



Weekly Discussion Questions 3/24/2025

[Clouse, Thomas. "Remembering Our Native Code Talkers." *The Spokesman-Review*, 23 Mar. 2025, Pg. A1](#)

Classroom Discussion Questions College Level

The strategic use of the Navajo language as an unbreakable military code during World War II highlights a significant shift in how Indigenous knowledge was valued by the U.S. government. How does this moment of recognition contrast with historical efforts to suppress Native languages and cultures through assimilation policies?

The long-delayed recognition of the Code Talkers' service raises questions about memory, justice, and national narratives. What does this delay reveal about the ways in which marginalized groups are remembered—or forgotten—in U.S. history? How does this influence public understanding of patriotism and service?

The Code Talkers' dual identity as Navajo and U.S. Marines placed them in a unique position within a country that often marginalized their community. In what ways might their service have reinforced or challenged dominant notions of citizenship and loyalty? How do these dynamics resonate with the experiences of other historically marginalized groups in military service?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 9-12

The Navajo Code Talkers used their language to create a code that was never broken during World War II. Why do you think the U.S. military turned to the Navajo language for this purpose, and what does this decision say about the value of Indigenous knowledge systems in times of national crisis?

Many Code Talkers returned home without public recognition for their service until decades later. How does this delayed acknowledgment reflect the broader historical treatment of Native American communities in the U.S.? What impact might this have had on their communities and future generations?

The Code Talkers had to balance their identities as both Navajo and American. How might serving in the U.S. military have affected their cultural identity and sense of belonging? What does their experience reveal about the complexity of patriotism for marginalized groups?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 6-8

The Navajo Code Talkers used their language to send secret messages during World War II. Why do you think the military chose the Navajo language? What does that tell us about how important Native American knowledge can be?

After the war, the Code Talkers didn't get public credit for a long time. How do you think that made them feel? Why is it important to recognize people for the good things they do, even if it happens later?

The Code Talkers were both Navajo and American soldiers. What do you think it was like to be part of two different groups at the same time? How might that have made their experience harder—or more special?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 1-5

The Code Talkers used the Navajo language to help send secret messages in the war. Why do you think they used a special language? How did it help?

People didn't know about the Code Talkers' work for a long time. How would you feel if you helped others, but no one knew about it? Why is it nice to say “thank you” to people who help us?

The Code Talkers were Navajo and also helped the American soldiers. Can someone be part of two groups at the same time? What's something special about being part of your family and your school too?