

BCSCR



Building Communities that  
Support Children's Reading

# Code Talker

by Joseph Bruchac

New Mexico/Colorado  
Grades 7-8



A Novel About  
the Navajo Marines of World War Two

# Contents

## *Code Talker*

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# Synopsis

## *Code Talker*



Told by grandfather, the narrator, a boy, Navajo tribal member Ned Begay attends an American-run boarding school, where he discovers that speaking the Navajo (Diné) language is forbidden. Students who are caught speaking it are punished, and in time some lose their ability to speak Navajo. While learning English and excelling in school, Begay determines to never forget his native language. Later, he and other young Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become code talkers charged with sending secret messages in Navajo during World War II. Ned Begay demonstrates that adherence to his culture—including the Navajo language, values, spirituality, and worldview—gives him the strength and courage to fulfill his duties as a code talker while simultaneously inspiring him to pass these cultural traditions on to younger generations.

### **New Mexico & Colorado CCSS**

- RL.7-8.1:** I can cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL. 7-8.2** I can determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL. 7-8.3** I can analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- RL. 7-8.4** I can determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
- RL. 7-8.5** I can analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- RI. 7-8.3** I can analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- RI. 7-8.6** I can determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

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- W.7-8.1** I can write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning, relevant, and sufficient evidence.
- W.7-8.3** I can write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W. 7-8.4** I can produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W. 7-8.6** I use technology to produce, publish, and display information flexibly and dynamically.
- W. 7-8.7** I conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W. 7-8.9** I draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL. 7-8.4** I can present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.
- SL. 7-8.5** I can make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.



# High Level Questions

## *Code Talker*

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### Listen, My Grandchildren & Chapter 1

1. Who is the narrator of this story?
2. To whom is the narrator speaking?
3. "I was only six years old and I was worried." (p. 5) "My heart sank. I really was going to be sent away." (p. 6) Analyze these two passages, and then write about how you would have felt to be sent away from home at such an early age.
4. The main character is surrounded by people who love him. Read chapter one and then cite textual evidence that supports that fact.
5. Why, if the main character is so loved, do his parents decide to send him away to boarding school? What part did his uncle play in the main character's departure from his home?
6. Why are mother, father, and the main character wearing their finest jewelry?
7. Summarize the Long Walk. Why do you think the Long Walk is important to the novel?

# Code Talker

## Chapter Two: Boarding School

## Chapter Three: To Be Forgotten

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1. “The boarding school was more than a hundred miles from my home, so our journey took us several days.” (p. 12) Find the closest city to you that is at least 100 miles away. Calculate how long it would take you to get there by car. Why did it take the main character and his uncle so long?
2. “There is no word for goodbye in Navajo.” (p. 12) What does this tell you about the Navajo culture?
3. Read pages 14---17. Write some examples of customs and beliefs in Navajo culture that are different from your culture. Why are beliefs and customs so important to our society?
4. Principal O’Sullivan said, “Navajo is no good, of no use at all. Only English will help you get ahead in this world.” (p. 18) Why is this statement false? Why is it cruel?
5. Read pages 19---21. Cite textual evidence showing how Navajo children were mistreated.
6. Research the word racism. Give the definition in your own words. How does the word racism tie in directly to how the Navajo children were being treated?
7. Why were so many Native Americans given the last name Begay?
8. What is the main character’s name? What new name was he given? How would you feel if someone took away your belongings and gave you a new name? How would you feel if you could no longer speak your native language?
9. Why do you think the author titled Chapter 3, To Be Forgotten?

# Code Talker

## Chapter Four: Progress

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1. Chapter Four begins with this quote, “Tradition is the enemy of progress.” (p. 23) What does this mean to you? Do you think this quote is true or false?
2. What happened to “Ned” when he spoke the polite Navajo greeting, the way his parents had always taught him? How does his education differ from yours? How is it the same?
3. What happened to the children who refused to give up their native language? In your opinion, why did they refuse to quit speaking Navajo?
4. How is one’s language connected to their culture?
5. “John Roanhorse was taken into the cold stone basement and chained in a dark corner.” (p. 25) “I think part of his spirit was left down in that cold, dark place.” (p. 25) Analyze these two passages. What is meant by part of his spirit was left?
6. “...our teachers—who watched us the way coyotes watch a prairie dog hole...” (pp. 25---26) What does he mean? What impression do you have of his teachers?
7. On page 27, the author foreshadows events to come. Predict what will happen.

