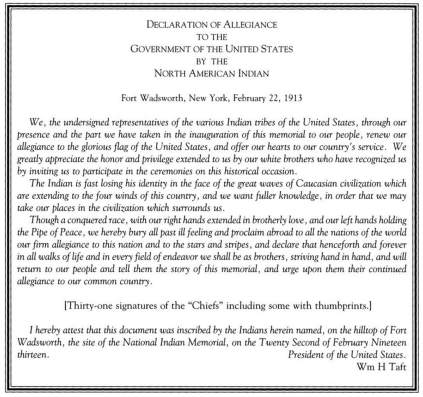
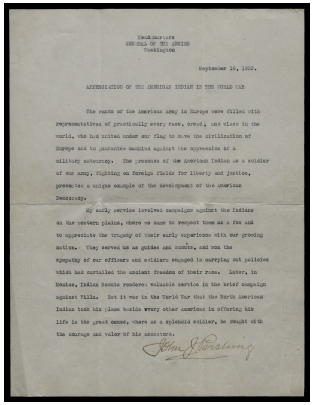
1.Title	**Indigenous Peoples' Service in World War I/II**
2. Developed By:	Raising Voices Cohort - Matthew Booren, Michael Machado, Cassie Moore, Tiffany Stephens, & Laura Venturo.
3. Theme/Focus	Contributions of Indigenous peoples to American War Efforts.
4. Grade Level and Standards:	High School US History **History 1a:** Formulate compelling and supporting questions after evaluating primary sources for point of view and historical context. **History 1c:** Gather and analyze historical information from a range of qualitative and quantitative sources. For example: demographic, economic, social, and political data. **History 2b:** Investigate causes and effects of significant events throughout United States history. For example: world and regional conflicts, urbanization and suburbanization, economic cycles, and popular and countercultures. **History 2c:** Analyze the complexity of events throughout United States history. For example: the Civil Rights Movement, migration, immigration and displacement, mass media, landmark Supreme Court cases, and the war on terror. **Civics 1b:** Evaluate how individuals and groups can effectively use the structure and functions of various levels of government to shape policy. **Civics 1c:** Explain the roles and influence of individuals, groups, and the press as checks on governmental practices. For example: direct contact with elected officials, participation in civic organizations, use of social media, and attendance at local governance meetings.
5. Guiding/Essential Questions	Why are people of oppressed groups willing to serve in the US Military? ○ How did Indigenous peoples contribute to American war efforts? ○ How and why did the US government's view of Indigenous people shift within the context of global conflict?

	○ How do people with multiple identities balance their allegiance to the nation and their cultural practices? ○ How did the US government recognize the service of Indigenous People after WWI and WWII? Why does it seem to take so long for the US government to recognize the service of underrepresented groups?	
6. Contextual Paragraph	As General John J. Pershing noted after World War I, Indigenous Peoples and soldiers have significantly contributed to the establishment and defense of American society. This resource set highlights the complex relationship Indigenous Peoples have had with the American government; from tribal councils pledging allegiance to a country that they were not yet citizens of, to overcoming discrimination and prejudice while serving, a fascinating history is revealed when the documentary evidence is analyzed. Specifically, this resource set highlights primary source accounts of Indigenous Peoples service in both World War I and World War II.	

