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## **The Intangible Heritage of Diné**

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### **Introduction**

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Prejudice. What is it? What does it feel like? When I was in high school I read a book titled *The Ordeal of Running Standing*. It was about a young Kiowa boy who faced set backs in the white man's world because of his race and returned home unsuccessful. When I finished reading the book my teacher asked me if I thought prejudice still existed. Because I had been born and raised on my Diné Nation, and never have experienced prejudice, I answered "No." The teacher's response was something like, "Oh it still exists." The teacher at that moment made me realize, understand, how naïve I was about the world beyond my border. Later, I did experience prejudice in the border towns that surround our Diné Nation. I, like Running Standing, came home feeling unsuccessful and shattered. These people are apart of the group who have oppressed Native Americans are "educated", but behave in a "barbaric and uneducated" manner in treating people. For myself, I have since learned that knowing who I am, having a strong self-identity as Diné, has impelled me to be able to be resilient to such racist experiences and obstacles, and be successful as a Diné.

I would like for my students to identify who they are, who they would like to become. When they find out who they are, what will they do with it? How will they continue the intangible heritage of Diné?

Today, very few of Diné children know who they really are as Diné. Their self-identity was kept from them due to various reasons: 1) The parents or grandparents may have made a decision not to teach their children Diné language, Diné culture, Diné teachings; 2) The parents and grandparents themselves do not speak Diné language nor practice or participate the Diné way of life, or know Diné traditional teachings; 3) The child herself or himself may have made the decision not to learn her or his language and heritage. The deep time experience of oppression inflicted on Diné through genocide, reservations, and boarding schools resonates through the uncertainty of self-identity. There is an enormous outside influence from the media, namely television. Diné youth want to be like the popular music people on television such as MTV. Therefore, most Diné youth find this as a better, "cooler", option to what she, he naively decides is unimportant.

## Rationale

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" *Shk'47, shidine'4, a[tah '11s99[g00...h1adida l4i'nizaad, nihisodizin, 1d0one'4 niidl7n7g77 d00 nihe'1'1l'9' nihi[ ch'aaw0le' sha'1[ch7n7, hosidool99'j9' sidoo[dee'j9'.*" These are the words left with the Diné by the great leader Chief Manuelito which roughly translates as, My children how every many you become, where ever you may go in the future as a people, do not forget our language, our culture, our prayers. Chief Manuelito was a person before his time. He had foresight and understanding of what was coming for the Diné Nation. He had left a message for his children, us, to follow when we cross the issues of language, culture, and heritage. His message was very clear of what was likely to happen in the future and to look out for those parts of intangible heritage that could be lost forever if not heeded.

The message Hastiin Ch'il Haajin (Chief Manuelito) has been left by the wayside while Diné have been busy with learning the Anglo American way of surviving. In this state of learning, a different way to live for survival, many of my people have moved on without or with little of Diné language, Diné culture, Dine teachings, and Diné prayers. Today, Diné are at a place where many of our people are unable to pass down to the young generation our Diné language, Diné culture, Dine teachings, and Diné prayers. The very essence and foundation of Diné, the very fabric that makes us a unique people, Diné, is being left behind and neglected.

## Demographics

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Ts4hootsoo7 Diné Bi'0lta' is located in Fort Defiance, Arizona on the Diné Nation. Ts4hootsoo7 Diné Bi'0lta' is a Kindergarten to eighth grade Diné language immersion school. It is part of Window Rock Unified School District, and is a public school in a rural area of northeastern Arizona. The Diné immersion school services 100% Diné students who come from over five surrounding communities. The school's goal is to revitalize and maintain Diné language for future generations.

A majority of the students attending Ts4hootsoo7 Diné Bi'0lta' are at the school because parents want their children to learn to speak Diné language and learn Diné culture. All the students come to the school with English as their first language. Students can enter the Diné immersion school at any grade level. The students entering do not speak Diné language.