# Code Talker

## Chapter 5: High School

## Chapter Six: Sneak Attack

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1. “Most of those teachers expected very little of us and that was just what some of us gave back in return.” (p. 28) How are expectations sometimes related to what people do?
2. “Neddie, you’re almost as bright as a little white child.” (p. 29) Make an inference. What were his teachers really saying to Ned?
3. Why were sports important to some of the children? How does this compare with your experience?
4. “Someday, I said to myself, I will become a teacher, one who does not just teach, but also shows respect to all his Indian students and expects the best of everyone.” (p. 29) Why is showing respect an important part of teaching?
5. Read page 30. Summarize the good things Ned liked about high school?
6. In what ways does Ned feel connected to the Japanese?
7. “Soon after that, we students at Navajo High School had our own food drive for the poor, hungry Japanese.” (p. 31) Why did the students hold a food drive for the Japanese? What does this tell you about their character? What made this act so significant?
8. Read page 33. Define divine destiny in your own words. Why is this concept a positive or negative one?
9. Ned reflects, “Did I really have to give up everything Navajo to succeed in the modern world?” (p. 36) What is your opinion on this topic



# *Code Talker*

## **Chapter 7: Navajos Wanted**

## **Chapter 8: New Recruits**

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1. Many Native Americans wanted to fight for their country. Why is this surprising?
2. “You can tell a lot about a man by the way he speaks and the way he carries himself.” (p. 43) What does this mean?
3. How did being a Navajo prepare Ned and other recruits for the military? Cite textual evidence.
4. How does Ned feel about becoming a marine? What are his expectations?
5. Why did Navajo men not know how far away Pearl Harbor was?
6. “[The recruit] believed that any Navajo joining up would have a better chance of getting through boot camp than your average Bilagáana.” (48) Use textual evidence that supports this passage.

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## **Chapter 9: The Blessingway**

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1. What is the significance of the ceremonies?
2. List the specific words that make the ceremonies so strong.
3. How did the ceremonies give Ned strength?
4. Some people called Ned “Ant”. Why do you think they used this expression? Cite textual evidence.
5. On page 52, the author foreshadows events to come by telling stories of non-Native Americans trying to use their language, but unsuccessfully doing so. Why, in your opinion, does the author do this? Predict what may happen based on this foreshadowing.
6. Ned was given an elaborate ceremony. Cite textual evidence that supports this passage.

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## Chapter 10: Boot Camp

## Chapter 11: Code School

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1. "I think it was probably harder for young white men to be abused like that by their drill sergeants than it was for us Navajos." (p. 61) Why does Ned think this?
2. Summarize the way Ned's drill instructors taught him to swim. Compare how he learns how to swim to the way you learned.
3. Contrast Ned's experience with the boot camp food with his non-Indian Marines.
4. What surprised Ned about Georgia Boy?
5. Cite textual evidence that supports Ned realizing, for the first time, three beliefs he held about the Bilagáana (67).
6. The author provides a flashback on page 68, with Ned reflecting, "Many years later, I know I was right about the first thing. We Navajo Marines were tough and determined..." (p. 68) Cite textual evidence which gives reasons why this might have been so.
7. "We were not just fighting for the United States. We were going into battle for our Navajo people, our families, and our sacred land." (p. 69) Reread page 10, and cite textual evidence that leads the reader to realize that Ned has not forgotten what his uncle told him.
8. "I was stunned. The idea of a Navajo being a teacher was new to me." (p. 71) Why did the narrator think this way?
9. Reread pages 73 and 74. Describe the duties of a Code Talker.
10. Reread the last paragraph on page 75. Many people thought that Phillip Johnson developed the code. Why was this not true? Why do you think people thought that Phillip Johnson developed the code instead of the Navajos?

