

Saving Languages and the Code Talkers

Week 22 • Tuesday • Words That Made History

Reading Time

Native languages carry stories, songs, and knowledge that exist nowhere else. Long ago there were hundreds of Native languages in North America. Sadly, many were lost when children were once forbidden to speak them. But today, nations are bringing their languages back — with language classes, apps, and schools where children learn from elders!

One Native language even helped win a world war. During World War II, **Navajo Code Talkers** — Marines who spoke the Navajo language — sent secret military messages in a code based on Navajo words.

The enemy never cracked the code, not once! The Code Talkers are honored as heroes, and their story shows how precious every language is.

Reading Questions

1. Why are Native languages so precious?

2. How are nations bringing their languages back today?

3. Who were the Navajo Code Talkers?

4. Did the enemy ever crack their code?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

language

Navajo

code

Code Talker

revive

hero

Fill in the Blanks

languages

elders

Navajo

code

cracked

heroes

1. Native _____ carry stories and knowledge found nowhere else.

2. Children today learn languages from _____.

3. The Code Talkers spoke the _____ language.

4. They sent secret messages in a special _____.

5. The enemy never _____ the code.

6. The Code Talkers are honored as _____.

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ There were once hundreds of Native languages.
- ☐ All Native languages are gone forever.
- ☐ Nations use classes and apps to revive languages.
- ☐ The Code Talkers served in World War II.
- ☐ The enemy cracked the Navajo code quickly.
- ☐ Every language carries knowledge worth saving.

Think About It

1. Why do you think a language dies if children stop learning it? Why is teaching children the key to saving it?

Draw a Code Talker

Draw a Navajo Code Talker sending an unbreakable secret message by radio.