Ts4hootsoo7 Diné Bi'0lta' is a public school teaching Arizona standards in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Previously, the school followed an immersion model that truly supported the goal as show in the chart:

Kindergarten 100% immersion	Fifth Grade 60% Diné, 40% English
First Grade 100% immersion	Sixth Grade 50% Diné, 50% English
Second Grade 90% Diné, 10% English	Seventh Grade 50% Diné, 50% English
Third Grade 80% Diné, 20% English	Eighth Grade 50% Diné, 50% English
Fourth Grade 70% Diné, 30% English	

Second grade through eighth grade initially had teachers specifically assigned to teach only in Diné language

and other teachers to teach only in English language to create a true immersion model of teaching and learning. Today, due to "funding" issues all grades are self-contained becoming more or less a bilingual school. Some students are taught by teachers that can only teach in English. The changes made in other areas of the school by administration are made without regard to the original immersion goal of the school. The changes also have created challenges for teachers and students in curriculum delivery, instruction, learning, and causing a rippling effect in other areas of the school and losing the goal of exposing students to their Diné heritage.

## **Diné oral history from the Four Worlds.**

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*Shi naash1, shiinaash1, ah lago naash1.* "I am walking, I am walking, I am walking in a state of grandeur." This is a song that is about the feeling, the state of being, at the time Diné were freed from *Hw44ldi* (Fort Sumner) by the United States Government in June 1868. Diné history begins worlds before this world. The Anglo have their version of Diné history. If I were to tell the Anglo version of our history to my elders, they would be affronted. Their reaction would be as if someone is telling them they don't know their own history and from whence Diné come or originate.

Telling of the oral history of Diné is defamiliarizing to the listener/learner as the people, historical events, and historical places that are used in conversations, songs, prayers in every day events are in the history being told. For example, the sacred mountains are a part of learning geography of Dine Nation that is familiar and becomes unfamiliar in the history lesson because of its nonexistence in this world until it was created. This creates respect and appreciation of the Mother Earth. Moreover, the historical events of Diné in deep time is what makes knowing Diné history pertinent to self-identity because of what happens, then explaining who we are as Diné.

Diné oral history goes back to the beginning of Ni' hodi[hi], Black World. In this Black World lived Spirit Beings, Holy Beings, and Insect Beings. First Man, First Woman, and Coyote were inhabitants of the Black World among others. The beings of this world had no definite form. This world did not have sun, moon, or stars but had columns of light from the four directions. At a certain part of the day there would be a white light coming from the east direction. Followed by a blue light coming from the south. Later, a yellow light from the west finally a blackness or darkness from the north.

Still today, Diné use these four colors to determine direction, a state of being, plant life, a way of thinking, sacred stones, cycle of life, sacred mountains, and Holy Beings. For example, the way of Thinking begins with the East that includes thoughts and ideas about the day or an event. The thoughts and ideas turn into Plans signifying the South direction. Once the Plan is implemented it signifies the West where the ideas and planning is implemented into one's Life and carried out. To the North is Reflection of the ideas, planning and experience's of life. Therefore, thinking, planning, life, and reflection are continuously part of one's life. This is part of traditional Diné philosophy that students will need to know.

One day, First Man saw a light in the west so he began to seek out the light. Simultaneously, First Woman saw a light in the east and she too began to seek out the light. First Man and First Woman both tried finding the light they saw. Finally, on the fourth attempt they find one another. First Man asked First Woman to come and be with him. First Woman agreed and became the spouse of First Man. Later, Coyote went to the four

directions and changed his colors to match the colors of each direction. He came to be called Child of Dawn, Child of Blue Sky, Child of Yellow Twilight, Child of Darkness.

Insect Beings lived in the First World, Black World, where they worked together in their community. They knew cooperation and worked well together, but they also knew Evil Shooting Way (black magic).

As time continued the people of the First World began to quarrel and fight among one another. This escalated until the Black God set the world on fire to destroy it. The people left First World by lifting up like a cloud into the next world, Blue World.

In deep time, the people in the Black World argued and fought as people do here in the current world we live in. Students will need to discuss this concept of war/fighting. Traditional Diné philosophy of Blessing Way teachings and Protection Way teachings will help students learn about how to carry themselves to develop self-identity.

