

STORIES THAT MATTER: NATIVE AMERICAN FIFTH GRADERS' RESPONSES  
TO CULTURALLY AUTHENTIC TEXT

by

Angeline P. Hoffman

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	11
LIST OF FIGURES .....	12
ABSTRACT.....	13
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	15
Stories Matter.....	15
Purpose of this study.....	18
Historical Influences .....	20
Professional History and Experience.....	21
Significance of Study.....	26
Summary .....	28
Overview of the Study .....	28
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	30
Historical Context.....	31
Oral Literature.....	33
Culturally Authentic Native American Children’s Literature Defined .....	37
Cultural Authenticity .....	39
<i>Cultural Authenticity: Insider or Outsider Perspective.....</i>	40
<i>Cultural Authenticity: The Need for Authors to have Experiences of the Culture.</i> .....	41
<i>Cultural Authenticity: The reasons authors choose to write a book. ....</i>	41
<i>Cultural Authenticity: The criteria for evaluation are based on. ....</i>	42
<i>Cultural Authenticity: Criteria that go beyond accuracy and the absence of     stereotypes to also include values, beliefs, and attitudes. ....</i>	44
<i>Cultural Authenticity: Empowerment .....</i>	45
Highlight of Native American History .....	47
Cultural Base Education and Natives Perspectives .....	48
Language.....	66
Researchers’ Responses from children’s literature.....	71
<i>Reader Response Theory .....</i>	73
<i>Literature Discussion.....</i>	78
Summary.....	84
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	86
Research Design for the Study of Fifth Grade Students’ Reading Responses and Perspective on Native American Children’s Literature.....	86
Research Methods and Questions.....	86
Research Design .....	87
<i>Human Subjects and Permissions.....</i>	87
<i>Setting .....</i>	88
<i>Teacher &amp; Classroom.....</i>	89
<i>Classroom Curriculum .....</i>	90
<i>Observation, Taping, and Transcripts of Literature Circles .....</i>	93
Data Collection .....	94

## TABLE OF CONTENTS -- CONTINUED

<i>Book Selection</i> .....	94
<i>Criteria and Evaluation Tools for choosing the books</i> .....	95
<i>Summary of each Book</i> .....	97
<i>Data sources: Transcripts from Literature Circle</i> .....	102
<i>Student Interview</i> .....	106
Role of Researcher.....	108
Limitations .....	109
Secondary Data Sources .....	110
<i>Observational Field Notes</i> .....	111
<i>Artifacts</i> .....	112
Trustworthiness.....	113
<i>Credibility</i> .....	113
<i>Member Checking</i> .....	114
<i>Transferability</i> .....	114
<i>Dependability</i> .....	115
Data Analysis.....	115
<i>Umbrella Category Cultural Themes</i> .....	119
<i>Interview 1: Background</i> .....	131
<i>Interview 2: Detail of the Experience</i> .....	132
Summary.....	134
CHAPTER FOUR: TEXTUAL FEATURES OF NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE	
.....	137
Umbrella Category 1 –Cultural Themes.....	141
<i>The Multiple Purposes of Storytelling</i> .....	142
<i>Storytelling to Affirm Apache Timetables and Perspectives of Time</i> .....	143
<i>Storytelling to Introduce and Reinforce Relationships</i> .....	145
<i>Storytelling to Affirm and Reinforce Natural, Reciprocal, Ecological Relationships</i> .....	146
<i>Storytelling as a Means of Intergenerational Transfer of Knowledge</i> .....	147
Cultural Themes: Storytelling.....	149
<i>Storytelling: Ethics and Teaching</i> .....	150
<i>Storytelling: Self-Image/Knowledge of One’s Own People</i> .....	153
Cultural Themes: Sense of Place .....	156
<i>Sense of Place: Sacred Places</i> .....	156
<i>Sense of Place: Sacred Directions</i> .....	157
Cultural Themes: Deep Knowledge.....	159
<i>Deep Knowledge: Understanding Natural Phenomena</i> .....	160
<i>Deep Knowledge: Response to Learner-Demonstrated Interest</i> .....	161
<i>Deep Knowledge: Response to Ceremony and Ritual</i> .....	163
Cultural Themes: Relationships.....	166
<i>Relationships: Family and Kinship</i> .....	166
<i>Relationships: Association</i> .....	168

## TABLE OF CONTENTS -- CONTINUED

Cultural Themes: Time .....	170
Cultural Themes: Ceremony .....	173
<i>Ceremony: Dance</i> .....	174
<i>Ceremony: Song</i> .....	175
<i>Ceremony: Prayer</i> .....	177
Cultural Themes: Animals .....	178
Umbrella Category 2 - Linguistic Patterns .....	183
Linguistic Patterns: Language .....	184
Linguistic Patterns: Bilingualism.....	187
Linguistic Patterns: Code-switching .....	187
Linguistic Patterns: Rez-talk.....	188
Umbrella Category 3 – Cultural Practices and Images.....	189
Significant Cultural Roles: Elders .....	191
Significant Cultural Roles: Woman.....	195
Significant Cultural Roles: Man .....	198
Significant Cultural Roles: Child.....	201
<i>Girl Child</i> .....	201
<i>Boy Child</i> .....	205
Practices and Manifestations of Culture .....	208
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Religion and Beliefs .....	209
<i>Religion and Beliefs</i> .....	210
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Prayer.....	214
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Sacred Being(s) .....	216
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Dance.....	219
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Music .....	220
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Lifestyle.....	224
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Body Wear.....	225
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Hunting.....	227
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Food.....	229
Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Shelter.....	231
Cultural Images.....	233
<i>Cultural Images: Symbol</i> .....	234
Summary.....	237
CHAPTER FIVE: NATIVE CHILDREN’S RESPONSES TO LITERATURE .....	238
Cultural Theme: Storytelling .....	240
<i>Storytelling: Ethics</i> .....	243
<i>Storytelling: Teaching</i> .....	246
<i>Storytelling: Self-Image and Cultural Identity</i> .....	247
Cultural Theme: Sense of Place.....	249
Cultural Theme: Deep Knowledge .....	250
Cultural Theme: Relationship.....	252
Cultural Theme: Ceremony .....	255

## TABLE OF CONTENTS -- CONTINUED

Cultural Theme: Time.....	257
Cultural Theme: Animals.....	258
Second Umbrella: Linguistic Patterns .....	260
Third Umbrella: Cultural Practice and Images .....	264
Culture: Significant Cultural Roles.....	264
<i>Significant Cultural Roles: Elders</i> .....	265
<i>Significant Cultural Roles: Woman</i> .....	267
<i>Significant Cultural Roles: Man</i> .....	270
<i>Significant Cultural Roles: Child</i> .....	271
Practices and Manifestations of Culture .....	275
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Religion and Beliefs</i> .....	276
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Prayer</i> .....	278
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Sacred Being(s)</i> .....	282
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Dance</i> .....	285
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Music</i> .....	287
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Lifestyle</i> .....	288
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Body Wear</i> .....	289
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Hunting</i> .....	290
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Food</i> .....	291
<i>Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Shelter</i> .....	294
Cultural Images.....	295
<i>Cultural Images: Symbol</i> .....	296
Summary of Student Responses .....	302
First Umbrella Category: Cultural Themes .....	302
Third Umbrella Category: Culture.....	304
Group Interview .....	308
Background.....	309
Detail of the Reading Experience .....	311
Summary .....	321
CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS .....	322
Summary of the Research Findings .....	324
The Significance of Storytelling as Teaching.....	329
<i>Socialization</i> .....	334
<i>Sense of Place</i> .....	335
<i>Ceremonial A Way-of-Life</i> .....	336
<i>Animals</i> .....	338
<i>Deep Knowledge of Coming-To-Know</i> .....	339
<i>Language</i> .....	341
<i>Cultural Values</i> .....	345
Transmitting Cultural Images and Symbols .....	348
Summary of Key Findings.....	354
<i>Implications of the Study</i> .....	357

## TABLE OF CONTENTS -- CONTINUED

<i>Implication for Classroom Teachers</i> .....	357
<i>    Opportunities to Identify with Culturally Authentic Native American Children's Literature</i> .....	357
<i>    Opportunities for Literature Discussion</i> .....	360
<i>    Culturally Relevant Teaching</i> .....	361
<i>    Teacher Educators</i> .....	364
<i>    Publishers/Authors/Illustrators</i> .....	365
Further Research .....	368
Conclusion .....	368
APPENDIX A STUDENT CONSENT FORM.....	378
APPENDIX B SAMPLE PARENT/STUDENT PERMISSION FORM .....	381
SUBJECTS DISCLAIMER FORM.....	382
Interview Questions .....	383
APPENDIX C EVALUATION .....	384
Evaluation: Books and Printed Materials .....	384
REFERENCES .....	456
<i>Native American Children's Literature References</i> .....	471

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Literature Circles Are . . . and Are not . . . Noe & Johnson, 1999, pp. X). . . . .	80
Table 2 Demographics of Students . . . . .	92
Table 3 Books Selected (See Appendix E) . . . . .	101
Table 4 Umbrella categories and themes . . . . .	118
Table 5 Definition of cultural themes . . . . .	121
Table 6 Definition of linguistic patterns . . . . .	122
Table 7 Definitions of cultural practices and images . . . . .	125
Table 8 Examples of ethical phrases . . . . .	151
Table 9 First Umbrella Category: Cultural Themes . . . . .	239
Table 10 Summary of Findings for the Textual Analysis . . . . .	326
Table 11 Native American Textual Features Identified in Children's Responses to 14 Native American Children's Literature: Cultural Themes . . . . .	331

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Summary of Key Findings.....	356
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine textual features in Native American Children's literature. Culturally authentic children's literature will be used to gain insights into children's perspectives as they engage through individual responses within the literature circles and to examine their perspectives throughout the study.

This study utilized qualitative research methods and ethnographic techniques. This study draws on two complementary frames: the theorization of culturally authentic Native American children's literature and reader response theory. I have achieved two goals: first, to make explicit decisions about how to depict reoccurring themes, language, and discourses of culture; second, to acknowledge a reader's ability to draw from a knowledge base or experiences available to members of a particular cultural community while interpreting literature. The students participated in fourteen literature discussions of culturally authentic literature, Data collection, transcripts from literature discussions, interviews, observational field notes, and written artifacts. Categories were constructed through inductive analysis of data.

My three research questions were derived from Rosenblatt and reader response theory, including Native American perspectives:

1. What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book?
2. What types of talk about that these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature?

3. What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's literature?

The findings of this study contribute to teacher education programs, Indigenous education, and the field of Native children's literature. Furthermore, these cultural literatures provide and maintained Native American stories while promoting literacy skills for all children.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Stories Matter

*Listen!*

*Did you hear that sound? Some say it's the wind blowing through the trees, but we know it isn't.*

*A long time ago, down in a valley, there were many people moving in, from far and wide. Every year these people would have a social dance so that the young people could get together.*

*The women of the village decided when these dances should be held. One evening, the women got together and talked. They decided it was a good time for a hoop dance. So, one was planned.*

*The evening of the dance arrived and during the hoop dance, a young boy and a young girl became very, very interested in one another. People who saw them began talking. "Look! They don't even change partners. They dance only with one another."*

*It was true. The boy and girl only danced with each other...*

Lacapa, Michael (1990, pg.1-8) *The Flute Player: An Apache Folktale*

This story was written by an Apache author and illustrator, Michael Lacapa, was dedicated to all young Apache friends who live near and around the canyon. This is a very significant story because it originated from the Apache Language and Culture Program and acknowledges the White Mountain Apache storyteller. I have listened, read, and learned from stories of Indigenous People, like this one, and from these stories I acknowledge that stories do matter. The stories are unique and different from Euro-American stories. These stories are significant to Native American people; these stories matter because they portray our Way of Life and, therefore must be heard and experienced through Native youth. These stories will be remembered through storytelling from the elders and also through attending school when teachers provide these stories.

Situated at the center of the White Mountain Apache Reservation in the mid 1960's, I returned to the Reservation when I was in the fifth grade as an elementary student. At this time reading was the center of my life as a daily personal experience to get away from the monotony of casual home activities. Reading placed me in an imaginative world of various experiences and self discovery. My fifth grade teacher inspired me to learn more about my own Apache people and he taught this through literature. One book on the Apache people was utilized in this classroom and it made me wonder why the literature on Native Americans was so limited and that why there was only one book. When I became an elementary school teacher on the reservation some thirty years later, I noticed that the literature for Native American children was still limited. My perspective on Native American children's literature changed once I utilized this literature in my fifth grade reading program curriculum.

At that time the school I was teaching at was labeled as an underperforming school, based on their test scores from two standardized tests: the Stanford 9 Test and the AIMS test. My concern was the reading levels of my Apache students based on the test scores. The lowest test scores were in three subject areas: Math, Reading and Writing. My personal and professional observations and experiences with reading prompted my interest in utilizing Native American children's literature in the classroom and led me eventually to this study. The purpose of this study is to examine Native American children's responses and perspectives and to identify textual features in Native American children's literature. Culturally authentic children's literature was utilized to gain insights into children's talk and thinking as they engaged in literature circles.

Over several years I developed an evaluation form based on two main resources (McCluskey, 1993; Slapin & Seale, 1998) to assess the cultural authenticity of Native children's literature. Fourteen Native American children's books were utilized in this research, all of which were evaluated for authentic representations of Native Americans. My interest in Apache children stems from my own experience of having one Native literature book in a fifth grade classroom and my interest in learning about my own Apache people. My concentration is on incorporating Native children stories into the curriculum and documenting how children perceive and respond to these books.

Personally, I am also concerned about how to change children's reading attitudes and engagement towards reading Native American literature. My perspective is shaped by the fact that I am an Apache woman, a parent of Apache children, a grandmother of Apache children, a former elementary school teacher, a high school teacher, and a concerned Apache citizen. My position in this research brings these attributes into my analysis and interpretation of the results. This research is intended to benefit the Apache Nation and other Native American cultures. I believe my teaching experiences and my perspective as an Apache woman have shaped, enhanced, and strengthened the research process by allowing me to engage in the research as an insider. Insider perspectives are important in research involving Indigenous people because they offer unique insights and ensure more sensitivity and authenticity in the portrayal of the community of study. I intend to examine through this study how teachers can utilize Native American children's literature to gain insights into children's talk and thinking as they engage in literature circles.

### **Purpose of this study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the textual features of Native American Children's literature and Native American children's responses to these textual features. Culturally authentic children's literature was used to gain insights into children's perspectives as they engaged through individual responses within the literature circles. I also examined their perspectives about these books and discussions throughout the study. My particular interest is looking at how culturally authentic Native American children's literature creates a "lived through experience" as "students themselves become part of these culture," (Rosenblatt, 1995, 1999 p. ). Rosenblatt's theories certainly supports my perception that students have the potential to make sense of and come to a new understanding of the world around them through the experience of the literature in their own lives. When this happens, the connection is made.

In addition, Rosenblatt (1995) noted that the "reader draws on past experience of life and language to elicit meaning from the printed words, and it is possible to see how through these words he reorganizes past experience to attain new understanding" (p. 25). Students can reflect on the reading through evoking meaning from the text by critical engagement and allowing the relationship between the literature and their own life to connect (p. 25). Therefore, I examined this relationship between literature and life in the response of fifth graders of Native American ethnicity who were born and raised on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. They participated in literature discussions about their own local culture as well as other Southwestern Native Nations. The study is based on the following research questions:

1. What Native American textual features are identifiable in the fourteen Native American children's books?
2. What types of talk about these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature?
3. What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's literature?

In answering these three questions, I studied twenty students from a fifth grade class on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Eight males and twelve females of different Native American Nations (White Mountain Apache, Mescalero, Navajo, Mexican, Arapaho, Havasupai, Blackfeet) participated in fourteen literature discussions in the month of May 2007. This research took place within the naturally occurring setting of their classroom. After establishing the theoretical and methodological foundation of my research, I did a thematic analysis of the fourteen Native American children's literature. I then used these features to put forward categories of reader response to examine my study participants' interpretations of the literature. I developed tables to depict the textual features as well as the reader response categories and included data from the transcripts of the literature discussion and interviews, observational field notes, and student's written work. The data was analyzed through inductive analysis ( ).

Defining the cultures of the children was a challenging task that took time, because of the many Native cultural lineages of students in the classroom. In this study, cultural authenticity was examined by asking questions about insider and outsider perspectives, the need for authors to have experience in the culture, the reasons authors

choose to write a book, the criteria for evaluating books, criteria that goes beyond accuracy, the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs, and attitudes, and finally, power. I have focused on the goal of making explicit decisions about how to depict occurring themes, language, and discourses of culture. Secondly, this study acknowledges a reader's ability to draw from a knowledge base of experience available to members of a particular culture while interpreting literature (text and language patterns).

Culturally authentic Native American literature in this study represents the stories and illustrations of the local culture as well as the other cultures of the Southwest region of the United States. The major selection of these stories are from books that have been evaluated for its cultural authenticity (Reese & Caldwell-Wood, 1997) in which the setting takes place within the the Southwestern Native Nations. In the study the term "Native American children's literature" includes literature from the Southwest region of the United States, but is not restricted to the Apache culture.

### **Historical Influences**

Oral literature is an integral part of culture; it is only in the last twenty-nine years that literature for local people on the Fort Apache Reservation has been available on paper, film, and recorded music. In 1981 the White Mountain Apache Tribe Language Committee of the Johnson O'Malley Apache Language and Culture Program under Tribal Education published the works of Apache writers, *Ndee Benagode'i': Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981). The stories were told by two

distinguished elders from the tribe, and apparently written and illustrated by Apache educators.

One local author/illustrator produced stories of the Western Apache Folktales, Hopi Folktales and other Native American Tales, based on his Apache, Hopi and Tewa descent. These stories of Apache, Hopi and Native Tales by Michael Lacapa are popular such as *The Flute Player* (1990), *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994), *The Magic Hummingbird* (1996), and *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004). An increasing number of these books are incorporated in the local school library system, school reading curriculum, local public library, and local museum.

It is important that literature should be studied because it educates the imagination and promotes cultural consciousness. Reese (2007) noted that that we need to provide children with literature that expands their knowledge and portrays the diversity of Native Americans in being culturally authentic (p. 217). The books portrayed from the Western Apache, Navajo, Hopi and [Cere] are the types of Native Nations that are utilized in this study. The books on Southwestern Native American children's literature have increased for the younger children, but only a few books can be found for intermediate age children or adolescents.

### **Professional History and Experience**

In being a professional teacher, working in community schools, public schools and a bilingual/bicultural charter school, I have observed other teachers encouraging students to value their life experience. By exposure to Native American literature,

reading children's, adolescent, and adult books through a literature-based approach will promote cultural consciousness and enrich life experiences through educating imagination, thus cultivating creativity. As a teacher, I utilized books from ethnic cultures but had few books about the local culture of the Western Apache. Michael Lacapa was our local author and illustrator, providing Apache folktales, Hopi folktales, Native tales and contemporary multicultural stories in which the characters are children of the same ethnic origin as children living in Apache land, Hopi land, and Pueblo land. Each story recognizes the people of the tribe and their characteristic living in the Southwestern regions of the U.S. His death has created a vacuum and other Native authors have been slow to emerge.

My personal prior history as a Native teacher is a stepping stone towards this study in utilizing Native American children's literature in the classroom. This history consists of my teaching experience on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation to Apache students in classrooms and in the library-reading program, teaching Native American children's literature to undergraduate and graduate level students, research conducted at the Tohono O'odham Nation, and interviewing a Native author. Furthermore, I have conducted several research studies in the area of multicultural and Native American children's literature throughout my graduate course work.

First, I conducted a study of multicultural literature in which I presented 15 books to my fifth grade students and asked: Can students comprehend multicultural literature through the enriched text and illustrations so that each student's level of reading improves? I found that multicultural literature did enhance the fifth grade students'

understanding through the illustrations and text, plus they learned more about other ethnic groups and especially their own Apache culture.

I noticed that many of my fifth grade students did not want to read and I knew that I had to find a way for my students to have that desire to read. My students needed something to motivate them, something they could personally relate to their own lives. I incorporated Native American children's literature into my reading curriculum and this caused a positive change. The students could relate to the reading because the books were about Native Americans, just like them. I noticed that reading became enjoyable based on the students' interest in the books and their desire to want to read more.

Through the readings I observed the students' "living through" the experiences within the Native stories. The Native American children's literature I utilized seemed to have created an increased interest in wanting to read more Native American stories as my students had become empowered to read more. This is what every teacher wants for their students - - a passion to read.

Next, my Master's paper was on Children's Literature to Promote Literacy Development. The purpose of that paper was to locate research which used children's literature to promote literacy development among young children. Also, I applied this newly gained research to enhance Apache students' reading abilities. This research was conducted with my fifth grade students. The ideas, approaches and strategies focused on culture and literacy, the power of literature, peer tutoring through literature, and the four-block approach.

My research on Native children's literature was to analyze the use of this literature to promote literacy among young Apache children. This study was conducted on a reservation at a public library during Spring Break of 2005. The study involved 14 Native American children's books and the responses of the children through literature discussions and artifacts developed through utilizing the reader response theory of Louise Rosenblatt. I concluded that literature discussions provided insights about what students learn from the book and how they applied it to their own lives based on their responses to the literature.

Then in the spring of 2006, I conducted a study with a colleague, in a joint research a study with a fifth grade teacher. The research was done with Tohono O'dham Native American fifth grade students in Sells, Arizona, by using selected non-Native American (mainstream literature) and Native Literature. The intent was to enable students to make a strong connection to reading, create sensory images, ask questions, and to determine what is important to them. Another goal was to collect the students' responses after reading Native books and Non-Native books and then compare their responses. Our finding was that the children's responses to Native American literature reflected their personal connections to their tribe and cultural values while the responses of Non-Native books were connections to personal experiences and interests.

My interest in Native American children's literature is my main focus but I also conducted a small study on a Native American author, the late Michael Lacapa. The research consisted of interviewing the Apache author--illustrator plus acquiring information about him through a Life History Interview. Questions from the Life History

Interview were on the topic of: demographic information, early life, language history, early schooling, general education, current uses of languages, and his work as a writer/illustrator. All of this information was used to understand how a Native author and illustrator developed into an artist and writer, and his purposes for writing a story. From this specific research, an interest on Native authors and illustrators and authenticity became relevant to my next study.

My next study was on the authenticity of Native children literature and the purpose of this study was to investigate the representations of Native Americans by Native authors and Non-Native authors in Native American children's literature from the Southwest region of the United States. The focus on this study was the authenticity of Native children's literature. The content analysis of this study was based on my own development of an evaluation form to examine sixteen Native American children's literature (eight by Native authors and eight by Non-Native authors), all of which were evaluated for authentic representations. Overall, twelve out of the sixteen books contained accurate representations of Native Americans.

