

# **Healing Through Art**

## Curriculum Unit Overview

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Indigenous Early Childhood Educators Professional Development Fellowship

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## **Rationale**

This curriculum holds significant meaning to me because the concept is intertwined with generational healing using Art. First, there is no wrong or right way for Art; Art can be interpreted in many versions and critiques. Art embraces a significant idea because it is constructed from human beings, as we are the source, we are the conductors, and we are the purpose. Art comes from our creativity, our passion, and our minds. The mind is such a beautiful organ in our body, and we may not be aware of it, but our mind holds generational trauma. In an introduction to *Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us*, the authors Susan Magsaman and Ivy Ross (2023) state, "Many of us tend to think of the arts as either entertainment or as an escape. A luxury of some kind. Art can be used to fundamentally change your day-to-day life. They can help address serious physical and mental issues, with remarkable results. And they can both help you learn and flourish" (p.23). Even young children are imprinted with trauma, and their healing can be welded and scaffolded delicately through Art.

As a young child, I grew up loving Art. I remember we used to have art class on Fridays only in fourth grade. At this time, I was attending a private school away from my home community. I knew I could partake in Art on my own time, but I had this mindset that only my teacher allowed an allotted time for Art on a particular day. My mind would not let me create or pursue beyond this set idea. My school was very cultivated on Western ideas, and I grew homesick for my family. As a young child, there were events and situations occurring at home that I had little control over. My voice was so small, and the difference I would make were small forces of change. Art was my outlet from stress at home, Art was my escape, and Art was a way for my mind to let go. I want to let go of some negativity latching on me from home. When I did return home again, my mindset was set for Art being on Fridays, and I felt lost in starting a new educational environment; I thought this place would be the same as before. But my educator at the time was a Dine' educator, which I rarely seen in my schooling. She encouraged me to create Art in all areas of learning at any time of the day; she deconstructed my thinking and gave me the freedom to subject my Art to my limitations. She spoke Dine' Language, and I could recall how peaceful she was when she acknowledged our artwork. She encouraged Art to be done outside, through our songs, and even through dance. In a way, she became my healing, my artistic mind flourished, and I felt proud and whole. My imprinted trauma had always been there in my brain, and restrictions hindered my healing, but I was fortunate to experience positivity in my story. "Trauma can be healed, intergenerational trauma..." *Humanized Education* (forthcoming, October 2024, p. 114).

Art can promote learning and language revitalization in an environment that welcomes cultural belonging. Indigenous students who partake in their cultural life have a stronger foundation in their lives and academics. "...when Native students are actively exposed to and engaged in traditional cultural practices such as language, ceremony, and art, they are more likely to achieve greater academic success" (Whitbeck et al., 2001).

## Demographics

The school district I instruct at is located in Tuba City, Arizona. Tuba City is located on the Navajo reservation among the painted desert. The land bears wind, sand, natural desert plants, and a community of Dine' people. Although you can pass through the town in less than five minutes, the town has been growing with small businesses and many residents. According to DATA USA, in 2017, Tuba City, AZ, had a population of 9.02k people with a median age of 29.6 and a median household income of \$48,293. Between 2016 and 2017, the population of Tuba City, AZ, declined from 9,221 to 9,022, a -2.16% decrease, and its median household income grew from \$45,613 to \$48,293, a 5.88% increase. The five largest ethnic groups in Tuba City, AZ are American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) (91.6%), White (Non-Hispanic) (3.57%), Two or More Races (Non-Hispanic) (1.72%), Asian (Non-Hispanic) (1.46%), and American Indian & Alaska Native (Hispanic) (0.776%). N/A% of the people in Tuba City, AZ, speak a non-English language, and 99.5% are U.S. citizens.

Tuba City Unified School District is located in Tuba City. The district services Tuba City, Cameron, Gap, Red Lake, and Rocky Ridge areas. According to the Tuba City Unified School District demographics, for the 2020 school year, there are six public schools in Tuba City Unified School District #15 School District, serving 1,694 students. Minority enrollment is 99% of the student body (majority Native American), more than the Arizona public school average of 62% (majority Hispanic). The Early Childhood Education Program is situated at Tuba City High School. Our program is a part of the Career Technical Education program at Tuba City High School. The preschool program is a lab-based environment for practicum and internship for high school students.

The Early Childhood Education Program is a preschool program that has been with High School for 24 years. The program has partnered with First Things First and Quality First in the last six years. First Things First created Quality First to work with childcare and preschool providers across Arizona to improve the quality of their early learning settings. Currently, more than 1,000 early learning programs in communities across Arizona participate in Quality First. These programs are licensed and regulated, but participating in Quality First is voluntary. These programs are committed to quality improvement, going beyond regulatory requirements to help the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in their care be ready for success in school and beyond ([qualityfirstaz.com](http://qualityfirstaz.com)).

Our program started with a two-star rating and has worked its way up to a four-star rating. It prides itself on providing a quality program to the Tuba City community. The program is evaluated by an Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), a classroom assessment tool designed to measure its quality. The result of the assessment determines the star rating.