In the Blue World, Second World, lived blue feathered beings such as Gin7tsoh Doot['izh (Blue Hawk), T11[t[11h Ha'al44h (Blue Heron), D0lii (Blue Jays), and Joo'gii (Blue Bird). There were no sun, moon and stars in the Second World. First Man had brought the pillars of light from the First World by rolling them into balls. Hornworm assisted First Man to unroll them into pillars by blowing smoke on the balls to provide light in the Second World.

Other Beings also living in the Second World were larger insects such as Cicada and Cricket. There were also other animals. The Ma'itsoh lived to the east. N1shd07[b47 lived to the south. Ma'ii[soo7 lived to the west. N1shd07tsoh live to the north. The Beings living in the four directions were fighting among themselves, and were not content.

First Man explored the Second World and found the Beings fighting and quarreling among themselves and killed some because they were fighting. Coyote also explored the four directions and found that the Beings were suffering and wished to leave Blue World. First Man told the people to prepare to leave the Second World. First Man then prepared zigzag lightening, straight lightening, rainbow, and sunray to use to leave the Second World. This did not work as he had anticipated. First Man then prepared a wand of black jet, turquoise, abalone shell, and white shell and put four footprints on the wand. All the Beings stood on the wand that lifted up with them into the Third World, Yellow World.

All the animals in each of the worlds are animals today, in this fourth world. The traditional teaching about animals is to respect the animals as animal people. Each animal has a god that looks over them, and one is not to harm animals without purpose such as food.

The Third World had two rivers. The female river flowed north to south. The male river flowed east to west. Again, there were no sun, moon, and stars. In this world there were six mountains. There was an east mountain, a south mountain, a west mountain, a north mountain, and two center mountains. The inhabitants of this world were the four-legged animals. There was the bear, deer, antelope, elk, squirrel, and chipmunk. Spider Man and Spider Woman also lived in the Third World.

The people lived in the Third World for some time. People began to see something shining in the distance. People went to go check to find out it was water. There was a flood. The people went to tell First Man about the coming flood. First Man told the people to prepare and go to the highest area that was Sisnaajin7, the east mountain. People gathered at the east mountain for safety but found it was not high enough. The water kept

rising. The people planted four trees for safety. The first tree was a pinon tree. This tree still was not high enough for safety. The people planted a pine tree next. The pine tree did not grow high enough to save the people from the flood. The people planted male reed next. It also did not grow high enough.

The fourth was female reed. The female reed began to grow into the sky. The people then began to climb into the reed and climb upward for safety from the flood. The people all climbed into the reed. Turkey was the last one to climb into the reed just as the water reached the opening of the reed. As the people climbed up the female reed the water followed them. The people kept asking one another what they had done to make the water angry to flood them. No one knew. As they climbed the water was right at the heels of Turkey. Turkey's tail dipped into the water making a white mark from the foam that is still seen today on Turkey's tail.

Turkey was late to get to the gathering on the east mountain because he was gathering the seeds of all the plants and trees in the Third World. He later would share all the seeds of the plants in the Fourth World for people to plant to have food.

The people climbed and climbed until they hit a hard surface. At that time, Badger was asked to dig through the rock. Badger tried and couldn't dig into the hard rock. Cicada was the one who dug through the hard rock all the way out to the other side. The water kept following from behind. All the people were asked and searched to see why the floodwaters kept following them. When people were being searched Coyote stayed so he would not be searched. He resisted, but was finally searched to see what he was hiding. When Coyote was searched he was hiding Water Monster's baby. Coyote was scolded and made to return the baby with offerings of sacred stones in a white shell basket. Once Coyote returned the baby the floodwaters began to recede.

There were two other major events that took place in the Third World that has significance to Diné teachings. First is the affair of First Woman and second is the Separation of Sexes, which is a result of First Woman's affair. First Woman had become ill and so First Man took care of her. First Man did everything for her. First Woman had become very ill that she could not walk and had to be carried. Eventually, First Woman began to recover and get well, which she did not share with First Man. During the time First Woman was ill, First Man would carry First Woman to the river and have First Woman sit by the river for much of the day.