In spring 2007, I did a content analysis study on Native American children's literature and evaluated this literature based on its cultural authenticity. The issue of authenticity has been frequently debated, and so my study examined issues of cultural authenticity as related to Native American Children's literature. I identified seven themes embedded in cultural authenticity as follows: (1). defining cultural authenticity; (2). insider and outsider perspectives; (3). need for authors to have experiences with the culture; (4). the reason authors choose to write a book; (5). the criteria for evaluation; (6).

criteria that goes beyond accuracy and the absence of stereotype to include values, beliefs and attitudes; and finally, (7). power. The themes are important because they reveal the complexity of cultural authenticity. In addition, the seven themes have been added to my evaluation form and the twelve books evaluated for culturally authenticity were utilized in my dissertation.

Given my work in the area of children literature and the responses to this literature, my dissertation is a study closely investigating the ways that Native American children experience culturally authentic Native American children's literature. This study examined responses of fifth grade students to literature placed within their own cultural context and that of other Native cultures. The intent of this research is to provide the best portrait possible of Native elementary students at Apache Elementary School and how the students perceived the use of Native American children's literature through literature circle discussions and group interviews.

### **Significance of Study**

In the study I explored the content of responses from students to culturally authentic literature and their perspective of the literature over time. It was my hope that this study will increase the knowledge of U.S. public schools to address the diversity of children in our nation's schools, and to see that diversity is healthy and helpful in educating multi-cultural young students. Within this research I cannot assume to generalize beyond the particular classroom in which I utilized Native American children's literature. However, I hope the implications of this study will be extended to

the field of education as a whole and in particular to educators teaching Native American students, to Native authors and Native illustrators, to Native Language revitalization, and to Native researchers and the people of the Apache Nation.

On the Fort Apache Indian Reservation I hope this study will have an impact on the educators of our Apache youth and the Apache people by contributing awareness of the significance of the Apache children reading and responding to culturally authentic Native American children's literature, written about their own culture. In addition, I hope this study will enhance and encourage the development of more Apache children's literature by encouraging local authors and illustrator to continue to publish their own work of the people. For the classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, resource teachers, and librarians in the Apache Nation, I hope this study encourages them to promote and incorporate these literature books in the Arizona State Standards for Language Arts (Department of Education, ). I hope that this study will serve as an example to be utilized in the classroom to promote and gain information and serve as a resource for teachers to share its findings with others.

I hope to contribute to demonstrating the need for books from underrepresented cultures in the field of multicultural education, especially in the area of culturally authentic Native American children's literature. I plan for the implications of this study to directly voice my findings to classroom teachers, resource teachers, curriculum specialists, and to encourage a curriculum that will include books that represent the cultures of children who have typically been underrepresented in the past.

## **Summary**

This chapter has provided a brief description of the intent of the research study relating a textual analysis of Native American children's literature and the students' responses to these books. Mentioning the importance of why stories matter was due to the uniqueness of Native American oral stories to portray the Native Way of life. The purpose of this study is to explore students' responses to culturally authentic literature through their discussion in literature circles to gain understanding of the literature context and to place themselves into the storyline through imagination. Historically, oral storytelling was the forerunner for Native American literature and not many printed materials written about Apache are available, but storytelling by elders has established children's literature. The researcher's personal quest to promote literacy using Native American literature is a key motivation for this study. The significance of the study and the overview of the study, as well as an introduction to the qualitative research methods and techniques, students' participation of literature discussions, data collection of the research studies, and the formulation of questions were introduced in this chapter. All of these topics are discussed thoroughly in the proceeding text.

## **Overview of the Study**

This dissertation is organized in the following fashion: There are six chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and sets the purpose of the study. Chapter Two is a review of the literature and the theoretical framework. Chapter Three explains the methods of data collection and analysis of data. Chapter Four presents the textual data

analysis of the fourteen culturally authentic Native American children's literature.

Chapter Five is the responses of the students from the text and from the group interviews.

Chapter Six summarizes the study, draws implications for further research, and discusses the educational merit of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The focus of this study is on the response and perceptions of fifth graders to culturally relevant text. This current literature review research relates to this study and places focus within culturally authentic text and theoretical framework. Throughout the readings of the work of others I have learned about storytelling from the Apache and the complexities of culturally authentic Native American children's literature, plus the transactional process of the reading practices. Being an Apache, raised and taught on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, and now providing readings of Native American children's literature in the classroom formed a new awaking of my culture that exists through cultural relationship within and around me. Reading Native American children's literature with its representation of culturally authenticity, as well as reviewing Native American Researchers, the critical responses to literature, including reader response theories has heightened awareness of new issues that prompt me to look at my role as a teacher and as learner.

The task of defining culturally authentic literature in this research was not easily obtained. In order for this study to progress it was important to define specifically the meaning of culturally authentic literature as applied to this study. In order to understand the perspectives of culturally authentic Native American children's literature I begin by reviewing past history and cultural understandings relevant to this research. The past history is the structure that builds the understanding for the reader to be aware of the cultural perspective. The language role developed plus the origin of the local culture and literature are discussed to support defining culturally authentic literature (for the students)

in this research, plus introducing further background knowledge of understanding cultural empowerment within Native American children's literature. The study is then placed within the theoretical framework of multicultural literature and focuses on Native American children's literature rendered mostly by Native American Authors and Native Illustrators. The point of Native American Authors proposes the issues of accuracy and authenticity, increased by Native American researchers and educators facing challenges in the selections of Native American children's literatures--are discussed in the research. Lastly, reader response theory and the transactional nature of reading serve as the theoretical framework foundation for examining students' responses to literature.

### **Historical Context**

In Native American Culture the word(s) Oral literature did not exist. Only when the European society arrived with their paper writing and as the moment of interest on Native American Indians surfaced, Native American's cultural ways of singing, dancing, and storytelling, together with other ceremonial rituals were ruminated as oral literature. Such a view of literature fits nicely with that of Champagne's, editor of *The Native North American Almanac* (2001) noted that the American Indians have developed rich and varied literature, reflecting the diversity of hundreds of Indigenous American cultural traditions and languages. With the arrival of Europeans came many new languages and cultures to which Native peoples have been forced to adapt. Thus, what we refer to as "American Indian literature" reflects a wide range of linguistic and cultural experiences (Basso, 1996; Peat, 2002; Fitzgerald, 2002; Farrer, 1991; McGaa, 1990).

Subsequently, American Indian literature-is-oral literature, and the words from the literature is alluded to by Champagne: he noted that major themes in American Indian literature include the place-centered tribal worldview, reverence for the power of the word. And Cajete (2000) asserted that Words are sacred to a child, kinships ties (to living and dead relatives, to supernatural beings, to celestial bodies, to animals and other spirits in nature), and belief in the importance of renewal of the world (Peat, 2002; Cordova, 2007) through rituals associated with seasonal cycle. European contact led to changes in traditional themes related to warfare and cultural continuance, particularly since the nineteenth century. The American Indian resistance has been evident not only in writing in English, French, and Spanish, but also in oral literatures.

Native writers endeavored and created wonderful and magnificent works of literature. This is alluded to by research scholars and is noted in the following paragraph:

Today, Native American writer's literature produced in English language can be counted among the most innovative and engaging in contemporary fiction, poetry, drama, and the nonfiction essay. Meanwhile, oral traditions continue to enrich the lives of the people as they have for countless generations, especially as traditional religious ceremonies are being revitalized (Deloria, 1999; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2002; McGaa, 1990; Peat, 2002).

## Oral Literature

The ways of the American Native Life was actually practical existence within the realm of a unique traditional Universe, this practical living was later translated in storytelling as Oral Literature.

Here is how oral literature is translated in the next sentence. Oral literature can be defined as that body of literary works, with relatively standard features, that a people have disseminated and preserved for many generations through oral performance. Myths (Cajete, 1994), legends, ritual dramas (Cajete, 1999), prayers (Deloria, 1999, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2002) , chant & songs (Farrer, 1991;), speeches (Basso, 1970) , anecdotes, and even jokes (Bruchac, 1997) and gossip (Smith, 1999) may all be considered forms of oral literature. For example, when a story is told by a Native speaker to a Native (tribal) audience, comes to life through their shared history (Silko, 1981; Katanski, 2005)), that is, the shared knowledge of the characters (Deloria, 1970), tribal custom (Fitzgerald, 2007), and geographical region (Basso, 1996), as well as family and personal history. The body language of the storyteller also adds enlivening dimensions to a story that writing cannot capture (Cajete, 1999) The pieces that find their way into print, however, are generally representatives of crafted oral work that have enjoyed a long life among a people.

Champagne (2001) noted: that Oral literature exists always and everywhere in human communities. In contemporary American Indian settings and communities, storytelling plays an essential role in the revitalization and preservation of culture (Reese,

2007; Cajete, 1994, 2000; Bishop, 1996; Smith, 1999; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Deloria, 1999; Basso, 1970; Reese, 2007). To understand the place of oral tradition within the body of works referred to as American Indian literature, one must recognize that oral literature is a continual aspect of all people's lives and that the weaving together of oral literary expressions with writing reveals the unique features and values of many culture across time (p. 847).

Other forms of oral literature related to storytelling include legends, trickster tales, and specialized types of stories (Deloria, 1999; Cajete, 1994, 1999, 2000). Most tribes have their own literary terms for their various types of literature. Legends, as opposed to myths, arise from events within historical memory. Over time the story of the event takes on symbolic significance and may be exaggerated in dimensions related to time, place, or factual detail.

Ancient knowledge and wisdom acquired for teaching sparked the imagination of Native Americans to uniquely create stories such as using a common Native American mythic figure, Trickster, often referred to as the trickster/transformer (Deloria, 1999), take the shape of Coyote in the Southwest, Ikhtomi (Spider) in the High Plains, Hare in the Great Lakes and the Southeast, Raven in the Northwest, and Blue Jay or Wolverine in Canada. Depending on the tribal tradition, stories about such characters may be used to teach proper behavior to children (Farrer, 1991;), to instruct and inspire adults (Cajete, 1999; Farrer, 1991;), to entertain through humor, to offer a culture hero who saves the people or otherwise makes the world better by his brave (or even unintentional) acts, or tell of how the universe came to be as we know it.

In all, this method of using these characters as mentioned was not perceived as literature but was a practical common way of teaching metaphors practiced by Native Americans.

Other practices of story telling perceived as literature today was noted as: Another category of recorded oral literature arises from the practice of Native religions, the verbal parts of rituals performed for specific purposes (Cordova, 2007). Early anthologists of American Indian lore, such as George Cronyn's *The Path of the Rainbow* (1918), were intended both to enlighten the public regarding the rich literary materials of Native cultures and to further the preservation of Native cultural materials. Toward the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, there was much concern among ethnologists, and other that American Indian cultures were dying out and that there would be no record of Native cultural practices if great efforts weren't made to record the. Before the 1960s, anthologies designed for a popular audience were frequently compiled from those ethnographic materials.

Along with this preservation the ongoing tradition of Native American practicing their sacred ceremonies have kept cultures alive and these rich literary materials became part of literature.

For Native American preservation was well meaning but it was a risk to reveal the sacred knowledge. Champagne (2009) noted that an important consideration in reading oral literatures relates to whether or not the particular American Indian tribe would prefer that such specific knowledge of their ceremonies remain only within the tribe (Deloria, 1997; Basso, 1970;) When much of the ethnographic material was first collected,

individuals may have revealed sacred tribal information without realizing that it would be published, or may have had it stolen from them by people who claimed they would not publish it.

On Creation (Cordova, 2007; Deloria, 1999) imply that myths appear from the cornerstone of American Indian cultures' worldview – perhaps of every culture's worldview. Similarly, Champagne noted: A simple definition of myth is “sacred story,” and even though the content of myth is fantastic – that is, beyond the realm of fact as we know it – people who hold their myth sacred see a deep, holistic truth in them. Readers outside the culture being studied see through the windows of myths, as it were, into the culture, glimpsing the life of a people, but by no means seeing it all.

Revealing what is termed oral literature that contained sacred knowledge to non-Natives was misperceived anyway, in a sense that was good, but it also hindered authenticity.

The rich oral literary materials also included music, songs and chants, as noted by scholars in the following narratives. Songs and chants, accompany virtually all Native ceremonies (Farrer, 1991; Basso, 1970). Some are generations old, but others are composed for the occasion, often continuing to be part of the ceremony in the future or simply remaining with the individual involved in the particular ceremony, as in the instance of naming or perhaps healing (Deloria, 1997, 1999).

Furthermore, American Indian literature has always existed in all communities throughout the Native American society. In considering all the significant aspects of what it entails, from the storytellers, to the individual who listens to the story, and the

experiences of the story through the knowledge acquired through applying the teachings with in each individuals life, is coming-to-know ones self.

### **Culturally Authentic Native American Children's Literature Defined**

The Culturally Authentic Native American children's literature is composed of traditional stories which consist of myths, legends and folktales in the oral storytelling traditions of a given people to include contemporary stories and poetry. An affirmation of Native American Children's Literature defined is noted by a scholar, Reese (2007) noted;

That through story, people pass their religious beliefs, customs, history, lifestyle, language, values, and the place they hold sacred from one generation to the next.

As such, stories and their telling are more than simple entertainment. They matter- insignificant way - to the well-being of the communities from which they originate (p. 245).

Within my elementary years as a young female Apache fifth grader, I remember a writing assignment, and it was to, "Write About Your Culture," well, my Culture, was Apache, and in that whole classroom there was only one book on the Apache people. The teacher had a very limited supply of books for this assignment. I will always remember this because I was inspired to write about the Apache people, with only one book available and it seemed like no other teacher was interested in my own Culture. The curriculum was geared towards domestic programmed mainstream standards. This story brings back the memory of how important that one book was and a reminder of how important such a book is for Educators. But even more that that, when I became a

certified teacher when I taught fifth graders I brought in Native American children's literature into my Reading Curriculum. The students' response to the literature was culturally relevant according to their responses, they saw themselves within in the books, and this increased their desire to read more books. Based on this knowledge I realized that I needed to further investigate why Native American students' reading increased their reading through Native American children's literature but interestingly something else was revealed through this process. I realized that not only utilizing Native American children's literature in the classroom promoted reading, but what is significant is how the Native Nations are portrayed accurately through stories and illustrations. Subsequently, I then developed an evaluation form to evaluate the Native American children's literature for culturally authenticity through the stories and illustrations of the books.

My evaluation form was drawn from and developed through these resources; *Through Native Eyes: The Native Experience in Books for Children* (Staplin & Seale, 2003), *Evaluating American Indian Textbooks & Other Material For The Classroom* (McCluskey, 1991), *Multicultural Children's Literature: Creating and Applying an Evaluation Tool in Response to the Need of Urban Educator* (Higgins, 2000), and *Stories Matter: The Complexity of Culturally Authenticity in Children's Literature* (Fox, D. & Short, K. 2003) through the development of this evaluation tool I evaluated fourteen Native American children's literature for culturally authentic. But first I had to define, Culturally Authenticity, and with this in mind I developed this literature review in defining Culturally Authenticity.

I have identified seven themes professional literature review focus on culturally authenticity. These themes reflect the complexities of evaluating culturally authenticity of the books. In identifying these themes my approach was to examine the first chapter of *Stories Matter* and circle every word that had a relationship to cultural authenticity. Then I categorized them by how many times each word came up. Again looking at the most frequent words, I came up with the seven themes and utilized the professional literature to support the themes. In addition, I also utilized these seven themes which were incorporated in the evaluation form requiring seven additional criteria for accepting or denying Native American children's literature for "culturally authenticity."

### **Cultural Authenticity**

In defining Cultural Authenticity seven themes emerged. The first theme was in developing a definition of cultural authenticity from the views of authors and educators who discussed cultural authenticity in their own personal words. From this, Rubine Sims Bishop asserted (1991b), that culturally authenticity cannot be defined but as an insider identifying culturally authenticity base on your own knowledge of your culture being represented. Moreover, other scholars, Weimin Mo and Wenju Shen (1997) noted that differences will always be within a cultural group, but it can be defined through your acknowledgment of your culture is the reflections of worthy values, facts, and attitude.

Deductively, based on those theories presented, I formulated a definition. The definition of cultural authenticity was developed with the question: does the book define

culturally authenticity through the author and illustrator's background? But the question was further condensed to: Does the book define cultural authenticity?

*Cultural Authenticity: Insider or Outsider Perspective*

A second issue considers the influence of insider and outsider perspectives. The big debate about insiders and outsiders is that it is too simplistic to say an outsider writes inauthentic books and insider writes authentic books. Mingshui Cai (1994) is concerned that authors who write outside their own culture often do not take on an "ethnic perspective" and instead may unconsciously impose their own perspectives onto the depicted culture with an attitude of cultural arrogance. Similiarly, Reese and Caldwell-Wood (1982d) noted that authors who are not Native American often rely on their own perceptions of what it might mean to be an "Indian," rather than conducting careful research or spending long periods of time with the tribe about whom they write. Conversely, Smolkin and Suina (1996a) noted that authors of multicultural books, if not "insiders" of the addressed culture, at best need to ask *an* individual they know who is from a particular culture, or who is familiar with a culture. Views of "insiders" may differ, even when considering subjects sacred to a culture.

From the assumptions by research scholars I formulated a question relating to the literature studies: Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspective? This question will give me an accurate depiction of the narrative stories written by authors, as well as the illustrators.

*Cultural Authenticity: The Need for Authors to have Experiences of the Culture.*

The third issue is the need for authors to have experiences which significantly relate to a culture to assure accuracy and deviate from stereotypes. The suppositions by researchers in the following statements support the need for experiences to validate assurance for accuracy. Woodson (2003) used the metaphor of sitting around a dinner table to argue that an author must experience another's world through personal experience and/or significant personal relationships in order to write with truth about that world. As well, Joseph Bruchac, an Abenaki author of numerous books for children, suggests "one way for a non-native to gain this knowledge is be listening with care and respect to those who are with [the culture] rather than those who view it from the outsider" (Dresang, 1999, n.p.). Authors and illustrators who have limited experience with a culture but are concerned about providing accurate information must seek out reliable sources (Smith & Wiese, 2006).

Based on the research statements by scholars, I developed a question which supports the requirements for experiences. The question is stated as: The need for authors to have experience of the culture?

*Cultural Authenticity: The reasons authors choose to write a book.*

The fourth issue is the specific criteria used to evaluate cultural authenticity. This includes stereotypes and accuracy which incorporates the evaluations of Native children's literature. Reese & Caldwell-Wood (1982) state that the best tools a teacher can use to aid

in selecting a book about Native Americans are evaluation guides written by Native people. Furthermore, “the purpose of authentic multicultural literature,” as Howard (1991) puts it, “is to help liberate us from all the preconceived stereotypical hang-ups that imprison us within narrow boundaries” (pp. 92). Yokota (1993) explains the elements of accuracy, stating that first, “rich cultural details” give insight into the “nuances of daily life.” Second, “authentic dialogue and relationships” show how a character depicted in the story “really speak” instead of being “generic non-Caucasian.” The third element of accuracy, is that the “inclusion of members of a ‘minority’ group for a purpose,” helps story in their culture, no matter how minor the role in the story” (pp. 160).

Based on the scholarly precepts from prior assumptions led me to developing a correlated statement alluding to authors of Native American literature and is noted as follows: The reasons authors chose to write a book?

*Cultural Authenticity: The criteria for evaluation are based on.*

The fifth issue is the author’s perspective, intention, and representation related to cultural authenticity. Consider the examples of the scholars such as, Rudine Sim Bishop (1992) believes that the real issue is the desire of members of a particular culture to tell their stories as a way to pass on their culture and that this desire is not the same as restricting the freedom of authors to choose their own topics. Harris (1997), Woodson (2003), Seto (2003), and Bishop (1992) suggest that authors should ask themselves *why* they want to write a particular book. When authors make their intentions and ideologies explicit, this disclosure influences the evaluation of their writing for its cultural

authenticity. Furthermore, Indian people believe that stories can either enhance one's life or cause harm if they are not properly used (Howard, 1985).

Overall, the examples given by research scholars led me to the development of the question: The criteria for evaluation are based on what?

*Cultural Authenticity: Criteria that go beyond accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs, and attitudes.*

The sixth issue is that cultural authenticity is not just accuracy but includes Cultural values, beliefs and attitudes. Weimin Mo and Wenju Shen (2003) noted that authenticity is not just accuracy or the avoidance of stereotyping but involves cultural values and issues/practices that are accepted as norms for the social group. Taxel (1990) asserted that raising issues about authenticity implies an understanding that what children read plays an important role in shaping their perceptions of the diverse peoples of our world. He also said that authors need to be cautious in creating characters, developing plots, and articulating themes that deal with subjects about which certain groups have every right to be sensitive. Insensitivities were demonstrated in a book written about Native Americans, Smolkin and Suina (1996b) noted in their review of *Arrow to the Sun* that sometimes, as one of our informants explained, a book must be removed to “maintain the norms, keep the traditions, and keep the truth as it is known there. “ Furthermore, if particular Pueblo communities do want *Arrow to the Sun*, in their school libraries, but the book contains motifs or images that Pueblo religion forbids to be seen out of a particular context, then the choice to exclude this book, made by a people who are witnessing the loss of their language and customs, must be seen as a reasonable defense of Pueblo values and way of life.

In deterrence of obstacles of inaccuracy in Native American literature, I included a statement which incorporated values, beliefs, and attitudes as noted: Criteria that go

beyond accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include, values, beliefs, and attitudes, does the book?

*Cultural Authenticity: Empowerment*

The final issue in cultural authenticity is power. Nieto (2002) noted that Multicultural education has always focused on issues of power through educational reform and resistance to racism. Drawing on Banks and Nieto, multicultural children's literature shares multicultural education's purposes and raises related debates regarding the intersection of power, race, and culture. Ching (2005) states that the authenticity debate in the children's literature particularly addresses this intersection within the racial and cultural context of the power: to narrate, to tell one's own story, to self-determine, to self-realize, to self-represent, to change inequity to equity, and to articulate reparation for historical injustice. Bishop (1982) states, "There is power in The Word and people in positions of power over others have historically understood plus often fear, the potential of The Word to influence the minds of the people over whom they hold sway" (pp. 1).

Deductively, from the assertion of the scholars I developed a question which reveals the control potentiality of words influenced by writers of Native American literature and the question is annotated as: Who has the power?

Stories do influence the way children think about themselves and their place in the world as well as the ways in which they think about other cultural perspectives and people. The theoretical and practical issues related to the role of culturally authentic literature matter in the lives of educators and those of children and adolescents. The

issues are important because they reveal the complexity of cultural authenticity as related to the definition of cultural authenticity. These issues determined the criteria I used on the evaluation form to consider the authenticity. In defining “culturally authenticity,” these seven questions must be asked: Does the book define cultural authenticity? Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspective? The need for authors to have experiences of the culture; The reasons authors choose to write a book; The criteria for evaluation are based on what?; Criteria that go beyond accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include, values, beliefs, and attitudes, does the book?; Who has the power?; Would this encourage a positive image for the Non-Indian reader?; Are multiple perspective presented?; Are there important facts omitted?