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## Chapter 12: Learning the Code

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1. How did Ned feel about their secret duty and how their sacred language would be used? Why? (p. 77).
2. What happened when three white men wanted to become code talkers? Cite textual evidence as to why they failed? What does this imply about the importance of language fluency? (pp. 78---79).
3. Reread page 81. Compare Ned's training now to his early education at the boarding school. Why was Ned happy with his training now?
4. "Now, grandchildren, when I say we were proud, I do not mean that we became self---important. We did not go around thinking we were better than everyone else." (p. 82) Why did the Navajos think this way?
5. Why did Ned take the corn pollen pouch with him during the war? (p. 82).
6. The author provides the reader with foreshadowing when he writes, "Our songs were lighthearted, for we know that a time lay ahead of us when our hearts might be heavy." (p. 83) Predict what might happen for the Marines to feel this way.

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## **Chapter 13: Shipping Out to Hawaii**

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1. How was Ned's dream about becoming a marine different from the reality? (p. 87).
2. "My teachers in Indian school had certainly never encouraged me to think about travel. In fact, they tried hard to discourage such daydreaming." (p. 88) In your opinion, why did the teachers do this? How could this be detrimental to learning?
3. Reread the first paragraph on page 89. Write about traditions you and your family have. Why are traditions important to a culture?
4. Reread the last paragraph on pages 90---91. Summarize how the teams were set up to use the code.
5. Why did the code talkers know more about what was actually going on in the war than others did? (p. 91)
6. What happened when the code talkers broadcast the first practice message? How did they keep it from happening again? (p. 93)
7. Compare the speed of Navajo code vs. the "white code" and why might this matter to the military?

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## **Chapter 14: The Enemies**

## **Chapter 15: Field Maneuvers**

## **Chapter 16: Bombardment**

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1. What is the Navajo's perspective on death/dead bodies? (pp. 95---96) How did they overcome their anxieties?
2. Reread the last paragraph on page 96 and 97. Compare the Japanese to Native Americans regarding their treatment.
3. "When we saw them, we realized that our enemies were just human beings." (p. 97) How does this passage support one of the themes of this novel?
4. Ned and his Indian comrades know how to stay hydrated in the desert without drinking their canteen water. At one point, Ned offers his water to the Lieutenant, and the Lieutenant states, "No, that wouldn't be fair." (p. 99) Why does the Lieutenant say this? What does this tell the reader about the Lieutenant?
5. Reread page 101. Compare the native people on these islands to the Native Americans. Why did Ned speak to them more than the white Marines?
6. On page 103, Ned has an encounter with Gene---Gene. Ned states, "It was one of the best conversations I ever had." (p. 103) Why? What is unique about this conversation?
7. "One of the strange things about war is the way it brings people together." (p. 105) Why does Ned say this?
8. The narrator explains why the men gave nicknames for the equipment they used. Reread the bottom page of 106 and the first paragraph of page 107. Compare the reasons for giving equipment nicknames to the nicknames given to the Native Americans at the beginning of the novel.

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## **Chapter 17: First Landing**

## **Chapter 18: Bougainville**

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1. What are the reactions of Solomon Islanders to military bombings? (p. 119)
2. Reread page 120. Describe the narrator's description of the terrain at Bougainville.
3. Why do you suppose Ned spits out the malaria pills? (p. 121)
4. What event led to Harry Tsosie's death?
5. Describe Ned's observation of the first Japanese soldier he sees. What is the comparison he makes? How do you think this affects Ned?
6. On page 126, Ned talks about his birthday. How do you think Ned feels about this?
7. Reread pages 129 and 130. Why did the radio operators and code talkers have to keep moving?
8. Reread page 132. Smitty had a duty that was necessary. What was this particular duty?
9. What does Ned do with his combat fatigues? Why? (p. 134)

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## Chapter 19: Do You Have a Navajo?