The age level for this intended curriculum is pre-kindergarten/preschool children. The ages will range from three to four years old. The pre-k class is a mixture of children from the community from different economic backgrounds. The children I service in the classroom are usually 75% Dine' children. The classroom is typically heterogeneous. The developmental milestones in the children range in all learning domains, from emerging to meeting standards. Our ratio is one teacher to fifteen students. Our program typically serves two students with special needs; our

PEEP program referees these students. The PEEP (Preschool Early Education Program) program is an in-house program in our school district that screens and services students under five. The children I service are typically in a traditional class environment on Monday through Friday. Our day starts at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast together and ends at 2:00 p.m. with a goodbye chant and summary of the day.

Our preschool curriculum is a quality-first program, and our curriculum is Beyond Textbook. Beyond Textbook (BT) is an online curriculum that allows teachers to collaborate on lessons and resources. The BT curriculum follows a calendar and requires teachers to unpack learning standards weekly. It is a very open-ended curriculum, and I am fortunate to be able to effortlessly incorporate my Dine curriculum.

### **Diné Curriculum focus**

This curriculum aims to promote creativity and healing through Art, engage students' families with cultural connections through harmonious thinking, and revitalize Diné language through art play. It was developed for developmental learning for kindergarten and preschool-age children.

While promoting creativity in the Classroom may seem straightforward for educators, the concept of promoting art activity through a healing approach is a unique and powerful idea. This approach is backed by research that shows Art can promote physical, mental, and emotional healing. According to Magsamen and Ross,

"The arts have the ability to transform you like nothing else. They can help move you from sickness to health, stress to calm, or sadness to joy, and they enable you to flourish and thrive. They can lead you to profound altered states, changing your very physiology" (2023, p.246).

Art incorporated into a class program has many benefits for students, and these benefits can have a lifelong impact. "Through arts-based programs like this, children can gain skills for self-reflection, self-expression, and verbal communication. These become the tools that they carry with them, hopefully for the rest of their lives" (Magsamen & Ross, 2023, p. 87). Art can become a valuable skill to help students cope with difficult times and life and may continue supporting or overcoming challenges.

Connecting student and family connections with harmonious thinking is a beautiful notion intertwined with the thought process of Hozho. According to Wayne Peate (2004)

"A complex Navajo philosophical, religious, and aesthetic roughly translated to "beauty." Hozho also means seeking and incorporating aesthetic qualities into life; it means inner life and harmony, and it means making the most of all that surrounds us. It refers to a positive, beautiful, harmonious, happy environment that must be constantly created by thought and deed. Hozho encourages us to go in beauty and to enjoy the gifts of life and nature and health" (para. 2)

Harmonious thinking is not simply done, this process is day-to-day living, and the amount of reflection and learning from this teaching is difficult. Jaine Toth (2017) states,

"Sometimes we become angry and frustrated by outside forces. When we aren't in harmony it is easy to blame our family, our boss or co-workers, our neighbors, our government leaders. But harmony and balance can be created even in the face of difficulties..." (para 4).

Children model what they experience in their upbringing; children learn to cope and comprehend with their mindset. Living in harmony and balance is nurturing for an individual because it brings emotional positivity. Emotional strength built with Art has the most profound impact on individuals because of the healing it promotes. According to an American Scientist online article, "Art therapy clinicians focus on the process of making rather than the artistic product, which allows our clients to gain insights about their situations and develop inner emotional resilience" (2021, para 8). Art can strengthen an individual's emotional and other personal or developmental growth. According to an artist named Kimberly Poppe (2024), she states.

"Art helps us explore what is happening to us, gives us a means to express it, helps us to integrate it into our life story which gives it meaning and allows for some sense of release or letting go. Through the means of creativity, we can connect with the essence and fullness of who we really are. This is where the reservoir of healing resides" (para 1).

Art can derive many emotions and feelings in humans, and it can be therapeutic to develop this skill at any age.

Diné language Revitalization through art play is a crucial focus of my curriculum. Language revitalization is essential because the Diné language is becoming endangered. According to Avantpage (2022), a website promoting Language,

"Navajo is an important heritage language, with a rich history. However, children are taught English during school, and English is spoken more often at home than Navajo. For this reason, the number of Navajo speakers is decreasing, and the Language has an endangered status" (para 1).

Language is a critical component in culture, and history has stated that the Diné language is spoken less and less. This curriculum is an additional tool to help revive the Diné language and create Diné speakers.

Language learning in the classroom is not just about igniting the language, but also about the approach we use. This curriculum, with its TPR (Total Physical Response) approach, plays a significant role. As Jon Reyher (2003) states, "A popular approach to immersion for beginning language learners is TPR or Total Physical Response. The psychologist James J. Asher (200) popularized TPR in the 1970s" (para 1). TPR involves students physically responding to spoken words, and even using picture cues to enhance language learning. It's about building the

foundational part of language learning, with students modeling in a supportive environment. TPR emphasizes using physical response activities to increase learning opportunities and language retention. A TPR lesson involves a comprehensive sequence of actions accompanied by a series of commands or instructions given by the educator, with students responding by listening and presenting the appropriate action responses.