One day as First man was just outside his house he heard noise from inside his house. It sounded like someone was moving around and walking. He ran inside thinking his wife might have fallen to find his wife lying there as he had left her earlier before. First Man told her he heard a noise like footsteps, but First Woman replied irritated, reminding First Man of how ill she was and was unable to move. First Man carried First Woman to the river as he had been doing so she could sit by the river. He noticed that she felt different not so limp as before and commented on it. She told him that it is her body's reflexes. First Man senses something being different and unnatural. He arranged First Woman by the river and left, but hid in a bush where he could see First Woman. A few moments later there is the sound of water splashing and out of the water came T1b22st77n Hastiin, Otter Man. First Woman jumped up without difficulty and ran into the water to meet Otter Man. This made First Man very angry and went home. At the end of the day First Man went and brought his wife back. He pretended not to know about First Woman and Otter Man's affair. First Man was rough with First Woman as he picked her up and carried her home. She commented on his roughness and he apologized. When he got her home he threw First Woman down and began to beat her with firewood.

This was the first act of infidelity committed by a Holy Person (First Woman) and, the first act of spousal abuse by First Man. The Diné teachings on these two issues are that infidelity is not to be committed as shown by the results from First Woman's circumstances in deep time. Traditional Diné philosophy of Blessing Way and Protection Way teachings will teach students about their own behavior in similar circumstances, and because

knowledge of the teachings will make wise decisions for him/herself.

First Woman told First Man that she did not need him and that she could live without him. She then told all the women to leave their spouses. First Man also told all the men to leave their spouses and used rafts to move across the river. Many people did not want to but were forced to leave their spouses. In the first year of the separation, both the men and women did very well. The men had taken food, clothing, and all the things needed to live comfortably. The men built new dwelling to live in. The women already had food, clothing, and dwellings therefore, they did not need to worry. In the second year, food, clothing, and necessities were still abundant and both the men and women lived well. In the third year of separation, the men and women began to miss one another and tried to cross the river to unite with their spouses and families but were taken under water by the Water Monsters. Food and clothing and necessities also became scarce for both the men and women. The women tried to reason with First Woman to change her mind to let the men come home. First Woman was very stubborn and would not make amends with her husband.

The fourth year was the worse. There was very little food left. The men went to hunt big game such as deer but could not prepare the meat in all the ways the women did. Men did not know how to plant and prepare corn, squash, beans and other foods either. The women did not know how to hunt big game and could only hunt small game such as rabbit, squirrel, and other small animals. There was not enough food for everyone. Women planted and had some food but were unable to do the heavy work such as plowing and harvesting all the food. Both the men and women had sexual relations with other Beings not of their people. After much hardship, First Woman and First Man finally realized that man needed woman, and vice versa. First Man and the rest of the men returned to their wives and families.

The teaching from this event in history is that man needs woman, and woman needs man. The teaching is that all things in the natural world comprise of male and female for balance and harmony, similar to the yin and yang in the Chinese philosophy. So, in life when one gets married one needs to remember this event and take care of one's relationship.

In the fourth world, the people found a world with water everywhere. The Water People lived in this world, Fourth World. When the people came to the surface, one of the Water People came to meet them. The people coming from the Third World asked to enter and were denied by the Water People unless they pass certain tests. One was for one person to sit in one place for four days. Cicada volunteered and sat in one place for the length of time. Although, the Water People did not know Cicada was able to leave its shell and make it look like it was sitting in one place for four days. On the fourth day Cicada came back to its shell and passed the test. Another test was to take an arrow and put it into the mouth and take it out of the anus. This feat was equaled. The people of the Third World were allowed to enter the Fourth World. The people had emerged from the Third World. (Haj77n47, Emergence is a major event in the Diné history. It is also a very special place for Diné. The place of Emergence is located in Dinétah the original home of Diné near Bloomfield, New Mexico.)

The teaching is to be able to retell this oral history of Diné and apply the events

to your own life. The events in deep time are very applicable in today's world. Learn and understand from the mishaps of the Holy People so you do not experience the hardship experienced by the Holy People.

In the Fourth World, the Holy Beings and all the people began to create the world. The Wind People were sent to the four directions to blow the water back away from the land to dry. It is said that the Wind People are holding the waters back to this day, and the Wind People must be given offerings.