## Chapter 20: The Next Targets

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1. Reread page 135. There is a high demand for code talkers, but a lack of trust on the part of the commanders. Why is this?
2. How did Ned save his squadron from friendly fire? (pp. 135-136).
3. Reread pages 136 and 137. What did the generals write about the Navajo code talkers? How did this make Ned feel? How did their comments differ from what he'd been told in the boarding schools? Why are these attitudes so different?
4. Ned is reflecting on his relationship with Georgia Boy and Smitty. He relates, "But I no longer thought of them as Bilagáana strangers." (p. 139) Why did he feel this way?
5. What was the effect of war on some Marines? (p. 139)
6. The narrator states, "...war is a sickness that must be cured." (p. 139) What does he mean by this? Why does he feel this way? In your opinion, how does his Native American culture lend to his way of thinking?
7. Reread page 140. What are Ned's thoughts on home, family, and being Navajo? What is the importance of Ned's identity? How did his identity help him to survive?
8. What is your identity? What characteristics about your identity might help you survive a similar situation?
9. What happened at Saipan? (p. 142)
10. What happened to the Japanese civilians? What did they do? Why? (p. 144).
11. How are respect and appreciation formed after people get to know one another? Write about a time you thought differently about a person once you got to know him/her.



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## **Chapter 21: Guam**

## **Chapter 22: Fatigue**

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1. What did the Navy do to Guam? (147)
2. Reread pages 148-152. To what does Ned compare the Japanese? Why?
3. Reread pages 154-155. Compare what happened to Chamorros in WWII to what happened to Navajos in history.
4. Reread pages 156-158. What happened to Charley Begay? Why was it necessary for another soldier to put his dog tag in his mouth? How does the author's use of flashback help tell this story?
5. Reread pages 161- 162. What significance does Monster Slayer have? Which three monsters survived? Why do you suppose these three survived?
6. What is the purpose of the Enemy Way Ceremony? (p. 162)

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## **Chapter 23: Pavavu**

## **Chapter 24: Iwo Jima**

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1. Describe the duty of a Japanese kamikaze pilot. (p. 166).
2. "...the ordinary American people didn't know about kamikazes." (p. 166) Why didn't they know?
3. Reread pages 168 and 169. Compare and contrast Japanese vs. European rules of war and the treatment of prisoners.
4. Reread pages 170 and 171. Who were the other Indians in the war? Why were they all given the nickname "Chief"?
5. What does Sam Littlefinger call white soldiers? What was his point in doing so?
6. What is the significance of the songs? (p. 171)

# Code Talker

## Chapter 25: In Sight of Suribachi

## Chapter 26 – The Black Beach

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1. “They were right. Iwo Jima wasn’t like those other landings that seemed like bad dreams. It was the worst nightmare of all.” (p. 176) Cite textual evidence supporting this passage.
2. Reread page 177. What happened to the food relief cans Ned’s high school sent the Japanese? How do you suppose this made Ned feel? How do you feel about a government stealing from its people?
3. Reread page 179. List the four reasons Ned did not eat his sandwich. What does this tell the reader about Ned as compared to the other Marines?
4. “Johnny stared down in silence for a moment. Things like that, he thought, make you glad you performed your ceremony.” (p. 183) Why did Johnny say this?
5. Reread the last two paragraphs on page 186. Write examples of the sensory language the author uses to convey the memories of the odor the war. How does the use of sensory language lend to the tone?
6. “As the battle for Iwo Jima raged all around us, our voices held it together” (p. 187). What is meant by this passage?
7. Reread page 191. Chart the deaths. How do these compare with the Navajo perspectives that “all life is sacred” and “war is sickness.” What is Ned feeling right now?
8. Reread pages 193 and 194. What was different about the photos of the marines on Iwo Jima?
9. What were Ira Hayes’s reactions to the photo? Why did he drink?
10. Reread the Foreword, *Listen, My Grandchildren*. Compare Ira Hayes on page 194 and 195 to information the author gives us on Ira Hayes in the Foreword.

