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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2016 Volume III: "Over the Rainbow": Fantasy Lands, Dream Worlds, and Magic Kingdoms

Journey to the Sun: Reclaiming Imagination and Self-esteem through Culture and History

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"Journey to the Sun: Reclaiming Imagination and Self-esteem through Culture and History" is a unit that is meant to bring a sense of cultural pride through the introduction of the Warrior Twins, or Hero Twins, known as Monster Slayer and Child Born-for-Water. Many students living on the Din4 Nation face many obstacles in life, and they are so set in reality that they lack imagination. The quickest escape for most children today is a pre-imagined world that doesn't challenge them to create something new. Everything is already visualized for them. My goal is to bring into the classroom the oral narratives that define our people. Din4 teachers, and teachers across the United States, can stimulate the imagination with tales of man-eating monsters, talking animals, arrows made of lightning. These tales teach us to practice to be better, listen to others, receive advice from elders, and remain cautious and brave when faced with challenges. For our Native children, and children of color across America, it is important to provide alternative narratives that show integrity and resilience. It is time to let them see themselves as warriors, suspend their disbelief, and be the storytellers themselves.

(Developed for Reading and Writing, grades K-8; recommended for Reading and Writing, grade 9)

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