Caring and respecting Mother Earth is essential in self-identity because as a human being we are in the image of Mother Earth. There is a traditional song about Mother Earth that identifies the sameness. This identifies how the two-dimensional map of Mother Earth is not as beautiful as the map of desire of Mother Earth where you resemble Mother Earth where one would be like her providing for all her children relentlessly.

During this time of emergence some of the women who had sexual relations with other beings in the Third World began to give birth to babies. When the babies were born, the babies were not in their own image. The babies' features were very odd. The mothers were ashamed and embarrassed of their infidelity committed with other beings, and abandoned their babies in ditches, caves and under bushes to let their babies to die. Ironically, the babies survived, grew up and began to kill the people who had abandoned them. These Beings were called "Enemies" because of how they came back to kill the people.

The teaching is one does not abandon or neglect children. A child may become angry for the mistreatment and inflict pain to those who mistreated him/her. The child grows up, gains strength, and become the "enemy."

First Man had collected and brought mountain dirt from the First World. He created and placed the six mountains Mount Blanca to the east, Mount Taylor to the south, San Francisco to the west, Mount Hesperus to the north, Huerfano Mesa to the center, and Gobernador east of center. Second, fire and sweathouse were created with songs and prayers. Third, female hogan and male hogan were created with direction of First Talking God. Fourth the sun, moon, and stars were created and put in place by First Man, First Woman, Black God, and Coyote. The sun was made of turquoise, and the moon was made of white shell. There was a shoe game to determine day and night. Neither the day or night people won. As a result there is night and day today.

## **Diné Clan History**

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After the creation of the Fourth World the people came to reside in Dinétah. They became careless and would not follow what the Holy Beings had taught them. The Holy Beings disapproved with the people and to teach them a lesson all the precious natural elements were taken away such as dark clouds, female and male rain, animals, plants, all things that were necessary to live.

Changing Woman, the mother of the Dine, was asked to take those essential natural elements to the west. She agreed to the task and sun and moon told her they would come to visit with her at the end of each day in the west. After some time, the people began to notice there was not rain. The lack of rain had caused the earth to become dry which resulted in scarce plants and animals for food. The people began to ask why they were being punished. A messenger was sent to find out where all the natural essential valuables were. The messenger found them in the west in the Floating House of Turquoise, the home of Changing Women. The essential natural valuables were returned with much instruction.

Changing Woman became lonely after returning the essential natural valuables to Dinétah. She created the first human beings. Four sets of male and female were created. Changing Woman first created the Towering House clan by rubbing her skin on her right chest and blowing on it to give it life. The second being created was Bitterwater clan from the left chest of Changing Woman. The third being created was One That Walks

Around clan from the right side of her back. The fourth being created was the Mud People clan from the left side of her back. Changing Woman blew on the beings to give life to them.

The first four clans were given canes and protectors to guide them to travel back to Dinétah. Kiyaaanii was given white shell cane and Grizzly Bear as its protector. Bitterwater clan was given turquoise cane and Bull Snake as its protector. One That Walks Around clan was given abalone shell cane and Mountain Lion as its protector. Mud People clan was given an obsidian cane and Big Wolf as its protector. The four original clans traveled back to Dinétah where the Holy Beings gifted them with songs, prayers, language, teachings, and everything about how to take care of Mother Earth and Father Sky. After this, all the Holy People left Mother Earth to their perspective places where they reside to this day. As the four original clans began to live and move about Dinétah other groups of clans were created and joined the four original clans. Today, approximately 102 clans in 21 groups are left. Each clan group has one to ten or more related clans. Many have become extinct for various reasons.

## Self-identity through clans

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The clan system of the Diné is complicated. The Diné are a matrilineal society. An individual has four clans acquired from the mother and father. The first clan is passed on to the children through the mother. The second clan is passed on to the children through the father. The third clan is passed on to the children through the maternal grandfather. The fourth clan is passed on to the children through the paternal grandfather.