# *Code Talker*

## **Chapter 27: Okinawa**

## **Chapter 28 - The Bomb**

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1. "This here is love day." (p. 199) What is meant by this passage?
2. Ned is reflecting back on Okinawa. He says, "It seemed like it would never end." (p. 201) Why does Ned say this? How does he describe it?
3. What was The Thought Police? (p. 202)
4. "It was like the old days, long before any white man's war." (p. 204) What does Ned mean by this? Why does Ned have this perspective?
5. Reread pages 205 and 206. What effects does the bomb have in Nagasaki and Hiroshima?
6. Compare what Emperor Hirohito says to what the Supreme Military Council says. Who had power? Was this power used for the good of the Japanese people?

# Code Talker

## Chapter 29 – Going Home

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1. Why didn't the code talkers go home right away? (p. 207)
2. How did the New Zealanders and Australians treat the American Indians? Why?
3. The code talkers had difficulty finding work after the war. Why? (pp. 207-208)
4. Reread pages 208 – 210. Compare how Ned was treated in San Francisco to how he was treated in Arizona. What does Ned realize after someone called him a stupid Navajo?
5. "Although I had changed, the things that made me feel sad and ashamed when I was a child had stayed the same. It didn't matter that I had fought for America. It didn't matter that I had made white friends who would have sacrificed their lives to save me..." p. 210) There are many injustices in this world, and how Ned was treated is an injustice. How does he overcome the many injustices he faces?
6. Reread page 211. What does Ned have to do after coming home from the war? How does this help him?
7. Ned tells the reader how the Enemy Way Ceremony helped him get back into balance. What does getting back into balance mean? Write about a time you felt "out of balance." What helped you get back into balance?
8. "My balance had been restored. I could go forward on a path of beauty." (p. 212) What is a path of beauty? If your balance is restored, what would your path of beauty look like?
9. Read page 213. What was discriminatory about the GI Bills? Why would the government let this happen?
10. "But more important than any praise was the fact that we could now tell this story. We could tell our children and our grandchildren about the way our sacred language helped this country." (p. 214) Why is the importance of language, culture, and storytelling crucial to our society?
11. Why should we cherish the lives and cultures of others, no matter how different they are from ours?
12. The author made a choice to end the novel with the following quote, "...strength we gain by holding on to our language, for being Diné." (p. 214) Reread page 215 *The Author's Note*. Why do you think Mr. Bruchac chose to end this way?
13. Examine the front and back of your novel. What is missing. Why?
14. Depending on relationships; and appreciating people for who they are, not the color of their skin are some themes of this novel. In your opinion, would Ned be a successful survivor of the war without those relationships?

# Vocabulary Introduction

## *Code Talker*

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A selection of vocabulary words are identified for each reading section. The vocabulary meanings are according to the context of the writings. You may want to either add to this list or decrease it depending on your students. You can decide whether to introduce vocabulary before reading the section, during, or after.

Vocabulary activities could include giving the word and definition, and then having the students give the definition in their own words, drawing a picture of what the particular word means to them, including a synonym/antonym, the part of speech, etc... The students may also write original sentences using the vocabulary words, finding the words on the pages and making a guess based on context clues.

Students may be quizzed on each section of words, assigned to write their own stories with vocabulary words, or play games to reinforce word meanings.



# Vocabulary - Code Talker

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## *Listen My Grandchildren & Chapter 1*

Mortar (p. 1)	
Nihima (p. 2)	
Bilagáana (p. 2)	
sacred earth (p. 5)	
hogan (p. 5)	
Awee Yazhi (p. 6)	
Kii Yazhi (p. 6)	
lodgepole (p. 7)	
Long Walk (p. 7)	
exile (p. 9)	
Fort Summer (p. 10)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### *Chapters 2 - 3*

agate (p. 13)	
yaat'eeh (p. 13)	
balance – Navajo connotation (p. 14)	
dialect (p. 14)	
Biye' (p. 22)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### *Chapters 4 - 6*

progress (p. 23)	
tradition (p. 23)	
Holy people (p. 24)	
ashamed (p. 26)	
reservation (p. 34)	
Americanism (p. 34)	
dunce cap (p. 36)	