In summary these questions were design to elicit cultural authenticity of Native American literature. These questions were utilized in my research studies. Again, stories do influence the way children think about themselves and their place in the world as well as the ways in which they think about other cultural perspectives and people. The theoretical and practical issues related to the role of culturally authentic literature matter in the lives of Native-Non Native educators and those of children and adolescents. This study is then placed within the larger theoretical framework of multicultural literature but due to the larger population of Native Americans in Native American children’s literature. Issues of accuracy and authenticity, and challenges faced by Native-Non Native educators and researchers in selection of multicultural literature and Native American children’s literature are discussed. Finally, reader response theory and the

transactional nature of reading serve as the theoretical framework for examining students' responses to literature.

### **Highlight of Native American History**

Schaefer (2004) states that, the history of Native American must be retold in order to understand how significant this study implies. The Native American was the original people of North America were the first to be subordinate by Europeans. The Indian Removal Act, passed in 1830, called for the relocation of all Eastern tribes across the Mississippi River. White people usually removed Native American who survived contact, were often removed far away, from their ancestral homes.

The United State government weakens tribal institutions by utilizing the Allotment Act of 1884. In 1934 the Reorganization Act, which was considered the efforts to strength tribal autonomy, did so by encouraging Native Americans to adopt White society's way of life. In which, tribal leaders and proposed to make individual landowners of tribal members. The effect of the Allotment Act on the Native Americans was disastrous. Much of the land initially deeded under the Allotment Act eventually came into the possession of White landowners.

Furthermore, the Native American – White relations in contemporary period did much as the same, such as Termination Act and Employment Assistance Program. In today society, the pan-Indian movement speaks for a diverse Native American people with many needs; settlement of treaty violations, economic development, improved

educational programs, effective health care, religious and spiritual freedom, control over natural resources, and greater self-rule (p. 169).

The 2000 Census showed that there were 2,475, 956 Native Americans in the United States. This represents an increase of 32 percent over the 1990s. In addition to the 2.5 million people who in 2000 listed American Indian or Alaskan Native as their sole racial identification, there were another 1.6 million people who listed multiple responses that included American Indian (Grieco & Cassidy, 2001; Ogynwole, 2002).

### **Cultural Base Education and Natives Perspectives**

Many Native cultures discovered that their children were not learning the alien mainstream program of studies and the dropout rate for Native Americans students was over an alarming rate of 50 percent, and several reservations had a rate of 70 percent. From these clues we deduced that the United States education system was not formatted to be compatible with Native American cultural heritage. As a result, Native American communities (American Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians) are creating lifelong learning opportunities that permit all members to improve their quality of life, and to meet their tribal responsibilities through meaningful contributions to the local, national, and world communities in which they live and interact. One of the greatest educational challenges for many is to build learning environments that allow each of their young children to obtain an education that “create good people that are knowledgeable and wise” (NWREL, p. 1).

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2002) states that, from a tribal and Native American professional perspective, the creation of lifelong learning environments and meaningful educational experiences for both the youth and adults of a tribal community requires a linguistic and cultural context that supports the traditions, knowledge, and language(s) of the community as the starting place for learning new ideas and knowledge. Furthermore, there is a firm belief within many Native tribal communities and among professional Native educators that this cultural context is absolutely essential if children are to succeed academically and to build a meaningful life as adults. This also means that all members of indigenous communities must be prepared to participate fully in modern society. Conversely, the damages from the forced alien education began appearing among Native American Cultures and Educators became alarmed and concern.

The development of new interests, attitudes, and programs concerning the education of American Indians occurred in 1969 and the early 1970's. The events that occurred, the release of the Senate Subcommittee Report, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge*; the first national conference on Indian education; the Havighurst Report; the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars held at Princeton University in March 1970; and the creation of the National Indian Education Association. The Senate Subcommittee Report indicated below.

*Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge* (1969) the U.S. Senate Subcommittee Report, provides information that stripped the American Indian of dignity within the decades of programs, attitudes, and federal policies. A previous

national study by Lewis Meriam and his colleagues presented perspectives regarding the place of language and culture in the education of American Indian. The “Meriam Report” recommended that Native teachers to teach in schools serving Native students, and early childhood programs that would provide a safe and challenging early environment for young Indian children plus incorporating tribal language and cultural programs in the school curriculum, Meriam (1928) presented the thesis that incorporating “Culturally Based Education (CBE) was a necessary component of a school’s culture if Native American students were to succeed academically as students and play a meaningful role as citizen (p. 2). Action was taken, resultantly from the Senate Subcommittee Report.

The major force for implementing new ideas generated from the emerging national discourse on ways to improve schools and schooling for Native American students became the Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318 as amended). The legislation included (2002) the priorities as the following:

1. funding for schools to develop culturally based curriculum
2. support for increasing the numbers of Native teachers and other professionals  
(an amendment added in 1973);
3. opportunities to develop Native language and cultural programs; and
4. a requirement for active, meaningful parental participation.

In addition, this legislation allowed fabrication of demonstration programs and experimentation of new ideas for educating Native children.

Another report study stemming from the prior reports on Native American Education was drafted. The Havighurst Report Research presented on the academic

performance of Indian and Alaskan Native children, with an analysis of strengths and weakness influenced by different learning and physical environments. In the Havighurst Report (1976) notes that in order to rebuild, we must solve the problem of educating children. This problem needs to be solved so that all children can master ordinary school curriculum. In addition, the lack of Native teachers, the lack of a curriculum that supports the language and cultural base of the Native community served, and federal policies and practices that have caused a loss of dignity and ability for many to adjust to the demands of modern society, all are part of the failure of schools. The impact of the reports produced an ongoing long term improvements for Native American Education as revealed by NWREL.

NWREL (2002) noted that the National Indian Education Association provided a long-term sponsor for expanding a national discourse about programs and policies that would concentrate on improving the quality of schools and schooling for Native American students. This organization increased the number of Indian teachers, plus strengthened the language and cultural priorities of Indian tribes, and supported changes in the curriculum of schools serving Native students. Furthermore, the NIEA provided leadership and support for developing and implementing the Indian Education Act of 1972. The U.S. Senate, Senators Walter Mondale and Ted Kennedy, worked on this act along with the president of NIEA Will Antell and a graduate student of Harvard during this period, a founder and member of the Board of NIEA William Demmert. In addition, William Demmert later became the first Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education in the U. S. Office of Education and Will Antell became the first chairman of the presidentially

appointed National Advisory Council for Indian Education (NACIE). Both positions were created under this new legislation.

Further assertions by NWREL supporting Native American Education improvement are noted in the following paragraph. The NWREL (2002) notes that promoting Native Language development and cultural priorities are important to continuing one's Native or tribal identity. In recognizing one's Native American heritage, many Native American groups and educators take this position, because it is necessary to an individual's mental, spiritual, and physical health. The opposition to this situation has decreased during the past 20 years as evidenced by the White House Conference on Indian Education and the Indian Nations At Risk report where the prevalence of recommendations indicates growing support. Earlier attitudes about language and culturally based programs are reflected in the fact that such programs did not exist, or were very limited in number before the Indian Education Act of 1972 (p. 3).

The NWREL (2002) states that improving academic performance and programs includes culturally based education activities (e.g., language and culturally programs) and is based on the firm belief within the Native American professional communities that high achievement in academics and motivation depends on the spiritual well-being of Native students, early attention to cognitive development, sense of identity, and social/cultural maturity. Improving academic performance will not occur until these factors are included as part of a comprehensive approach for nurturing and educating the whole child.

Jerome Bruner, Native American scholar, in direct support of the growing Native American position on the influence of culture in a person's life, states that "culturally shapes mind...it provides us with the toolkit by which we construct not only our worlds but our very conceptions of our selves and our powers." He further states that "...you cannot understand mental activity unless you take into account the cultural setting and its resources, the very things that give mind its shape and scope. Learning, remembering, talking, imagining; all of them are made possible by participating in a culture" (pp. x-xi).

The NWREL states that qualitative research provides interesting insights to this position. The prior dialectics theories presented further reasserted the need for cultural base advocacy for Native American and by elaborated further in the programmed formalize theories below. But first the initial stage of studies which began Native American Cultural reformation needs to be mentioned. The current based education (CBE) priority of Native people has been reinforced in recent years through several events:

1. *Indian Nations At Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action*
2. the White House Conference on Indian Education,
3. the Native American Language Act of 1990, and  
the Executive Order of August 1998 on Indian Education.

In the final paper of the study for Experimental Research on Culturally Based Education for American Indian/Alaskan Student (2004) culturally based education (CBE) is defined as follows:

Culturally based education incorporates native language and/or important

elements of native culture. Culturally based interventions are deemed to be planned activities and material designed to improve education and introduced within the education systems. They include broad programs that engage participants for long periods with a high degree of involvement (e.g., all-day immersion programs) and more specific interventions that entail less time and involvement (e.g. specific language text) (pp. 1).

The definition of Cultural Base Education delineated above is to my satisfaction and is appropriate.

The review of relevant literature Demmert & Towner (2003) identifies three established educational theories regarding Native peoples that are closely aligned to Culturally Based Education (CBE), including limited research evidence that shows a direct relationship between CBE and improved academic performance among Native students. These theories include the following:

- 1) *Cultural Compatibility Theory*. This theory focus on the level of congruence- - the more closely the human interaction in the school and in the classroom are aligned with those of the community, the more likely are the goals of the school likely to be reached.
- 2) *Cognitive Theory*. This theory introduces new knowledge through an association with prior knowledge: for learning to occur, relevant prior knowledge in a person's long term memory must be stimulated or utilized, which means new information undergoes some form of processing that focuses on the conceptual characteristics of

the new information (such as its meaning, personal and social relevance, or relationships to prior knowledge and experience) as a means of improving learning and recall.

- 3) *Culturally-Historically-Activity Theory (CHAT)*. Issues of culture, language, cognition, community and socialization are central to learning: primary socialization of infants and young children is accomplished through joint, meaningful activity with guidance by more accomplished participants, principally through language exchanges or other semiotic processes. Language vocabularies and routines acquired by learners through these processes are the primary cognitive tools for individual and group problem solving and adaptations. Primary to this hypothesis is that activities have a culture basis (pp. 5-6).

The three approaches represent increasingly more elaborate discussions of the concept of congruence between the social-cultural dispositions of students and the social-cultural expectations of the school. The Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), the most elaborate of the three theoretical approaches, provides a foundation for creating school conditions that facilitate language, cognitive, and psychological development which enhances student academic achievement (p. 6-7): and following are the six CHAT components;

- Rich and respectful language exchanges with more competent others –teachers and community elders
- To develop community and academic disciplines through language
- To provide shared instructional activity

- To develop forms of relationship that is familiar to the students (community-contextualize
- To discuss of multiple identities through dialogue
- Emphasizing academic goals and their relevance to the lives of students and their families (p. 1).

NEWRL asserted about Cultural based education: that culturally based education, by expressing the values of the community, ensures greater endorsement, involvement, and support by parents and community resources. This, in turn, strengthens potential associations between students' experience and the academic curriculum. Therefore, a CBE intervention that is congruent with community goals is effective for student academic achievement (p. 1). Such views of course are favorable for a better community based education for Native Americans which included Language Revitalization.

Demmert a Native Scholar (2005) noted that this report also identifies six critical elements of culturally based education surfacing from the analysis of the literature review. These include the following:

- 1) Recognition and use of Native American (American Indian, Alaska Native Hawaiian) languages as the language of instruction, as a bilingual approach to learning, or as a first or second language.
- 2) Pedagogy that stresses traditional cultural characteristics and adult-child interactions as the starting place for one's education (mores that are currently practiced in the community, and which may differ community to community).

- 3) Pedagogy in which teaching strategies are congruent with the traditional culture as well as contemporary ways of knowing and learning (opportunities to observe, opportunities to practice, and opportunities to demonstrate skills).
- 4) Curriculum that is based on traditional culture, which recognizes the importance of Native spirituality, and places the education of young children in a contemporary context (e.g., use and understanding of the visual arts, legends, oral histories, and fundamental beliefs of the community).
- 5) Strong Native communities participation (including partnering with parents, elders, other community resources) in educating children and evident in the curriculum, planning and operation of school/community activities.
- 6) Knowledge and use of the social and political mores of the community (pp. 6-7).

Demmert and Towerer (2003) asserted that:

Formal research evidence suggests the hypothesis that comprehensive Culturally Based Education (CBE) programs with strong Native language programs influence a youngster's academic, social and cultural, development as well as an individual's identity in a positive way, especially when started early in a child's life (Demmert & Towner, 2003). However, the number of studies with appropriate designs measures of

effectiveness and statistical analysis is very small, indicating that better quality designs and replication are needed (p. 7).

This wonderful pieces of reasoning by Educational scholars tracked Native American Culturally Base Education into a workable resolve for better and appropriate education. Certainly, stories in children's literature featuring Native Americans are that of Native American them-selves is the most powerful voice equitable.

A Lakota Sioux, Anthropologist Bea Medicine suggested that mainstream culture pays deference to the printed word. In how the "Indian" image has been formed by outsiders, Bea Medicine in her discussion noted that when the Native American presents his or her own history, there are allegations of bias or ethnocentrism. In her article "The Anthropologist as the Indian's Image-maker" Medicine (1971) notes:

However, it is the creating of the American Indian lifestyles into the printed word which has allowed a certain unchallenged expertise and validity to the anthropologists as the Indians' image-makers. The printed word, so important in academia as the documental source, has resulted in the corrupting concept of the ethnographic present which has posed the Native American in a stilted, static stance which has had great repercussions in the image-molding perspective of American anthropology. (p. 27)

Doris Seale, a Lakota/Cree, librarian and book critic for the Council of Interracial Books for Children. In her 1981 evaluation of bibliographies of books with Native American themes, Seale expresses deep concern for the proliferation of inauthentic booklists, and the ultimate perpetuation of negative images and stereotypes in children's

Native American literature. Seale (1981) notes:

Surely no people have been so much written about as the American Indian. The “1981 Subject Guide to Books in Print” has 56 pages of listings under “Indians” related headings. At something over 100 titles a page, this is close to 6,000 books that are at least theoretically purchasable... Some of this material is accurate and informative; some of it is even written with sensitivity and insight. In general, however, 500 years of writing based on false premises, misunderstandings and deliberate misrepresentation has created a body of literature having little to do with the realities of native existence, either past or present. (p. 11)

Furthermore, Mary Gloyne Byler (Cherokee) supports Seale’s suggestion that publication about Native Americans are stereotyped, and that too many non –Native authors are writing about Native Americans. In her research of appropriate books about Native Americans, she examined over 600 books in a four-year period. She rejected two out of three books because the content or illustrations were conspicuously offensive. Finally, she decided to limit her selection of books to American Indian authors. Byler (1973) concluded:

Down through the years the publishing industry has produced thousands of books About American Indians- a subject that fascinates many. Fact and Fiction – it is not always possible to tell which is which- have rolled off the presses since frontier days. But American Indians in literature, today, as in the past, are merely images projected by non-Indian writers. (p. 5)

If anything, there are too many children’s books about Indians... the majority of

these books deal with the unidentified past. The characters are from unidentified tribes and they are often not even afforded the courtesy of personal names. In fact, the only thing identifiable is the stereotyped image of the befeathered Indian...

This depersonalization is common in books for children. (Ibid.)

In *Look To The Mountain* (2004), Cajete has developed an educational theory of context, and recognition that any propositions or doctrines must find a comfortable home in the existing community and age-group context where they are promulgated in order to be effective. He represents 27 years evolution of traditional American Indian Education that include a quest for self, individual and community survival and wholeness of the context of community and a natural environment. Cajate in reference to stories, notes that when we are alienated from the roots of our primal stories, we become adrift in the vast ocean of contemporary mass society, continually trying to define ourselves through prepackage images and distorted stories that are not our own. In addition, living our myths through a contemporary form of indigenous storytelling ensures that we remain connected to the guiding stories that have given us life and “that place that the Indians talk about” (p. 141).

Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O’odham) professor of Linguistic (1995) notes that, “each child “reaches deep into the past, a past he or she shares with a community – a past thousands of years old” (p.11). “McCarty has worked in the field of American Indian/ Indigenous education for more than 25 years & Dick (Navajo) a bilingual teacher (2003) accorded that, “all learners come to the classroom with a storehouse of cultural and linguistic knowledge. Within the case of Native students, that knowledge typically

includes storytelling traditions, the flow and structure of oral narratives, and the importance of oral traditions within the community”, (Zepeda, 1995; McCarty & Watahomgic, 1998). When teachers and students jointly “reach into” these traditions, they are able to exploit not only culturally embedded forms of inter-textuality, but also the essential social and relational qualities of authentic literacy events, similarly (McCarty & Dick, 2003) asserted that.

Moreover, as a research tool, Russell Bishop (1996) suggests that storytelling is a useful and culturally appropriate way of representing the ‘diversities of truth’ within which the storyteller, rather than the research, retains control. Bishop also suggests that ‘the indigenous community becomes a story that is a collection of individual stories, every unfolding through the lives of the people who share the life of that community (p. 24, 169).

In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Smith (2001) states that for many indigenous writers stories are a way of passing down the beliefs and values of a culture in the hope that the new generations will treasure them and pass the story down further. The story and the storyteller both serve to connect the past with the future, one generation with the other, and the land with the people and the people with the story.

Reyhner a Native American Academic researcher (1992b) urges teachers not to use basal readers and textbooks designed for teaching suburban, middle-class white children. Instead, he proposes reading books that are culturally relevant and appropriate for American Indian students. Reyhner concludes,

If Indian students are to become productive tribal members, informed citizens, and problem solvers of the future, they need to start reading with meaningful realistic literature about which they can think and hold discussions. Reading textbooks can, at best, only provide an appetizer to encourage students to explore classroom, school, and community libraries as well as bookstores. If meaningful and interesting stories are too difficult for beginning readers to read, then teachers need to read them aloud to students. (P.166–167)

In the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (Brown, 1992) suggests that reading and language art teachers should:

- Recognize the cultural heritage of American Indian students as an asset.
- Create warm, accepting environments to encourage risk-taking in learning and skills.
- Provide contextual clues.
- Adapt content and concept to American Indian students' current skills levels.
- Incorporate frequent comprehension checks.

Kirk (1989) recommends using dialogue journals as an effective way to increase reading and writing skills for cultural minority students. He views the role of the journal as helping the students clarify their feelings and reflect upon their values and experiences. In addition, dialogue journals provide a low-risk opportunity for the students to establish a personal relationship with their teachers.

The Indian Nations at Risk Task Force's finding indicates that, "the perspective from which a school's curriculum is presented can significantly influence Native students' attitudes toward the school, schooling in general, and academic performance ... Schools that adjust their curriculum to accommodate the variety of cultures served are more successful than schools that do not" (Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, 1991, p.16). Similarly, Cleary and Peacock (1998) states "schools that acknowledge, accept, and teach a child's cultural heritage have significantly better success in educating [American Indian] students" (p.108).

Reese & Caldwell-Wood (1982), indicate that the best tools a teacher can use to aid in selecting a book about Native American are evaluation guides written by Native people. In addition, Reese & Caldwell-Wood (1982), indicate that authors who are not Native American often rely on their own perspective of what it might mean to be "Indian," rather than conducting careful research or spending long periods of time with the tribe.

Of particular importance in increasing intrinsic motivation among American Indian students is increasing the curriculum's personal relevance to them. Research conducted by Walker, Dodd, and Bigelow (1989) suggests that American Indian students tend to

prefer to learn information that is personally interesting to them.... When these students are not interested in a subject, they do not control their attention and orient themselves to learning an uninteresting task. Rather, they allocate their attention to other ideas that are more personally

interesting, thus appearing detached from the learning situation. When a subject is interesting, they learn the information and then creatively express this new learning ... (p.69)

Smolkin & Suina (1996a), indicate that authors of multicultural evaluations, if not “insiders” of the addressed culture, at best need to ask an individual they know who is from or who is familiar with a culture. View of “insiders” may differ, even when considering subjects sacred to a culture. Furthermore, Smolkin & Suina (1996a), indicated in their review of *Arrow to the Sun*, that sometimes, as one of other informants explained, a book must be removed to “maintain the norms, keep the traditions, keep the truth as it is know there.” Furthermore, if particular Pueblo communities do not want *Arrow to the Sun* in their school libraries, if the book contains motifs or images that Pueblo religion forbids to be seen out of a particular context, then the choice to exclude this book, made by a people who are witnessing the loss of their language and customs, must be seen as a reasonable defense of Pueblo values and way of life. Smolkin & Suina (1997) state that scholars engaging in the authenticity debate have extended and illuminated the treatment of power in diverse cultural and geographical contexts represented in children’s literature.

McCarty & Dick (2003) noted that if we are genuinely committed to a critically democratic and emancipatory education, then the stories through which children construct their world should reflect and validate who they and their communities are.

Keeshing-Tobias, (1992) noted that Native stories that are written without input from the people whose story is being told may produce an entertaining tale that can lead

to beautiful illustration, but often such retellings and illustrations provide children with a misguided and stereotypical view of Indian cultures.

Ebersole (2000) researched the culturally relevant text of fifth grades in Hawaii using Hawaiian literature. In one of her finding she noted that it is important to provide opportunities to identify with culturally relevant literature and offering power selection of literature.

From the research testimonies mentioned supporting Cultural Educational relevancy by experts in Native American Cultural field of studies, we can deduce that there is a need for educational reformation in teaching Native Americans involving Indigenous education from the students stance by connecting to the guiding stories that are embedded through inter-textuality of cultural association with curriculum relevant and appropriate for Native Americans. Then the students can reflect, and validate who they are. This process involves the school, parents, community, in which provide community knowledge, expertise and cultural practices to shape the work that school do and make it relevant to the lived experience of children from Indigenous background as we have seen. With the ideas just developed, in this study I used culturally relevant literature, the culturally authentic Native American literature to gain insights into children's perspectives as they engaged in literature discussion. These stories illustrate representations of the children's local culture, Apache, plus three other native tribes were represented because the limited Apache children' books were culturally accurate. Furthermore, this culturally relevant literature was important to this research based on the students, the culture, tradition, and location which is basis, the purpose of my research.

In the support of cultural preservation, (Cajete, 2003) noted that Indian educators and Tribal leaders also need to advocate for culturally based education to achieve the foundational goals of self-determination, self-governance, and Tribal sovereignty (p. 16). In addition, he states that the stories go beyond education and the recitation of words and include Indigenous stories related to the experience of life lived in time and place. In the legacy and the innate learning potential of indigenous story must be recaptured and made an integral part of contemporary Indian Education at every level. In indigenous communities, the elders, the grandmother and grandfather, hold the stories of their families and their people. It is they who give the stories, the word of thought and action to the children. They tell the children how the world and their people came to be. “So it goes, giving and receiving, giving and receiving stories – helping children to remember the story of their community is really the story of themselves!” (p. 170). In my research, culturally based education is significant to my study based on the recognition of that teaching strategies need to be congruent with the traditional culture as well as contemporary ways of knowing and learning through the Native American children’s literature. Furthermore, the findings of this research may enhance strong Natives communities in educating children.

### **Language**

The change of language plays an essential function in the growth of culture in Native Americans. When Europeans arrived the Native American had their own spoken language. It was originally believed and reinforced through their own spoken language.

The following is the indication of research regarding the issue of language within the school system.