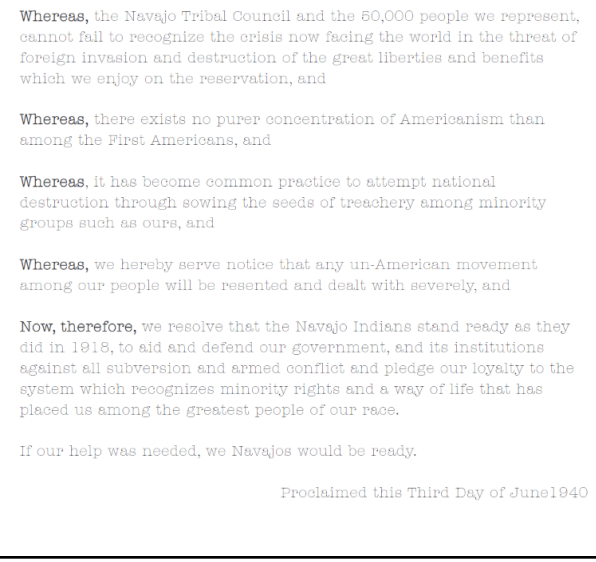
Curated Sources for Inquiry Kit

Declaration of Allegiance to the Government of the United States by the North American Indian	Possible Inquiry Question: 1. What purpose does pledging allegiance serve in a nation? Why do people pledge allegiance to the American flag, for example? 2. Were Indigenous People recognized as US citizens in 1913? *(Note: Indigenous citizenship is addressed in the narrative included in Document 2, if your students need additional background)* 3. What is the tone of this declaration? What are some words/evidence that indicate the tone of this declaration? 4. What purpose does pledging allegiance to the government of the United States at this time serve for Indigenous Peoples tribes? 5. Do you believe the leaders of the various Indigenous Peoples' tribes cited actually wrote this pledge? Which passages confirm this belief? Which passages might refute your belief?
 DECLARATION OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES BY THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN Fort Wadsworth, New York, February 22, 1913 *We, the undersigned representatives of the various Indian tribes of the United States, through our presence and the part we have taken in the inauguration of this memorial to our people, renew our allegiance to the glorious flag of the United States, and offer our hearts to our country's service. We greatly appreciate the honor and privilege extended to us by our white brothers who have recognized us by inviting us to participate in the ceremonies on this historical occasion.* *The Indian is fast losing his identity in the face of the great waves of Caucasian civilization which are extending to the four winds of this country, and we want fuller knowledge, in order that we may take our places in the civilization which surrounds us.* *Though a conquered race, with our right hands extended in brotherly love, and our left hands holding the Pipe of Peace, we hereby bury all past ill feeling and proclaim abroad to all the nations of the world our firm allegiance to this nation and to the stars and stripes, and declare that henceforth and forever in all walks of life and in every field of endeavor we shall be as brothers, striving hand in hand, and will return to our people and tell them the story of this memorial, and urge upon them their continued allegiance to our common country.* [Thirty-one signatures of the "Chiefs" including some with thumbprints.] *I hereby attest that this document was inscribed by the Indians herein named, on the hilltop of Fort Wadsworth, the site of the National Indian Memorial, on the Twenty Second of February Nineteen thirteen.* *President of the United States.* Wm H Taft	
https://www.wyohistory.org/sites/default/files/topic2_2.jpg	

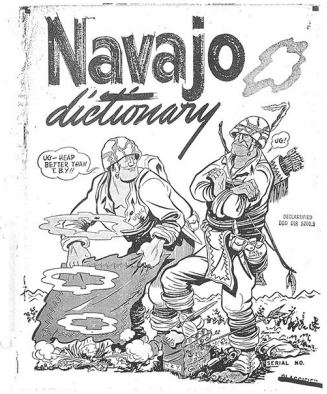
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	This document shows both the dedication and loyalty of various Indigenous Peoples to the government of the United States, despite the fact that citizenship had yet to be extended to Indigenous People.

Appreciation of the American Indian during the World War  https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/american-indians-service-world-war-i-1920#:~:text=Nearly%205%2C000%20Native%20men%20enlisted,men%20served%20in%20the%20military.	Possible Inquiry Questions 1. What do you notice about how the author of the letter speaks of the history with Indigenous populations? 2. Do you believe the government should have the authority to send people to war, even without their consent? Explain your reasoning. 3. What contradictions about citizenship and rights exist within this letter? 4. What might the author mean by "The presence of the American Indian as a soldier of our army, fighting on foreign fields for liberty and justice, presented a unique example of the development of the American Democracy?"
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	This letter is cited by 1920s era advocates of Native American groups gaining citizenship as a reason to make Native Americans citizens. Native American veterans were made citizens in 1919, and the 1924 Native American Citizenship Act extended citizenship to all Native Americans soon after. This document can be helpful for understanding why these groups might have been willing to serve.