# Vocabulary – Code Talker

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## Chapters 7 - 9

Axis powers (p. 39)	
sanction (p. 40)	
Bureau of Indian Affairs (p. 40)	
platoon (p. 44)	
the draft (p. 47)	
boot camp (p. 48)	
Blessing Way (50)	
<i>singer</i> (p. 50)	
Hosteen (p. 50)	
corn pollen (p. 54)	
dry painting (p. 54)	
Pollen Boy (p. 54)	
<i>beauty</i> (p. 55)	
Dawn Song (p. 55)	
<i>bless</i> (pp. 55-56)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 10 - 12

calisthenics (p. 61)	
wash out (p. 62)	
illiterate (p. 67)	
leatherneck (p. 68)	
“nonc com” (p. 70)	
code talker (p. 73)	
Morse code (p. 73)	
amphibious (p. 74)	
classified (p. 76)	
word frequency (p. 77)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 13 - 16

“worth his salt” (p. 85)	
scuttlebutt (p. 85)	
corporal (p. 87)	
Father Sky (p. 90)	
right frequency (p. 90)	
“Roger” (p. 90)	
Bushido (p. 96)	
field maneuvers (p. 100)	
malaria (p. 101)	
Debarkation (p. 103)	
alligators ( p.103 )	
neutralize (p. 107)	
Dc day (p. 107)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 17 - 18

shelling (p. 114)	
knots (p. 114)	
starboard (p. 116)	
shrapnel (p. 117)	
foxhole (p. 117)	
Japanese pillboxes (p. 118)	
broached (p. 117)	
echelon (p. 117)	
Banzai attack (123)	
bivouacs (p. 129)	
Doggies (p. 133)	
fatigues (p. 134)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 19 - 22

<i>sickness</i> (was as) (p. 139)	
civilians (p. 144)	
Chamorros (p. 148)	
“dug in” (p. 153)	
battle fatigue (p. 161)	
<i>enemy sickness</i> (p. 161)	
Monster Slayer (pp. 161- 162)	
Enemy Way ceremony (162)	
<i>restore to balance</i> (p. 162)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 23 - 24

DDT (p. 164)	
biyaato (p. 164)	
chai (p. 164)	
frogmen (p. 164)	
censors (p. 165)	
kamikazes (p. 165)	
Allies/Allied forces (p. 169)	
blockades (p. 169)	
powwow (p. 171)	
Sennimbari (p. 174)	

## Vocabulary – Code Talker

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### Chapters 25 - 29

howitzer (p. 181)	
Iwo Jima (p. 181)	
tracer bullets (p. 184)	
sitting ducks (p. 185)	
napalm bomb (p. 186)	
Bc 29s (p. 196)	
cracker (p. 198)	
G.I. (p. 199)	
Thought Police (p. 202)	
polio (p. 203)	
“white man’s war” (p. 204)	
atomic bomb p. 205)	

# Literary Devices

## Code Talker

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*The author uses many literary devices throughout the novel. Read the definitions, read the examples, fill in the blank, and then write why you chose the specific literary device.*

- Onomatopoeia:** The use of words (such as *hiss* or *murmur*) that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.
- Simile:** Comparing two things using “like” or “as”.
- Irony:** Inconsistency between what might be expected and what actually occurs.
- Personification:** Giving human-like characteristics to non-living things.
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1. “I always obeyed my mother—whose love for me was as certain as the firmness of the secret earth beneath my moccasins.” (p. 5)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
2. “...his voice as creaky as an old saddle.” (p. 6)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
3. “...and always stood so straight that he seemed as tall as a Lodgepole pine to me.” (p. 7)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
4. “My uncle **clucked**.” (p. 7)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
5. “...my mother with one hand pressed to her lips while the other floated as gracefully as a butterfly.” (p. 7)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
6. “His features were sharp, as hard and craggy as the rocks...” (p. 8)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
7. “The wagon rattled along, the horses’ hooves **clopped**...” (p. 8)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
8. “Time no longer crawled by...” (p. 30)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
9. “The hours and days, the weeks and months and even the years, grew legs and began to run...” (p. 30)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_



# Literary Devices, continued

## *Code Talker*

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**Personification:** Giving human-like characteristics to non-living things.