St. Charles and Costantino (2000) investigated a research report titled; Reading and the Native American Learner in which the first off-reservation government boarding school was Carlisle. The school was established in 1879 by a former military officer named Henry Pratt. Pratt's, whose motto was "Kill the Indian and save the man" (Utter, 1993), p. 196). By the turn of the century almost half of the American Indian schools under federal supervision were such boarding schools, and American Indian children were routinely forcibly removed from their families to be placed in them (p. 10).

In addition, in the research the indication of the obvious policy of assimilation of Native Americans in this manner was repudiated by 1936, it was not until 1970s that significant substantive change in the nature of these schools began to occur. In this study they found that American Indians and their communities were still dealing with these schools' long lasting and profoundly negative influences. In the Swinomish Tribal Mental Health Project (1991) describes the enormous degree of social disruption and cultural degradation that resulted from this federal goal of assimilation through education, especially in regard to the attempt at eradicating American Indian languages:

Boarding schools were major agents in the loss of Indian languages.

Children who were caught speaking Indian languages were rapped on the knuckles or made to stand in corners with rags tied around their mouths. Many children forgot their languages or became ashamed to even admit that they knew them...

Language is the major carrier of culture... When the language is lost, a great deal of the children is lost also. Many things cannot be fully translated. With the words, sounds, and rhythm of native speech goes the heart of the culture. Nothing was done to weaken Indian culture than attack on Indian languages made in B.I.A. [Bureau of Indian Affairs] boarding schools...(p. 10).

Furthermore, this research indicated that although American Indian children in these schools may not experience the degree of overt and concerted assault on their languages and cultures that American Indians experienced in previous decades, American Indian children still often experience personal and institutional racism in school. Testimony gathered during the U. S. Secretary of Education's Indian Nation at Risk Task Force hearing in 1990 and 1991

Teresa L. McCarty (2002) authors' *A Place to Be Navajo* is from 20 years of ethnographic and collaborative work at and with the community of Rough Rock. McCarty in 1980 was hired as a curriculum writer for the Material Development Project, with additional hire of a Navajo language and culture specialist, an artist, and a secretary/editorial assistant (all members of the community). Furthermore, McCarty completed her dissertation on the school's bilingual/bicultural program (McCarty, 1984; 1987; 1989). Then in 1987, she was hire to a consultant to bilingual teachers and the elementary school principal on a new bilingual/bicultural program developed with the Hawaii based Kamehemha Early Education Program (KEEP, Begay, Dick, Estell, McCarty, & Sells, 1995; Vogt, Jordon & Tharp, 1993). Dr. McCarty work at Rough Rock conducting ethnographic observations of bilingual classrooms, and to collaborate

with teachers, teacher aide, parents, and administrator on the bilingual/bicultural program (p. 2-3).

Lucille Watahomigie is Hualapai, and the founder of the internationally recognized, (Hualapai Bilingual Academic Excellence Program) from Peach Springs, Arizona, along with Teresa McCarty, a non-Indian anthropologist and educator who has worked 18 years with the bilingual program at Rough Rock, Peach Spring and elsewhere in the United States (1998) in their research they drew on community-base language education in the United States. Alarming, of more than 200 indigenous languages still spoken in North America, Hualapai is among the smaller groups, with about 1500 Native speakers. Like all indigenous North American languages, Hualapai is endangered: where as just 30 years ago nearly all Hualapai children came to school speaking Hualapai just 50% of the current school-age population speak the language (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1998, pg. 95). Through its bilingual/bicultural program and its emphasis on Hualapai literacy, the public school at Peach Spring seeks to help children develop their Hualapai proficiency while preparing them with English and other skills needed for full participation in the non-Indian world (p. 85).

Hualapai literacy and language maintenance has developed a practical orthography in Hualapai when it began with the founding of the bilingual program in 1978. This program first identified characteristics that were distinguished from their own community. This creation led to 'child-centered' curriculum in which the natural and social environments are viewed as the foundation for, and as enveloping children's cognitive, linguistic, and affective growth. This idea is to bring the everyday, informal

experiences of the home and community directly into the process of school-based learning (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997; p. 103; cf. Watahomigie & Yamamoto, 1987). During this time the staff worked with elders of the community and academic linguists to create a practical orthography for Hualapai. Through time, the bilingual program staff developed a grammar pamphlet, a dictionary, attractively illustrated children's literature, and a sequence of thematic language and culture-base teacher guides. The result from these instructional innovations led the Hualapai Bilingual Project to be recognized as a national Bilingual Academic Excellent Project, and adopted by Indians schools in the USA and Canada.

Interestingly, findings from research on the non-linguistic causal factors regarding the erosion and loss of the White Mountain Apache language are similar to studies done on other tribes as inferred by (Crawford, 1996; Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997). And the researchers are noted below.

Keith Basso (1996) a ethnographer-linguist who wrote articles and monographs comprise all his work from the community of Cibecue, Arizona on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation on such subjects as Apache ceremonial symbolism (1966), classificatory verb stems (1968), witchcraft beliefs (1969), patterns of silence in social interaction (1970), and a sardonic type of joking in which Apaches imitate white men (1970). In addition, the project of Apache maps with Apache place and names, spread over five year (1979-1984). The project has three parts, traveling with consultants, active or retired horseman; talking with consultants about places and place-names and the stories that lie behind them; and listening how place-names get used in daily conversation

by Apache men and women. This project is about places and place-names and something of what Apache make of both – is what it is mainly about (p. xv).

Adley-SantaMaria (1997) discovered in her research findings that the Apache language was eroding, and inferred a revitalization of the language. In her premises for her thesis she asserted; White Mountain Apache Language Shift: A Perspective on Causes, Effects, and Avenues for Change,” is that the illumination of linguistic and non-linguistic causal factor that negatively affect transformations in the White Mountain language is a priority, not only to reverse continue language shift to English, but also to preclude holistic changes in White Mountain Apache culture and society. Another causal factor among White Mountain Apaches include attitudes toward their language (or language ideology) underlying decisions to pass on their language to the younger generations.

### **Researchers’ Responses from children’s literature**

The following discourses will support my relevancy to incorporate the theories presented prior, in utilizing culturally relevant literature in my study from the writings of Reading and the Native American Learner Research Report document (2000) cites that the challenge for teachers and caregivers is to provide American Indian children with experiences within a culturally relevant and appropriate learning environment.

In related research studies, Wanda Michelle Brooks, "Reading, literature and culture; examined the case study of middle school students' responses to African American fiction for children" (January 1, 2001). Her research specifically explores how

incorporating African American literature into a reading classroom is responded to and interpreted by African American, middle school children. Four qualitative research methods were used to gather data for the present study. The present study concludes that African American children's literature contains significant promise with respect to influencing and enhancing African American middle school students' reading processes and subsequent development.

In further research studies in the Native American children's literature, Debbie Reese (Nambe Pueblo) assisted teachers to select children's books that are realistic in their presentation of Native peoples, as well as factually historically, and culturally accurate (2001). In her research titled: *Native American in Pictures Books*, recommended for early childhood classroom, (1945-1999), is a study of children's picture books about Native Americans, but it includes various reasons that contain images of Native American. This study incorporated several points that distinguish it from prior research studies. Another researcher, Seale's, study was similar and significant, plus relevance to the early childhood curriculum of children's literature and early studies pertaining to accuracy. It is significant to examine these criteria because of the effects it has on early childhood curriculum and by implication to the youth.

A review of dissertation abstracts, which are related to children's literature, and the impact of culturally authenticity of the literature--have been drawn to me from the recommendations of Brooks (2006) and Reese (2001)

### *Reader Response Theory*

The theoretical framework that guides this study is from the reader response principles. Researchers and teachers in the past thirty-years have been seriously interested in response to literature including myself. (Probst, 1990) Reader response theories concerns with “how readers make meaning from their experience with the text” (Beach, 1993, p.1) have done much to enrich understandings of the reading process and student response to literature.

A reader’s responses begin with connection to the reader’s background experiences, allowing evocation and evaluation while reading, a process that can results in an aesthetic experience. In literary response, from the transactional theory views readers as actively constructing meaning with print based on their experiences and knowledge base. Rosenblatt’s reader response theory (1978, 1983, and 1991) suggests that there are as many potential interpretations of a text as there are readers. Based on this research it is essential to use her idea of reader response in examining stance: reading for information (“efferent stance”) and reading as engagement with a text (“aesthetic stance”). This theory led me to conduct this study using a literature study circle approach. *Theory in Practice: the Legacy of Louise Rosenblatt* contains theoretical ideas that also assisted me in understanding fully the theories and how other researchers utilize the theories in the reading field (e.g. Barnes, 1992; Cambourne, 1988; Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Probst, 1988, Short, Harste, Burke, 1995). For me Rosenblatt’s ideas guide the nature of instructional invitations as teachers interpret and respond to students and their

work, the solid sense of community within the classrooms and the democratic principles that guide my work with children and teachers.

Furthermore, while Rosenblatt's work is often slotted into "reader response" theory and associated only with her concept of "efferent" and aesthetic" stances to text, she has had a major impact on the field because she developed a transactional theory of reading that describes the role of reader, text, and teachers and shows how they could serve a democratic agenda. In *Literature as Exploration*, she details the foundational components of her theory (1938, second through fifth edition: 1968, 1976, 1983, 1995, pp. 48).

In 1938 Rosenblatt drew on the work of the pragmatic philosophers who were her contemporaries. She used the terms "interaction" and "interactional" to describe her theory. Rosenblatt (1968) later chose instead to use the word "transaction" and "transactional" to describe her theory. She explains that she felt those terms, first used by Dewey and Bentley (1949) better represented the fundamental concepts in her theory. Across all editions, Rosenblatt argues that meaning does not reside in the written word or in the reader. Instead, the text and the reader comes together to create a poem, a new meaning. Therefore, meaning is constructed in the relationship between the text and reader. In her words:

Meaning emerges as the reader carries on a give and take with the signs on the page...(T)he two-way, reciprocal relation explains why the meaning is not "in" the text or "in" the reader. The poem or the novel or the play exists in the transaction that goes on between reader and the text (1995, pp. 27).

It is Rosenblatt who first helped the field understand that when readers engage in the process of creating the poem, they bring their personal passions, expertise as readers, intentions, and knowledge of language and of the world to the task (Pearson & Sprio, 1980). In addition, Rosenblatt helped the field understand long before schema theory that what readers bring to the text influences what they take from it. When teachers embrace this notion then young children grow as readers. Children learn to use what they know about the text, language, and the world to make sense of print and to create their own text. As a consequence, while children in the same classroom may comprehend the text in similar ways, they will necessarily interpret it in personal ways, and in so doing, create unique poems.

Rosenblatt (1994) noted that literature does not provide for vicarious experiences, but is a lived-through experience in and of itself: To understand is to have assimilated something “into the very marrow of personality” (p. 74). Furthermore, that which has been assimilated becomes part of the experience with which one encounters the future:

We are not vicarious or substitute Joliet’s or Leopold Bloom: we are living in the World of the work, which we have created under guidance of the text and are unique mode of experience, an expansion of the boundaries of our own temperaments and worlds, lived through in our own person, t (1995, pp. 68). The poem, the play, the story is thus an amplification of life insight (1995, pp. 264)

In addition, Rosenblatt states that literature is valued not because readers acquire information from it but because literature provides additional experiences. When

teachers bring this understanding to their work with students, they use texts not just to teach main idea or cause and effect, instead, they use texts to help children live beyond their ordinary lives and to come to understand, from the inside, about other people, other places, other times. In better understanding their world, children are able to envision a future world that is more just and equitable. By understanding intrinsically how change occurs, students can plan for change.

Rosenblatt wanted teachers who do more than take responsibility for teaching reading and writing. Her deep conviction is that literature and language arts can and should lay the foundation for and foster the development of democratic society. This belief is at the very core of her theory of reading;

Democracy implies a society of people, who no matter how much they differ from one another, recognize their common interests, their common goals, and their dependence on mutually honored freedom and responsibilities. For this they need the ability to imagine the human consequences of political and economic alternatives and to think rationally about emotionally charged issues. Such strengths should be fostered by all the agencies that shape the individuals. But the educational system, through all its disciplines, has a crucial role (Rosenblatt, 1995. p.xvz).

Furthermore, all of the other elements of Rosenblatt's theory come together in an understanding that the function of public education is not the production of workers for the state but the development of citizens for a democracy. In the classroom, this translates into experiences in which the texts that children read, the poems they create,

the experiences they have, and the transformations they experience are shaped by the teacher so that children live democratic lives in school and are prepared to contribute as adults to the continuing development of a society that is more just, more equitable, more democratic. While such an agenda is currently referred to as critical literacy, it is an agenda that Rosenblatt laid out for the field more than sixty years ago.

Another perspective which expresses similar views is that of another scholar; K. Smith (1993) writes that “the difference between an aesthetic and efferent experience is centered in the reader and in classroom situations, and it is often influenced by a particular teacher’s purpose for reading a particular text” (p. 27). The literature discussion students participated in during this study was grounded in a transactional view of reading. The discussions were not focused on guiding students toward a predetermined meaning, but rather on creating an environment that encouraged students to negotiate meanings of the story together. The intention was to provide aesthetic purposes for reading so students could “savor the images, the sound, the smells, the actions, the associations, and the feelings the words point to” (Rosenblatt, 1991, p. 47).

Studies on children’s responses to literature have come out of reader response theory. Probst (1990) points out that the concept of response has posed problems for teachers because planning instruction is difficult. Response can be unpredictable, diverse and digressive making it difficult to plan for instruction and design curriculum. While response poses problems for teachers it is even more challenging for researchers because it is hard to find and difficult to assess. Despite these challenges there are numerous studies that have provided insight into the complexity of response.

### *Literature Discussion*

Felsenthal (1989) indicates that the use of children's literature provides an ideal opportunity to develop critical reading. Current research indicates that reading is a constructive process, that is, readers come to texts with background knowledge that helps them to construct meaning about what they read; further, readers construct meaning as they interact with peers and adults when discussing stories (Jett-Simpson, 1989). The content of children's literature lends itself to drawing on background knowledge and to the use of interactive strategies with peers and adults, such as story discussions, role-playing, and retelling texts to help construct meaning about text.

In defining literature study circles Hill, Johnson, and Noe (1995) describe the discussion groups in which children meet regularly to talk about books. Groups are determined by the book choices. Literature study circles are heterogeneous and include a range of interest and abilities. Literature circles are usually associated with small groups of 4-5 students, although some teachers prefer groups of 6-7 (Hanssen, 1990). The small groups give students a choice in the literature to read and more opportunities to talk and think with each other in a supportive context.

The deduction of a small group favoring interaction about subjects supportively warrants that idea to be utilized in approach to my study. As the groups share, students become interested in reading the books of the other groups. For my research study, the students will be in a group based on the selection of the books, and the groups will consist of five students each. The teacher and I will read to a group of students. In the literature study circles, the students meet in small groups to discuss their books. The

students will share passages of the story, raise questions, express a personal reaction, and talk about their personal responses to the story. In the process of observing children through their interactions with literature both in and out of classrooms numerous researchers have come to consider that reader-centered, as contrasting to text-centered, experiences with literature leads to a much deeper understanding of literature as well as promoting private attitudes and an appreciation towards reading and literature (Langer, 1993, Peterson & Eeds, 1990 Short & Pierce, 1990).

Another view that enhances children's literature is by Samway and Whang (1996) they state that, "literature study circles are grounded in a socio-psycholinguistic view of the reading process, one that recognizes the way in which reading is a meaning-making process. When encountering a text, readers bring their own life and literary experiences to the discussion" (Weaver, 1994). Reading is a transactional process based on the reader's experiences and knowledge. Literature discussion within the context of literature circles is constructed on a belief in the ability of students to actively create meaning, to construct multiple interpretations through discussion. An important aspect of literature circles is that students' initial responses to the literature are at the foundation of the talk as opposed to the teacher setting the agenda for the content of the discussion. Below are explanations of Literature Circles, table1.1.

Literature circles are . . .	Literature Circles are not . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader response centered.</li> <li>• A component of a balanced literacy program.</li> <li>• Groups of readers formed by book choice.</li> <li>• Structured for student independence, responsibility, and ownership.</li> <li>• Guided primarily by students insights and questions.</li> <li>• Intended as a context in which to apply reading and writing skills.</li> <li>• Flexible and fluid; never look the same twice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher and text centered.</li> <li>• The entire reading curriculum.</li> <li>• Teacher-assigned groups formed solely by ability.</li> <li>• Unstructured, uncontrolled “talk time” without accountability.</li> <li>• Guided primarily by teacher-or curriculum-based questions.</li> <li>• Intended as a place to do skill(s) work.</li> <li>• Tied to a prescriptive recipe.</li> </ul>

**Table 1 Literature Circles Are . . . and Are not . . . Noe & Johnson, 1999, pp. X).**

Research demonstrates that social interaction and collaboration among students in small groups promotes achievement and productivity because children explain materials to each other, listen to each other's explanations, and arrive at joint understandings (Johnson & Johnson, 1975, Slavin, 1983).

Different research inquiries have been conducted to explore the use of literature discussion in the elementary school classroom. Eeds and Well's (1989) study of fifth and sixth graders participating in literature discussions reveals that children of varying abilities participated in rich discussion of literature. In the discussion they shared their construction of meaning, but changed them as they heard other views, shared personal stories which inspired other group members, participated as active readers as they read; and valued and evaluated the text as literature.

In addition, while the physical classroom setting and the emphasis place upon literature established by the teacher plays an integral role in response to literature (the social community of the classroom established by students also plays an important role in response to literature (Keifer, 1983)). Similarly, Eed and Wells (1989) present evidence that indicates that children who take part in a literacy community can support each other to take part in "grand conversations."

Along with reader and contextual factors, considerations of different types of text affect children's response to literature. Studies have looked at how the content of stories influences student's reading interest (Purves and Beach, 1972). This area of research has been focused on the content and genre of literature in which children are interested. In general, elementary-aged children are interested in adventure, fairy tales, making things,

humor, biographies, true-event stories, and animal stories (Martinez and Roser, 1985). In this study, the focus of response is upon culturally relevant texts; therefore I want to look at how children respond to texts set within their own cultural experiences.

The different ways in which children respond to literature is also what researcher have studied. The studies have provided valuable information about various readers, context, and text factors that play a role in influencing children's responses to literature. These studies have assisted my development as a collaborative researcher and have informed me of the many factors that affect response. Within these studies they have led me to think about the different ways the context of the classroom, reader factors, and textual factors play a role in the outcome of a study.

Earlier research conducted by Purves and Rippere (1968) presented a way to analyze the content of responses. Through studying written responses to literature they devised an extensive list of statements that numbers over 100 to identify the kinds of responses that may be made. The statements cluster into four major categories: Engagement-involvement, Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation. Applebee (1977) summarized studies that followed or modified Purves and Rippere's work. The most important finding from his summary was that "the approach to literature adopted by the individual teacher does affect the content of the response from the teacher's pupil" (p. 256) implying that patterns of response are learned.

Four years prior, when Purves and Rippere (1968) had analyzed students' written responses, Squire (1964) examined students' oral responses to literature. He interviewed

students after reading sections of short stories, thus looking at reading as a process rather than a product.

Many researchers have been interested in exploring the relationships between responses and reader factors, text factors, and context factors. These studies have provided knowledge about and information to support the teaching of literature response in school. A number of studies on reader beliefs and expectations, socioeconomic status, cultural background, personality, cognitive development, sex and personal style (Applebee 1978; Cullinan, Harwood, & Galda, 1983, Hickman, 1983) have contributed to reader characteristics that influence response.

The first to study the developmental differences in children's response to literature was Applebee (1978). Looking at the response of six, nine, thirteen, and seventeen year olds, he found differences across children's objective responses and personal responses. Cullian, Harwood, and Galda (1983) in addition looked at developmental differences in response to literature. The children at grades, fourth, sixth and eighth grade read two books and were asked to tell about the story following the reading. Just like Applebee (1978), Cullian, Harwood, and Galda (1983) found that children at different ages use different processes in recalling stories. Again the analysis of the theories presented moves me to utilize the concepts for my practical research work I will conduct in a classroom environment.

In conclusion, the study is then placed within the theoretical framework of Rosenblatt's reader response theory and focused on Native American children's literature written mostly by Native American Authors and Native Illustrators. The point of Native

American Authors brings up the issues of accuracy and authenticity, plus Native American researchers and educators facing challenges in the selections of multicultural literature and Native American children's literatures are examined. Lastly, reader response theory and the transactional nature of reading serve as the theoretical framework foundation for examining students' responses to literature.

### **Summary**

In this chapter I've initially mentioned the focus of study pertaining to the perceptions of fifth-graders response to cultural relevant Native American Children's literature as applied by using the theoretical framework by research scholar Louise Rosenblatt's reader response theory, and other theories such as (CBE) Cultural Base Education and Native research perspective. I defined specifically the meaning of Cultural Authentic literature to support the validity of the study by developing evaluation forms derived from scholarly research books. Then, explaining the past history of Native American language and oral literature by storytelling revealed the multicultural existence of colorful attributes of Native people--attempting to empower cultural awareness to young Native American children. This also attempted to direct to the reader to be aware of the cultural perspective of Native people.

I also discussed the NEWRL (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory) supporting Native American cultural literacy education due to the crisis of inordinate education provided by mainstream school system. The results of Native American youth having a high drop out rates forced the U.S. Congress to investigate and as a result a Senate Subcommittee Report titled INDIAN EDUCATION: A National Tragedy, A

National Challenge—emerged. A resolve of reconfiguring the School System's curriculum was acknowledged and resulted in the Indian Education Act of 1972, mandating funding and reformation. With this support, several schools of the many thousands, I only revealed two schools that were assisted by research and educational consultants along with the Natives from the community developed an innovative school system reconfigured towards an appropriate culture related school curriculum. These schools were successful and one became a prototype for other schools throughout United States.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### **Research Design for the Study of Fifth Grade Students' Reading Responses and Perspective on Native American Children's Literature**

The purpose of this study is to explore children's responses to literature written about Native Americans. This study looks at fifth graders' responses to literature placed within their own cultural context and that of other Native cultures. As my research embraces readers and texts from Native American background and perspectives, with admiration to culture, I will rely on Native American ethnicity as a lens, but this talk is significant to different groups as other elements of culture, such as, for example, gender and class. The particular focal point would be taking into account the ways in which culture, as inclusive in Native American children's literature as well as within the practices of Native American readers, becomes salient methodologically. The intent of this research is to provide the best portrait possible for Native elementary students at Apache Elementary School and how the students perceive the use of Native American children's literature through literature study circles. Observation through researcher notes, audio tape recordings, interviews and artifact has been used to collect data.

#### **Research Methods and Questions**

This study employs qualitative research methods (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) to gather data in order to answer these research questions:

1. What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book?

2. What are the types of talk about these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature?
3. What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's literature?

In this study, qualitative data is utilized when a reader's ethnicity is closely matched to the culture portrayed in literature and to learn of the different types of interpretations that appear. The developmental progress of aligning our curriculum and pedagogy to students' needs and literary practices, in addition the awareness about learners' reading processes is important.