Navajo Tribal Council June 1940	Possible Inquiry Questions

 **Whereas,** the Navajo Tribal Council and the 50,000 people we represent, cannot fail to recognize the crisis now facing the world in the threat of foreign invasion and destruction of the great liberties and benefits which we enjoy on the reservation, and **Whereas,** there exists no purer concentration of Americanism than among the First Americans, and **Whereas,** it has become common practice to attempt national destruction through sowing the seeds of treachery among minority groups such as ours, and **Whereas,** we hereby serve notice that any un-American movement among our people will be resented and dealt with severely, and **Now, therefore,** we resolve that the Navajo Indians stand ready as they did in 1918, to aid and defend our government, and its institutions against all subversion and armed conflict and pledge our loyalty to the system which recognizes minority rights and a way of life that has placed us among the greatest people of our race. If our help was needed, we Navajos would be ready. Proclaimed this Third Day of June1940 https://www.michaelgormangallery.com/code-talker-harry-tsosie	Suggested protocol for document: [Save the Last Word for Me] Follow-up questions: 1. What surprises you about this document? 2. What specifically does the proclamation cite as the reason for officially supporting the US government in World War II? 3. How does this document support the overall essential question of “Why are oppressed peoples willing to serve?”
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	The proclamation is a demonstration of support of the Navajo Nation to the greater American War effort. The document is emphatic in their support, despite perhaps individual misgivings of Navajo peoples.

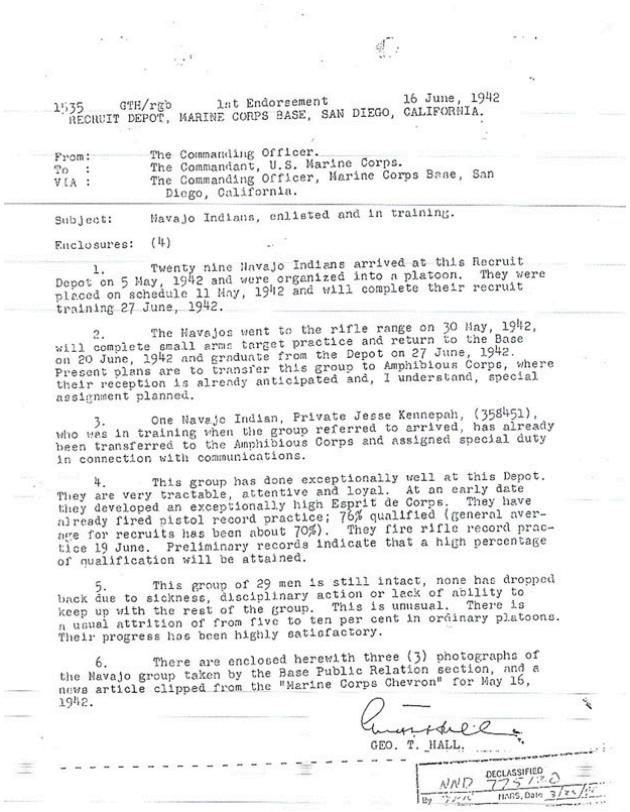
Navajo Code Talkers' Dictionary REVISED 15 JUNE 1945 (DECLASSIFIED UNDER DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DIRECTIVE 5200.9)	Possible Inquiry Questions 1. Make some observations about this cartoon cover of the Navajo Code Talkers’ Dictionary. What do you see? List objects, people, activities. 2. How might Indigenous People have interpreted the cover of this dictionary differently from other Americans during this time period? 3. The style of this dictionary cover has a dark humor that is also expressed in other military cartoons from the time, but how does this differ from the way that other soldiers were

 https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/n/navajo-code-talker-dictionary.html	depicted? 4. What purpose does depicting the Indigenous People soldiers in such a cartoonish nature serve?
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	The dictionary shows both the significance of the Navajo Code Talkers to the war effort (the complexity of the language and the codes), but also depicts the racism and attitudes towards the Navajo people, as demonstrated by the image on the dictionary cover.

