Indigenous Updates - January

The Zuni word for January is Dayamcho Yachunne

APS-Indian Education Department would like to share with you our monthly messaging flier in building connections and relationships with our Native American students, families, and communities. Taking this time to celebrate and empower your Indigenous students will create harmonious and supportive schools.

Happy New Year!

The significance of the New Year in Native American cultures varies greatly depending on the tribe or nation. Different Indigenous groups observe New Year celebrations in ways that are deeply connected to their specific cultural practices, seasonal cycles, and spiritual beliefs. While some Native groups may mark the start of a new year with a specific ceremony or event, it is important to understand that many Native cultures do not adhere to the Gregorian calendar, which is commonly used in Western societies. Instead, their sense of time and the concept of a "new year" is often tied to natural events like the changing of seasons, lunar cycles, or agricultural activities.

Common Themes:

Renewal: Many Native American cultures view the New Year as a time of renewal, where individuals and communities come together to reflect on the past year, heal, and prepare for the year ahead.

Connection to Nature: The changing seasons and natural cycles, such as the return of the sun, the harvest, or the lunar cycles, often mark the beginning of the new year. Nature plays a central role in many Native traditions.

Community and Spirituality: Native New Year celebrations often involve the community coming together for spiritual practices, dances, songs, feasts, and rituals to honor ancestors, the Creator, and the natural world.

Ultimately, the New Year in Native American cultures is a time to reaffirm one's connection to the land, the Creator, and the community. The celebrations reflect the ongoing cycles of life and the interconnectedness of all beings.

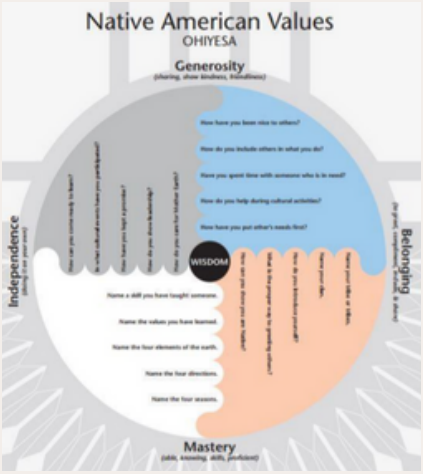
Support Our Native scholars earn their Seals and Stoles with support with essay writing, volunteering opportunities and cultural enrichment.

What is the Seals and Stole Award?

The APS Indian Education Department created a special award for Native American seniors to wear with their cap and gown at commencement ceremonies. There are four seals that a senior may earn. It is an opportunity for Native students to learn more about their culture, contribute to their community, and learn the Zuni or Navajo language. Students may earn one, two, three, or four seals (The fourth seal is a state language seal that at this time is only for seniors who are proficient in Navajo). By earning one seal, the student will receive the stole. It is an honor for students to earn and wear the stole.

Guidelines and more information contact: Sara Money: sara.money@aps.edu

It's a New Year to Reestablish a sense of Belonging in the Classroom



Resources:

- From Fitting In to Belonging: Understanding the Forces That Shape Belonging: Facing History
- What is Belonging: Introductory Lesson
- Sense of Belonging: Research-based Strategies
- Every Student Matters: Cultivating Belonging in the Classroom: Edutopia
- How To Create A Sense of Belonging in the Classroom and Build an Inclusive Classroom Community
- Circle of Courage Model
- Reclaiming Youth at Risk (Native Values/ Circle of Courage)

Incorporating Indigenous ways of belonging in the classroom is an important step toward fostering inclusivity, respect, and cultural awareness. Here are several ways to integrate Indigenous perspectives and practices into teaching:

Incorporate Indigenous Knowledge and History

Curriculum integration: *Teach Indigenous history, culture, traditions, and worldviews alongside mainstream content. This could include the rich oral storytelling traditions, Indigenous literature, art, and important historical events.*

Guest speakers: *Invite Indigenous elders, leaders, or community members to share their knowledge and experiences, either in person or virtually.*

Traditional knowledge systems: *Incorporate Indigenous perspectives on the environment, health, and community. This might include teachings on sustainability, land stewardship, and the interconnectedness of life.*

Use Indigenous Pedagogical Approaches

Storytelling: *Emphasize oral traditions as a key mode of learning. Indigenous cultures have long relied on storytelling to pass on wisdom and cultural practices. Incorporate story circles where students can share their stories, listen actively, and learn from one another.*

Holistic learning: *Adopt a holistic approach to teaching, which considers the emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical aspects of students' development, aligning with many Indigenous educational philosophies.*

Community-based learning: *Engage students with local Indigenous communities for field trips or projects. Learning in the community often creates deeper understanding and a sense of belonging.*

Promote Indigenous-Led Education Initiatives

- ***Support Indigenous students:*** *Advocate for policies and practices that support Indigenous student success, such as providing access to resources that reflect their identity and culture.*
- ***Collaborate with Indigenous educators:*** *Work with Indigenous educators to create curricula and educational experiences that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being. This might involve incorporating land-based learning, environmental teachings, and ancestral practices into subjects such as science or geography.*

