

Traditional Cornfield Food and Names

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Author Note:

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“The philosophy that underlies all Native American healing techniques- herbal, physical, and spiritual- is really very simple. In order to live healthfully, people must learn to live in harmony with the world around them. In a sense, the Native Americans were the first ecologists. They wanted their relationship with Mother Earth to be as harmonious as possible because they believed that only when they lived in harmony with the earth would they achieve spiritual peace, which was essential for good health” (Shimer, 2004).

Introduction

Yá’át’ée’h, this is my second year participating in the Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators Program at Northern Arizona University. I wanted to take the program again to continue finding or learning new ways to implement the learning strategies and learning supplements to my Navajo classes. I have created a classroom where my students are involved with my discussions about the many topics that I am covering. I am transitioning myself from the traditional lecture type class to a student-oriented classroom. As an educator, there are students in the classroom that have support from their family, relatives, or communities with their native language, and then there are some students that do not have any support. I am also promoting students that keep to themselves and. Have them step out of their comfort zone and share with their peers.

At a young age, I was told about my Navajo cultural teaching by my parents and relatives. I still remember the stories that my elders, including my parents, have told me. My parents would say, “One day it will be up to me as a Navajo individual to share and pass on our stories to the young generations. Remember the stories that are shared with you, you are part of the stories too.” With that in mind, I have presented many traditional stories to my students orally, like how my elders did in the past. “Bidziil is a concrete strength, and it is abstract power. In this latter sense, it is power based on knowledge which is acquired through learning the stories and the ritual” (Farella, 1984). In most cases, I have orally addressed it first in Navajo and then summarized it in English. Most of my students that come into the classroom are still learning their Native language (Navajo). I want the students to understand and comprehend the topics in both languages. To me, my mother tongue is very important to me because that was what I was raised with. Learning the English language, I learned that when I went to boarding school. There is a small percentage of students that know about their traditional Navajo teaching or cultural teaching. In this curriculum I will be doing food (Ch’iiyáán) pronunciation in Navajo and what it means. Mainly, food that is grown in the cornfield. Before I begin a lesson, I do a Pre-assessment (KWL) on the topic. That shows me how many students know about the topic. I start with the word “cornfield” and explain the reason it’s called da’ak’eh. After that I do a Compare and Contrast chart with the students, the old ways and the new ways of farming. There are several lessons that cover the words or phrases that are related to cornfields or gardens. There are fruits and vegetables names that I cover with the students. Also, I will introduce some new garden crops that are not covered in the textbook. I also cover why foods are named in a particular way and share the importance of crops.

Context and Rationale

Context

I came to Flagstaff after graduating from high school. The important thing was to go to school at Coconino Community College and Northern Arizona University. On top of that, I realized I needed a job, so I found a job that worked with my school schedule. After several years, I completed my degree, I started working for Flagstaff Unified School District at Puente de Hózhó. A bilingual magnet school for elementary students that are wanting to learn their Native language. I taught Navajo language and other subjects to 4th grade, 5th grade, and 6th grade. About 98% of the students were Navajo and 2% were of different tribes or ethnicities. This was prior to 6th grade being moved to the middle school level. I taught there for about 5 years before leaving for another life adventure.

A couple of years went by before I started teaching again. This time I moved to STAR school, which is about 25 miles out of Flagstaff. The acronym for S.T.A.R. (Service To All Relation). There I have co-taught 1st grade and 2nd grade with another teacher. About 95% of the students were Navajo and 5% were of different tribes or ethnicities. I have co-taught general studies and did a little of the Montessori teaching to the students. On top of that, I taught a little Navajo language to the first and second graders. A unique isolated school that taught about the relation between people and the environment. Plants, trees, animals and so forth. This is when I found out about the Navajo Nation Peacemaking system. I never heard about it until I got to STAR school, and I am glad that I did. It is a system that influences traditional practice and kinship. The people start off by introducing themselves and their clans. The first step is to find out how people are related to one another. By using relationships people resolve their differences with one another. It was always fascinating to me that the school used the Peacemaking system. After learning about that, the following year I got hired to teach at Coconino High School.