Photograph of Navajo Indian Code Talkers Henry Bake and George Kirk, 1943  	Possible Inquiry Questions 1. Describe what you see. Include details about the setting, the people, etc. a. Who might have been the photographer? b. What clues do you have about location? c. What do you imagine is happening in the photo? d. Does something surprise you? 2. Now compare this image to the cartoon image of the Navajo Dictionary. a. Are there any similarities? b. What are the differences between the images? c. How does the caricature of the first image contrast with the reality of the second source?

https://catalog.archives.gov/id/593415	
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	This image documents soldiers, in the field, participating in combat activities. This image is included to dispel the idea Indigenous People soldiers were not part of combat operations, or that they were serving behind the lines. This image documents the activities of Navajo Indians in the Marine Corps during World War II- Cpl. Henry Blake, Jr. and Pfc. George H. Kirk operating a portable radio set. These photographs originated with the U.S. Marine Corps, but were compiled by the Defense Audiovisual Agency (DAVA) in the early 1980's.

Navajo Indians, enlisted and in training report	Possible Inquiry Questions



1535 GTH/rgb 1st Endorsement 16 June, 1942
RECRUIT DEPOT, MARINE CORPS BASE, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps.
VIA : The Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Base, San Diego, California.

Subject: Navajo Indians, enlisted and in training.

Enclosures: (4)

1. Twenty nine Navajo Indians arrived at this Recruit Depot on 5 May, 1942 and were organized into a platoon. They were placed on schedule 11 May, 1942 and will complete their recruit training 27 June, 1942.

2. The Navajos went to the rifle range on 30 May, 1942, will complete small arms target practice and return to the Base on 20 June, 1942 and graduate from the Depot on 27 June, 1942. Present plans are to transfer this group to Amphibious Corps, where their reception is already anticipated and, I understand, special assignment planned.

3. One Navajo Indian, Private Jesse Kennepah, (358451), who was in training when the group referred to arrived, has already been transferred to the Amphibious Corps and assigned special duty in connection with communications.

4. This group has done exceptionally well at this Depot. They are very tractable, attentive and loyal. At an early date they developed an exceptionally high Esprit de Corps. They have already fired pistol record practice; 76% qualified (general average for recruits has been about 70%). They fire rifle record practice 19 June. Preliminary records indicate that a high percentage of qualification will be attained.

5. This group of 29 men is still intact, none has dropped back due to sickness, disciplinary action or lack of ability to keep up with the rest of the group. This is unusual. There is a usual attrition of from five to ten per cent in ordinary platoons. Their progress has been highly satisfactory.

6. There are enclosed herewith three (3) photographs of the Navajo group taken by the Base Public Relation section, and a news article clipped from the "Marine Corps Chevron" for May 16, 1942.

GEO. T. HALL.

DECLASSIFIED NND 775178 By NARS, Date 3/25/15

Possible Inquiry Questions

1. How does this document demonstrate the commitment of Navajo soldiers to serving?
2. How does the author describe the Navajo soldiers who are serving? Cite specific evidence from the document to support your answer.
3. How might this document relate to the dictionary cartoon and photograph of Navajo Code Talkers?
4. What was the opinion of the US government towards the Navajo during the war, immediately after the war, and at present? (will require some additional inquiry beyond this document)
5. Who is this letter written by and to whom is it addressed?
6. In addition to the fact-based evaluation of the performance of the Navajo Indian platoon, what clues are present about the expectations and perception of these recruits?
    a. How would you explain the advanced performance of these recruits?

chrome-extension://oemmndcbldboiebfnladdacbdfmadadm/https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/code-talkers/assets/print/code-talkers-code-talking-memo.pdf	
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	This document speaks to the dedication of the Navajo recruits. Even if drafted, Navajo were committed to serve faithfully.

Veterans History Project: Chester Nez  https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.54891/#vhp:clip	Possible Inquiry Questions: 1. Chester Nez notes that he suffered abuse in his childhood while in the care of BIA schools. He later joined the USMC to protect the freedoms that exist under the U.S. government. Where do you believe his sense of service comes from? 2. In what ways can language be both a liability and an asset?
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	During World War II, Marine recruiters came to a high school in Tuba City, Arizona, in search of Navajos to participate in a secret program. Chester Nez was one of the young men who volunteered, and he passed through rigorous training and testing to become one of the Code Talkers, who used their native language to confound Japanese who were intercepting American communications. Nez outlines in detail how 29 young recruits assembled a complex code that helped win the war. He recalls being mistaken for the enemy and having a gun held to his head by an over-eager soldier.