## **Research Design**

### *Human Subjects and Permissions*

Permission to conduct this study was granted by the Human Subject Protection Program at the University of Arizona. The approved Project Proposal Form is on file at the Human Subject Protection Program Office, located at 1350 North Vine Avenue, in Tucson, Arizona.

In addition to the Human Subjects Protection Program approval, permission to conduct this study was granted by the tribal IRB committee. This was all conducted by a cover letter and a copy of my proposal given to the University of Arizona IRB Program. I discussed my research interest and goals with the school superintendent and the

principal of the school I selected. (I selected the school because I had a previous working relationship with the teachers.)

I conducted this study with one particular fifth grade classroom. After the study was accepted by the School Board, and with their permission and support I presented each student in this fifth grade classroom with a parental consent form during an informal meeting in the classroom. During the meeting I explained the study, answered students' questions and then invited them to participate. Students were informed that only those who returned the consent form with their parents' or guardian's signature would be able to participate. I sent home permission slips describing my intent and methodology. The student and their parents discussed and returned the forms (Appendix A). Once I was granted permission by the teacher to conduct the study in her classroom with her students.

All parental consent forms, data, transcripts, student artifacts, field notes, teaching journals were stored in a locked desk, and pseudonyms were used to protect the individual identities of the participants (the school district, as represented by the school board, the school principal, the teacher, and the students who participated in the study).

### *Setting*

This study took place at a public elementary school located in a community on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The population of Apache Elementary School is predominantly of Native American decent, with a small population of Euro-American decent. Most of Apache's parents are a combination of working class and those receiving

state and government subsidies. Approximately 51.6% of the population and 46.9% of families are below the poverty line. Students at Apache have either attended school in the district all of their lives, or attended Apache Elementary School for a brief amount of time.

### *Teacher & Classroom*

Data for this study was collected from Ms. Gruse's fifth grade literacy class during the spring of 2007. Ms. Gruse's class was held in the Apache Elementary School, which is located in a small community on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. This community is near the town of Whiteriver, Arizona. The school serves approximately 475 students in grades K through 5. The elementary school has been labeled a "low performing school" and was working with the state on meeting the school's Improvement Plan.

Twenty (20) students from Ms. Gruse's class participated in the study by discussing culturally authentic Native American children's literature. The literature discussions were taped and recorded as part of a normal teaching routine and interviews with students were conducted at the end of the school year.

Ms. Gruse is a Euro-American teacher who moved to Whiteriver, Arizona from California after completing her certification to be a teacher. Her reasons to teach on a reservation included her interest in Native students, the culture, and the beautiful land. The Fort Apache Indian Reservation was her ultimate choice based on the land, culture and the Apache people. Consequently, she lives near the school, and has been active in

the community for the past twenty years. In addition, Ms. Gruse has earned a Master's Degree from the University of Arizona in Multicultural Education.

During the fall of 2006, I completed my administrative internship at the local middle school and Ms. Gruse invited me into her classroom to get to know the students. Two days out of the week, I visited her classroom and facilitated lessons on identity, focusing on names of the students and the community they live in with the landmarks of the community included.

### *Classroom Curriculum*

In Ms. Gruse's classroom curriculum, she has seen what works and what doesn't. In her experience, she has concluded that unless the students are motivated to learn and read, learning does not occur. During the time of the study, she was given the freedom to create a reading program completely without a basal. All the reading was either expository, nonfiction, or fiction. In this way, she taught to the reading standards and focuses on science and social studies curriculum. The materials she utilized are textbooks, award-winning multicultural literature, newspaper articles, magazines, brochures, directions, maps, charts, graphs, poetry, letters, and anything else she can get her hands on. Students are also actively involved in bringing in and discussing issues and themes to be studied. The studies are related to Apache history, language, and culture. The class found this highly motivating. The students got plenty of fiction reading through the Accelerated Reading program, which is individualized, on level, computerized, and motivate learning to earn points.

Ms. Gruse believed she saw more improvement than any other year in her students' reading. Test scores are above average and she said she will never teach reading the same again, after utilizing her own teaching techniques.

The arrangement of the classroom reflected her beliefs about learning. The desks were arranged into groups of four or five. Bookshelves were full of children's literature, picture books, and awarding-winning multicultural literature, along with Native American children's literature, newspapers, magazines, and brochures. These were available for the students to read throughout the day and students loved check out the reading materials. Art supplies, writing paper, tools to write, paint; mark, color, and draw were are easily obtained. The walls were covered with posters, graphs, maps, classroom procedures and rules, and especially, student work.

### *Participants*

Of the twenty students participating in the study, 8 are male, and 12 are female. All the students are of White Mountain Apache decent, and seven are a combination of Spanish or Hispanic decent, or Navajo, Mescalero Apache, Arapaho, Blackfeet and \*Havasupai-Hualapai tribes. Additionally, all of the participants are socio-economically lower or middle class. There are different levels of academic abilities in reading and writing based on the class and the district ratings. All of the students have been in this class for writing and literature class since the beginning of the academic year.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>
ANGELICA	Female	Navajo/White Mountain Apache
JASMINE	Female	White Mountain Apache
TSCHAWN	Male	White Mountain Apache
EZRA	Male	White Mountain Apache
MARIA	Female	Navajo/White Mountain Apache
KORDELL	Male	White Mountain Apache
CORRINE	Female	White Mountain Apache
LYNDA	Female	Navajo/White Mountain Apache
JAGGO	Male	Hispanic/White Mountain Apache /Mescalero
MATTHIAS	Male	Arapaho/White Mountain Apache
LISA	Female	Blackfeet/White Mountain Apache
PAULA	Female	White Mountain Apache
JOSEPH	Male	Hualapai/White Mountain Apache
SAMSON	Male	White Mountain Apache
DEBBIE	Female	White Mountain Apache
VANGIE	Female	White Mountain Apache
ANGELEA	Female	White Mountain Apache
SJANTE	Female	White Mountain Apache
KAILA	Female	White Mountain Apache
MARIE	Male	White Mountain Apache
(F referring to female and M referring to male)		

**Table 2 Demographics of Students**

*Observation, Taping, and Transcripts of Literature Circles*

Using fourteen books of Native American children's literature, I compiled a large quantity of raw data from the children's responses to culturally relevant literature. Using suggestions from Merriam (2001), who demonstrates a systematic guided process for analyzing field notes, I processed hours of discussion and interview recordings, various textual documents, and children's drawings. This systematic process allowed me to examine the data I collected in an objective and methodical manner.

I organized the data and reviewed the documents and field notes. I then began the year-long process of the transcription of all audio recordings. I transcribed all portions of the recorded discussions and group interviews in order to more accurately code and organize that information. I used the recorder's digital counter to isolate portions of the interactions that were relevant to the inquiry and that answered specific portions of each research question. Finally, I placed the transcriptions into Word documents.

I then follow the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to help me to discover any links between the concepts and patterns developing in the data. In this manner I found answers to children's perspectives on reading Native American children's literature, the kinds of issues children talk about in literature circles of Native American children's literature, and the types of talk that they engage in through literature circles focusing on Native American children's literatures.

## Data Collection

### *Book Selection*

In choosing the books for this study, my focus was on, “Stories do matter for children.” Children need stories in their lives that authentically convey their own and other’s cultures (Fox & Short, 2003). In addition, Fox and Short reaffirm that stories have influences on the ways children think about themselves and their place in the world as well as the way in which they think about cultural perspectives and people. Therefore, I used literature that I think will incorporate these concepts into this study.

The following resources were utilized to develop an evaluation tool to examine the authenticity of Native children’s literature. I used this form to select the 14 culturally authentic Native American children’s literature books for this study. *Through Native Eyes: The Native Experience in Books for Children* (Staplin & Seale, 2003), *Evaluating American Indian Textbooks & Other Material For The Classroom* (McCluskey, 1991), *Multicultural Children’s Literature: Creating and Applying an Evaluation Tool in Response to the Need of Urban Educator* (Higgins, 2000), and *Stories Matter: The Complexity of Culturally Authenticity in Children’s Literature* (Fox, D. & Short, K., 2003).

The fourteen culturally authentic Native American children’s literature derived from the South West Region of the United States and the tribes represented are relevant to the students involved in the study. These stories representation of the students’ local tribes includes Apache, Navajo, Hopi, Pueblo, plus other native tribes because of the

limited Apache children's literature that are culturally accurate. The significant of this study to provide Native literature to a fifth grade students, through literature circles and group interviews. The imperative key is having culturally relevant literature based on the students, the culture, tradition, language and the location of the study.

### *Criteria and Evaluation Tools for choosing the books*

This research study is derived from a previous study, Hoffman (2005a) on representations of Native Americans by Native Authors and Non-Native authors of Native American children's literature from the Southwest region of the United States. The focus of this study was evaluations of sixteen Native literature based on cultural authenticity. Through this process I developed an evaluation form based on two main resources (McCluskey, 1993; Slapin & Seale, 1998) to assess Native American children's literature. Twelve out of the sixteen books evaluated were accepted as culturally authentic. And the other four were problematic. The fourteen books evaluated as culturally authentic are utilized in this research as well as four other Native American children's literature based on tribe the books represented. The additional books were also bilingual.

The evaluation form I developed to examine the Native American children's literature as culturally authentic is a process to determine what is most significant to examine. In the process of revising of the evaluation form, more information was provided to enhance the evaluator's viewpoint on the different topics that were examined within the Native American children's literature.

I engaged in the following research process:

1. Collected picture books about Native Americans of the Southwest region of the US.
2. Sorted books into Native American authors and Non-Native authors and by the genre of traditional and contemporary literature to ensure a range of literature.
3. Selected a set to use in the research study.
4. Read the selected Native American children's literature and used the evaluation form.

This enabled me to evaluate these books on these criteria and questions:

- Does the book define cultural authenticity? Yes or No, Why?
- Is the book from an Insider or Outsider perspective? Explain.
- The need for authors to have experiences of the culture;
  - Does the author? Explain
  - Doe the Illustrator? Explain
- The reasons authors choose to write a book. Explain.
- The criteria for evaluation are based on what? Explain.
- Criteria that go beyond accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include, values, beliefs, and attitudes. Explain.
- Who has the power? Explain.
- Would this book help American Indian children identify and be proud of their heritage? Explain.
- Would this book encourage a positive image for the Non-Indian reader? Explain.
- Are multiple perspective presented? Explain.
- Are there important facts omitted? Explain.

- Is the American Indian stereotyped in this material;
    - Through the illustration?
    - Through the content?
  - Are Native American given credit for Western civilization? Explain.
  - Considering the time period of the setting of this material, does the illustration authenticate the Indian way of life?
  - Are the author and illustrator qualified to write a book dealing with the American Indian based on his/her background or research?
5. Read the profession literature to identify key aspects of Native American culture.
6. Developed categories of Native American textural features through analysis of the books.
7. Analyzed the children's responses to the Native American features in the books.

#### *Summary of each Book*

For the completed evaluation form of culturally authentic Native American children's literature see Appendix D:

*1. Flute Player: An Apache Folktale* (1990), author and illustrator Lacapa, Michael. The story is about an Apache boy and girl who like each other. The Apache boy plays his flute for the girl and the girl places a leaf in the river demonstrating she likes his playing. The boy goes hunting and the girl gets sick... (See Appendix D1 for evaluation)

*2. Antelope Woman: An Apache Folktale* (1992), author and illustrator Lacapa, Michael. The story is about a beautiful Apache maiden who follows the mysterious

young Apache man who has come to the village to teach her people to respect “all things great and small” and she becomes his wife. (See Appendix D2 for evaluation)

3. *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994), authors Lacapa, Kathleen & Michael and illustrated by Lacapa, Michael. The summary of the story is about the main character, Tony, who notices that his skin is darker than yellow-haired, blue-eyed Scott’s, but lighter than that of his Native American friend, Will. This story is well-designed; this title is for all children of multicultural marriages who struggle to find an identity. (See Appendix D3for evaluation)

4. *NDee Benadgode’i: Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981), authors Adley, Karen & Lacapa, Michael and illustrated by Lacapa, Michael. The book contains Storytelling Timetable, and Preparation for Storytelling. The first story is *The Cooking Stick*, is a story of how the Apache people were already living in the world but one day a war started, and they had a Spirit help them through the Head Crown Dancer, through this two children were left behind. The Cooking Stick helped the boy and girl survive. The second story: *Old Big Owl Witch* is a story of how naughty children were taken by this lady. The third story: *Spider Helps Robin* is a story of how the Spiders helped the baby robins to return back to his nest in the tree. (See Appendix D4 for evaluation)

5. *The Mouse Couple* (1980), author Malotki, Ekkehart, and illustrated by Lacapa, Michael. The father mouse went in search of a husband for the mouse couple’s daughter who was industrious and for that he went to all four directions; sun, clouds, winds, and

butte. But he was sent back to his own kind, in search of a husband. (See Appendix D5 for evaluation)

6. *The Magic Hummingbird* (1996), author Malotki, Ekkehart, and illustrated by Lacapa, Michael. In this story the Hummingbird helped the two young children survive the drought and help their people. And the two young children learn from experiencing the importance of staying in contact with the source of creation. (See Appendix D6 for evaluation)

7. *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) author Ortiz, Simon and illustrated by Lacapa, Michael. In the story two boys were sent by their people to the west to visit the Shiwana, the Spirit of rain and snow, and bring back water to relieve a drought. (See Appendix D7 for evaluation)

8. *The Gift of Changing Woman* (1993), author Seymour, Tryntje Van Ness and by Apache illustrators. The story is how the ceremony of an Apache girl goes through her puberty dance or “Sunrise Dance” and how it is conducted. (See Appendix D8 for evaluation)

9. *Between Earth and Sky* (1996) author Bruchac, Joseph and illustrated by Locker, Thomas. A young boy learns that everything living and inanimate has its place, should be considered sacred, and given respect, through the guidance of his uncle and the retelling of various Native American legends. (See Appendix D9 for evaluation)

10. *BiDii* (2000) author Thomas, Marjorie W. and illustrated by Begay, Patrick S. and Translator Redhair, Darlene M. The story is about a Navajo boy named “Bidii” who

tends to get into trouble by not listening, and showing off. He learns the hard way to be a good listener and respect others. (See Appendix D10 for evaluation)

11. *Kinaalda'* (1993), author Roessel, Monty, and photographer Doris, Michael. The story is about Celinda McKelvey, a Navajo girl, who participates in the Kinaalda', the traditional coming-of-age ceremony of her Navajo people. (See Appendix D11 for evaluation)

12. *Sunpainters* (1994), author and illustrator Whitethorne, Baje. The story is about Kii Leonard as he experiences a total solar eclipse, witnesses the magic of the Little People, and learns how to show respect for Mother Earth in the Navajo Way. (See Appendix D12 for evaluation)

13. *Song of the Shiprock Fair* (1999), author Tapahonso, Luci, and illustrated by Emerson, Anthony Chee. The story is about the experience of the Shiprock fair through the eyes of a Navajo child. (See Appendix D13 for evaluation)

14. *Red is Beautiful: Chiih Nizhoni* (2003), author John, Roberta and illustrated by David, Jason, and translator Thomas, Peter. The story is about a Navajo girl who is teased because she has a chiih face, happy face, but her Grandmother helps her overcome the teasing of her fellow classmates. (See Appendix D14 for evaluation)

The following table 3 is the list of culturally authentic Native American children's literature that will be used in the literature discussion circles. The books are from the Southwestern region of the United States Native Tribes and consist of Apache, Navajo, Hopi, and Pueblo. The genre consists of traditional, contemporary and poetry.

<b>Culturally Authentic Native American Children's Literature</b>			
<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Tribe</b>	<b>Genre</b>
Lacapa, Michael	<i>The Flute Player</i>	White Mountain Apache	Traditional
Lacapa, Michael	<i>Antelope Woman</i>	White Mountain Apache	Traditional
Lacapa, Kathleen/Michael	<i>Less Than Half, More Than Whole</i>	White Mountain Apache	Traditional
Lacapa Michael & Adley, Karen	<i>Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe</i>	White Mountain Apache	Traditional
Ortiz, Simon J.	<i>The Good Rainbow Road</i>	Pueblo	Traditional
Malotki, Ekkehart	<i>The Mouse Couple</i>	Hopi	Traditional
Malotki, Ekkehart	<i>The Magic Hummingbird</i>	Hopi	Traditional
Seymour. Tryntje Van Ness	<i>The Gift of Changing Woman</i>	Apaches: Chiricahua, San Carlos, Mescalero, White Mountain	Traditional
Bruchac, Joseph	<i>Between Earth &amp; Sky</i>	Many tribes	Poetry
Thomas, Marjorie W.	<i>BiDii</i>	Navajo	Contemporary
Roessel, Monty	<i>Kinaalda'</i>	Navajo	Traditional/ Contemporary
Whitethorne, Baje	<i>Sunpainters</i>	Navajo	Traditional/ Contemporary
Tapahonso, Luci	<i>Songs of Shiprock Fair</i>	Navajo	Contemporary
John, Roberta	<i>Red is Beautiful Chiih Nizhoni</i>	Navajo	Contemporary

Table 3 Books Selected (See Appendix E)

*Data sources: Transcripts from Literature Circle*

Literature Circles is the context in which I collected my data. Literature circles are small flexible discussion groups of four to eight students that support readers in thinking critically about texts. Within this research study, the classroom teacher and I read aloud to the students. The students listened to the story and then talked about what they heard to extend and deepen each student's understanding by sharing thoughts and ideas that might not have otherwise been explored.

Literature circle are based in Rosenblatt's (1978) theory of transaction. The meaning of a text comes as a result of the interaction of the reader with the text, and it is not inherent in the words of the author. The influence of understanding the text is what the reader brings to the text that is a set of previous experiences. In Literature Circles, the focal point is on sharing the reader's own questions and thoughts about the text or the author's style or motivation and then challenging the reader's ideas through talk with other students.

Vygotsky (1978) states that an educational research consists about the role of collaboration in learning suggest that when students collaborate on learning tasks, their understanding is broadened and deepened. In Literature Circles, students share understandings and ideas with each other, as well as with the teacher, to clarify their thinking and to become more reflective and critical as they read.

Literature Circles enable students to read and discuss a variety of books and stories. This exposure can develop more mature and wide-ranging reading preferences

(Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). The texts selected are rich in Native American children's literature, oral narrative stories of the Southwest region, storytelling, sense of place, deep knowledge, relationships, time, ceremony, animal, culture, and bilingual literature. This type of study also allows students to be exposed to various Native and Non-Native authors, formats and genres.

The literature circles provide the classroom teacher and I with a unique opportunity to observe and assess students to gain a better understanding of how they engage in actively thinking and reflecting about what they have read, and how well they interact with their peers as they share their thoughts and ideas of the reading.

In addition, the literature circle gives each student an opportunity to begin to understand that there is more than one possible interpretation to a given text. The discussions with peers will often draw attention to ideas and understanding that weren't initially evident to the reader and provide the students with an opportunity to take more responsibility for their learning. Student motivation is one of the key factors critical to student academic success. Furthermore, the students' motivation is closely linked with the element of choice (Palmer, Codling & Gambrell, 1994). In this study, in the Literature Circles the students are responsible for choosing their own reading material, from a selection that has been preset (14 Native American children's literature) by me.

Furthermore, the Literature Circles provide each student an opportunity to voice their understanding of the text with the group and especially to be heard. In most cases, when the discussion of a text in classrooms is solely teacher-directed, many students are unintentionally silenced. They may be silenced by more outgoing peers who are always

quick to offer an answer. They may be silenced by the fear that their answer might not be the correct one, or that they will be embarrassed in front of their peers and teacher. They may be silenced by their limited proficiency in the English language and the lack of self-confidence needed to express their thoughts in a large group. In Literature Circles, the student knows that all members of the group are invited, and indeed, are expected to prepare and to participate in the discussion.

By observing the participants in their classroom setting, I was able to record valuable data from their involvement in literature study circles. Observations were conducted for the duration of ten weeks with four reading groups of a particular fifth grade classroom in their reading blocks on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. These observations also included a description of the classroom, the teaching style of the teacher, and a social description of the students through talk and thinking in the literature study circles

Facilitating small-group literature study circles permits the classroom teacher and me to stimulate and inform the students' knowledge of the books. This wide range of perspectives helps deepen the students' textual understanding as the students' discussed the interpretations expose to them through the literature (Beach & Philippot, 1999).

In this research study, the literature study circles lasted between 30 to 40 minutes, three times a week. 32 discussions will be taped for 4 weeks. The twenty students were organized each week into six literature circles. Membership in these groups changed based on students choice of the books they want to read. The students were put into groups by their selection of the book they have chosen. Each week the student selects a

different book and each selection of books are in a group of four books. Some books will be offered as a reading selection more than one week. Each group will discuss 7 – 8 of the 14 books. The class held 32 literature discussions, each of which was audio-taped by either the classroom teacher or me (we taped our own discussion groups). I fully transcribed each audiotape discussion. Approximately 24 tapes were collected of the literature study circles. I selected one or two discussions of each book so that there will be over 15 transcripts to analyze. The processes for the selection of a discussion group to transcribe are:

1. To listen to the 4 tapes for each book.
2. To select the discussion in which the students engage in the most focused and engaged talk related to the book.

The literature study circles were facilitated by both the classroom teacher and myself, we had two different groups. The discussion followed a pattern whereby transcripts of the literature discussion were analyzed using the process of analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) which includes looking back at the data for categories and then for relationships among the categories, and to look back at the data to modify and refine the categories (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

### *Student Interview*

The process of group interview follows Frankel and Wallen (2003) who state that qualitative research investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials. There is greater emphasis on holistic description which, Geertz (2000) describes as “a thick description” (pp. 6). Furthermore, Franenkel and Wallen state that researchers describe in detail of all what goes on in a particular activity or situation rather than comparing the effects of a particular treatment (as experimental research), or describing the attitudes or behaviors of people.

Franelkel and Wallen (2003) further states that, “interviews are opinions and researchers ask questions to find out what people *think* about some topic or issue. Answers to such question call attention to the respondent’s goals, beliefs, attitudes or values. Set of expectations for all interviews are the following: *Respect the culture of the group being studied; Respect the individual being interviewed; Be natural and develop an appropriate rapport with the participant* (pp. 459-460).

The theories of Frankel and Wallen are infused in my presentation of applicability in my research study. I interviewed the students in May in a group of 2 – 3 students to ask about their perspectives related to the discussion groups and to Native American children literature. The interviews were conducted either in the classroom or another classroom across the hall. This decision was based on the circumstances; if the read aloud was occurring then the group interview was conducted in another room, but this was done toward the end of the research. The important factor was providing a quiet place to

conduct the group interview where the voices of the interview and interviewees could be clearly heard and not be interrupted by anything occurring in the class.

### The Interview Questions

#### Interview 1: Background

- What kinds of reading you do outside of school?
- What have been your experiences with reading before 5<sup>th</sup> grade in school?
- What kind of books have you read in school?

