

Name _____ Dte _____

Diné (Navajo) United States' Most Populous Tribe

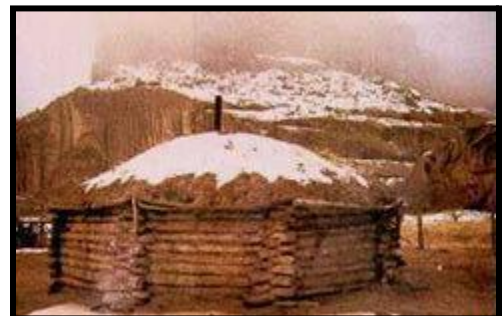


The People

The Diné (Navajo) Nation covers the corners of three states: Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. The Diné (Navajo) Nation is the largest reservation in the United States, covering 27,673 square miles. The name "Navajo" comes from the Spanish who called them the Apaches of Navajo. They call themselves "Diné" which means *the People*. However, the official name is Navajo Nation as lawmakers debated and voted down legislation seeking to change the name from Navajo Nation to Diné Nation in 2017. The Diné (Navajos) are matriarchal, meaning the women rule the family, and ancestry is traced through the mother.

Homes

The Diné (Navajo) lived in hogans. The round hogan is symbolic of the sun and its door faces east so that the first thing that a Diné (Navajo) family sees in the morning is, "Father Sun, one of the most revered of the Navajo deities". The construction of a new hogan is almost always a community affair. Once completed, the new hogan is blessed where



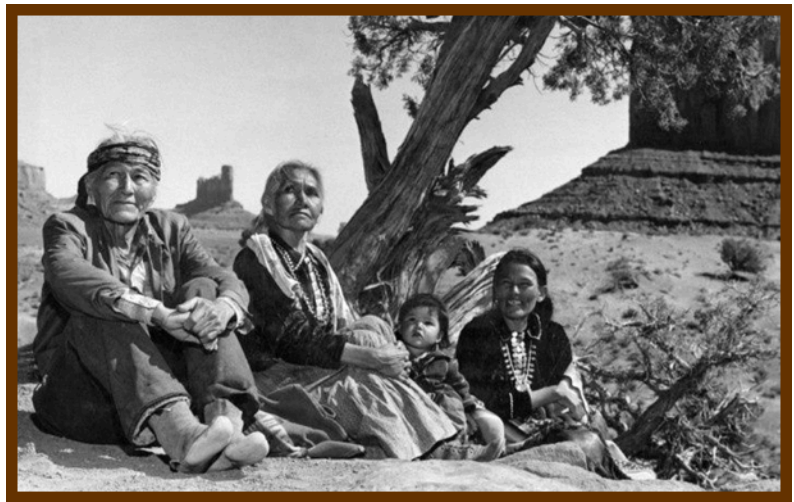
the Holy People are asked to "let this place be happy." Today, many of the People have retained their native religion and Diné (Navajo) ceremonies can be conducted only in a hogan.

Food

The Diné (Navajo) were farmers who grew three main crops known as the "three sisters": corn, beans, and squash. After the Spanish arrived in the 1600s, the Navajo began to farm sheep and goats as well, with sheep becoming a major source of meat. They also hunted animals for food like deer and rabbits. They made dishes like mutton stew, fried cornbread, and even grilled prairie dog.

Clothing

The clothes worn by the Diné (Navajo) made good use of the natural resources that were available to them. Before they started raising sheep, they wore clothes made of woven yucca plants or deerskin. The men wore breechcloths and the women skirts. Their shoes were soft leather moccasins. Later, they wore clothes woven from the wool of sheep. The women spun and wove wool into cloth for ponchos, blankets, and cloaks for protection in cold weather.



Yucca fiber was also used to make sandals, belts, baskets, and mats.

<http://navajopeople.org/blog/navajo-clothing/>

Weaving

The Diné (Navajo) are known for their woven rugs and blankets. Archaeological evidence reveals the Diné (Navajo) possessed weaving skills to make clothing and other utilitarian objects to support their lifestyle. They first learned to weave cotton from the Pueblo peoples. When they started to raise Churro sheep they switched to wool. The Diné (Navajo) weaver, generally women, would strike a balance between the mind, the hand, and the material. Weaving was, and still is, an important part of Diné (Navajo) life. A successful weaver becomes a valued part of the community and contributor to the family economy.