There are many benefits to using Total Physical Response to learn a language. According to Erin Walten, "Total Physical Response has a lot of benefits, particularly for beginners and young learners.

- The pairing of movement with Language is innately associated with effective learning
- Students actively use both the left and right sides of their brains
- It works with both small and large group
- It sharpens students' listening skills
- Students are not required to speak until they are ready to, therefore creating a "safe zone" that considerably lowers inhibitions and stress
- Students will appreciate the change of pace and potential for humor
- Kinesthetic learners (who respond well to physical activities) and visual learners (who learn best with visual cues) will learn much from TPR. (This is another reason why knowing [your students' personalities and learning types](#) is essential.)
- As no one is called upon individually, [TPR is excellent for introverted students](#)
- Limited materials and planning mean it's simple for teachers to prep

The Total Physical Response (TPR) approach will be used in this curriculum to scaffold students to learn Diné language in various art activities. This curriculum is a supporting tool to assist in revitalizing Language, and there are so many educators who can continue to strengthen the Diné language.

The main purpose of implementing the Diné' curriculum in my ECE curriculum is to encourage artistic Art through visual and hands-on learning. I plan to start my curriculum in October. The month allows for the change of curriculum schedule. In previous years, the school district usually had a Native American week, and I would like to embed this week into the three-week curriculum. The curriculum developed will encourage Diné language comprehension through an Early Childhood Scope. The introduction week will emphasize the clanship and Kinship of my students and their families. Clanship and Kinship are important to Diné' culture because it establishes identity with others and relationships. Our clans and the relationships we establish through clanship (referred to as Navajo clanship called Ke') with other members of our tribe are symbolic markers that form our identity as Navajo people (Haskie, M. 2013). The clan system connects Diné people by boundaries, connections, and physical relationships. The curriculum will unpack to develop, explore, and inform children about Diné' teachings and Language regarding student's interest areas. Students will be exposed to Diné literature and Language concerning early childhood education. Students will experience total physical response activities in language lessons and with pictorial support. Through these seven processes, early childhood students will use Diné language and teachings to start their learning foundation and encourage their talents and interests.

## **Classroom Activities**

The curriculum will be conducted in a three-week window. The focus of this curriculum is to encourage Diné language exposure in a preschool setting while fostering artistic growth. The lessons emphasize art standards, allowing children to learn Diné' teaching through hearing stories, songs, games, and manipulating concrete objects. The children will use their five senses to explore the Diné' curriculum lessons. The curriculum will focus on Diné culture through food, Language, clothing, music & storytelling in the first two weeks. The third week will align the curriculum with the district's original Native American week and festivities. In the third week, there is a trip to the Navajo Museum in Tuba City, Arizona. At the museum, students will experience and explore Navajo teaching and storytelling.

### **Week 1 & 2 - Introduction to Diné' Culture and Teaching.**

For the introduction part of the curriculum, I will be using puppets to introduce the theme. The puppets will have a female and male version (Navajo girl Mia and Navajo boy Lian). Puppets are a fun and interactive way to grab students' attention and stimulate the conversation about the puppet's Diné' clothing. I will give students time to look at the puppets and hear them introduce themselves to clans to develop Ke'. Then, I will let the students observe the puppet's clothing and appearance. Then I will complete a K-W-L chart of Diné' culture with my students. The KWL chart is designed to document students' background knowledge, what they learn, and, at the end, what they learned in summation. The developed pacing guide for the two weeks has been categorized into Literacy, Math, Science, Drama, Circle time focus, cooking, technology, and assessment. Since preschool learning is play-based, the curriculum is set up to revisit the areas throughout the two weeks. The activities in the first two weeks involve storytelling, technology, and songs.

There will be many hands-on activities that the students will be completing with the Circle Time and Focus Activity. At the end of Day 1, students will be sent home with a letter to parents, sharing our theme and invitation to invite the family into our center to share their songs and other customs. Parents will be asked to complete a college board with family members and clans. The colleges will go on our family board to share with our students. Showcasing family kinship and clans will demonstrate that they belong to Ke's harmony. The family board will allow students to see who is related to them by clans and who is not related. The family board will remain up for the duration of the theme. 8 Week 3- General Native American Cultural Week This week is the most exciting because it is a celebration week for everyone. Guest speakers will visit our Classroom this week to share information about Diné's culture and teaching. The third week focuses on hair styling, clan identification, moccasin day, traditional jewelry day, and traditional dress-up day. Students and staff are encouraged to participate and interact on the assigned days. This week will also include a field trip to the Tuba City, Arizona, Navajo Museum. The museum is for all ages and is very interactive. The museum aims to help people understand the exhibits of Navajo culture, traditions, family systems, and other customs.