The Diné clan is very important for every Diné person to know. It tells about who you are. Where you come from. It identifies who you are in relation to other Diné with the same clans. Clans connect you to other Diné as sister, brother, mother, father, maternal or paternal grandfather, or maternal or paternal grandmother. For example:

Name	Nishli	Bashishchiin	Dashichei	Dashinali
Person 1	Kiyaa'aanii	Todich'iinii	Dibelizhini	Honaghaanii
Person 2	Kiyaa'aanii	Haltsooi Dine'e	Tabaahi	Naakai Dine'e
Person 3	Naakai Dine'e	Dib4lizhini	TI'izilani	Tachii'nii

The chart above shows clans of three people. The second column comes from the mother's clan. The second clan comes from the father's clan. The third clan comes from the maternal grandfather's clan. The fourth clan comes from the paternal grandfather's clan. So, you would introduce yourself like this after your name: Kiyaa'aanii nishli (I am of the Towering House clan). Todichii'nii bashishchiin (I am born for the Bitterwater clan). Dibelizhni dashichei (My maternal grandfathers are the Black Sheep clan). Honaghaanii dashinali (My paternal grandfathers are One Who Walks Around clan).

Identifying how another person is related to you is by the first clan first. From the chart Person 1 and Person 2 are related to one another as brothers or sisters (depending on gender) because they both have Kiyaa'aanii clan as their first clan. If the second clans, father' clan or from the same group of clans, are the same then the individuals are also related as brothers or sisters. If the first clan is the same as the third clan, then they are related to one another as grandchild and maternal grandmother or maternal grandfather. If the first clan is the



same as the fourth clan as with Person 2 and Person 3 on the chart, then Person 2 will call Person 3 my paternal grandfather or grandmother. Person 3 will refer to Person 2 as my paternal grandchild. These are the basic relationships of the clan system. Individuals related to one another through the first three clans cannot flirt, date, or marry because of the relationship status.

Once relationship is established as brother, sister, mother, father, grandmother, or grandfather the individuals will regard one another as that for life. This relationship never changes. People maybe strangers when they meet. After introductions are made, then based on clans of the people, relationships are identified and may have new family members.

The purpose for the clan system is: to identify yourself to others for others to relate to you properly; the Holy People will recognize you as their child bestow blessings and protection; and for genetic healthiness meaning clans is the way Diné keep from negative hereditary genes to become a dominate gene causing illness and disease among the people.

Teaching of the clans and clan system is absolutely necessary for the Diné students to know so they are able to begin to identify who they are as a Diné person. This part of the heritage of the Diné is essential for longevity of the Diné for generations to come. When young people know their clan they will know how to relate to the other Diné around them and the natural world. This is where self-identity, respect for self and others, and the environment becomes the foundation that makes the person progress forward to overcome challenges in life to be successful and live in harmony.

## Objectives

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My philosophy of teaching is to use traditional Diné oral history to have students understand their own history from a traditional perspective. The traditional Diné oral history is about the origin of Diné and the creation of the first four original clans. This history of Diné is a crucial element of self-identity for in particularly a young native individual in the developmental age of understanding who h4/she is. This history is from a grassroots perspective that is not found in general history classroom textbooks. Students will understand the importance of the oral tradition that is part of an intangible heritage as well as the traditional historical information. Through the oral history students will learn lessons on life that can impact their lives personally because of it reliability. Students will be able to learn how other oral history of Diné people can explain the differences from Anglo-American historical accounts recorded in the history books.

## Strategies

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Incorporating oral language proficiency skills is essential as well as literacy skills for student success. I have students who are able to speak academically but struggle with natural speech as in conversational language. My ultimate goal is for students to become better speakers of Diné language while being able to convey/tell their own oral history to continue the oral tradition, moreover to develop a strong self-identity through their personal knowledge of their own history.

## **Proficient oral language speakers**

A majority of my students do speak Diné language at either Novice High or Intermediate Low or Intermediate Mid on the American CT Foreign Language guide. My students need to practice oral language to become more proficient in Diné. Using second language learning strategy, Accountable Talk, which provokes students to use language to question and discuss a situation. I will create situational stories that will create discussion for example, a story about a young girl who has to choose between her traditional life, and a western education. I will develop higher order thinking questions about the story for students to discuss. Questions will include what, why, and how so that the answers create more than a yes and no response. I will assist students with Diné language as they are in a discussion session.