Jewelry

Jewelry has been one of the most sacred parts of Diné (Navajo) culture and continues to hold much significance in the modern times as well. It is believed that they learnt the art of jewelry making and silversmithing from the Spanish. The first artists were men and then women began to work silver around 1918. Diné (Navajo) jewelry is known for large turquoise stones and big, heavy silver. They believe in

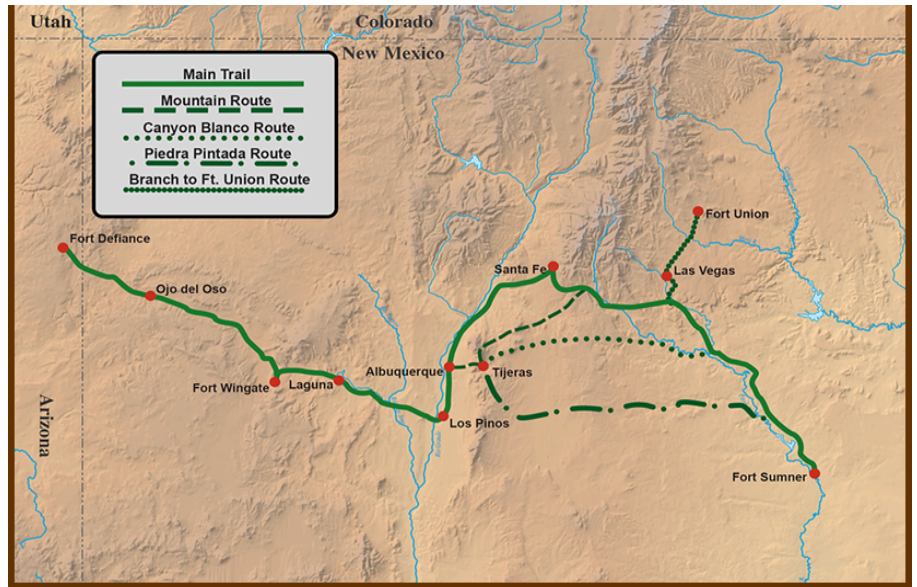


teaching such methods and techniques to their children so that the craft get passed down through generations.

The Long Walk

The Long Walk to Bosque Redondo, was the 1864 forced displacement of eight thousand Diné (Navajo) men, women and children.

In the middle of winter, they walked over 300 miles where approximately 200 of them died of starvation and exposure to the elements. The relocation was poorly planned and unsuccessful.



Four years later the Navajo were allowed to return to their homeland.

Code Talkers

The Diné (Navajo) code talkers were U.S. Marines who created and used a code to keep military secrets during World War II. The code talkers played a key role in the United States' victory over Japan. Their code was never broken.



Diné Today

The Diné (Navajo) Nation has recently become the most populous tribe in the U.S., according to the Diné (Navajo) Office of Vital Records database. There was an increase of 30.4 percent in 2020, bringing their membership numbers to 399,494. Today, despite external threats, the Diné (Navajo) find strength and direction by maintaining their traditions. The ceremonial words "Sa'ah naaghahi bikeh hozho" signify the struggle for a long life in beauty, order, and harmony with the environment.



Check for Understanding

1. The Diné (Navajo) Nation covers the corners of which three states:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
2. The Diné (Navajo) Nation is the largest reservation in the United States, covering _____ square miles.
3. The name "Navajo" comes from the Spanish who called them the Apaches of Navajo. According to the text what name do they call themselves and what does it mean? _____
4. The official name is Navajo Nation because _____

- a) Lawmakers debated and voted down legislation seeking to change the name from Navajo Nation to Diné Nation in 2017.
 - b) U.S. Government debated and voted down legislation seeking to change the name from Navajo Nation to Diné Nation in 2017.
 - c) Many people could not pronounce it correctly.
 - d) Lawmakers debated and voted unanimously to change the name from Navajo Nation to Diné Nation in 2017.
5. The Diné (Navajo) lived in hogans. Using information from the text, either draw or write a description of a hogan.

Directions: Draw or write a description of a Diné (Navajo) in this box.

6. What types of food did the Diné (Navajo) eat?
- a) corn, beans, squash, pig, cow, and prairie dog
 - b) beans, broccoli, squash, sheep, cow, and prairie dog
 - c) corn, oatmeal, squash, sheep, goats, and prairie dog
 - d) corn, beans, squash, sheep, goats, and prairie dog
7. Citing evidence from the text, support the statement that, "Archaeological evidence reveals the Diné (Navajo) possessed weaving skills."

8. Why did the Diné (Navajo) believe it was important to pass down the craft of making jewelry?

- a) To be able to retain the turquoise and make money.
- b) To pass on the craft from generation to generation.
- c) To be able to retain the silver and make money
- d) To share their talents with the world.

9. Citing information from the text, describe the long walk.

10. The Diné (Navajo) code talkers were:

- a) U.S. Army
- b) U.S. Marines
- c) U.S. Air Force
- d) U.S. Coast Guards