

National Indigenous History Regional Tour Activity
Navajo Code Talking Memory Game

Items needed/Preparation:

- 24 cards for 2 stacks of 12 terms
- Sharpie/marker to write the words on the paper
- Master sheet for instructions and correct translations
- Write on 10 cards the english translation of the Navajo code word and on another 10 cards the Navajo code words should be written (there should be 20 cards total!)
- **Note:** There should be at least 1 person in charge of this activity that does not take part in order for someone to be in charge of the master sheet
- **For the English translation cards:** Write what is written in the meaning column for the translation (if needed leaders of the activity can explain the difference between the meaning and literal translation)

Read to the kids:

During WWII Americans and the local Native American tribes communicated military strategy discreetly in order to avoid enemy nations from discovering and decoding American activity during the war. The government or a local military base would give the messages to a Navajo member nearby and this message would be sent to another base, however not every word they used directly translated to an English word for what they were saying. To overcome this, the language used code talk by utilizing Native American words for animals, plants, and much more in order to communicate the actions of other nations and American plans and strategies throughout the war. Examples of this can be the Navajo translation of Besh-lo, which means iron fish, however this was code for the word submarine! In this activity you will come together to figure out the meaning of the Navajo code words given to you by placing them with one of the English words given out to you!

Instructions:

- **To note:** the kids should be able to work as an entire group together, but if needed a second deck of the same words can be used if it is necessary to split up into more than 1 group
- There should be 2 decks of cards: 1 deck of 10 cards with the english meaning of a navajo word, and a deck of 10 cards that has the Navajo word written down
- Lay out a deck either on the floor or a table (depending on the setting) try and match the English word to the Navajo word
- From there the kids should discuss and match the English and Navajo words based on their own intuition!
- If chapters want to make the game more challenging, they can set a timer for 5-10 mins

Master sheet:

Literal English Translation	Navajo Translation	Meaning
Our Mother	Ne-he-ma	America
Kid(s)	Klizzie-yazzie	Kid(s)
The people	Diné	Nation/Nation of the Navajo
Beauty, balance, harmony, order	Hózhó	Legacy (that one leaves behind based on their life)
Military	Silago-keh-goh	Military
Red soil	Tacheenee	Battalion
Big plant	Tah-tso	April
Half	Ghaw-jih	September
Allies	Nih-hi-cho	Allies
By signs	Na-eh-eh-gish	Signal