**Simile:** Comparing two things using “like” or “as”.

**Metaphor:** Comparing two unlike things **not** using “like” or “as”.

**Idiom:** Word combinations that are used which have a different meaning than the literal meanings for each word.

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1. “Somehow, I managed to hold my tongue.” (p. 53)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
2. “I am a plucked turkey.” (p. 59)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
3. “But any Marine worth his salt...” (p. 86)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
4. “If there’s any possible way that something can go wrong, *you can bet the ranch* that it will.” (p.100)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
5. “...the whole place began to quiver underfoot like a giant animal trying to shake fleas from its back.”  
(p. 130)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
6. “[The Japanese] were falling out of the tops of those trees like coconuts.” (p. 130)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
7. “After the Canal, this’ll be a piece of cake.” (p. 176)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
8. “[...scrambling up the steep slope] is like trying to swim up a waterfall.” (p. 184)  
Literary Device \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

# *Using Choice Boards*



## *Code Talker*

Choice boards give students the opportunity to participate in multiple tasks that allow them to practice skills they've learned in class or to demonstrate and extend their understanding of concepts. From the board, students either choose or are assigned tasks to complete. Individual tasks address the grade level specific Common Core State Standards and also learning style modalities.

To scaffold the activities for struggling readers, teachers can modify the tasks using the blank template provided or give more details for performance criteria. Some teachers like to assign point values for the different tasks.

In order to support teachers, the choice boards developed for BSCBR are coded for specific CCSS standards.

# Choice Board

## Code Talker

<p>Using the same format as Ned uses on pages 133-134, write a letter home from Ned's perspective explaining what happened to him.</p> <p>Then write a letter back (written by his little sister) showing how you think his family might react.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.RL.10</b></p>	<p>Research real code talkers. Choose one code talker and become that person.</p> <p>Get to know your code talker by listening to or reading interviews.</p> <p>With a partner, interview each other in order to get to know the other code talkers. Pay attention to shared characteristics.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.W.1</b></p>	<p>Listen to Talibah Begay sing a <i>Beauty Way Song</i>; Radmilla Cody sing <i>The Dawn Song</i>; and Verdell Primeaux &amp; Johnny Mike sing a <i>Healing Song</i>.</p> <p>Use descriptive and sensory language, describe your impressions of these songs.</p> <p>Keep in mind how the Blessingway Songs gave Ned strength.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.SL.4</b></p>
<p>Research the devastating results of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.</p> <p>Find two survivors who interest you and write a short characterization of each survivor.</p> <p>Present the information to your class.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.SL.5</b></p>	<p>On a map, in chronological order, chart Ned's travels beginning from his Native land, to the islands where Ned served throughout his WWII deployment.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.RL.1</b></p>	<p>Research the <i>Code Talker's Dictionary</i>.</p> <p>With a partner, construct and translate appropriate, secret messages (no longer than 10 words).</p> <p>Once constructed, trade your messages with others.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.W.6</b></p>
<p>Research the <i>Code Talkers Recognition Congressional Medals Program</i>. Choose one tribe from those who were honored. Locate that tribe on a map.</p> <p>Illustrate your tribe's medal, /describing the unique medal. What do the images represent? Write a summary of that tribe's participation as code talkers during WWI &amp; WWII.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.W.7</b></p>	<p>Analyze Kii Yazhi/Ned's character. Show how he develops over the course of the novel, how he interacts with other characters, and how he advances the development of the theme.</p> <p>Creatively display the analysis through the use of technology.</p> <p><b>CCSS 7-8 RL.3</b></p>	<p>There are many themes throughout this novel. Consider each theme and discuss how each is developed in the novel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual identity vs. social expectations</li> <li>• Coming to terms with abandonment and loss</li> <li>• Forming relationships with others</li> <li>• Concern with self vs. concern for others</li> <li>• Overcoming obstacles</li> <li>• Overcoming stereotypes</li> </ul> <p><b>CCSS 7-8.RL.2</b></p>

