

# Cultural Lit. 34: The Navajo Homeland

## Summary

Students will: Identify the historical and traditional location of the Navajo Homeland; Understand the four original clans system and the development of other adopted clans, e.g. Nakai Dine' (Mexican), Notahi Dine' (Ute), Oz'ii Dine' (Hopi); and, understand the Navajo traditional leadership system which was clan and regional representation (vs US one chief/president model), after direct instruction, reading texts and cooperative group work, within 2-3 class periods.

## Time Frame

3 class periods of 60 minutes each

## Materials

1. Map: Dine' Bikeyah. Time Traveler Maps, [www.mapZ.com](http://www.mapZ.com)
2. Wilson Aronilth, Jr. 1992. *Foundation of Navajo Culture*. Tsaile, AZ: Tsaile Press.
3. Navajo Clan Chart Wheel and book, Navajo Clan Legends; Clan Word Strip and (Adopted Clans-to be published 2005). San Juan School District Media Center. [www.sanjuan.k-12.ut.us](http://www.sanjuan.k-12.ut.us)
4. Lawrence D. Sunberg. Dine'tah: An Early History of the Navajo People.
5. Traditional Leadership. Window Rock, AZ: Navajo Nation
6. Journal or notebook.

## Instructional Procedures

### **Anticipatory Set:**

Post the names and words: homeland, clan, regional, leader, Reservation. Conduct a collective brainstorming session (utilizing group structures) and add the generated vocabulary words to posted words. Allow students to postulate their understanding of words and concepts.

### **Activities:**

1. Using a large Dine' Bikeyah map for instruction, while students work in cooperative group structures--sharing desk size Dine' Bikeyah maps-- teacher will discuss geographical area of historical traditional location of the Navajo Homeland.

A. Boundary of the area: location of Four-Directions sacred mountains, which historically defined the homeland area

- i. Sis Naajini -- Sierra Blanca Peak (east)
- ii Tsoodzil- Mount Taylor (south)
- iii Dook'o'ostliid-San Francisco Peak (west)
- iv Dibe Nitsaa- Mount Hesperus (north)

B. Symbols and Meanings of four directions-four peaks-Foundation of the Sacred Mountains, Wilson Aronilth Jr. 1992 [http://earthmath.kennesaw.edu/main\\_site/RSI\\_studies/foundationof the sacred mountains.htm](http://earthmath.kennesaw.edu/main_site/RSI_studies/foundationof%20the%20sacred%20mountains.htm)

C. Present-day border towns, rivers, and the four states.

2. Using Navajo Clan Chart Wheel and Navajo Clan Legends book at front of class, while students work in cooperative group structures with Clan Word Strip hand-out, teacher will discuss the four

original clans system and the development of other adopted clans.

A. Student's will compare Anglo family relations system to Navajo Clan system, e.g., Anglo genealogy charting

B. Name the four original clans, their meanings and origins.

C. Discuss the development of adopted clans, e.g., Nakai Dine' (Mexican), Notahi Dine' (Ute), Oz'ii Dine' (Hopi).

3. Using Navajo Traditional Leadership text, teacher will read from pamphlet at front of class while students work in cooperative group structures taking notes with teacher prepared note-taking outline. Teacher will lead discussion regarding the Navajo traditional leadership system

A. Compare clan and regional representation with US one chief/president model.

#### Assessment Plan

Student participation in group work and one notebook or journal entry for each subject: Dine' Bikeyah map, Clan system, traditional leadership.

#### Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)