### **Student Assessment Plan**

The curriculum assessment plan will use a rubric method and a student achievement data form. The rubric will indicate how students can meet the lesson's learning domains. The student achievement form will be a summative assessment during a one-to-one testing environment. The

teacher will use the data form to plan, reteach, or enrich activities based on the standard taught. The lessons and assessments are indicated in the assessment area of the pacing guide.

**Alignment with Standards Diné' Learning Standard:**

Concept 2- Nahat'a' Nahat'a' bik'ehgo a'nisht'ée dooleeł I will practice and apply practice Diné way of life through planning.'

PO3: Níłch'iał'aan ánaá' níłgíí shił bééhózin dooleeł

**Alignment with Standards Arizona State Early Learning Standard:** Social Studies Standard, STRAND 1: Family Concept 1: Understands Family The child demonstrates an understanding of families and the roles and responsibilities of being a family member.

c. Describes/discusses own family's cultural or family traditions

**Diné' Learning Standard:** Concept 2-Ádáhozdíłzin dooleeł.

I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity.

PO 1: Ínísts'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł.

I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

**Diné' Learning Standard:** Concept 1-Nítsáhákees Shintsáhákees shił niigo bee ákonisdzin dooleeł. I will acknowledge and value my thoughts and personality.

**Diné' Learning Standard:** Concept 2-Ádáhozdíłzin dooleeł. I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity.

PO 1: Ínísts'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł.

I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

**Teaching Strategies**

K-W-L Chart

The strategy will help teachers understand what their students already know about Navajo culture and what they want to learn. The chart allows the teacher to return and fill out the portion of what the students learned at the end of the unit. Peanut butter & Jelly (Think Pair share): This strategy is shared between two students. One student is assigned to peanut butter and the other to jelly. The peanut butter or jelly student will share their ideas and answers with their partner when shown a visual picture of the items.

Find Someone Who

This strategy will allow the teacher to incorporate visuals of Navajo items (e.g., cradleboard, Hogan, jewelry). Students will have to mingle and search for a person with the items. This interaction is a quick way for students to connect to Navajo cultural items that are visually inspired.

Puppet Play

This strategy, known as Puppet Play, is a fun and engaging way to build characters and help preschoolers learn about new topics. Diné'spuppets are an excellent way to deliver information and help students retain it. Diné'spuppets can also assist with developing language skills, including Diné'slanguage.

Field Trip/Virtual Field Trips



Field trips can provide preschool students with new opportunities for learning through experience. The Interactive Navajo Museum in Tuba City, Arizona, allows students to learn what to do instead of passively listening to information.

### Numbered Heads Together

This strategy will allow teachers to use cards to display learning information such as colors, weather, family, and animals for team teaching. The teacher asks the question, and students answer it solo, then put their heads together with the team to share the team's answer.

### 10 Technology

Technology is a powerful tool that can make lessons more interactive and hands-on for student learners. It can be used in virtual field trip videos and iPad learning of Diné' Bizaad. Technology can aid in PowerPoint presentation lessons and Smartboard demonstrations of Diné lessons. This strategy will allow students to access the Navajo language on YouTube videos and apps with Diné' Bizaad language on animals, objects, and food. iPad learning for technology is limited to seven minutes of screen time each day for each student.

### Mud Play with Water

This strategy will give students loose parts to strategize and create/construct Navajo Hogan and planting for vegetables and flowers. The instruction strongly assimilates STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Focus Activity This teaching activity/strategy is a critical piece of instruction. Students will work one-on-one with the teacher on a drama project. The project is set up as an "I do, we do, you do" approach. The activity is embedded with essential Language to strengthen Diné's learning concept. The focus activity is set up as a hands-on play area. This area can be set up outside or inside the Classroom.

### Library Discovery

This strategy allows book exploration of Diné' authors and illustrators. The library has book bags with props to enlighten reading and discovery. Families may check out the Diné-inspired book bags to explore and engage with their child at home.

### Family Nights

This strategy allows families to visit our center and engage in storytelling about stories they learned about social justice in their homes.

Total Physical Response is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input.

Flashcards contain a small amount of information that is held up for students to see and aid learning.

### Singing Songs

Songs can express information, improve listening skills, build vocabulary, provide repetition instruction, and be enjoyable.

Nature Walk Outdoor promotes senses and academics.

### Music and Movement

These activities promote body awareness, information retention, educational growth, pattern recognition, and physical development.

Open-ended questions allow space and time to answer questions. Cooperative Games

Games encourage academic growth, language development & repetition, social interaction, and growth.

Book Bags containing books and resources to encourage language growth and development.

American Sign Language assists language learning, social interaction, expressing ideas, and communication visually. Vision Boards visually show learners how to achieve goals, build background knowledge, and project images (new/old).

**Alignment with Standards Dine' Learning Standard:**

Concept 2- Nahat'a' Nahat'a' bik'ehgo a'nisht'ée dooleeł I will practice and apply practice Diné way of life through planning.'