## **Teacher modeling oral history**

Through modeling of oral history by the teacher and community storytellers will help students develop natural language that includes traditional language of onomatopoeia and figurative language that are parts of oral language. It is important for students to listen to oral language the way it is spoken in a natural traditional way for its authenticity. Students will hear the inflections and expressions in words in natural language. I will model my oral history on various topics such as my education, my childhood, my boarding school experiences, and other topics for students to listen to oral Diné language.

## **Vocabulary Development**

My students are limited in their Diné language vocabulary. It comes challenging for students to create complex oral sentences to orally tell of an event with accuracy. Many of my students interject English words or phrases for words they do not know in Diné. Diné language sentence pattern is different from the English sentence pattern. The English sentence pattern is S-V-O. The Diné sentence pattern is S-O-V. Further, every verb has between 15 to 46 conjugation depending time and speakers. A majority of the parents are not speakers of Diné language that makes it difficult for my students to practice speaking Diné language at home with parents.

Teaching students Diné language is very challenging due to the complexity of the language and the conjugation of verbs. Vocabulary words need to be taught in context not isolated words. One word in Diné could translate to one sentence in English or vice versa. Vocabulary words need to be introduced by modeling its pronunciation and meaning for students be able to use the vocabulary words correctly. The vocabulary words need to be used in similar context in speaking and writing daily until students are able to use the vocabulary words correctly.

## **Classroom Activities**

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### Lesson One – Self-identity

Who am I? Where do I come from? Who are my people? Who am I related to? Am I on the right path?

This will be the first lesson for students to begin thinking about whom they are and their self-identity as Diné in respect to other cultures.

Introduction: Have students brainstorm who they are to identify themselves. Write the answers on the board so students can begin seeing the various answers that are being given by students. Guide students with questions to have them think about themselves. Use the questions to put the answers in categories.

Instruction: Introduce self-identity using a poem or a dictionary definition. Discuss the students' ideas and perspectives from the poem or dictionary definition. Tell students that knowing their traditional Diné clans is the foundation of who they are and determines behavior, attitude, personality, feelings, thoughts, thinking process and opinions about our selves. Tell students that related clans should never flirt, date, or marry because the clan system is away Diné keep the blood and seed clean and healthy. Tell students traditionally, saying your clans let people know who you are as well as the Holy People. The Holy People will recognize you and give you blessings and protection. Tell students the questions from the categories are answered with the knowledge of one's four clans. Tell students Diné clans' values and beliefs of the four clans are: we represent our mother's clan because we come from Changing Woman through our mother. Changing Woman is the one who created the four original clans from her body. Changing Woman represents Mother Nature and therefore we are connected to the Mother Earth like our own mother. Understanding the history of the Diné clans and its purpose creates an understanding of and positive relationship with our environment. Further, understanding Diné traditional clans' purpose creates positive behavior, attitude, personality, feelings, thoughts, thinking process and opinions about our selves to create a positive self-identity. Model for students how to introduce yourself in Diné. Write how to introduce your self saying your mother's clan first, your father's clan second, your maternal grandfather's clan third, and fourth your paternal grandfather's clan:

Ya'1t'44h. Sh7 47 \_\_\_\_\_yin7shy4. (My name is)

\_\_\_\_\_nish[9. (mother's clan)

\_\_\_\_\_b1sh7shch77n. (father's clan)

\_\_\_\_\_dashicheii. (maternal grandfather's clan)

\_\_\_\_\_dashin117. (paternal grandfather's clan)

Activity: Students will introduce themselves using the format to introduce self properly in Diné culture. Assist students to pronounce clan names. Students will use oral Diné language to identify themselves. Students with the same clans raise their hands to identify relationship with the person making the introduction. Students will begin to see whom she/he is related to in the classroom based on their clans.

Assessment: Student self-introduction with four clans and identifying one person with the same clan or clans as herself or himself. Students will begin to identify who is related them. If students do not know all of their four clans then have students ask their parents or extended family to get their right clans.