#### Interview 2: Part 1 Detail of the Experience

- Talk to me about the literature discussion of these books. What was that experience like for you?
- What has reading in school been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade? What has talking about books been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade?
- Tell me as much as you can about reading Native American children literature?
- Talk to me about the literature discussions of these books? What was that experience like for you?
- What discoveries did you make/what did you learn through reading books?
- Did you find the characters similar to yourself?
- How did you think you were like the character? How did you think you were different from the character?
- How do these books help you understand yourself better?
- How does it help you understand others better?

- How do these books help you understand your life better?
- What did you learn about the issue of culture? Racism? Relationships?
- How has reading this book changed you?
- What is your culture?
- What did you learn about culture through the Native American children's literature?
- How have reading these books from and about Native American children affected you as a reader and a learner?
- Have you changed your ideas about reading?

(Appendix C).

I asked the students to provide information about their own background and the details of their experience in the literature discussion group plus the books they had experienced during the discussion. The interview process was conducted in a group interview of 2 to 3 students. The interview is an important outlook for students to reveal and voice their own experience with the literature that is relevant to their own culture plus other Native American cultures. The group interview gave me an insight in revealing the students' perceptions about the literature experience.

### **Role of Researcher**

I considered myself as an insider in this school based my previous teaching experience with Apache children plus being also an Apache. My life experience includes living on this reservation, attending the local public school system, from elementary, Jr. High, and high school, plus being a teacher aide and a certified teacher fifteen years.

Prior to the study, Ms. Gruse welcomed me into her classroom to get to know the students, an hour twice a week and this gave me information about the students and how Ms. Gruse reading curriculum was taught. And during this time I was also teaching a children literature class at U of A and Mrs. Gruse' students were pen pals to my undergraduate students.

When I began the study, Ms. Gruse and I spent additional time to prepare, and debrief about what had happened in the literature discussions, and to share general observations about the students. And additional time before, after school and in the evening we collaborated on the students and the study on the telephone or on the internet.

At the start of the research I believe that the students saw me as an insider because of the previous visits to the class and the students knew I was an Apache, lived in the near community, and taught at the local elementary school and knew some of their parents.

### **Limitations**

While I considered myself as an insider in the classroom, there were inevitable limits in data collection. First, I was limited by time. This research was carried out during the literature discussion time; I was in the classroom for three times a week a total of 2 hours and 15 minutes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The communication with Ms. Gruse was on a regular basis, but time constraints did not allow much contact with or observation of the students during play time or in passing, nevertheless I was limited by the time I spend with the students.

Second, being a researcher and a teacher during the time I spent in the classroom was an effort. The primary purpose for being in the classroom was to conduct research and both the students and I realized that. Ms. Gruse trusted me with her students and the teaching of the literature and I felt obligated to teach. I was both a teacher conducting research and a researcher teaching literature. I feel that the students came to see me as a teacher researcher teaching along with their teacher.

Third, I was concerned about taking away time from the students' regular classroom curriculum. I realized that the class needed more time to complete other assignments and the time I spend conducting this research may have taken the students away from their regular reading curriculum. My presence and research purpose inevitably affected Ms. Gruse's regular literature curriculum during the time I spent in the classroom (approximately the whole month of May).

Fourth, the issue of communication was limited with the parents of the students in the classroom. Ms. Gruse kept the communication with the parents on a regular basis about the research since she was the classroom teacher and had established a positive relationship with the parents of the students in her class.

### **Secondary Data Sources**

The secondary sources of data are utilized to support the primary sources of data. In this research I used the main sources of data to generate the categories for analysis and secondary sources of data were used to support the categories.

### *Observational Field Notes*

The observational field notes served as a secondary source of data. The detailed field notes were taken for the duration of the first week of the investigation when the first observations were conducted. The field notes I took changed over the course of the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) reaffirm that observations take different forms at different stages of the inquiry. I took careful notes in a notebook; recording the date and time and a description of the activity occurring during that time. The first week I observed three literature discussion groups. I audio-taped these discussions and I transcribed all three discussions. I wrote down the students' name that was speaking and his/her statements, and then I would note my own personal observations and opinions about the discussion (Hubbard & Power, 1993).

Through the study I realized that it was more difficult to take detailed field notes and participate in the discussion at the same time. The detailed field notes changed and I relied on the audio tapes and transcripts to record the discussions. I remember one occasion when the audiotape did not record and I had to remember the discussion right after the students returned to their classroom.

Field notes are secondary source of data that also include the discussion, students' names, my observations and my personal opinions of the discussion, and a brief description of my plan.

### *Artifacts*

Artifacts are writings or illustrations of the students during the time of this research. The artifacts are reading journals, written essay responses to the readings, including illustrations, also, two writing forms that the student used to help them write journals and essays on their reading responses of the Native American children's literature. Each child responded in their literature journal twice a week over the course of the study. The children illustrated, and reflected upon the reading through writing. These artifacts were be utilized along with data from either the audio taping of the student responses or the audio taping of the group interviews.

The research questions and the qualitative methods of data collection correspond;

First question: What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book. Methods: Read professional literature on culture, drawn from the text of the books about culture, and create categories of cultural textual features.

Second question: What are the types of talk about that these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature? Methods: Literature discussion, artifacts, field notes.

Second question: What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's literature? Methods: Interviews artifacts and field notes. By means of the first question my purpose was to answer, what Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book. I looked at the content of their responses to the culturally relevant literature through in-depth analysis of

the transcripts. In question one I wanted to look at the content of their responses and what they talked about when responding to culturally authentic text. The second question, what are the types of talk about that these textual features children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature. The third questions concentrated on what are the children's perspectives about reading Native American children's literature? In addition, this question concentrated on how the participants used their understanding of literature to think about their own lives through the interviews process to see how individual students perceived literature from their own culture.

### **Trustworthiness**

Measures were taken during the implementation of this research inquiry to increase trustworthiness. In 1985, Lincoln and Guba wrote that the inquirer needs "to persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (p. 315). Within this particular research they found four criteria used in qualitative research to establish trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

### *Credibility*

I collected a large amount of data that will be collected in the forms of notes in addition to my field notes, and my personal reflection notes. In addition, other safeguards were an eight to ten week research at the site for especially building trust and rapport with the children while guarding against over rapport with them, and awareness of personal biases.

I used the triangulation of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and to cross-checked the accuracy of data gathered. The triangulation of data involved using the three methods of data collection – (1) participant observation (Spradley, 1980), (2) interviewing (Seidman, 1991), and (3) transcript analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

In order to refine ideas in the research I discussed ideas and patterns in the data with the classroom teacher. During the time when I was doing my data analysis, I also had intensive sessions with Dr. Short, who provided an outsider perspective by asking questions to clarify my insider perspective. As the research progressed I met with my committee members and family members to help refine my own ideas and provide additional insights about issues surrounding the Apache culture.

### *Member Checking*

Member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was conducted through asking each of the participants to review portions of the transcript at two separate times. After the analysis is finished I will show the students a draft of finding to ensure that I presented them accurately. Ms. Gruse was given copies of all the transcripts when they are transcribed. She read the drafts of all chapters and provided feedback on the writing.

### *Transferability*

Lincoln & Guba (1985) state that it is, “not the naturalist’s task to provide an index of transferability: it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers” (p. 316). In “thick

description” is the best way this can be done because it enable the reader of the study to make judgment about whether or not the study is transferable. My endeavor in this study will be to provide a thick description of both the setting and the participants.

### *Dependability*

Lincoln & Guba (1985) argue that if it is possible to us the techniques to determine credibility, it may not be necessary to demonstrate dependability separately. Furthermore, a technique that characterized as “overlap methods” represent the kind of triangulation in relation to credibility. By establishing dependability credibility will be established. In this study triangulation method is used.

### **Data Analysis**

Data collection and analysis for this study explored children’s responses to literature written about Native Americans. This study examined responses of fifth grade students to literature placed within their own cultural context and that of other Native cultures. The intent of this research was to provide the best portrait possible of Native elementary students at Apache Elementary School and how the students perceived the use of Native American children’s literature through literature circle discussions. Researcher notes, audio tape recordings, group interviews, artifacts (student illustrations) and documents (student writings, including reading journals) were used to collect data.

Before answering the questions on children’s responses, I first did a textual analysis. This was done by making explicit decisions about how to depict c theme, language, and discourse of culture. By investigating children’s perceptions of fourteen

different examples of Native American literature, I answered my original research questions from the data I gathered:

1. What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book?
2. What the types are of talk about that these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature?
3. What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's literature?

The theoretical and methodological foundations of my research came from professional references of examinations of the Native American children's literature views--on what constituted "cultural" representation of Native American in which is place into the textual feature of Native American children's literature texts. I read all the fourteen books and recurring themes of cultures, language patterns, and cultural practice and images came up from the text I analyzed. Then I place the cultural textural features into subcategories that match up with the major categories. Then I utilized these same textual features for the students' responses of the text from the children's literature discussion groups. Then I interviewed the students' on their perspectives of the fourteen Native American children's literature.

After working with participants in this project, I compiled a large quantity of raw data. Using suggestions from Merriam (2001), who demonstrates a systematic process of data analysis, I was systematically guided through field notes, hours of discussion and interview recordings, various textual documents, and children's drawings. This

systematic process allowed me to examine the data I collected in an objective and methodical manner.

I organized the data and reviewed the documents and field notes. I then began the year-long process of the transcription of all audio recordings. I transcribed all portions of the recorded discussions and group interviews in order to more accurately code and organize that information. I used the recorder's digital counter to isolate portions of the interactions that were relevant to the inquiry and that answered specific portions of each research question. I placed the transcriptions into Word documents.

The analysis offered insight into the participants' perspectives on Native American children's literature. Additionally, the data suggested the types of issues children discuss in literature circles after being exposed to Native American children's literature. Finally, the data revealed linguistic features of literature circle discussions in which the children engaged.

Once the transcription was concluded, I again reviewed all documents and reorganized all the data. I began coding the information, as suggested by Merriam (1998), using a simple alphabetic/numeric coding system. Soon, umbrella categories began to emerge from the data as specific topics or units of meaning. Further analysis of the data revealed that it could be organized under three major umbrella categories which included Cultural Themes, Linguistic Patterns, and Cultural Practices and Images. Below these categories, the data suggested sub-categories, which roughly fit into the larger umbrella categories as shown in table 4.

Umbrella Categories Reflecting Native American Textual Features				
Cultural Themes		Linguistic Patterns	Cultural Practices and Images	
1. Storytelling a. Ethics & Teaching b. Self-Image / Knowledge of One's Own People	4. Relationships a. Family b. Kinship c. Association	1. Language	1. Significant Cultural Roles a. Elders b. Woman c. Man d. Children i. Girl ii. Boy	3. Cultural Images a. Symbols
		2. Bilingualism		
2. Sense of Place a. Sacred Places b. Sacred Directions	5. Time	3. Code-switching		
		4. Rez-talk	2. Practices and Manifestations of Culture a. Religion & Beliefs b. Prayer c. Sacred Beings d. Dance e. Music f. Lifestyles g. Clothing & Adornment h. Hunting i. Food j. Shelter	
3. Deep Knowledge (Secret, Sacred) a. Understanding Natural Phenomena b. Response to Learner-Demonstrated Interest c. Response to Ceremony and Ritual	6. Ceremony a. Dance b. Song c. Prayer			
	7. Animal			

**Table 4 Umbrella categories and themes**

### *Umbrella Category Cultural Themes*

I divided the first umbrella category suggested by the data, Cultural Themes, into seven themes repeatedly brought up in the responses of the students. These themes included Storytelling, Sense of Place, Deep Knowledge, Relationships, Time, Ceremony, and Animals. Some of the sub- categories also had emergent topics suggested by the data. Apache children recognize multiple purposes for storytelling as do the adults in their world. To help orient the reader to these purposes, I have included the definition for all the themes. Table 5 correlates themes identified through subject narratives.

CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF RESPONSES TO NATIVE AMERICAN TEXTUAL FEATURES: Cultural Themes	
<p><b>1. Storytelling:</b> is explained as a gift for continuation of the memory of the people. Informing about who and where you come from, how family relationship is very essential and we must tribute our own existence through our environment.</p> <p><b>a. Teaching &amp; Ethics:</b> is identified through the learning experiences of children, through the trial and error of everyday life, plus through knowing and sharing.</p> <p><b>b. Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People:</b> ways of living, learning, and acknowledging ourselves as individuals, and this is taught through story telling of the past, through stories that have moral values in which the Native American people incorporate into their way, learning and acknowledging our self as an individual.</p>	<p><b>4. Relationships:</b> establish contact between two beings or entities.</p> <p><b>a. Family: it not only immediate family, consisting father, mother, sister, brother, grandparents, uncle, aunts, but it extend to our Clan, our Community and our tribe.</b></p> <p><b>b. Kinship: the network of extended family, and clan that forms a significant foundation of responsibility and respect.</b></p> <p><b>c. Association: it is the perspective of an individual to come to know through a relationship, to be responsible, and to participate in life of one self and one's own people.</b></p>
<p><b>2. Sense of Place:</b> is a place that is significant to the Native American, the sense of belonging to a very specific place, the purpose of belonging, a sense of home, a sense of harmony, and respect for the forces of nature and communicating with the</p>	<p><b>5. Time:</b> holds cultural significance because time is equated, in a fashion, to the process of coming to know.</p>

<p>balance and harmony of the terrestrial environment and the Cosmo-Universe.</p> <p><b>a. Sacred Places: a mystical kinship with the land and the natural environment plus a place where energy or natural forces exist and the very essence of Native American sacred life.</b></p> <p><b>b. Sacred Directions: the four directions (north, east, south and west) corresponding to our Life Cycle and where we can connect with the, In Charge of Life the Spirit Entities.</b></p>	<p><b>6. Ceremony:</b> is a Way of Life integrated into our cultural Spirit of Life for all Native American it is a social gathering for ritual of prayer of dances.</p> <p><b>a. Dance: this evokes the Creator or Deities of the Universe – for extol, enlightenment, foretelling, blessing, healing, or to overcome any difficulties, and a reacted through symbolism of the culture, and – songs- retelling stories that signifies purpose of the dance.</b></p> <p><b>b. Song: is life is supernatural, song sings the singers and it becomes energy and messages, a significant component of Ceremony.</b></p> <p><b>c. Prayer: a significant element that evokes a blessing and deters obstacles.</b></p>
<p><b>3. Deep Knowledge (Secret, Sacred):</b> knowledge of the Native American’s ceremonies, stories, places, culture, relationship, religion, and belief that is sacred to them.</p> <p><b>a. Understanding Natural Phenomena: referring to the Native American deep sacred knowledge of metaphysic (in-ordinary reality).</b></p> <p><b>b. Response to Learner-Demonstrated Interest: The empowerment of personal sacred deep knowledge given freely to other entities to be used appropriately.</b></p> <p><b>c. Response to Ceremony and Ritual: teaching and learning of sacred knowledge through experience and participation of cultural understanding the Native Way of conducting one’s self or coming-to-know.</b></p>	<p><b>7. Animals:</b> a Spiritual helper, each has certain qualities that are special and powerful, and shared with human being if they are respected.</p>

**Table 5 Definition of cultural themes**

<b>CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF RESPONSE OF NATIVE AMERICAN TEXTUAL FEATURES: Linguistic Patterns</b>
<b>1. Language:</b> Language is a purely human and noninstinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols.
<b>2. Bilingualism:</b> defined for present purpose as the ability to use two languages with near equal fluency.
<b>3. Code-switching:</b> a term commonly used for the use of a combination of Apache and English interchangeably during the same conversation event.
<b>4. Rez-talk:</b> a term commonly used on the reservation that is coded-language that means that only the people from that reservation knows the vocabulary and meaning of that particular world.

**Table 6 Definition of linguistic patterns**

Cultural Practice and Images category consists of different tribe of Native Americans with their own particular Way of Life; their own traditions, their philosophy, beliefs, religion, prayer, dances, songs, ceremony, different way of dressing, their life skills of living with the natural environment, dwelling, and how it is instilled in their existence.

**CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF RESPONSE OF NATIVE AMERICAN  
TEXTUAL FEATURES: Cultural Practices and Images**

**1. Significant Cultural Roles** are important roles that plays a significant part within the Native American communities and families

- a. Elders: has lived life's experiences, wisdom of life, teaching from their perceptions, as propagated by their prior elder ancestor.
- b. Woman: she gives life, she is the co-creator, nurturers, kind, empowered, poise, confidences are necessary of the behavioral values and characteristics in all aspect of life.
- c. Man: considered protectors of the tribes, teachers, storytellers, providers, dancers, medicine men, performer of ceremonies, singers, and leader of the people, plus an invaluable knowledge to convey, the dynamic role of being active in a tribe.
- d. Children: are socialized, learn through observing to pay attention and understand what goes on around them.
  - i. Girl: a free adolescent female, daughter, granddaughter or god-daughter.
  - ii. Boy: a free adolescent male, a son, grandson.

**2. Practices and Manifestations of Culture** deals with these areas that are practiced and utilized in the Native American Way of Life

- a. Religion & Beliefs: the primitive unknown about the Great Mystery, its quantum physics, and utilization of it for purpose and need. The metaphysic of the connection to the Spirit World where, what is unbelievable exists, is the source of their Deities, ceremonies, and ritual.
- b. Prayer is life and recognition of the Unseen and Eternal.
- c. Sacred Beings: a unique quality of existence and purpose through teaching by our elders, metaphorically. The Sacred Spirit Being's presence to help anytime in need, and that it was sacred, warranted assurance.
- d. Dance: this movement signifies life, and is honoring life and evoking the Universe made by the Creator, the Natural Forces, and the Spirits, for gratitude, and celebration of life, plus it also emulated animals in honor of their

existence.

- e. Music is the noise of the Universe, it the sound of an Invisible Force, sound of movements, our voices that sing the song heard, and music of our inner silence can also be heard from within us and during our vision, dreams, and channels. This perception came from the Native American.
- f. Lifestyles are a way of life that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group.
- g. Clothing & Adornment: different styles of body wear, skin animal hide, cloth clothing, shirts, breech cloth, ornaments consist of jewelries, hair ties and other things became added feature of body wear. Feathers adorned that signified honor and protections.
- h. Hunting: Universe provided wild-game, they were respected and honored, prayers and rituals were performed prior to the hunt, and Native American were taught to save and think of other, game management.
- i. Food: wild game, fish, plants, these were healthy foods from the creator and Native American lived off the land.
- j. Shelter is to keep away from harsh heat or cold environment and to deter, to be safe, from dangerous intruders. Native American utilized the natural environment to build their shelter.

**3. Cultural Images** is explained by utilizing animated symbols, characters, figures, marks, icon, and pictogram to express a concept of an existence of how things or events occur.

- a. Symbols: The description of matrix events utilizing powers of animation reveals that animation is the primary reality which delves deep into the realities of Indigenous thoughts creates reality.

**Table 7 Definitions of cultural practices and images**

The three categories that developed through the responses to produce the Umbrella Categories Reflecting Native American Children's Textual Features captured through the Fourteen Native American children's literature to the study: (1) Cultural Themes was develop through the themes that were evident through the readings, this selections came from the array of particular themes that came up over and over again.

The first Major subcategory is Cultural Themes is based on the themes that kept on recurring including; Storytelling, Sense of Place, Deep Knowledge, Relationship, Time, Ceremony and Animals. The seven recurring cultural themes are significant to the Way of Life of the Native American People as well as the significant references to narrative stories of Native American children's literature.

The first Cultural Theme is Storytelling and this is evident in all the stories and the significance of each story to the Native American tribe from which the narrative story originated. The Storytelling is more likely the foundation of this category and as well as the whole Textual Features because each narrative story exists through storytelling. Within the Storytelling itself arises the two themes of Teaching and Ethics, and Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People. Because each narrative story involves Teaching and Ethics from the Moral of the story, Ways of Life, learning from family and community members, and through the environment; just to mention a few. Self-Image/knowledge of One's Own People was important because the stories were about Native American children from their own tribe as well as other tribes from the South West Region of the United States. In addition, the knowledge of our experience gained knowledge from the reading of my own tribe as well as other neighboring tribes. These

two themes consistently appeared throughout the readings of the fourteen books in my study.

The second Cultural Theme is, Sense of Place, and this came up from the narrative stories of the locations where the Native People live, to where the places are that sacred based on the location but more deep knowledge of why that place is so significantly special to the Native People. And furthermore, the sense of the sacred directions that is so significant to the Native People, based on their sense of their own existence to the four cardinal directions and the space above, beside and below us. And how the direction is significant in how we perform our ceremonies to the direction our dwellings is facing. The theme of Sense of Place is apparent in the readings that signify the Way of Life of the Native American and this how this theme kept on reappearing.

The third Cultural Theme is Deep Knowledge, based from the readings that dealt with knowledge gained from the narrative story that is sacred and knowledge that only that specific tribe identify with. Within the Deep Knowledge the themes appeared Understanding Natural Phenomena, Response to Learner- Demonstrate Interest and Response to Ceremony and Ritual. In addition, each one of these themes are embedded in the knowledge from the readings but still knowledge that is questionable through Natural Phenomena, Ceremonies and Ritual that are recognized and still are being performed today.

The fourth Cultural Theme is Relationship, and the appearance of the Relationship through Family, Kinship, and Association from the readings. Within the Native American People the Relationship of the Family, Kinship and Association is

respected and a key element of the belief of Native People and therefore is represented in some form or another in each of the fourteen books.

The fifth Cultural Theme is Time, which holds cultural significance of the process of coming to know, of our own existence. The appropriate time is for storytelling, ceremonies, ritual, prayers, and a time experienced in developmental processes as a child to being an Elder.

The sixth Cultural Theme is Ceremony, which is significant in the Native American Way of Life. Ceremony is considered a privilege, either to participate or witness a Ceremony through the Dance, Song and Prayers of the Native People. The ceremonies and songs related to a girl's coming of age is one example of this theme. But the Singing of songs--are also Prayers of Healing, Strength, Endurance, and of symbolism are a few examples of how Ceremony, Dance, Song, and Prayer arise in these books.

The seventh Cultural Theme is Animals that is presented in most of the books. Animals reappearances is due to their roles in the creation narratives or based on their characterization in narrative stories about ethical or moral behaviors. Animals are able to talk, communicate with humans, and respected as Spiritual helpers.

The second major category is Linguistic Patterns based on the Bilingual talk with Indigenous Language of Children's literature within the study and the reappearance of Code Switching and Rez Talk from the readings and the children's responses.

The first Linguistic Pattern is Bilingual With Indigenous Language, this was developed through the three Native American children's books that had two bilingual

contemporary literature (Navajo) and one that is trilingual Native American Tale (Keres, Spanish and English).

The second Linguistic Pattern is Code Switching and this happens when the students utilized English and a Native Language in one sentence. This particular theme developed through the students' responses to several Native literature readings from this study where they integrated Apache words into their comments in English about the book.

The third Linguistic Pattern is Rez Talk and this appeared through the responses of the students' particular talk of a coded-language that only the people from that place would know what they were talking about. There were only a few responses but I felt this was interesting.

The third major category is Culture and this was developed through all the readings of the Native American children's literature that focus on the makeup of Culture: (1) Significant Cultural Roles of Elders, Woman, Man, Children (Girl, Boy); (2) Practiced Manifestations of Culture through Religion & Belief, Prayer, Sacred Being, Dance, Music, Lifestyle, Body Wear, Hunting, Food and Shelter; (3) Cultural Images within Images.

The first category of Culture is Significant Cultural Roles which reflected the different important roles that play a significant part within the Native American communities and families, including Elders, Woman, Man, and Children. I realized that the Elders are the Keepers of Knowledge for the People; Women are co-creators and central to all other relationships; Men are authoritarian leaders, providers, storytellers;

Girls are young, hyper-attentive; and Boys are engaged in interplay, learning by doing. All of the examples of the different types of Roles reappeared in the reading and these examples are of just a few of the roles that each take on in the narrative stories.

The second category of Culture is Practiced Manifestations of Culture within the Native American families and communities described by the students to deal with the areas that are practiced and utilized in the Native American Way of Life, such as Religion & Belief, Prayer, Sacred Being, Dance, Music, Lifestyles, Body-wear, Hunting, Food, and Shelter. The Way of Life that the Native American People practice with each category intertwined with the others. Within Religions and Belief, prayer is the main element plus the Sacred Beings are portrayed; for example in dances, through the Music and the Lifestyles of the Native People celebrate their Way of Life. In addition, the celebrations of Life continue through the feasting of food and the shelters that provide shade and protection.

The third category of Culture is Cultural Images, a vivid description or representation of nature, being, objects, events, or even visions within our own mind. The first and only category of Cultural Images is Images and this category represents comments about the illustrations from the Native American children's literature in this study. In fact, this was the most popular category because of the different types of illustrations and representation of the Native Way of Life.

The Images category under Cultural Images is derived from the landscapes, the environment, the Native People, the dwelling, the livestock, the ceremonies, the sacred beings, the animals, the shelter and this is just to mention a few. This category came

from the responses of the students and how they described the illustration. Plus the student could actually experience the illustrations through seeing themselves within the stories, participating in the dances, fascinated by the images of the four sacred beings of the Hopi People, or the images of the Changing Woman or the photographs of Kinaalda' ceremony. This is how this category was revealed through the students overwhelming response to illustrations or Images within the narrative stories of this story.

In answering the third question, what are children's perspective about reading and discussing Native American Children's books? The process consists of interviewing the students in group of two to four students at a time. The Interview question I asked were Interview One gaining information about the students' background. The Second Set of Interview questions Details of the Experience. The following will be the question plus the explanation of the questions.

#### *Interview 1: Background*

- What kinds of reading you do outside of school?
- What have been your experiences with reading before 5th grade in school?
- What kind of books have you read in school?

The questions stated above is to provide prior knowledge of their reading experiences outside of school, their reading experiences before fifth grade and the kind of books the student read in school. This interview allows the students to respond to these questions about their experience in reading, outside of school, before fifth grade and the types of books the students read in school. I utilized this data to understand the students' concept

of obtaining reading material, what type and their experiences through their prior schooling. The information about what kind of books they have read enabled me to find out if the students had read any Native American children's literature prior to this study. And the next set of questions was on the detail of the experience of utilizing Native American children's literature in their classroom.

*Interview 2: Detail of the Experience*

- Talk to me about the literature discussion of these books. What was that experience like for you?
- What has reading in school been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade? What has talking about books been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade?
- Tell me as much as you can about reading Native American children literature?
- Talk to me about the literature discussions of these books? What was that experience like for you?
- What discoveries did you make/what did you learn through reading books?
- Did you find the characters similar to yourself?
- How did you think you were like the character? How did you think you were different from the character?
- How do these books help you understand yourself better?
- How does it help you understand others better?
- How do these books help you understand your life better?
- What did you learn about the issue of culture? Racism? Relationships?

- How has reading this book changed you?
- What is your culture?
- What did you learn about culture through the Native American children's literature?
- How have reading these books from and about Native American children affected you as a reader and a learner?
- Have you changed your ideas about reading?

The second set of interview question pertains to the students' experiences of reading Native American children's literature. Some of the questions are asking about the literature circle and the discussions of the books they have read. In addition they gained knowledge of sharing their own experiences with the text, shared experiences among their peers, gained knowledge of shared experiences that changed their perspectives in one way or another toward that particular reading, and respecting each other's talk and giving each other a voice to be heard.

Another area of interest is what's within the text, who were the characters whether they were similar or different from that character, and whether they liked that character or not, what they liked learned from the characters, and how did the character make a difference in their life. The answers to these questions came from the experiences the students had with the characters, the experiences of being just like the character or how the character is similar to their Uncle, Mother, Grandfather, or cousin. Furthermore, the character within the literature might resemble them as someone who listens and respect the Elders, their Grandparents, Uncles, Aunt. The experiences the students had involving

the text and the illustrations. These experiences are so important to acknowledge and to be voiced from the students because the literature has become relevant and they see themselves in the stories.

The questions also asked if the text helped them understand themselves or others better, or helped them understand their lives. These questions pertain to the lesson learned, the moral of the stories in which the students would learn how to behave, respect all thing great and small, respect the Native Way of Life through observing a ceremony, ritual, prayer, phenomenal happening, listen to Elders of the family, or work together to accomplish a task.

The next set of question asks about issues of culture, racism, and relationship and their identities as well as how the reading influenced them as readers and learners. These questions pertain to issues that students face in the area of culture, racism and relationship and their understandings of culture identifying with tribal affiliations as well as, their perspectives as readers.

The two sets of interview questions will shed light on the students' experiences and perspectives, as well as whether they were able to identity with characters in the story and the learning experiences through the stories.

### **Summary**

The place of study was at an elementary school on the reservation of the White Mountain Apaches. I presented the intent of my research project to the school system and received their approval to implement the Native American children's literature in their

school curriculum. Then I coordinated with a school teacher and classroom students to begin the literacy program.

From prior research methods in selecting culturally authentic books, fourteen of the Native American literature books were utilized and were analyzed for textual themes. The design of the research data acquisition from fifth-grade Native American students provided the best portrait possible for cultural authenticity to formulate their responses through literature circles and group interviews. This research utilizes a qualitative research method to gather data to direct findings by asking, What are the children's perspectives on reading Native American children's literature? and--What types of talk that children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature? Data collection from the responses was compiled using a systematic process of data analysis. Then with the data analyzed the answers provided a clue to enhancing educational curriculum to promote reading and acknowledgements of the student's identity of their Native Culture's Way of Life. The analysis also offered insight into the participant perspectives of Native American's children literature. Furthermore, the data suggested the types of issues children discussed in literature circles after reading Native American children's literature. Finally the data revealed a certain particular linguistic pattern features. To explain this pattern features—it was accurately coded and organized and graphically illustrated in word documents for better comprehension. Subsequently, three categories of the word documents were developed through the responses to produce the graph table annotated as “Umbrella Categories Reflecting Native American Textual Features” derived from the fourteen Native American Children's literature. Also depicted

on the graph table were Cultural Themes, Linguistic Patterns, and Culture, as derived from the aforementioned Textual Features. This exploratory study revealed the concepts in operation which was a brief overview of this chapter.

#### CHAPTER FOUR: TEXTUAL FEATURES OF NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE

The analysis procedures to analyze the textual features of Native American children's literature were derived from the research of Wanda Brooks (2006) on African American textual features. I found her research instrumental in forming my own examination of textual features and their influence on children's cultural and literary thought. Few studies have been conducted on Native American literature textual features.

In her research, Brooks (2006) examined the texts as well as African American students' cultural interpretations of literature containing "authentic" depictions from their own ethnic group. The theory and methodological foundation for her examination of contextual ways of understanding stories was framed with constructivist views of reading and poststructuralist literary theories. She perceived that these theories provided determinative methods to acquire realistic information based on her review of previous research. From that confirmation of theories and methods, Brooks established the theoretical and methodological foundations of the research. She first did a thematic analysis of the three African American children's literature that was based in her review of the professional literature to determine significant themes within African American culture. Next, categories were created from the reader responses which conceptually represented her analysis of students' interpretations of the three books based on the African American textual features. Brooks created tables to depict the textual features as they related to the reader response categories, including the definitions and examples for each category to indicate where these categories from the textual and response analyses did and did not overlap. In addition, she shared two representative pieces of data analysis

to illustrate the nature of the participants' responses. In her implications, Brooks noted that the research addressed literacy directives in classrooms where culturally influenced textual features are viewed as pedagogical tools. Her study of eight graders responses to "culturally conscious" African American children's literature provided a more meaningful understanding about how readers of similar ethnicity use culture to interpret literature that represent their own lives. She concluded that student interpretations of culturally-relevant literature come from the narratives depending on which African American life were read by the students. There are variables that influence how African American students interpret culturally authentic literature, and so each student's perception of African American life will vary based on their experiences and cultural knowledge. Despite this variation, culture is very important to individual students. In her conclusion, Brooks (2006) discussed future research directions that consider diverse readers, reader response modes, cultural knowledge, and experiences, as well as African American children's literature.

The research of Brooks (2006) enabled me to construct my own research based on her textual features and the procedures she conducted to provide evidence of multiple perspectives about authentic depictions of African Americans. Subsequently, my study focused on Native American children's literature textual features and then used these features to examine students' responses and their perspective of culturally authentic Native American children's literature. The theoretical and methodological foundations of my research came from professional references of examinations of the Native American children's literature and culture--on what was viewed as constituting "cultural"

representations of Native American culture. This review of the literature formed my initial categories for examining the textual features of Native American children's literature. These categories were then adjusted based on the actual analysis of the books to see which were relevant for this set of texts.

I first examined professional literature on Native Culture to identify possible themes, patterns and practices and then used these to examine books and develop categories of cultural textual features. This literature review is referenced throughout this chapter in introducing the various categories as well as in the literature review in Chapter one. The significance of Native Culture is embedded in each Indigenous Nation. Native researcher, Littlebear (2000), argues that the way culture is viewed is significant for children knowing and living within their Native Way of Life and that Indigenous knowledge is important within the communities in which these themes are common but are also as diverse as the locations and the people (p. 554). Fear-Segal (2007) further examined culture through the Native way of life and stated that Indigenous knowledge is significant to education and learning because it is essential to Native survival as well as the continuation of the identity and worldview of each tribe (p. 49-50). Cajete (2004) affirms that American Indian education needs to reflect traits shared by Indigenous cultures of the world and that they are expressions of the ancestral tribal roots of all the families of humankind (p. 33). Cordova (2007) asserted that:

We fail to take into account the many possible ways that human beings might be defined. Each distinct cultural group, perhaps in an original isolation from other groups, provides three definitions around which they build all subsequent

determinations about the world they live in. First each has a definition or description of the world; second, there is a definition of what it is to be human in the world as it is so defined and described; and, the third, there is attempt to outline the role of a human in that world. The distinct pattern of a culture may be seen to derive from these three definitions, and may account for the distinctions between cultural groups. I refer to these definitions and descriptions as a worldview of *matrix*, because they are not singular and disconnected definitions, but compose a whole picture of interrelated concepts and ideas. (p. 1)

Smith (1999) argued that story telling provides a focus for dialogue and conversation among Indigenous peoples, to ourselves and for ourselves. Such approaches fit well with the oral traditions which are still a reality in day-to-day Indigenous lives. Furthermore, Smith stated that their themes tell us about our cultures (p. 145). Grande (2004) noted that through a “tradition-based” revitalization project, Red pedagogy does not aim to reproduce an essentialist or romanticized view of “tradition.” Alfred (1999) suggested a model of “self-conscious traditionalism” for Indigenous communities, defined as, an intellectual, social, and political movement to reinvigorate Indigenous values, principles, and other cultural elements best suited to the larger contemporary political and economic reality (p. 167). In other words, Alfred (1999) is arguing that the struggle for freedom is not about “dressing up in the trappings of the past and making demands” but about being firmly rooted in “the every changing experiences of the community (p. 166).

Furthermore Bradford (2007) discussed aesthetics and sociocultural values, arguing that a text operates as a site where meaning is negotiated by readers who bring their own cultures and languages to the act of reading. Meaning is achieved as a product of the dialogic situation of reading (p. 44). Bradford further notes that in postcolonial settings a reader and writer may come from very different linguistic cultures, even if they both speak varieties of English, and such differences will be embodied in how texts are written and read (p. 15).

The professional references that I used to examine the Native American children's literature in terms of what constitutes "culture" of the lives of Native Americans were placed into the textual feature of Native American children's literature. The various aspects of culture for Indigenous people from the professional literature were placed into the sub-categories of Cultural Themes, Language Patterns, and Cultural Practice and Image.

### **Umbrella Category 1 –Cultural Themes**

I divided the first umbrella category suggested by the data, Cultural Themes, into seven themes repeatedly brought up in the texts. These themes included Storytelling, Sense of Place, Deep Knowledge, Relationships, Time, Ceremony, and Animals. Some of the sub- categories also had emergent topics suggested by the data (see table 4 and 5). Apache children recognize multiple purposes for storytelling as do the adults in their world. To help orient the reader to these purposes, I have included the following discussion of the varied purposes of storytelling (oral narration) within my culture.

### *The Multiple Purposes of Storytelling*

In the manner to which I am referring to *storytelling*, I draw upon my own cultural conceptualization of this communicative practice. Within my Apache culture, *storytelling* is explained as a gift. Initially, the Creator gave Native Americans the power to talk with a certain language. These word languages contained powerful messages that were to be communicated. We acknowledged the power of words. Hence, from the word languages Native Americans were created. Talk is creation. From creation came narratives of our origin that were received by the medicine men through their dreams.

Native American *storytelling* involves members of a community or small groups of relatives gathering together to hear narratives which are told by the elders of the tribe. The storyteller conveys information about the specific Native American culture of the community. Narratives are transmitted through Native language, which supports the maintenance of Native identity. They carry information about the origin and history of the people. Embedded in these stories is the important knowledge that we, as Native Americans from specific tribal cultures, must acquire in order to survive and to conduct one's self appropriately. Both the narratives and the language that conveys them are place-based in the sense that they are tied to the land - especially the knowledge of where we came from, where we live, how we survive, and our way of life.

These narratives are transmitted orally from generation to generation by storytellers through narratives, songs, dances, and prayers by the elders of the Native American People. Gregory Cajete (1994), a Pueblo educator teaches that,

...story has been the primary Way for connecting each generation of Indian people to each other. Story is the way that we remember to remember who we are, where we have come from and where we can go as we enter the twenty-first century (p. 138).

It is essential for this traditional practice to be carried forward by teaching our Native children about their cultures at an early age. My research curriculum did just that.

Storytelling content was introduced through an example of Native American children's literature from the book, *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1989). The first story relates to the creation story explaining the origin of the Apache. The second story, *The Old Owl Witch*, is a story describing behavior which is considered inappropriate within the culture. The third story, *Spider Helps the Robin*, is a story describing cooperation among animals and how we, as human beings, should act.

#### *Storytelling to Affirm Apache Timetables and Perspectives of Time*

Adley and Lacapa (1989) offer perspectives on how a specific Native tribe conducts its own storytelling, note the purpose of telling a story, and describe the appropriate timetable for storytelling:

The White Mountain Apache people have carried down an oral tradition. As the years passed, the next generation has taken on the responsibility of teaching the next generation of the White Mountain Apache Culture and Language ... All these stories have a purpose and meaning. By reading discipline and advice

stories, White Mountain Apache children will have a greater respect for life and people to behave accordingly. The White Mountain Apache stories are told according to the changing season, with this in mind, a timetable of storytelling must be respected. Timing relates to the natural sequences of events. (p. 8)

Since the beginning of time, the Apache people observed the natural order of the Universe - the days and nights, the rising of the sun, the moon, the stars, and their locations, which indicated the seasons of the year. Therefore, in White Mountain Apache philosophy, there is a proper time for everything. Also, the adherence to time goes back to the Warfare period and is related to obedience and order. Failing to follow instructions or conducting activities that did not follow a sequential, timely order could have very dangerous consequences during the Warfare period. If one didn't listen to and strictly obey orders, then bad things could happen to him/her. Therefore, when telling legends and narratives, there is a timetable which is followed and used to regulate the time of storytelling and what is to be told. The White Mountain Apache tell our legends according to the first, second, and third snowfalls. This is a good time to tell a story, when people are together in their dwellings.

In the *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*, Adley and Lacapa (1981) state:

These legends and stories are told by older men and women. The other types of stories told by the Apache elders are; proverbs (sayings and advice stories); stories about the little animals; the Fox, Coyote, Turkey, Snake, and the legend of the Elk; the Crown Dancers (deities); religious and philosophical Apache stories;

and Clan (tribal sub-groups) stories. Furthermore, as clans gather, their stories may vary or be similar. However, each clan is responsible for their legends to be told and carried on to children of the clan. (p. 8)

### *Storytelling to Introduce and Reinforce Relationships*

It is very important for the children to know who they are and where they come from; the answers reflect Apache understandings of our relationships with one another, other people, the earth, and the universe. Storytelling provides information about where a people come from, why they were created, how familial and extended relationships are essential, and how we must attribute our own existence to our environment.

The narratives, by developing in our children a sense of the relationships to which they should aspire, instill in our children a sense of purpose and provide guidance along life's way. Cordova (2007), an Apache philosopher, states,

The stories that are told about the appearance, creation or emergence of humans are specific to a place. There is an assumption among Native Americans that each group will have a different story since they occupy different "niches". But over all, they fit in a particular place for a particular reason. (p.146)

The story of the Apache People provides an illustration of this assertion by Cordova. In the Apache creation story, Changing Woman has two sons, one by the sun and one by the water. In Apache, we say you lean toward the father (the sun) but you are with the mother (the earth). You lean toward the sun, which is in the sky at a distance.

You touch the earth and are close to it. This proximity to the maternal in Apache thought is why a child is a member of the mother's clan (Seymour, 1993).

This Apache perspective of being grounded with the mother and leaning toward the father reflects the belief that the child will be provided guidance by the father in any situation but the child will always return back to the mother. When an Apache person is "with the mother," the expression reflects our practice that our clan is inherited from our mother, and this clan relationship is an elemental relationship for all Apache people. The Apache clans originate from "Mother Earth" which the Creator made for us; she is our real mother who provides water, food and shelter in our universe.

*Storytelling to Affirm and Reinforce Natural, Reciprocal, Ecological Relationships*

Beyond our familial and clan relationships, Apache storytelling reinforces the significant uniqueness of the emergence of specific groups of Indigenous people in a particular place and for particular reasons. Elder Apaches refer to our existence as the people being under the Big Dipper. In our songs, prayers, dreams, the people have been born under the Big Dipper so that our deities know where to contact us.

The place of emergence and the reasons for their emergence are significant to Indigenous people, who, in each and every nation, respect and re-tell the narratives of how they were created in a particular place for a particular reason. In discussing the purpose of storytelling, Cajete (2003) affirms that,

Story is about the unique ways of Native American teaching and learning, reflected through their special connections to Nature, family, community, and

spiritual ecology. It is honoring connections and the place traditional teaching and learning have in American Indian life. (p. 23)

In the texts I analyzed, the traditional stories demonstrate the significant implication of these aspects of man's relationships to nature and harmony with nature. In the story of *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992), a character reflects on the interdependence of humans, other creatures of the earth, and the earth:

As they walked, the young man told the woman, 'We must even honor the water, for it flows down from the mountains to nourish the plants. It nourishes our brothers, the animals. It also nourishes us, the people. We must respect all things great and small (p. 12).

In the same story, the teaching of respect for all things great and small reoccurs. The story tells about two antelope that, after being transformed from humans, are chased by the coyote and run into a prickly pear patch for protection. Unlike the hooves of the antelope, which cannot be penetrated by cactus thorns, the paws of the coyote are soft and unprotected. If the coyote pursues--harm will come to the coyote, so it gives up the chase. The young man antelope notes, "... *we must be thankful for the sharp prickly pear because it gives us protection from those who wish to have us. It is good to honor all things great and small*" (p. 27).

#### *Storytelling as a Means of Intergenerational Transfer of Knowledge*

Bishop (1992) affirms that literature reflects human life and allows children to see them reflected in the humanness of the characters (p.43). Krebbs and Holmes (2009)

further note that orality (orality + literacy) is a component of an orally literate society. Thus, in addition to reading literature in a textual format, children from an orally literate society are also expected to learn from the story, remember the story, apply lessons from the story when appropriate, and re-tell the story to transmit the lessons contained within it. Such teaching through knowing and sharing is revealed through the story, "*Kinaaldá*," in which Roessel (1993) notes, "*Ceremonies like the Kinaaldá help young people understand what it means to be both an American Indian and a Navajo*" (p. 29).

Through ceremony, tradition, language, and culture, young Native Americans learn about who they are, and specifically through this story, *Kinaaldá* (1993), they learn about being Navajo. *Kinaaldá* is a special ceremony for a Navajo girl who is going through the change of a girl to a woman and the Navajo people mark this transformation through this ceremony.

*Kinaaldá* is the story of Celinda, a girl who is going through the change of womanhood. Through family sacrifice to arrange for and make the ceremony possible, Celinda begins to recognize how important her family is and how hard it has worked to make her ceremony complete. As she prepares for and is participating in the *Kinaaldá*, Celinda learns more about her culture, and for the first time, feels the responsibility of her family. This ceremony is very important in the Navajo way of life, and it is important for a family to honor its daughters through this event.

Bishop (1984), a researcher of children's literature, believes that an ethnic perspective is a world view shaped by an "ideological difference with the American majority" (p. 148). This perspective is reflected in culturally specific ways of living,

believing, and behaving, as in stories such as *Kinaaldá*. Miller Lachman (1992) another children's literature researcher, believes that an important aspect of storytelling involves the ability of Native people to relate to elements associated with the story (how a people survive, what they accept (trust) as true, the demeanor of people) and, perhaps more importantly, to assume the perspectives of the cultural group, "like actors who take on roles so thoroughly that they come to be identified with them (and occasionally act them out in life)" (p. 17).

These statements by Bishop (1984) and Lachman (1992) are so true of the character of Celinda in *Kinaaldá* (Roessel, 1993). As she comes of age and takes on the role of a woman, the listener/reader who can relate to her from a cultural or even personal perspective, may assume her perspectives in regards to valuing the family and the tasks that it has undertaken in planning and staging her ceremony. In assuming the perspectives of the story's main character, the listener/reader, in applying concepts of orality, will then be able to extract lessons vicariously from the story, internalize the story, apply learning derived from the story in applicable contexts, and re-tell the story in order to share the lessons incorporated within it.

### **Cultural Themes: Storytelling**

In my inquiry into the response of White Mountain Apache children to a curriculum program of Native American Children's literature, the reflections of the children indicate that storytelling is an integral part of their home lives. Their discussions and reactions to the content of the narratives offer insight to how the people of the White

Mountain Apache tribe tell and utilize their own narratives. For this reason, I have chosen to review the umbrella category, “Cultural Themes,” for this chapter.

The first recurring theme, *Storytelling*, was the most common theme revealed by the data. Interestingly, *Storytelling* also emerged as a common theme in a similar study of Native American Children's Literature of the Southwest Region of the United States (Hoffman, 2007). Themes woven into the narratives included in the study were those that repeatedly rose through the children's responses to the literature.