PO3: Níłch'iał'aan ánáá' níłgígí shił bééhózin dooleeł Alignment with Standards Arizona State Early Learning Standard: Social Studies Standard,

STRAND 1: Family Concept 1: Understands Family The child demonstrates an understanding of families and the roles and responsibilities of being a family member. c. Describes/discusses own family's cultural or family traditions Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 2-Ádáhozdíłzin dooleeł. I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity.

PO 1: Íinísts'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł. I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 1-Nitsáhákees Shintsáhákees shił niigo bee ákonisdzin dooleeł. I will acknowledge and value my thoughts and personality. 9 Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 2-Ádáhozdíłzin dooleeł. I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity. PO 1: Íinísts'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł. I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

**Tuba City Early Childhood Development Learning Center**

Pre-Kindergarten Pacing Guide

	Theme	Literacy	Math	Science	Focus Activity	Circle Time	Assessment
<b>Week 1 &amp; 2</b>	Healing Through Art	Print Awareness: Recognize Name I will listen to cultural stories about the birds & Insects	Shapes in Dine' Bizaad  Circle.- názbąs. Square. dik'á,	Season: Spring I will identify types of weather	Jewelry Making I will recognize cultural items and jewelry. -Navajo artist showcase of jewelry makers	Introduction to Dine' culture & puppets Storytelling: First Laugh	Shapes in Dine' Bizaad  Rubric Assessment on types of weather
	<b>Cooking</b> Making Frybread with family  Making Blue Corn mush with family	Letter Knowledge: Letters in my name for clan activity. I will recognize Dine'	Shapes in Dine' Bizaad  Triangle. táá'go deez'á  Rectangle dik'áągo heeneez.	Season: Summer Assembly of loom schematics	Rug Weaving -Sheep shearing -loom making -colors in Dine' Bizaad -Patterns	Assembly of looms Storytelling: The Goat in the Rug-Weaving	Scissors Skills  Rubric assessment on Identifying cultural items & jewelry

		teaching of self -identity					
<b>Songs</b> Navajo Puppy Songs by Terry Teller Cradle Song by Sharon Burch Twinkle Twinkle little Stars by Radmilla Cody The Baby Song by Talibah		Phonological Awareness: Listening with Purpose I will listen to oral stories about the stars	Counting in Dine' Bizaad 1-10	Season: Fall	Corn Husking -colors of corn -corn in Dine' Bizaad -purpose of corn Cradle Board introduction	Colors & counting in Dine' Bizaad Storytelling: Seasons and animals	Rubric assessment on Book Handling of Dine' Animals to Count (little book)
<b>Technology</b> Collection of YouTube videos with appropriate Navajo language for early childhood learners		Narrative Skills: Make Predictions I will recognize the stories of a hogan	Colors in Dine' Bizaad	Season: Winter Outdoor: Mud play for Hogan activity	Making Hogan Hogan -Purpose of Hogan -materials for hogan	Focus on Dine' Kinship and terms I will use appropriate Kinship terms	Rubric Assessment on Colors in Dine' Bizaad
<b>Week 3</b>  <b>Reconnect with school's general Native American Cultural week</b>	<b>Focus:</b> Traditional Hairstyle/Headband  Storytelling: importance of hair styling- Navajo Hair Story  Storytelling: Navajo Basket by guest speaker	<b>Focus:</b> T-shirt & clan color to help identify clan family in school setting <b>Field trip:</b> Navajo Museum, Tuba City, Arizona	<b>Focus:</b> Traditional Moccasin Day Storytelling: history of Moccasins  Navajo shoe game & storytelling with guest speaker	<b>Focus:</b> Traditional Jewelry day  Storytelling: Silversmith and jewelry making with guest speakers	<b>Focus:</b> Traditional dress up day  Storytelling: High school students reading to PREK their completed Dine' Bizaad books.		

### Shape Identification Lesson:

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, the students will be taught the art concept of shapes in Dine' Bizaad through visuals, technology, and games. The teacher will focus on the following seven shape descriptors: Circle (Nązbąs), square (Dik'á), Star (Só'), Rhombus (Dijgo Bidazniik'á), Oval (Heenezgo Nąsbąs), Triangle (táá'go deez'á), and Rectangle (Nineezgo Dik'á). The lesson objective is to use art materials and paint colors to represent types of shapes.

**Building Background:** The shape lesson will be incorporated into our circle times, group times, and teachable moments in a mural play.

Students will be allowed to explore types of shapes through songs, puppet plays, stories, and total physical response play,

**Classroom Activities:** Discovery areas include the science area, dramatic play area, library area, music area, art area, technology area, and puppet play area. These areas can incorporate the lesson in many ways by showcasing the activity in visuals, games, puppet plays, virtual field trips, and language activities. Teachers can encourage Dine' bizaad of the concept in many teachable moments in the discovery areas.

Small group activities can focus on the lesson goal and desired outcome. Teachers need to scaffold the lesson based on students' learning needs. Guest speakers can also emphasize a Dine teaching approach in a small or large group setting.