## ***Choice Board***


# Using a RAFT Matrix - Code Talker

A RAFT matrix enhances students' comprehension of novels they're reading and information they're learning. It also provides a fun way to encourage student writing. RAFT is an acronym for *role, audience, format, and topic*:

- **Role.** The role is the person or people the student becomes for this project. Sometimes students take on the role of a book character, historical figure, or contemporary personality, such as Peyton Manning, and at other times, they are themselves.
- **Audience.** The audience is the person or people who will read or view this project. They may include students, teachers, parents, or community members, as well as simulated audiences, such as book characters and historical personalities.
- **Format.** The format is the genre or activity that students create. It might be a letter, brochure, cartoon, journal, poster, essay, newspaper article, speech, or digital scrapbook.
- **Topic.** The topic pertains to the book. It may be an issue related to the book, an essential question, or something of personal interest.

RAFT is an effective way to differentiate instruction by providing tiered activities. The BSCSR RAFT matrices are scaffolded and can be adjusted according to students' achievement levels, English proficiency, and interests.

# RAFT Matrix

## *Code Talker*

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<b>Role</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Grandfather	Kii Yazhi	Song	Strength
Kii Yazhi	His Family	Rap	Growing Up
Ned	Bilagáanas	Facebook	Racism
U.S. Government	Native Americans	Letter	Equality

# Extension Activities

## *Code Talker*

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### **Writing – Research: W.7-8.7-9**

Students will conduct sustained research projects to answer question (including a self-generated question) or solve problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. (W.7-8.7)

Students will gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (W.7-8.8)

Students will draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, claims, reflection, and research. (W. 7-8. 9)

### **Possible Research Topics:**

- Concentration Camps
- Survivors
- Liberators/Rescuers/Resisters
- Starvation-lack of food and nutrition
- World War II- Important Leaders
- World War II-Important Events
- Nazi Propaganda
- Holocaust War Criminals
- Lessons learned from the Holocaust
- The Japanese American Internment Camp
- Voices of the Holocaust
- Anne Frank
- Tolerance/Intolerance
- Children of the Holocaust
- Nuremberg Trials
- What was the Final Solution?
- Hate Groups
- Nazi Beliefs
- Liberation
- Boxcar Horrors
- Acts of Courage
- Daily Life in the Camps
- Star of David
- Doctors of the Holocaust
- Medical Experiments of the Holocaust
- The Story of Raoul Wallenberg
- Death Marches
- Book Burning

# *Code Talker*

## **Writing – Narrative: W.7-8.3-9**

Students will compose narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

### **Possible Narrative Topics**

- An experience that led to renewed faith
- An encounter that changed your life
- An experience that left you disillusioned
- A significant misunderstanding
- A dangerous experience
- A moment of failure or success
- A frightening experience
- A memorable journey
- An encounter of someone or something you were afraid of
- A unique friendship
- Your bond between mother/father and child
- An occasion when you experienced rejection
- An occasion when you befriended an outcast
- An event that marked a turning point in your life
- A rebellious act
- A brush with death
- Two different versions of the same event
- An experience that altered your view of someone
- An imaginary encounter with a real person



# *Code Talker*

## **Other Extension Activities:**

- Scene Performance – Students will work in small groups and enact chapters from the novel. Switch up the chapters and students so everyone has the opportunity to perform.
- Fake Book <http://www.classtools.net/FB/home-page> - The students may use this site to create a web page that details the persons of the text. The students will choose images of actors, real people, historical images, primary source documents, etc... in order to portray the novel's characters, tone, theme, and style.
- Draw the Setting – Students will draw one of the descriptions of the setting in the text, or create a model or collage of the setting.
- Other Works – Students will read one of the author's other works and write a comparative paper discussing the similarities and differences in style, themes, and structure.
- Study Guide – Students will prepare a study guide for the class.
- Political cartoon – Choose a political cartoon regarding one or more of the novel's topics. Analyze the cartoon using the following resource:  
[http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon\\_analysis\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf)