

The Perfect Code for Victory:

The Navajo Code

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The development of the Navajo language into an unbreakable code during World War II is a great example of communication because the U.S. military used the Navajo language to prevent enemies from understanding intercepted signals while deciphering the code easily themselves. Navajo language was the key to protecting messages while quickly and accurately interpreting a complex code. This code was fascinating to us because the communication was based on a different language. We were also intrigued by the fact the code was derived from an unwritten language. The fact that Navajo speakers could not understand the code was another angle of interest. These elements in addition to the role which cryptology played in protecting military communication led us to the code talkers and their unbreakable code as our topic.

We began our research by getting an overview of the topic by reading websites and gathering information. We then explored newspaper articles, websites, and books which provided helpful information. Newspapers.com provided newspaper articles that we used for our research. We also used the National Archives and the WWII Museum to find information about the Navajo code and its use in WWI and WWII.

Because we both created a website last year, we knew how to make a website and felt we would be successful this year making one. We both wanted to see if we could make a better project than last time. We started by writing the words for the website's content. Then we chose a color scheme in line with the colors of the military uniforms. We edited the content multiple times to get the words polished. We then

loaded the words, videos, and pictures into the website. Finally, we polished the website by adding in the navigation links and paperwork.

Despite lingering prejudice and distrust against Native Americans, during World War II, the efforts of Navajo soldiers trained to be “code talkers” proved essential for successful missions in the Pacific due to the Japanese not being able to understand intercepted messages. Even native Navajo speakers could understand the messages due to the fact it was encoded.

The Navajo Code was a significant part in World War II in the Pacific front. Since the Japanese were unable to break this code, it protected U.S. military communications at places like Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, and Saipan and it was never broken. By encoding the military messages, the code saved countless American lives since it was secure.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources:

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161-162. We got some information on stories of the war from a code talker. This source also helped us understand why they weren't able to say anything about the code before it was declassified.

"C09356 (02)." *Ronald Reagan*, www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/photo/c09356-02. This website gave us pictures of the signing of the Navajo Code Talker Day proclamation. This helped in the visual part of the speech.

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www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/proclamation-4954-national-navaho-code-talkers-day. This article was a speech given by Ronald Reagan on the code talkers and the announcement of National Code Talker Day. We also learned about why it was so late and got quotes from this source as well.

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Wisconsin, vol. 5, 9 Apr. 1904. p. 119.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89058378829&view=1up&seq=11> This newspaper article describes how hard it was for the Native Americans to learn English. We used the poem for a picture to add to the visual side of things.

Secondary Sources:

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2010.library.nau.edu/speccoll/exhibits/daysofarchives/codetalkers.html. This source gave us information about the implementation of the code. It also helped in understanding a different angle on the implementation by explaining why Philip Johnson was credited the idea.

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