Encourage Critical Thinking and Reflection

- ***Debates and discussions:*** *Allow students to critically engage with Indigenous issues, such as land rights, sovereignty, and the impacts of colonialism. Encourage thoughtful, respectful discussions that help students build empathy and understanding.*
- ***De-colonize the curriculum:*** *Encourage students to examine history and current events from an Indigenous perspective, highlighting the impact of colonialism and examining the resilience of Indigenous peoples.*

The Importance of Health & Wellness

Resources for our Native Students & Families

- Circle of Life
- Healthy Native Youth Org.
- Running Medicine
- First Nations Community Healthsource
- Native American Professional Parent Resources
- Two-Spirit & LGBTQI Resources
- Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women
- EPIC for Native children with Disablities
- Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council, Inc.
- Native American Social Work Studies Institute
- Southwest Pueblo Consultants and Counseling Services
- Tewa Women United

Get Involved: Events & Happenings

- Native American Health Care Career EXPO, Fri Jan 31, 9:30 - 1pm, UNM Health Science Campus (priority Reg Jan 17)
- Indian Parent Committee Meeting, Thur Jan 16, 5:30 pm contact Jacqueline.Malone@aps.edu
- Indigenize Your Mind Book Club: Whiskey Tender by Deborah Jackson Taffa, Sat Jan 11, 3-5pm, San Pedro Library
- Native Ways of Knowing Virtual Book Webinar: Michaela Goade, Thur, Jan 16 3:30- 5pm
- Laurel GoodLuck Storytime, Sat Jan 18 12-2 pm, San Pedro Library
- Native Ways of Knowing Virtual Book Webinar: Deborah Miranda, Thur Jan 23 3:30- 5pm
- Diné (Navajo) Baby-Toddler Storytime, Wed Feb 5, 11:15 -12 pm, San Pedro Library
- Navajo Natoin Seal of Bilingual Proficiency Assessment Jan 21- 30, San Juan College, Farmington (Reg. Window: Dec 16 - Jan 17) Contact (928) 871-7660/7683 vernathomas@nndode.org
- Save the Date Indigenous Education Research Conference, April 3 & 4, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
- Native Student Higher Education Access and Success Strategies Webinar, Wed, Jan 15, 11 am

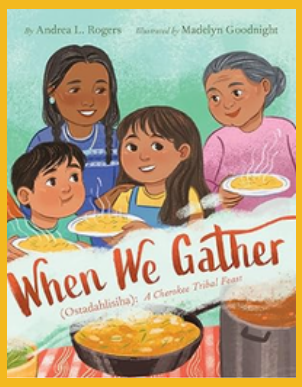
Culturally Responsive Resources

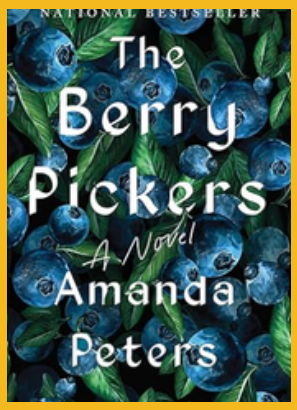
Helpful reflections to consider when selecting Native American lessons or activities.
Be mindful of where and by whom resources have come from. Is it written in past tense?
Is the creator a Native person?
Are othering or stereotypical terms used?
Be critical of sites like TeacherspayTeachers.

When in doubt check out: American Indians in Children's Literature by Debbie Reese

Read Something New this Month

- The Berry Pickers: A Novel
- Sharice's Big Voice: A Native Kid Becomes a Congresswoman
- Rez Dogs
- When We Gather: A Tribal Cherokee Feast
- Coming Home: A Hopi Resistance Story
- Jo Jo Makoons: The Used-to-be-best friend
- Legendary Frybread Drive-In: Intertribal Stories
- Indian no More
- A Bad Day for Sunshine
- Words like Love
- Night Sky, Morning Star
- Kino and Teresa
- The Round House
- Red Wolf
- Fire Exit: A Novel
- The Art Thieves
- Looking for Smoke
- The Truth According to Ember
- Waiting for the Long Night Moon: Stories
- Bingo Queens of Oneida: How Two Moms Started Tribal Gaming in Wisconsin
- Love After the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction
- The Serviceberry: an Economy of Abundance
- The Yazzie Case- Building a Public Education System for our Indigenous Future
- Whiskey Tender: A Memoir
- Eyes Bottle Dark with a Mouthful of Flowers
- Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States: A Graphic Interpretation
- Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples
- Reclaiming Youth at Risk (Native Values/ Circle of Courage)





Internet Resources

- Am Indian Archival Resources - Marquette Univ.
- Native American Constitutions - Library of Congress
- National Archives: Native Heritage
- Bureau of Indian Ed. Standards
- First Nations Career Role Models
- Indigitize Computer Science Lessons
- NM Historic Sites - Lesson Plans & Virtual Classrooms
- Legends of America Tribe List