arnoilth, W. (1991). Foundation of Navajo culture. Navajoland, Az: Diné Community College

Markowitz, N. L. and Bouffard, S. M. (2020). *Teaching with a social, emotional, and cultural lens: A framework for educators and teacher educators*. Harvard Educational Press.

Navajo Nation. 2011 Navajo Nation High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report. Window Rock, AZ; Navajo Nation Division of Health, Health Education Program, October 2013.

Venet, A. S. (2021). Equity-centered trauma-informed education: Transforming classrooms, shifting systems. Equity and Social Justice in Education Series. W.W. Norton & Co.

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

SEL Pre-Assessment

What does SEL stand for?	
What does building trusting relationships mean?	
What does it mean to foster self-reflection?	
What does is mean to foster a growth mind set	
What is cultivating perseverance?	
What does it mean to promote collaborative learning?	
What does it mean to respond constructively along differences?	

What is SEL important: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

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

### Reference Sheet

1. **Building trusting relationships: K'eh bee alká'adiilwol:** Working together to achieve a positive and trusting relationship by way of our Diné culture system
  - Communication
  - Social engagement
  - Working cooperatively
  - Resolving Conflict
  - Building relationships
  - Helping or seeking help
2. **Foster self-reflection: Hwiani' dóó Hwiat'é bee adá akóijilzin:** Knowing and being aware of your thoughts and feelings to which lead to the outcome of your behavior.
  - Identifying emotions
  - Self-perception or identity
  - Recognizing strengths or weaknesses
  - Self confidence
  - Self-worth
3. **Foster growth mind set: Yá'át'ééhgo Nitsáhakees Bíl Há'ot'éegi:** Acknowledging and following a clear and positive mindset for yourself to help with your choices.
  - Self-motivation
  - Perseverance
  - Goal setting
  - Self-discipline
4. **Cultivate perseverance: Siihwíindzin:** To strive and develop a clear and positive focus for yourself and to establish a positive self-holistic foundation.
  - Follow through with goals
  - Stay focused
  - Don't give up
5. **Promote collaborative learning: Na'nitin dóó Ohoo'aah bee Alk'i'adeest'íí':** To promote and encourage a positive teaching and learning process.
  - Communicate with others
  - Work with others to solve problems
  - Share ideas
6. **Respond constructively along differences: K'é bee Alhidolzin:** Keeping an open perspective with others to help establish and maintain a positive relationship.
  - Appreciate and respect others
  - Be positive with your words
  - Work through problems in a positive way

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

Book Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEL Matrix**

<b>Chapter &amp; Page #</b>	<b>Problem/Conflict</b>	<b>Competency it Addresses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Building trusting relationships</b></li><li>• <b>Foster Self Reflection</b></li><li>• <b>Foster Growth Mind Set</b></li><li>• <b>Cultivate Perseverance</b></li><li>• <b>Promote Collaborative Learning</b></li><li>• <b>Respond Constructively Along Differences</b></li></ul>	<b>How was it resolved or How should it be resolved?</b>