



Being An Apprentice Tribal Healer

Related educational topics or areas of focus

Planet OzKids activities relate to broad topics or areas of focus which are taught in schools and in home schooling worldwide, regardless of curriculum differences.

This activity relates to several topics including **English** (reading, comprehension, writing, speaking), **Personal Learning, Society and Environment** (culture, place and space, natural and social systems), **Technology and Enterprise** (technology skills)



Type of task

Exploring world of work situations, imagining and writing

Age group for this activity

This Being An Apprentice Tribal Healer Activity is designed for Year/grade 5 - 8 students (age 11 - 14).

School and work choices for Navajo young people

More than half of Navajo families live on the Navajo Nation, in towns, on farms or in remote areas. The rest live outside in cities and towns.

Life is more traditional on the Navajo Nation. Young people may go to school and college there, or travel between their homes and schools outside.

Navajo young people can choose professional careers as doctors, scientists, teachers and others or they can work in many industries, or run businesses. They can work within their Nation and outside. They can also follow traditional career paths, becoming artists or medicine people.



Apprentice tribal healers

In 2002 an apprenticeship system was created to train young men and women as future tribal healers, or medicine people.

In many hospitals, tribal healers help to care for patients along with nurses and doctors, blending medical science and traditional ways.



Activity instructions

Children can be asked to:

1. Read information on Planet OzKids about how Navajo young people live today:

Going to School – part of Life at Home, at:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/navajo-school-life-indigenous-people-of-north-america.htm>

Going to work – also part of Life at Home, at:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/navajo-work-life-indigenous-people-of-north-america.htm>

2. Read information on Planet OzKids about the ceremonies that are part of the Navajo way of life, under Culture and Customs – Ceremonies and Festivals at: <http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/navajo-ceremonies-culture-indigenous-people-of-north-america.htm>

3. Individually or in small groups, make a list of the key ceremonies and state when or why each is performed.

4. Discuss the role of an apprentice. Think about tradespeople, technicians or craftspeople you know – and how they work with their apprentices. Determine:
 - Ways the tradesperson “boss” can help the apprentice
 - Things you think you might like about being an apprentice, and things you think you might not like.



Activity instructions continued

5. Imagine you are an apprentice tribal healer, or shaman. From what you have read and thought about so far, determine:
 - Key tasks that you would learn to carry out
 - Skills you would need to develop
 - Things you might like, or not like, about the job.
6. Write a description of what life may be like for a Navajo apprentice tribal healer.
7. Share your description with the class and listen to other people read their descriptions.

Identify items described by others that are different from what you described.

Useful information on the Planet OzKids web site

Indigenous People of North America – Tribes and Nations:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/indigenous-people-of-north-america-tribes-nations.htm>

Indigenous People of North America – Navajo:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/navajo-indigenous-people-of-north-america.htm>

Navajo – Recent History:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/navajo-recent-history-indigenous-people-of-north-america.htm>

Indigenous People of North America – Early History:

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends-people/indigenous-people-of-north-america-early-history.htm>

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