



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2026 Volume IV: Resistance from Aristotle to Star Wars

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## The Navajo Long Walk

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In this unit, “Survival as Resistance: The Navajo Long Walk,” students will analyze historical and literary texts to examine the tyranny imposed by the United States government and explore how the Navajo people resisted forced removal, defended their homeland, and worked to preserve their way of life.

Students will first examine the historical context leading to the Navajo Long Walk by studying Indigenous resistance during the Mexican-American War and the increasing expansion of the United States into Indigenous lands. They will then focus on the events of the Navajo Long Walk and analyze the Treaty of 1868, exploring how the Navajo people resisted force removal and negotiated for the right to return to their homeland (Diné Bikéyah).

Throughout the unit, students will engage with both informational and literary texts, using close reading, discussion, and evidence-based writing to examine themes of tyranny, resistance, and resilience.

In the final steps of the unit, students will create a graphic novel, comic strip, or storyboard illustrating acts of Navajo resistance and resilience, and complete an annotated analysis of the Treaty of 1868.

By the end of the unit, students will develop a deeper understanding of the Navajo Long Walk, the lasting impact of federal policies on Indigenous communities, and the resilience of the Navajo people.

(Developed for ELA, grade 6; recommended for ELA, grades 4-6)

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