After completing my Major's program, I inquired about a position at Coconino High School. One of the community's parents kept coming around asking me to teach at Coconino High School. After they stopped by my work place several times, I went to the district office (FUSD) and submitted my applications for the Navajo instructor position. After being interviewed by the principal of Coconino High School, I was hired to teach Navajo Language, also Navajo History and Government. Thus, I begin my journey of teaching at a high school level.

I have been working for Flagstaff USD for about eleven years at the high school level. I teach six classes at Coconino High School. They include five Navajo language classes: two classes of Navajo 1, two classes of Navajo 2, and one class of Navajo 3/4. The sixth class is the Navajo History and Government class. The Navajo History and Government class is offered to high school students at Coconino High School during their Junior and Senior years. Most of the students that come to the classroom are Navajo students. The percentage breakdown of the classes combined looks like 90% Navajo, 7% other tribe, and 3% others. The 2025/26 school year Navajo 1 classes combined had about twenty-nine students, Navajo 2 classes combined had about twenty-eight students, Navajo 3/4 had about ten students, and Navajo History and Government class had about twelve students.

At Coconino High School, the Navajo History and Government class is offered to students that are in their Junior or Senior years. By the time they get to their Junior and Senior level, most students would have decided that they are continuing to pursue their higher education. Seniors that are seeking a scholarship have an opportunity to receive one from the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation offers the Chief Manuelito Scholarship program to students that do well in their four years of high school academics. The Navajo History and Government class is set for high critical thinkers and high learners that want to learn about their Navajo History and Navajo Government. In the CRAIS Tool, “Critical understandings of diversity, and specifically race: 9. Models critical thinking about historical narratives and contemporary status quo” (2021). It is full of information about Navajo history (oral or text form), and it requires intensive reading and writing. Most of these students that are taking the class have gone through the Navajo language classes. Most students take Navajo 1 and Navajo 2; they are usually finished with their requirements by then. Very few would go on to Navajo 3 or Navajo 4. At that level, Dual Enrollment is available for students through Coconino Community College. My recommendation for my students is to know some Navajo language because they must introduce themselves in Navajo when they are doing the presentation. I share as much information with my students through the years they come to take Navajo from me or before they exit their high school. Hopefully, one day they will begin to value the importance of being a Navajo person, and they can teach the next generations to come. Another thing I recommend for them is to start listening and start recording the information that is presented to them by their grandparents (maternal or paternal). To have them seek the importance of their family history, their stories, and their teachings. Students can find out how powerful their own family stories have more value and sacredness that they need to help them value themselves as Navajo. In time they begin to understand the value of being a Navajo or Dine. The journey that we take together through the year helps us bind that relation between the instructor and the learners. Most will have a better understanding of who they are by the end of the school year, and they will continue to learn about themselves.

Coconino High School has a student population of 1,506 for the 2024/25 school year. The diverse population is 31.8% white, 35.3% Hispanic and 26.7% Native American. There is a small percentage of other nationalities that attend Coconino High School. Asian, African Americans and others. The students that generally come to Coconino High School are in the Flagstaff community and the surrounding areas. Some come from the Navajo Reservation like Cameron, Gray Mountain, Leupp, Grand Falls, Tolani and Dilkon, etc. Even though there are no residential dorms offered to students that come off the reservation to go to school, still they come to Coconino High School. There are parents that come to Flagstaff to work, and they bring their children with them to attend the public schools here in Flagstaff. For many others, parents have gone to school here in town and found jobs; they are raising their children here in the Flagstaff community. Flagstaff is a border town of the Navajo Reservation, and many of the Navajo people came to Flagstaff to go to school either in elementary, middle school, high school, college or university. The other factor is to find a better high paying job. Navajo Reservation does not have high paying jobs, so people must look elsewhere to find a job that meets their needs of income.