**Lesson Materials:** Assorted paint, paint brushes (optional), painting paper, cutouts of shape images, yarn, and paint bowls.

**Lesson extension:** An additional learning bonus for this activity can incorporate mixing colors for shape representation.

**Lesson Rationale:** Shape recognition is a vital skill in our world today. Shapes are used to discriminate between several objects, items, locations, etc. An important benefit of students learning about shapes is that it helps them develop early literacy and math skills. The shapes that we see all around us in our everyday environment are the same shapes that create letter formation and numbers in our alphabet and number system.

**Alignment with Standards**

Lessons for types of shapes will have the following standards:

Arizona State Early Learning Math Standard: Geometry

- 4.1.a Recognizes basic two-dimensional shapes when presented in different orientations.
- 4.1.b Uses the names of geometric shapes when describing objects found in the environment.
- 4.1.c Creates two-dimensional shapes during play.

Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 2- Nahat'a' Nahat'a' bik'ehgo a'nisht'ée dooleel  
I will practice and apply the Diné way of life through planning.'

Rubric used:

Student Achievement Data Form		
	<p>Criteria are based on identifying different types of weather.</p> <p>The teacher will display types of shapes</p> <p>The teacher will ask students to identify or describe the type of shapes.</p> <p>Students can respond in Dine language or Total Physical Response for data collection.</p> <p>Circle (Nqzbqs)</p> <p>Square (Dik'á)</p> <p>Star (Sq')</p> <p>Rhombus (Dijigo Bidazniik'á)</p> <p>Oval (Heeneezgo Nqsbqs)</p> <p>Triangle (táá'go deez'á)</p> <p>Rectangle (Nineezgo Dik'á).</p>	<p>The teacher will need to indicate the number of students in each domain.</p> <p>Identify the percentage &amp; mean of student data.</p> <p>Based on the data, teachers may need to reteach or enrich the standard taught.</p>
Exceeds	Student matched 6-7/7 shape identification/oral or TPR description	<p>The number of students who:</p> <p>Exceed:</p> <p>Percent of total class:</p> <p>Number of Students:</p>
Meets	Students matched 4-5/7 shape identification/oral or TPR description	<p>The number of students who:</p> <p>Meets:</p> <p>Percent of total class:</p> <p>The number of Students:</p>

Approaches	Students match 2-3/7 shape identification/oral or TPR description	The number of students who: Approaches: Percent of total class The number of Students:
Falls Far Below	Student match 0-1/7 shape identification/oral or TPR description	The number of students who: FFB: Percent of total class: The number of Students:

### **Designing a Rug:**

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, students will explore the art concept of rug weaving. They will build background knowledge on the process of weaving and designing a rug. Students will also be allowed to develop and design their own rug with various materials.

#### **Building Background:**

Navajo women have woven traditional rugs for centuries and used them for many purposes. Rugs serve a functional purpose and represent Diné beliefs, heritage, and way of life. The rug patterns can tell stories of the Diné traditions, spirituality, and community.

**Classroom Activities:** Discovery areas include the science area, dramatic play area, library area, music area, art area, technology area, and puppet play area. These areas can incorporate the lesson in many ways by showcasing the activity in visuals, games, puppet plays, virtual field trips, and language activities. Teachers can encourage Dine' bizaad of the concept in many teachable moments in the discovery areas.

Small group activities can focus on the lesson goal and desired outcome. Teachers need to scaffold the lesson based on students' learning needs. Guest speakers can also emphasize Dine's teaching in a small or large group setting.

**Lesson Materials:** small loom or cardboard, string, yarn, plastic needle, popsicle stick, and Book: The Goat in the Rug by Charles L. Blood.

**Lesson extension:** an extension activity would be to pattern the rug's colors.

**Lesson Rationale:** Rugs in Diné culture have so much educational learning behind them. The rug's foundation begins with shearing sheep, wool processing using various tools, and wool dyeing. Then, the process of loom weaving and pattern development begins. The craft is time-consuming, and the outcome for each rug is amazing. The rugs can generate pictorial meaning, stories, and other various designs.

#### **Alignment with Standards**

Lesson for designing a rug

##### **Arizona State Early Learning Standard:**

Mathematics: Strand 2 Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Concept 2: Patterning

The child recognizes, fixes, duplicates, extends, describes, and creates patterns.

a. Recognize patterns in the real world.

e. Creates patterns.

Strand 3: Measurement and Data, Concept 3: Measures

The child uses measurement to describe and compare objects in the environment.

c. Uses various standard measuring tools for simple measuring tasks.

Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 2-Ádáhozdílzin dooleeł. I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity. PO 1: İinısts'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł. I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

Student Achievement Data Form		
Criteria are based on music making.		The teacher will need to indicate the number of students in each domain. Identify the percentage & mean of student data. Based on the data, teachers may need to reteach or enrich the standard taught.
<p><b>A checklist for designing a rug</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Visually explores rug materials</li> <li>-Student physically engages with rug materials</li> <li>-Student creates a rug design</li> <li>-Student constructs a completed rug</li> </ul>		
Exceeds	Students can complete 4/4 out of the checklist. The number of students who:	The number of students who: Exceed: Percent of total class: The number of Students:
Meets	Student can complete 3/4 out of the checklist	The number of students who: Meets: Percent of total class: The number of Students:
Approaches to learning	Student can complete 2/4 out of the checklist	The number of students who: Approaches: Percent of total class: The number of Students:
Falls Far Below Visual Exploration	Student can complete 1/4 out of the checklist	The number of students who: FFB: Percent of total class: The number of Students:

**Color Identification Lesson:  
Making Color Wheel Collage**

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, the students will be taught the eight primary colors in Dine' Bizaad through visuals, technology, puppet play, and games. The color lesson will incorporate into our circle times, group times, and teachable moments in discovery areas. The teacher will focus on the following colors: Black (Łizhin), Brown (Dibélchí'), Blue (Yágo Dootł'izh), Green (Ch'ilgo Dootłizh), Orange (Yéego Łitso), Purple ( Tsédídéeé), Red (Łichíí) and Yellow ( Łitso).

**Building Background:** Our world is full of colors, making life very eventful and exciting. The food we consume has colors, and the animals we see and the plants and flowers we crop have colors. Color is an ongoing concept in our world. Color identification is vital in learning how to sustain and balance healthy eating in the food groups and categorizing other essential information such as parking, locations, maps, etc.

**Classroom Activities:** Discovery areas include the science area, dramatic play area, library area, music area, art area, technology area, and puppet play area. These areas can incorporate the lesson in many ways by showcasing the activity in visuals, games, puppet plays, virtual field

trips, and language activities. Teachers can encourage Dine' bizaad of the concept in many teachable moments in the discovery areas.

Small group activities can focus on the lesson's goal and desired outcome. Teachers need to scaffold the lesson based on students' learning needs. Guest speakers can also emphasize Dine's teaching in a small or large group setting.

**Lesson Materials:** construction paper, glue, markers, tissue paper squares, paper squares, patterned scrapbook paper, torn paper, or other various collage materials.

**Lesson extension:** An additional learning bonus for this activity can be incorporating a color hunt of items inside or outside the classroom and counting how many things you found of a specific color.

**Lesson Rationale:** This lesson incorporates so many learning aspects of recycling, color identification, fine motor skills, sorting skills, counting, and even collaboration skills. The purpose of this lesson is to collage and sort items by their color. Students will visually see how items can coordinate with matching colors and the tactile items used to enhance language as they describe the characteristics of each item.

**Alignment with Standards:**

Lesson for color identification will have the following standards:

Mathematics: Strand 3: Measurement & Data, Concept 1: Sorts and Classifies

The child sorts and groups objects by a variety of attributes.

- a. Sorts and classifies objects by one or more attributes (e.g., size, color, shape, texture, use).

Language and Literacy: Strand 1: Language, Concept 3: Vocabulary

The child understands and uses increasingly complex vocabulary.

- a. Uses rich vocabulary across many topic areas.
- b. Uses category labels and names objects within a category.

Fine Arts: Strand 1: Visual Arts, Concept 1: Improvises and connects with visual arts.

The child uses various materials, media, digital tools, techniques, and processes to explore, create, respond to, and connect with visual arts.

- a. Creates their own original works using a variety of materials/media, tools, and techniques (e.g., materials/media, such as, paper, digital drawing application, sand, clay).
- c. Engages in two- and three-dimensional artistic investigations.

Physical Development, Health & Safety: Strand 1: Physical Development, Concept 2: Fine Motor Development

The child uses fingers, hands, and wrists to manipulate tools and materials.

a. Uses fingers, hands, and wrists to manipulate a variety of tools and materials (e.g., crayons, markers, chalk, sponges, paintbrushes, scissors, pencils, silverware).

b. Uses hand-eye coordination to perform simple tasks.

c. Manipulates smaller objects, tools, and instruments that require wrist and squeezing motions.

Dine' Learning Standard: Concept 1-Nitsáhákees Shintsáhákees shił niigo bee ákonisdzin dooleeł. I will acknowledge and value my thoughts and personality.

PO 3: Nitł' iz ałtaas'éei baa ákonisin dooleeł. I will recognize cultural items and jewelry.

**Dine' Learning Standard:** Concept 2-Ádáhozdíłzin dooleeł. I will practice and maintain the sacredness of self-identity. PO 1: İinists'áá' go na'nitin baa ákonisin dooleeł. I will listen to and observe cultural teachings.

Student Achievement Data Form		
<p>Criteria are based on identifying eight primary colors.</p> <p>Black: Łizhin            Brown: Dibéłchí'            Blue: Yágo Dootł'izh            Green: Ch'ílgo Dootłizh            Orange: Yéego Łitso            Purple: Tsédí déé            Red: Łichíí            Yellow: Łitso</p>		<p>The teacher will need to indicate the number of students in each domain. Identify the percentage &amp; mean of student data.</p> <p>Based on the data, teachers may need to reteach or enrich the standard taught...</p>
Exceeds	Students can identify and match 8/8 colors with color cards.	<p>The number of students who:            Exceed:            Percent of total class:            The number of Students:</p>
Meets	Students can identify and match 6-7/8 colors with color cards.	<p>The number of students who:            Meets:            Percent of total class:            The number of Students:</p>
Approaches	Students can identify and match 3-5/8 colors with color cards.	<p>The number of students who:            Approaches:            Percent of total class:            The number of Students:</p>
Falls Far Below	Students can identify and match 0-2/8 colors with color cards.	<p>The number of students who:            FFB:            Percent of total class:            The number of Students:</p>



## Resources:

- Kaimal, G. (n.d.). How art can heal | american scientist. How Art Can Heal. <https://www.americanscientist.org/article/how-art-can-heal>
- Toth, J. (2020, August 21). The Navajo concept of Hozho: Living in Harmony. BahaiTeachings.org. <https://bahaiteachings.org/navajo-concept-hozho-living-harmony/>
- PEATE, W. (2004). Listening with your heart: Lessons from Native America. RIO NUEVO PUB.
- Reyhner, J. A. (2003). Nurturing native languages. Northern Arizona University.
- Poppe, K. (2024, March 22). How art can heal. Kimberly Poppe: Art & Design | Photography & Consulting. <https://kimberlypoppe.com/photography-art-and-design-articles/how-art-can-heal>
- Avantpage. (2022, February 15). Language spotlight: Navajo, the endangered language. AvantPage. <https://avantpage.com/blog/language-spotlight-navajo/>
- Walton, E. (n.d.). An introduction to total physical response (and four activities to try) ' EF teacher zone. EF Teacher Zone. <https://teacherblog.ef.com/total-physical-response-efl-classroom/>
- Magsamen, S., & Ross, I. (2023). Your brain on art: How the arts transform us. Random House.
- Castagno, A., & Brayboy, B. (2008). Culturally Responsive Schooling for Indigenous Youth: A Review of the Literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(4), 941-993.
- Djonko-Moore, C., Jiang, S., & Gibson, K. (2018). Multicultural teacher education and diversity practices in early childhood. *Journal for Multicultural A theory of culturally relevant pedagogy."* *American Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 465-491, doi: 10.3102/00028312032003465.
- Haskie, M., & Edwards, Jennifer L. (2002). Preserving a culture: Practicing the Navajo principles of Hózhó, ' Dóó. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Haskie, M. (2013). Teaching sociology at a tribal college: Navajo philosophy as a pedagogy. *The American Sociologist*, 44(4), 378-384.
- York, S., & New, E. (2016). Roots and wings : Affirming culture and preventing bias in early childhood (Third ed.).
- Pewewardy, Lees, & Clark-Shim. (2018). The Transformational Indigenous Praxis Model: Stages For Developing Critical Consciousness in Indigenous Education. *Wicazo Sa Review*, 33(1), 38. <https://doi.org/10.5749/wicazosareview.33.1.0038>
- Souto-Manning, M., Ryan, S., Cowhey, M., Bentley, D. F., Padron, H., Baines, J., Felderman, B.

C., Mendonca, M. H., & Bouari, D. (2013). Multicultural teaching in the early childhood classroom: Approaches, strategies, and tools, preschool–2nd grade (Early Childhood Education Series) (1/16/13 ed.). Teachers College Press.

Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. M. A. (2012). Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wiley.

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/tuba-city-az> Website data supporting the latest profile of Tuba City demographics.

[www.TCUSD.org](http://www.TCUSD.org) Website for Tuba City Unified School District.

<https://qualityfirstaz.com/parents/what-is-quality-first/> Website data for information on Quality First in Arizona.

<http://www.gomyson.com/subclan/getclan.php> Website for list of Navajo clans in Dine' Bizaad and English. Website also assists with clan introduction.

### **Songs:**

<https://youtu.be/LS2F1qz7BSA> Navajo Puppy Song by Terry Teller

<https://youtu.be/TwxvLCfdQU0> Cradle Song by Sharon Burch

[https://youtu.be/0dR0rzZD\\_1o](https://youtu.be/0dR0rzZD_1o) Twinkle Twinkle little Stars by Radmilla Cody

<https://youtu.be/eYf4upJqqA0> The Baby Song by Talibah

### **Technology Links for supplemental teaching support**

<https://youtu.be/CV0kgidzGqY> Farm Animals in Navajo by BlueBirdFlower

<https://youtu.be/1nFmMP2NgkU> Colors in Navajo by BlueBirdFlower

<https://youtu.be/5LSRnQZm7HE> Number in Navajo by BlueBirdFlower

<https://youtu.be/6QKiU-V0HQw> Shapes in Navajo by BlueBirdFlower

<https://youtu.be/gni8nLbP22E> Days of the week in Navajo BlueBirdFlower

Ipad app: Navajo Toddler by Isreal Shortman