***Charles Chibitty*, Lawton, Oklahoma, 2003. Photograph by Chester Cowen, courtesy of the Oklahoma Historical Society, Research Division, Cowen Collection,**	Possible Inquiry Questions 1. Describe the symbolism of the Comanche headdress juxtaposed with the

19687.IN.CO.28.6  https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/code-talkers/assets/print/code-talkers-introduction-chibitty.pdf	American flags? 2. Discuss the two figures in the statue. What do they each represent? 3. How does this image represent how people can have multiple identities? For example, Charles Chibitty is both an American soldier and an Indigenous tribe member. Are there other points in history or current day that you can give other examples of intersectionality. 4. Why is it significant that this memorial was established in 2003, over half a century after WWII?
Significance of the primary source and importance to this collection.	Memorial established/commemorated in 2003 to honor Comanche code talker Charles Chibitty. Opportunity for students to discuss Native American military service, relationship to US (flag), relationship to elders (background).

Suggested Strategies for Instruction
Document 1 (Declaration of Allegiance) — Jigsaw with annotation. Graphic organizer provided. Four groups, each group is assigned one of the open-ended inquiry questions (1, 3, 4, and 5). First read, no annotations. Before second read, review assigned question. Second read, annotate for evidence that speaks to the question. Review as a group, build consensus. Share out. When other groups share out, graphic organizer should have space to agree/disagree with interpretation/analysis and take notes. This could easily transition into a discussion protocol/exchange of views.

Document 2 (Appreciate of the American Indian) — Using the four inquiry questions provided, students should write a letter in response to Pershing. Additional discussion protocol around the phrase “oppression of a military autocracy”. Students should be encouraged to create connections to other eras of history and the tension between the stated aims of military intervention and whether those goals have been met domestically.

Document 3 (Navajo Tribal Council) — See protocol linked in document set.

Documents 4 & 5 (Navajo Dictionary + Code Talker Photograph) — In partners, students will each be provided with either Doc 4 or 5 and a graphic organizer. Each partner will be asked to write a brief description of how the Navajo Code Talkers are depicted in their respective images. Students should swap images and descriptions, review, then turn & talk about the similarities and differences. This could be followed up by a partner discussion about the intended audiences for each image and how that informs the depictions. Finally, students should conduct a persuasive technique analysis. A brief description of the following techniques should be included on the graphic organizer: labeling, symbolism, exaggeration, irony, and analogy/comparison. Students will evaluate the dictionary cover to identify which of those techniques are present and provide examples. In addition, students should be provided a definition of the term “dehumanization” and discuss the role of political cartoons in that process and the purposes it serves.

Document 7 (Chester Nez Clip) — Warm-up/Do Now: How many languages do you speak (list them)? How do you think your language status (monolingual/multilingual) has had an impact on your experience in school?

Lesson — Native American Boarding Schools & assimilation with special attention to language — e.g., What do you think the Native American children who attended boarding schools experienced with respect to their language? Why do you think so?

Show video clip of Chester Nez describing his experience at the boarding school he attended, specifically the part about speaking Navajo.

It may be helpful to provide the following context at some point in the lesson — the same website has dozens of interviews with other servicemen who served as Code Talkers who all, more or less, had the same experience of speaking Navajo at boarding schools and then were recruited to be Code Talkers during World Wars I and II.

Think-Pair-Share (1 on 1) around the issue of schooling & language. Partners should then share what they learned from each other. Some questions students could explore with their partner include: In what ways was the ability to speak Navajo a liability for these men? In what ways was it an asset? At our school, do you think it’s a liability, an asset, or both to be multilingual? Explain your thinking.

Expansion Questions/Activity — How is language used to reinforce the status quo? How might the Code Talkers have felt about the purpose their language was being used for? Possible extension activity — compare & contrast the experience of translators who assisted the U.S. in the

War in Afghanistan.

Additional Resources:

Why We Serve - Smithsonian Exhibit: https://americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/

NPR Interview: https://www.npr.org/2011/11/28/142849647/navajo-code-powerful-as-any-weapon-in-wwii

Code talkers in both wars: https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/military/code-talkers.html

The Remarkable and Complex Legacy of Native American Military Service
https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/remarkable-and-complex-legacy-native-american-military-service-180976264/