Like me, I came to Flagstaff to go to school at Coconino Community College and Northern Arizona University. My parents were always encouraging us to continue our education and make something out of ourselves. So, I got my degree in education and now I am teaching at a high school level. Every year, during the first week of school, the students work on their clans and introductions in English and in Navajo. It helps them identify themselves as a Navajo person. Even

though they come from different parts of the Navajo Reservation, they find that their clans help them connect with one another. There are clan system charts that I give them so they can find out their own clan and find out how they are related to one another. If there is no relation, I have them greet one another as maternal grandmother (Shichó/ shimá sání) or maternal grandfather (Shicheii). A cultural teaching about kinship that my mother and father have taught me through the years. After several lessons, we get to discuss the topic, "Cornfields". The traditional foods that are grown in the cornfield. We discussed the topic for about two to three days. We, Compare and Contrast chart the old ways and the new ways of doing cornfields. Types of traditional food that are grown and what are new to the cornfield as of today. Some of the students have no knowledge about cornfields because they have grown up in the city or town. As well as learning the names of the crops in Navajo and English. We go into more detail on why the cornfield products are named the way they are in Navajo. So, the students will have a better understanding of the cornfield products' names.

"Yá'át'ééh, Junior Goh yinishyé. Tl'ízilání nishlį, Chishí báshishchíin, Kinyaa'áanii dashicheii, Tsédeeshgíizhnii dashináli. Dził Ntsaa náhas 'a'déé' naashá. Dził Yijiin bikáá'déé'. Éi áadi shiyaa hoo'a' dóo áadéé' ch'eshikééh."

Hello, my name is Junior Goh. I am of the Manygoats clan, born for the Chiricahua Apache, my maternal grandfathers are the Towering House People, and my paternal grandfathers are the Rock Gap People. I am originally from Black Mesa and Big Mountain region. Part of the Hopi Partitioned Land. The region is the birthplace of my first clan, the Manygoats (Tl'ízilání). My mom will always say, "Naabehó bizaad bee yanílti' éi nizaad át'é. Naabehó baa hane' bíhool'aah, Naabehó bínantin bíhool'aah. Kóq t'óo aháyóigóo baahane' dahóló. Díi ts'ida áłtsé Naabehó wólyéii hooghan nimázi si'áádóo bíhoo'aahgo át'é. Kóq, kq' diiltł'ih dóo honeeshgish bíighah sitáago áadóo áłtsé íhoo'aahgo át'é." "Learning Navajo language, Navajo history, Navajo cultural stories, and Navajo traditional teaching, it must take place at home in a hogan. A hogan is where you have the central fire going with a fire poker beside it. Within the walls of the hogan one learns about being a Navajo." And continue with "One day, we will be gone, and you will be teaching these to the younger generation. It may be your own kin that you will be teaching one day. So, remember and never forget about the teaching and the stories that we tell you." So, that is where I start with my class, from within the walls of the hogan.

As I recall, my dad did most of the farming for his family. He would travel eight miles to the of the cornfield, which is by the canyon. The canyon was northwest of where we resided. He would say, "I went to the cornfield and hoed weeds. To prepare it for this coming year." He never went by the calendar but used the traditional method, that was to observe the moon and stars (constellations). We never went with him, so I do not know how he actually did the preparations. My mom once said, "Your father goes to the cornfield and does his blessing. He sings his blessing songs and does his blessing prayer before planting any seeds. At home, he would take out the seeds that needed to be planted; he would organize the seeds. He would go through all the seeds and talk about it. "This is corn. This one is white corn, this one is blue corn, and this one is yellow corn." The story of corn (Naadaa') is told in many of our traditional stories. From the First World, when First Man and Woman, they were created out of the perfect ear corn. We Navajo use corn for many

things from home cooking to ceremonial purposes. So, yes, corn is very important to the Navajo people. “But the corn meal and corn pollen are also the food of diyinii, and these are returned to diyinii in the form of offerings. This food provides sustenance both to diyinii and to the earth-surface beings” (Farella, 1984). He would take out the melon seeds and say, “This one is the watermelon seeds, this is cantaloupe seeds, this is squash seeds, and this is pumpkin seeds.” I never saw him plant beans in all the years that he was around. In the late afternoon sun, we would get in his old yellow pickup truck and head to the cornfield. After thirty minutes on the dirt road, we would get to the cornfield. He would hand us a coffee can filled with corn kernel and tell us to go plant. I would watch my siblings, and they would advise me to walk about three feet away from them and plant the seeds that were in the can.

Rationale

Farming is one of the oldest and the most natural ways to grow food. “Some narratives credit various beings with bringing seeds from the Lower Worlds during the Emergence, and these seeds became the source of planting for both Puebloans and Navajos” (Frisbie, 2018). In Navajo, it is no different. I am fortunate to have been raised with it by my parents. Especially my father. He was the one that would go out to the cornfields towards the end of May to prepare the cornfield. If there were some weeds in the cornfield, he would just dig them out with a shovel. But if there are lots of weeds in the cornfield, he would come home and tell his family that he needs help clearing. As a family we would drive several miles to get to the cornfield. Bring out the homemade cultivator or plow to clear the weeds from the cornfield. My sibling would have a hoe in hand to clear out the small weeds. Clearing the cornfield takes a whole day with the help of all family members. Afterwards, we would plant the seeds that he prepared at home. Some of my students come from this type of background and they have knowledge about farming. They know about the hard labor that is involved with farming.

In the classroom, I talk about in detail what farming is on the reservation. I tell the story in Navajo first and I do a summary of that story in English. It helps the students that are still learning the language. To some extent, farming is in every Navajo family. Some families continue to practice while some families stop practicing. I have the students that know about farming talk about it as a classroom discussion. So, others would get familiar with the topic. The Navajo Language textbook we have in the classroom does not cover farming that much. It is like a short introduction with a few words or phrases. Or verbs that have connections to farming in Navajo. There is a list of foods in Navajo and translated to English. Otherwise, as a teacher, I will introduce words that are not discussed in the textbook. Words like the newer foods that farmers grow and hand tools that are used in the cornfield. The process of growing produce in the cornfield is a lot of work. Keeping weeds out and watering the plants when they start to grow. Especially during the drought season, my father would always go to the cornfield in the heat of the afternoon to check on the crops. If it needs watering, he will come home and load up the empty water barrels. He asks if anyone would help, but we would all go to help. We go to the water well and load up the water with pails. When we finished, we went to the cornfield and carried a bucket of water around to water the crops. At the same time, we would mend the fence that the cattle turned down. When the crops began to grow, they were one of the hardest things to tend to. Be there every day or night to keep little critters out. After the crops get bigger, usually the little critters do not bother the growing crops.

By July, the monsoon rain would appear, and the need for watering would be done less than often. But still my father would travel to the cornfield to maintain the growth of the crops and maintain the weeds.

Content Objectives

Prospectus

Cornfield and its food

As I am remembering my parent's description of seeds, "During the great flood in the third world, all The People moved into the fourth world. The People realized they have forgotten all the seeds in the world below. The People did not know how to start their crops again. And from behind The People came Turkey. Turkey came forward and told The People that he had to share what he has taken from the world below. Turkey shook itself four times and all the seeds came out of its feathers. The People rejoiced and thanked Turkey for what it had done."

"Alk'idáá', jini..." is the opening phrase to many of the cultural stories that were told to me by my elders of the past. My mother and father were no different; they would begin their stories that way. A way to get your attention to their oral stories. Stories that are not written down but told to young ones. It is a continuous storytelling from the generations before us and now it is handed down to us. "Turkey is frequently mentioned, and the seeds are usually for corn, beans, and squash, among other plants" and "...has Turkey shaking grains of white, blue, yellow, and variegated corn from its wings, followed by pumpkin (or maybe squash), watermelon, muskmelon, and beans seeds, four of each, each time." (Frisbie, 2018). As of now, they have journeyed to the next world. Now, we, the children of our elders, must carry on the stories that they shared with us when we were young. All I have now are memories, the stories, the moments, the tranquilities of their time amongst us children. I often wonder if they taught us all of what we needed to learn about our past, present and future.

So, I begin, "Alk'idáá', jini," with what my mom and dad told me through the years about the cornfield. My mom states, "The cornfield is one of the easiest ways to grow your own food. There is no need to pay with money. Follow your father; he is preparing the cornfield. Begin what involves having a cornfield. To maintain it. It is a lot of work to do. One must go to the cornfield in the heat of the day to hoe weeds, mend the fences." "In the old days, we (Navajos) would go to a location or cornfield held by families and relatives of the same clan. They would all come to gather and prepare the field. That's why we call cornfield (da'ak'eh). A place where families and relatives come together. Ours was a place towards Kayenta where the rock slopes down. That whole area was our cornfield. We would go there and help plant and maintain the cornfield. And when harvesting time came around, we divided up all the harvest. It was like that back then, now we have our own cornfield. Go now. Help your father and learn his ways." There are different stories about cornfields across the reservation. Every family has their own story. So, what I share is what I learned through the years from my parents and relatives.

I grew up in the Hopi Petition Land (HPL) or formally known as Joint Use Area (JUA). Miles from the nearest town or store. Over the years, most of the families that resided there have

relocated. I grew up with a low income. My mother stayed home and took care of the kids and the homestead. My father went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad. So did several of my older brothers after high school. With a low income, farming was one of the ways that our family received food and saved money. We did not go to the store or trading post every day or week because it took at least 2 hours one way trip. With the harvest that we received it kept us fed through the year. The cornfield was about several miles northwest of our home. If we drove, it would take about thirty to forty minutes to get there. Walking usually took about two hours. So, when my father was working, we would go to the cornfield to tend to it. Hoeing weeds and watering the crops: corn, watermelon, squash and whatever we planted. Most of the time we had to haul water to give to the crops. Otherwise, we had to walk to the nearest well or spring to bring back water. So, my mom had to haul barrels and fill them up with water and then take them to the cornfield.

My father had about 4 acres of cornfield, and it was next to a small wash/ arroyo that led into the canyon. It was mostly sandy soil with no clay. In that cornfield, he planted peaches and apricots from seedlings. He made it grow to be big fruit trees. It was quite a harvest when all fruit trees produced their fruits. The fruit trees were the ones that produced their fruits early, and they ripened in the cornfield. Some days we would stay there and tend to the cornfield. We would bring the livestock if we chose to stay for several weeks. We, the younger kids, would tend to the herd most of the days, taking them into the canyon west of us. It was about half a mile away. We go there to have them drink water from the small stream made by underground water sources. A small spring that ran out from under a big boulder. As for my parents, they always tended to the crops and mended fencing. If they needed a post to be replaced, they waited until we came back with the herd in the afternoon or evening. Most of the time, when we ate, we went to the cornfield to get a fresh watermelon and have it with dinner.

My father did all the preparations for the cornfield when we were at school. He would come out to the cornfield and do his blessings and prayers so he would have plenty of harvest. I never saw him do it, but my mother was the one that told us about it. When we got home for the weekend, he would take us to the cornfield. He would divide all the seeds at home, and he knew what they were. He never labeled them because he never went to school nor did my mother. Both of my parents somehow managed to stay away from going to school. But the knowledge they both had was way superior to a person having a doctoral degree. He would give us coffee cans or USDA cans filled with seeds. Corn was planted in most of the central area of the cornfield. Melons were off to the side in a medium size section along with squash and pumpkins. He would always remind us to plant this number of seeds in each hole. We followed his instructions. The days went by until the crops began to grow. I would follow my mother around the cornfield, and she would talk about all the plants that had begun to grow. These are the corn, and this is how their leaves grow. Corn has a significant role in our lives. We eat it, use it in our ceremonies, and collect its pollen. Corn by itself can teach you about life. We begin life as seedlings, sprout out from the ground, grow slowly and mature through the weeks. They get their nutrients from the rain and the soil it grows in. Like a person, a person starts from a baby, infant, toddler, child, teen, adult and an elder. We get our nutrients from the plants that we grow. So, we are blessed to have all the crops that are growing. Corn is the important crop that Navajos can grow in their cornfield, "For the Navajos there is no food more important than corn" (Frisbie, 2018). She would say in Navajo. When there was no rain in the forecast, they got water barrels and hauled water to the cornfield. We had buckets of water

with a small tin can, we watered like that. So, we depended on the monsoon rain in July to help water the crops by then they would grow bigger and taller. Most started to produce little corn or melons. Even at that stage of growing my mother would go out to the cornfield and collect certain ones. This helps with bigger crops to yield.

Somehow, both of my parents would recollect their olden days of farming. My mother would tell her story about their cornfield, north of Black Mesa Trading Post. Now, it's just standing structures that remind us of what it was. She says, past the store and when the highway levels out at the bottom going towards Kayenta, that was where our (Manygoats clan) cornfield was. Now, it is overrun by sage and other natural plants that grow in the area. When we are driving in that location, she would point it out. From the highway all the way to the rock slope and from there-to-there shoe would say. It is about acres of land or maybe more. She would say all the families and relatives would gather at the top of that location and come down to plant. It took several days with all of them working together. She did not quite remember what plant was planted where. All she remembers was the cornfield they had when she was growing up. Back then she said her family used to move around until years later. When the US government told the Navajos to stay in one area to live in, they chose to reside at our present location. She would tell us about the farming tools of the past; she stated the tools were made from animal bones or other natural items. Now, most tools are bought at a local hardware store. Planting sticks that were made from greasewood, that were sharpened at the end. She would say do not use any other stick except greasewood.

Both of my parents would sometimes sit there and sort out the seeds. We would watch them, and they made sure we knew all the seeds and how they looked. They would say this is how you collect the seeds from the crops and how you dry it and prepare it for the next season. Afterwards they would find some old coffee cans or USDA cans that had lids. Put the seeds in it and store it in the shade-house. They made sure it would not get moisture in it. So, they covered it with a tarp or canvas tarp. They say, let them rest for next season and they will produce lots of crops.

In the following years, many families and relatives have drifted apart. The cornfield became just one household because people were living apart from one another. Families and relatives no longer plant together like they use to. For my family, we are no different, our relatives that live close by all have relocated to a different part of the reservation. We no longer plant together; we have our own plot of cornfield. It has shrunk in size from what it was decades before. My parents would often say, remember all that was told to you and practice it every year. Continue farming because it does not cost anything. Food from the grocery stores costs money. You pay for the fuel to go there and back. You pay for all the groceries that you get at the store. So, having a cornfield helps with the food and money.

My discussion about the cornfield in the Navajo Language class always reminds me of the past. When I was younger helping my parents plant their cornfield and tend to it. With the limited resources for materials, I rely on my own personal experiences about the cornfield. The knowledge that I was given from my parents and to share it with my students.

Teaching Strategies

As an instructor for the Navajo Language, I have only done lecture-typed classrooms with a much-detailed discussion through the 55 minutes. The lecture presentation is to introduce the main words/phrases in the Navajo language and have the students learn the words/ phrases in the lesson. Write the words on the whiteboard and break it down to what it means. Pronounce the words/ phrases for the students so they will say it. Going from Navajo to English for the students to learn their Native tongue. Most of the time, I introduce the word in Navajo and translate it into English. Create several sentence examples on how to use the words using their Conversation Questions. This curriculum will aid the instructor to broaden the lesson to the students' general knowledge about the topic. The instructor will move towards a student-based learning to give a better understanding of the historical word usage and apply it to today's world of Navajo speaking.

There are several strategies that the instructor will give to the students, a pre-test before the lesson, and a post-test afterwards. Students will be given a KWL chart and fill out What They Know about the Navajo Cornfield and crops. Fill out What I Want to Know as questioning forms about the topic. That will encourage them to learn for themselves and build their knowledge about the topic. Last, they will fill out the What I Learned section. That is where they must recollect the knowledge that they have gained through the curriculum. Also, as they are going through the lesson the students will Compare and Contrast the past, present and future about the Navajo cornfield. They will be given a Compare and Contrast chart to fill out. They will be doing three sides, their family strategy, the old Navajo strategy, and the newer farming techniques. As they are reading and watching a film, students will be given a Metacognitive Reading Log, it will be labeled as Note Taker. It will aid the students with their reading, and they will do the same when watching a film or going to their family asking them about farming. The lesson will be delivered to a whole class setting and a small group setting. Independent reading is assigned before discussion of the topic. Students will be given a chart so they can keep track of their reading progress, and it also helps with their reading. If there are several students that are not in the classroom, the small group helps. Pull the individuals aside to a separate table, and the instructor will go through what they have missed. That way, all the students are equally informed about the topic. We will analyze some illustrations and photos that pertain to the Navajo cornfield. Carefully, scan and review illustrations and photos of the cornfield. The instructor will use the think out loud strategy to talk about the kinds of emotions that he feels, and share memories, illustrations and photos that he recalls. After going through several illustrations or photos, the instructor will give the students a moment to do the same. After that, the instructor will have the students read their book and make connections of the textual to the illustrations and photos.

In doing the curriculum, the teacher will explain how the Navajos in the past used to help one another prepare and plant together on the cornfield. Also, discuss with students what they have observed with today's cornfield and what it will be like in the future. The teacher will explain what cornfield means in Navajo (da'ak'eh = A place of relatives gathering). When harvesting came around, families and relatives shared the harvest with one another. The Hopis and Navajos were neighbors in some parts of the reservation. During harvest time, they would exchange crops. Prior to the U.S. government becoming involved with the two tribes, Hopis would invite

their neighbors, the Navajo, to their festivals and ceremonial rituals and vice versa. Both tribes would trade from one another. Navajo would bring their mutton or other handcrafted items and would trade the Hopis for their corn, squash, etc. A kinship was formed between the two tribes. Not by clans but by neutral respect for one another. For many years it has been that way, and the two tribes never argued about who the land belongs to but just simply shared the land that they lived on. There are stories from the Hopis, that they were the ones to help the Navajo people how to farm and cultivate the land. Hopis saw these poor, ragged looking people squandering across their land, and they started helping them. The Hopis helped the Navajos settle into an area that surrounded their mesa.

Students will be assigned independent reading prior to the lesson. The instructor will assign several readings out of the *Dine Bizaad* textbook. The instructor will have additional reading resources that relate to the cornfield available for students to look at and read. Another resource is to have the students watch the films, "*Broken Rainbow* and *The Seasons of the Navajo*". Students will fill out a video note taking paper while watching the film and use that source to write two to three pages of reflection paper. Students will also be advised to recognize how cornfield has changed from the past to present that is connected to the film. Their reflection paper should reflect on the cornfield and what they have watched.

In the classroom, we will discuss the Navajo cornfield as a class. All students should have their notes and any resources brought to the classroom. Prior to coming to the whole class discussion, the instructor will hand off a list of what the students need to do. One of the prior knowledge areas should involve family history about cornfields. Ask their own family about three foods that are grown in the cornfield or in their cornfield if they have one. As students finish their list, they will have a one-on-one talk with the instructor to check their understanding. The instructor will facilitate the discussion in the whole class discussion. Making sure all are on the same topic. As the teacher facilitates, he will write some of the food from the lesson in the Navajo language textbook. Dine Bizaad Textbook, Lesson 26, the lesson goes over Navajo cornfield related verbs and nouns. So, I incorporate what crops are planted at the cornfield. I start off with cornfield, different seeds and tools that are related to cornfield. Below is an example of what I do with my students in the classroom.

The teacher writes the names of crops in English, and the students give the word in Navajo. Examples:

English =>

(Navajo word) =>

(Breakdown or meaning of the word in Navajo) =>

(Translation of that word)

Cornfield: da'ak'eh (da = plural indicator, k'e = relatives, K'eh = in one area) (Relatives that gather in one area)

Food = Ch'iyyáán (ch'il = plants, yáán = eat) (Plants that are eaten)

Corn = náádáá' (náá = about in an area, dáá' = ate) (plants scattered about that are eaten)

Different corn: Blue corn (Náádáá' dootl'izhí), white corn (Naadaalgaii), yellow corn (Naadaaltsoii)

Squash = naayizi (naa = about in an area, yiz = curved, í = the one) (The one scattered about that is curved)

Watermelon = ch'eehjiyáán (ch'eeh = trying, ji = the one, yáán = to eat) (The one that is trying to be eaten)

Cantaloupe = táneesk'ání (tá = in water, nees = in, k'á = mushy, ní = the one)

Pumpkin = naayizí hichí'í (naa = about in an area, yiz = curved, í = the one, hichí'í = red, í = the one) (The one scattered about that is curved that is red / orange)

Bean = naa'olí (naa = about in an area, ol = to float, í = the one) (The one scattered that floats)

Peaches = didzétsoh (didzé= juniper berry, tsoh= big) (The big juniper berry)

I also add new food or crops for modern gardens like raspberries, blackberries, grapes, apples, pears, plums, cherries, chilis and many more. Some of these have no Navajo names yet, mainly due to not being grown on the reservation by Navajos.

Apple= bilasáana (bila= hand) (sa= To eat) (The one eaten in hand)

Grapes= ch'il na'atl'ohii (ch'il= plants) (na'atl'oh= tangles like a string) (the one plant that strings)

Chili= azee'dichii' (azee'= medicine) (di= at, location) (chii'= spicy hot)

In small group discussion, students will Compare and Contrast their understanding about the lesson topic. The instructor will have discussion questions on the table, so the students do not just sit there. Students will reflect on their learning based on their reading and film that they have watched. Students will reflect on where the Navajo cornfield is in their own communities or the areas of their grandparents that have their cornfield. Hand out a blank piece of white paper and have students illustrate their community farm/garden land or their grandparent's cornfield. Part of the illustration should have a layout of the garden or cornfield. Illustrate where each crop is planted in their garden/ cornfield. If they have no garden or cornfield, have the students illustrate their imaginary garden or cornfield. It will help them develop a keen idea about the cornfield.

Student Assessment Plan

Assessment Plan

Standard	Learning Objective	Assessment	Assessment Format
IC.AH.1	Students will be able to discuss complex issues.	Formative	Pre/Post
IL.AM.1 IL.AM.3	Students will be able to watch/listen to a video and understand the main ideas of the topic.	Formative Summative	Video Questionnaire Reflection Paper
IR.AH.1 IR.AH.2	Students will be able to read and understand the topic of discussion in their reading.	Summative	Rubric

PW.IH.3 PW.AM.1 PW.AH.2	Students will be able to write short narratives about the topic being discussed. Students will be able to write a reflection paper and present his/her point of view.	Summative Culminating Activity	Rubric
COMP.A.1	Students will analyze other resources to find information relating to the topic.	Formative	Data collections

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Video Notetaker

Title of video or film:

Evidence	Interpretation
I saw, I heard, I read in the text...	I wondered, I made a connection, I thought...

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Lesson Notetaker

Chapter:

Evidence	Interpretation
I saw, I heard, I read in the text...	I wondered, I made a connection, I thought...

Resources

1. Goossen, I.R. (1995) Dine bizaad: speak, read, write navajo. Salina Bookshelf, Inc.
2. Yazzie, E.P. (2008). Dine bizaad binahoo'aah. Salina Bookshelf, Inc.
3. Frisbie, C.J. (2018). Food sovereignty the navajo way: cooking with tall woman. University of New Mexico Press
4. Shimer, P. (2004). Healing secrets of the native Americans: herbs, remedies, and practices that restore the body, refresh the mind, and rebuild the spirit. Black Dog & Leventhal.
5. Mayes, V.O. (1989). Nanise': a navajo herbal: one hundred plants from the navajo reservation. Navajo Community College Press.
6. Farella, J.R. (1990). The main stalk: a synthesis of navajo philosophy. University of Arizona Press.
7. Mihesuah, D.A. (2019). Indigenous food sovereignty in the united states: restoring cultural knowledge, protecting environments, and regaining health (volume 18). University of Oklahoma Press