Extended Activity: Students introduce themselves daily or once a week before they speak in classroom activities. This helps to learn the proper self-introduction in Diné and pronounce their clan names correct.

Extended Activity: Write poems on being Diné to address self-identity.

## Lesson Two – Diné Clan History

Who am I related to? What are my clans? How do you get I clans? Where do clans come? How will I tell my history?

This lesson will follow the activity on self-introduction of clans. This history of Diné traditional clans will enable students to understand her or his own history.

### Lesson Three - K'4 d00 Shik'47

Introduction: Hand out a list of Diné clans to students and discuss the groups of clans by reading each clan name in Diné language. Students locate and identify their clan group and related clans in that group.

Instruction: Tell students clans in its groups are related. Meaning that those clans in one group cannot date or marry. Introduce the words k'4 and shik'47 and discuss the meaning of the words. K'4 means to be welcoming, caring, compassionate, and similar positive qualities. Shik'47 means being related to others by birth and clans. Diné use their clans to identify their relationship to others using Diné kinship terms as follows: sh1d7 (my older sister), shideezh7 (my younger sister), shinaa7 (my older brother), shitsil7 (my younger brother), shim1 (my mother), shida'7 (my maternal uncle), shim1y1zh7 (my maternal aunt), shizh4'4 (my father), shib7zh7 (my paternal aunt), shizh4'4 y1zh7 (my paternal uncle), shim1s1n7 (my maternal grandmother), shicheii (my maternal grandfather), shin1l7 (my paternal grandmother/father).

Activity: First have students color code the paper with a list of Dine clans. Teacher select colors that is most representative of each clan. Have students color each group of clans according to teacher direction using colored pencils or crayons. Have each student get four strips (1in x 5in) of construction paper that matches the student's clan colors from the clan sheet. Students write their clan names on the appropriate color paper. Show students a poster board chart (prepared by teacher prior to activity) with labels for student name and the four kinship terms, and names of all the students in the class including the teacher. Have each student paste their four clans in order according to the labels. (See appendix) Students will identify the others students in the class who is related to them by the colors. The colors that are the same in the first and second columns will be sisters and brothers. The third column will be related as maternal grandfather. The fourth column will related as paternal grandfather. Have students identify each other using the kinship terms instead of their English names.

Assessment: Student's four clans on the chart/graphic organizer.

Extended Activity: Create clan groups or clubs in the school with students, teachers and adult staff. Invite parents and community to share information about their clans' characteristic that helps students with their own personal history.

Extended Activity: Journal writing to tell who they found was related to them and their thoughts and feelings about the new found sister, brother, etc.

### Lesson Three - We come from the Four Worlds

What is my story? Where do I come from? Where does my people's history begin?

This lesson can only be given during the winter months of November through February. (If you listen to nature it would be between the first frost and the first thunder.) This helps the Native Diné youth to be knowledgeable about the history of his/her own people.

Introduction: Have students tell what they know about the history of Diné. In groups have students write their answers on chart paper. Have each group share the information they wrote. Post those in the classroom.

Instruction: Tell students this is our history of our people. According to our elders and leaders before us, this is the oral account they left for us to carry on to future generations. Teacher reads or retells the oral Diné history about the beginning of Diné people. Discuss the events and traditional lessons and morals for students to understand their uniqueness and the importance to maintain the traditional oral tradition, and history.

Activity: Give students a choice to retell the oral history using power point, comic drawing, or write a short book about the Four Worlds. It could be about only one of the worlds or it could be about all the four worlds. Put students in groups of two to four to retell the events of their history.

Assessment: Student's presentation of the Diné historical events. .

Extended Activity: Invite community members to the classroom to tell other oral historical events of Diné.

Extended Activity: Students retell history orally to younger grades.

## Appendices

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Classroom Clan Chart

<b>Yinishy4</b>	<b>Nish[9</b>	<b>B1sh7shch77n</b>	<b>Dashicheii</b>	<b>Dashin117</b>
Student name	Mother's clan	Father's clan	Maternal Grandfather's clan	Paternal Grandfather's clan

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