The sub-theme of *Storytelling* had two major topics that emerged from the data, related to two distinct purposes for *Storytelling*, the first and most obvious included teaching and ethical values held within the culture. The second included self-image and knowledge of one's own people.

#### *Storytelling: Ethics and Teaching*

One of the first sub-themes to be exposed through the data was Ethics/Teaching, the title of which was suggested through specific phrases utilized by the characters to refer to storytelling as a way to convey particular values or ethics. Table 8 provides examples of phrases utilized by the students and categorized by the type of phrase that alludes to ethics.

Phrases Referring to Ethics						
Task-based phrases	“honor all things great and small”	“maybe someday you will be a leader”				
Teaching –learning process	“to share”	“to learn”	“to know”			
Other phrases utilized by participants	“for Navajo youth to share the culture”	“to learn”	“girls learn”	“I will teach you”	“to help young understand”	“this is why you don’t...”

**Table 8 Examples of ethical phrases**

In *Bidii*, Thomas (2000) demonstrates how ethics are identified through the learning experiences of children, through the trial and error of everyday life. The main character, a Navajo boy, is mischievous and learns a lesson from his misbehavior. At the conclusion of the story, the boy admits, “*Yes, this is why you don’t get into everything and you don’t show off,*” revealing that he is learning that showing off is not appropriate. Just as the main character learns a lesson of conducting one’s self in this story, children see themselves through this character and they are able to vicariously learn the lesson. So, through the storytelling process, every child is able to learn a lesson through a life experience, created by the storyteller.

Teaching is very important in today’s Native American society. Teaching of our traditions, cultures, and practices are passed on through oral narratives, riddles, jokes, songs, and in ceremonies like that portrayed in books like, *Kinaaldá*. Other ceremonies are being taught by our elders and practiced by our young Native children. This is one way children participating in this project observe teaching and why it is one of the easiest of themes for these children to draw from the Native American children’s literature presented through this study.

In discussing traditional educational practices, native educators Deloria and Wildcat (2001) note:

Education in the traditional setting occurs by example, and not as a process of indoctrination. That is to say, elders are the best living examples of what the end product of education and life experiences should be.”...Furthermore, “the final ingredient of traditional tribal education is that accomplishments are regarded as

the accomplishments of the family and are not attributed to the world around us (pp. 45-46).

Deloria and Wildcat (2001) further note, just as in the text of *Kinaalda*, ' that the ceremony develops a sense of community, but that sense of community grows from hard work and clear thinking that is shared. This development of community illuminates and distinguishes what is valuable in the old ways from the behavior we are expected to practice as members of mainstream American society These authors echo the sentiments of many Native people when they assert that it is very important for younger Indians to take the lead in restoring the sense of family, clan, and community responsibility that undergird the traditional practices within a culture. (pg. 46)

*Storytelling: Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People*

*Less than Half, More than Whole, Bidii, Roots and Branches*

A second sub-theme of storytelling that surfaced during data analysis is associated with the individual's self-learning concerning who s/he is in this world. *Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People* is conveyed through oral storytelling describing the past, through narratives that have moral values that Native American people incorporate into their ways of living, learning, and acknowledging ourselves as individuals. The title of this sub-category was suggested through textual analysis that revealed repetition of specific phrases utilized by the characters when they referred to themselves. The phrases frequently referenced the characters themselves, their own attributes and characteristics, and their associations.

Self-Image was ascertained by the way the people were described within the story. In *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*, Tony searches for his own identity when friends, one of whom is Anglo and the other who is an American Indian tell him, “*You’re not like me,*” and “*I think you’re only half, or less than half (anglo)*”(Lacapas,1994, p.3). The story reveals how Tony recognized physical attributes associated with his own identity:

*As the lake grew still, the boys saw the color of their hair, eyes, and skin. Scott’s hair was yellow and his eyes were the color of the sky. Will’s skin was brown, and his hair black as night. Tony saw that he wasn’t as dark as Will or as light as Scott (p. 3).*

As the story progresses, Tony begins to understand the physical attributes exhibited by the members of his immediate and extended family, when his grandfather points out that they were like the kernels on a single ear of corn, each unique, special, and important, and all a part of the whole,

*Tony looked into his grandfather’s eyes in the mirror framed by all the different sizes, shapes, and colors of his family. Finally, he understood: He was not less than half, he, like the corn- was more than whole (p. 32).*

This story relates to self-images, based on the main character striving to find his identity through four important people in his life, and the grandfather’s use of story to help him find his identity and clarify his self-image.

In acknowledging that our own identities are constructed through the knowledge and understandings shared trans-generationally by those with whom we are related,

Deloria & Wildcat (2001) emphasize the importance of relationships in clarifying our identities:

...the primary lesson learned is and was that knowledge and understanding come from our relatives, the other “persons” or “beings” we have relationships with and depend on in order to live. And it is through these relationships, physical and psychological, indeed spiritual, that human beings begin to understand who, why, and even to some degree what we are...discovery of meaning through very complex relationships that is the hallmark of American Indian education. (p. 33)

Another example of self-image construction is through the story of a young Navajo boy, named Bidii, who is at an age of learning right from wrong (Thomas, 2000). The concept of self is evident from the first page, “...*his mother and father are always talking to him about behaving himself, but he is not a good listener* (p. 1). By the end of the story, *Bidii*, recognizes that as a more mature boy, he is not supposed to get into everything, nor is he supposed to show off. However, he realizes this only after he suffers a consequence resulting from showing-off.

In, *Roots and Branches*, Susag (1998), discloses that through narratives, the maturational process of self-development allows, “...*listeners (to) learn how to imitate positive and creative behaviors, to understand the power or good that they may access, while they also learn to recognize their own deceitful and fraudulent behaviors* (p. 42).

*Bidii* (Thomas, 2000) and *Roots and Branches* (Susag, 1998) provide examples of learning about one’s self through acknowledging the appropriate behavior and the association of the stories through the lessons learned.

### Cultural Themes: Sense of Place

The *Sense of Place* for my people is below the Big Dipper of the White Mountains; it is mentioned in our Apache songs, in our Apache language, and our Apache prayers. Our place is encircled by the four corners of the universe, the four sacred winds, and the four sacred mountains. According to Farrer (1991), within the cosmovision of the Universe and World, a Mescalero Apache understands that on the fourth day, "THE CREATOR MADE MAN --HE MADE APACHE!" (p. )

#### *Sense of Place: Sacred Places*

##### *An Apache Medicine Man, Between Earth and Sky, Gift of Changing Woman*

All Apache people are born to a *Place*, and in the book, *An Apache Medicine Man*, Bernard Second's (199?) narration alludes to the origin of the Apache in the universe as follows,

*Now...*

*I get into a time in my people's history when our people were made.*

*We were made in a Land of Ever Winter, a House of Ice and*

*Winter,*

*Which we call in Apache,*

*Kugha'bikine, House of Winter*

*Or House of Ice-House,*

*on the shores of a big lake called Tudubits alidaa,*

*Water that you Cannot See Over.*

*On the shores of that Lake*

*Mother Earth bore Two Sons;*

*They were Twins.*

*She bore them into this world (p. 18).*

Seymour (1993) more specifically describes what the term *Place* entails for the Apache,

The Apache people, descendants of Changing Woman, live today in a land of mountains; mountainous desert with cacti, mountain foothills with juniper and scrub, mountain upland with pines and snow. A wide ranging tough terrain, Apache land reaches across millions of acres in what is now eastern Arizona, with two smaller areas in northern and southeastern New Mexico. Although beautiful, the land is hard and demanding. For those who can listen to the land, however, it can be rich and fruitful (p. 15).

Bruchac (1996) describes a specifically Apache *Place* as existing “between Earth and Sky” and further elaborates on the Apache conceptualization of *Place*,

*The landscape of North American is filled with places that hold deep, sacred meanings to the native people. Some are locations where special ceremonies took place. Other places are related to stories from long ago. Many of those sacred places are connected to lessons that we all need to hear (p. x).*

*Sense of Place: Sacred Directions*

*Between Earth and Sky*

Buchac (1996) describes the spaces of the Apache in relation to other entities:

Though it seems to be empty and dry, the desert is always filled with life. Those tall cactuses that life their arms up into the sky are ancient people who promised to always look over those chosen to live in this sandy place. The clouds in the sky are also alive. They are ancient beings who care for the people. They will answer with rain when you ask for their help. (p. 13)

In acknowledging the importance of directionality to the Native peoples, Buchac (1996) further notes,

Western culture speaks of our directions. Native American cultures throughout the continent recognize seven. There are the cardinal directions of East, South, West, and North, directions that correspond to our life cycle of birth, youth, adulthood, and the time of being an elder, respectively. Then there are the directions of Earth and Sky. These Six Directions are easy to locate. The Seventh Direction, however, is harder to see. It is the direction within us all, the place that helps us see right and wrong and maintain the balance by choosing to live a good way. (p. x)

The sense of belonging in a very specific place is multi-faceted and incorporates the purpose of belonging, a sense of home, a sense of harmony, respect for the forces of nature, and communicating with the balance and harmony of the terrestrial environment and the Cosmo-Universe defines a *Sense of Place*. For many Native Americans, including my own Apache people, a *Sense of Place* is defined through location, referred to as the sacred places, the four directions, and the role of languages that is tied to the

landscape. These are very important concepts to teach about the Culture for the purpose of survival, which Cajete (2004) affirms,

A value many Indian people share is that their stories, languages, customs, songs, dances, and ways of thinking and learning must be preserved because they sustain the life of the individual, family, and community. It is especially the stories that integrate the life experience and reflect the essence of the people's sense of spiritual being; it is the mythic stories of a people that form the script for cultural process and experience. (p. 41)

### **Cultural Themes: Deep Knowledge**

The theme, *Deep Knowledge*, refers to knowledge of Native American ceremonies, narratives, places, relationships, religions, and beliefs that are culturally unique and sacred to individual cultures. Often, this knowledge is kept secret from non-members. *Deep Knowledge* reflects the most significant values and beliefs in the life of a Native American. Learning the ways of Native American life and how to relate to all of this is to enter the Universe. Cajete (2004) further explains the concept,

Entering the Universe meant requesting and receiving answers about the culture through dreams and vision quests. Native Americans perceived this as a deep and critical challenge (p. 41).

In this way, *Deep Knowledge* is viewed as coming from within. Only a few individuals are said to recognize this key aspect of *Deep Knowledge*.

*Deep Knowledge: Understanding Natural Phenomena*

*Sunpainters*

*Deep Knowledge* is perceived through the occurrence of natural events, which unlock the knowledge held within. In the book *Sunpainters*, Whitethorne (1994), states, Long, long ago, before scientists gathered the information they have today on eclipse, some people were frightened by this daytime darkness. They didn't understand where the sun had gone, and they may have been afraid that it wouldn't come back. Some Native American tribes thought that solar eclipses were omens-messages about events that were going to happen someday. Other saw the darkening of the sun as a struggle between the sun and mysterious forces. Some tribes had shaman ("of the moon") eclipses, and prepared the community for the event. From shamans to whole communities, people made prayers and offerings to strengthen the sun or moon. They believed that by offering prayers, fasting, and honoring the forces of Nature, the sun or moon would indeed be reborn. (p. 27-28)

Similarly, Navajo people perceive solar eclipses, when the moon passes between the earth and the sun causing the light of the sun to cast a black shadow on the earth surface, as a struggle. However, a metamorphic explanation of the solar eclipse is given within the story of *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994), Kii (the main character) is told to go into the Hogan by his Pipa before the eclipse begins. He tells his grandson,

There is something wrong with the sun. The sun has died today. When this happens to the sun, one does not sleep, or lay down; one does not eat any food,

one does not drink any water. You wait until it's over. You sit up and you wait.

(p. 4)

Then, Kii's grandfather further explains the eclipse in terms of painting,

I'll tell you a story about the children of Mother Earth. They are known as

Na'ach'aahii, Painters, the children that paint. (p. 9) These little children work

hard with their brushes, repainting the world and giving it back its rich, bright

colors. (p. 15) The human beings are afraid. Come bring your brushes, and your

little ladders, and anywhere there is a dull color, give it back the colors of the

rainbow. (p. 12)

The *Deep Knowledge* embedded in this Navajo story focuses on respecting the natural events of the universe. The grandfather passes his knowledge to his grandson. In addition, the grandfather continues the teaching about the Solar Eclipse through "how to act" during the eclipse and in return following this great natural event with prayers to the four directions, to the sandpainters, and honoring the forces of Nature.

*Deep Knowledge: Response to Learner-Demonstrated Interest*

In *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003), Nashasha is teased unmercifully by her classmates because she has a roughly chapped face; because of this, she dreads having to go to school. Her kind grandmother teaches her several things about life that cannot be learned at school. Her grandmother teaches Nashasha about *chiih*, such as healing and protection of the skin,

Ma' explained to Nashasha that she had learned about the ancient uses of natural resources through oral stories from her grandmother. It was a tradition that must continue (p. 20).

The Grandmother feels that she is getting old and that it is time to pass on what she knows to her grand-daughter. She tells Natasha that, "*maybe someday you will be a leader of our people*" (p. 17). From her grandmother, Nashasha learns that *chiih* protected skin and it made it soft. She applies *chiih* to her face and the rough, chapped skin disappears. Now, her classmates don't have a reason to tease her, and don't call her *Chi'izhii*, chapped face, anymore. This experience, the teasing, she will never forget. Nashasha later begins a successful cosmetic business and travels the world. In doing so,

Nashasha ... educated other cultures about the importance of using natural resources from Mother Earth for healing and protection. It was what the Holy People had intended (p. 28).

*Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003) is another approach in teaching deep knowledge, from elders to grandchild, on how to respect Mother Earth and how to utilize the natural resources for healing and protection. The grandmother taught her granddaughter how to improvise through the method of utilizing the red clay from a native ceremonial rock. The *Deep Knowledge* the Grandmother is passing on in the story empowered the child to learn about the natural resources Mother Earth had to offer through using the red clay and making it into lotion to smooth her skin. This story integrates the life experiences of the Grandmother with her hope for her Granddaughter's future by providing knowledge --knowledge that only she knew-- and reflects the essence of the

people's sense of spiritual being by causing Natasha to change the way she proceeds with her life. After receiving the gift of *Deep Knowledge* from her grandmother, Natasha follows a life path intended by the holy people. This story connects to the following statement by Deloria (1997) who affirms that,

The difference between non-Western and Western knowledge is that the knowledge is personal for non-Western peoples and impersonal for the Western scientist. Americans believes that anyone can use knowledge; for American Indians, only those people given the knowledge by other entities can use it properly. (p. 38)

Deloria (1997) implies that the personally valuable knowledge is passed from American Indian to American Indian, and in this way relates to my perspective of the story, of the Grandmother passing her knowledge of the red clay to her granddaughter. Thus, the grandmother shares the message of the deep –secret-- knowledge. As a grandmother, I value the lived experience with my grandchildren, just as my relatives before me did. Moreover, I want more for them and in this way I, and other Apache grandmothers, give the knowledge that will benefit them when they need it.

*Deep Knowledge: Response to Ceremony and Ritual*

*Kinaaldá*

Cajete (2005) notes,

A quality of informality characterized the greater part of American Indian and learning, since most traditional knowledge was in the context of the day-to-day

life experience of the people. Formal learning was almost always required in the transfer of sacred knowledge. Therefore, various ceremonial practices formed a complex for the formal teaching and learning of sacred knowledge which was founded upon experience and participation in a tribal culture. (p. 57)

Cajete's distinction relates back to the story in *Kiaaldá* (Roessel, 1993). As Celinda prepares to participate in the Kinaaldá, it is revealed that,

The Kinaaldá ceremony was given to the Navajos by the Holy People. The Holy People are the ones who made the world. Each Holy Person is in charge of certain parts of the universe. Some control the rain and others control the wind. The Holy People created the Navajos and everything on the earth. To allow the Navajo to prosper; the Holy People gave them ceremonies. The Kinaaldá ceremony was gifted to the people so young women could have children. The Navajos believe in healing both the mind and the body. This ceremony is used to create a balance between the body and the mind. When the body and mind are well, the Navajos call this feeling Hozho, or Harmony. It is the one word that can best sum up Navajo beliefs (p. 11-12). The first Kinaaldá was performed for Changing Woman, the most honored of all Navajo Holy People. (p. 17)

The coming-of-age ceremony takes place when a girl has her first menstrual cycle. The Kinaaldá is a ceremony for the young girl coming of age and through this ceremony the Navajo girl experiences and learns specific sacred knowledge through experiencing and participating her Navajo culture. The Navajo believe that, in this way, the Kinaaldá prepares a Navajo girl to understand life. Through this ceremony, the girl

learns about her culture, and it's up to her to see that the Kinaaldá is successful as instructed. This is a great event for the family, relatives, community members, and the girls who are completing this ceremony through prayers. To this day, the Navajo tradition of Kinaaldá is practiced to honor and support a Navajo girl who is changing from a girl to a woman.

*Deep Knowledge* is critical to the Native people, and is inherent in narratives dealing with knowledge that is passed down to the younger generation through narratives that explain the occurrence of natural events, knowledge of natural resources, and knowledge obtained through participating in ceremony. Learning, listening, experiencing and respecting is learned through the actions of the Native youth through their outcome of understanding the Native Ways of conducting one's self or applying the knowledge gained to help other people. Cajete (2005) describes the Native American way of knowing,

He affirms living and learning were fully integrated. The ideas of such a process are founded on the continuous development of self-knowledge, or 'finding life' through understanding and participating in the creative process of living, on direct awareness of the natural environment, on knowledge of one's role and responsibility to community, and on cultivating a sensitivity to the spiritual essences of the world. (p. 56)

*Deep Knowledge* in coming-to-know or 'finding life' involves participation in cultural activities to maintain the understanding, observation, and knowledge through understanding of one's self.

### **Cultural Themes: Relationships**

The theme of *Relationship* is important to Native people, and is one that repeatedly appears through the texts of the literature. *Relationship* is considered a key element in the Apache belief, as well as all Native American tribes, in the area of family - -parents, grandparents, kinship, clan-- and association with each other in friendship and courtship.

#### *Relationships: Family and Kinship*

##### *Less than Half, More than Whole, The Flute Player*

The division of the theme *Relationship* into “family” and “kinship” reveals a faulty predisposition to utilize English language terminology and western worldviews to denote relationships experienced by Native people. In the Apache worldview, family is not perceived as the “nuclear family” of mainstream society. Rather, the understanding of family extends along clan and kinship relationships not commonly recognized by members of mainstream American culture. I will discuss them in an Apache manner, as one and the same.

In the theme of *Relationship*, the sub-themes of *Family* and *Kinship* are strongly revealed through the text of Native American children’s literature. In recognition of the critical role played by family, Cajete, (1994) notes,

... not only [did the] parents take responsibility of their children, but all the adults members of a child’s extended family, clan, and the tribe taught discipline, guidance, knowledge. Another area, Kinship, extended family and clan within

Indigenous communities and offered relationships that strongly affected the awareness of the children. As a result, children learned at an early age how important [that] family, responsibility, respect, and the foundations of relationship and kinship is as it is incorporated in the Native family system. And older children learned early to care for younger ones. Through it all, the experience of the relationship are learned --how to share, nurture and support others. (p. 173)

In the story, *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*, by Lacapa, (1994), a young boy is told by friends that because he is of mixed heritage, he is “only half,” or even, “less than half. Tony begins searching for an answer to his question, “*What does it mean to be less than half?*” In his quest, he asks four family members (his Grandmother, siblings, Uncle, and Grandfather) to answer his question. The question was answered with direct responses by his brother and sisters. However, the adult family members replied with symbolic explanations. The three symbols utilized in explanations include a multicolored butterfly, a horse’s good markings, and a multicolored ear of corn. Finally, when the simile of the corn is offered by his grandfather, Tony begins to understand that he is not at all half or less than half. He is simply part of a whole, a whole that includes diverse and unique individuals like him.

This corn is like you,” Tony’s grandfather said. “It is one of great beauty because of its many colors. And just as the corn with its many colors it is a gift to the people, so you are a gift from the Creator (p. 30). Then, Tony looked into his grandfather’s eyes in the mirror framed by all the different sizes, shapes, and

colors of his family. Finally, he understood: He was not less than half; he – like the corn- was more than whole. (p. 32)

This is a contemporary Native American story of a child, Tony, who is Apache, Tewa, Hopi, Irish, English and Mohawk in descent. Tony felt different from others, but found his sense of peace and belonging as it was revealed to him by his grandfather.

### *Relationships: Association*

#### *The Flute Player, Shiprock Fair*

In the Apache Folktale, *The Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990), the two main characters become interested in one another. The interest is revealed when the young girl, listening to the Flute Player, symbolize her interest in him by placing a leaf in the river. The Flute Player, seeing the leaf in the river, knows that the girl liked his song, “As soon as the boy-finished playing his flute he dashed to the water and looked for the girl’s leaf. He saw it and as it floated by, he picked it up” (p. 15-16). This story of this relationship describes not only how the relationship begins, but also how it continues on --even when life ends.

Native American children’s literature explores relationships as they extend beyond romance and courtship, immediate family, and clan into the community. In *Songs of the Shiprock Fair* Tapahonso (2004) describes the close community ties within a Native community,

Nezbah and her family live in Shiprock where everyone prepares for the fair each year. At various schools, parents, relatives, grandparents, and teachers work into

the evenings building and decorating floats for the parade. Navajo songs from radios drift thorough the air as they talk and laugh. The smell of fry bread, stew, and children begging for candy. The whole town brims with excitement. It's almost time for the Shiprock fair. (p. 3)

The Shiprock Fair is experienced throughout the community, with the preparation for different events involving individuals within the Navajo community as well as with people from surrounding communities. The sense of relationship involves the association among people within and throughout the community of Shiprock. This association involves coming together as groups of people, young and old, talking and laughing with one another; this is what brings the community together. The association builds friendship, relationship, connection, organization, union, and society within this community.

In discussing community, Cajete (2000) states,

Community interdependence characterized activity related to all major events and task. As a matter of common survival and tradition, people of a community came together for the common benefit of all. It is this daily practice that forged communal spirit and provided a foundation for learning and understanding of the nature of relationship. (p. 97)

Deloria, Jr. and Wildcat (2001) describe the importance of relationship and inter-relationship between and among human beings and the centering of such relationships in the education of our children,

The primary lesson learned is and was that knowledge and understanding come from our relatives, the other “persons” or “beings” we have relationships with and depend on in order to live. And it is through these relationships, physical and psychological, indeed spiritual, that human beings begin to understand who, why and even to some degree what we are. Discovery of meaning through very complex relationships is the hallmark of American Indian Education. (p. 33)

As inferred in the above quote, the theme *Relationship* was drawn from both the text of the Native American children’s literature and scholarly publications concerning Native American education. The theme is engrained in the Native American conscious and subconscious in the form of nuclear families, clan family, kinship, the association of friendship (including courtship), and community. Most of the books in my study involve relationships of some type as the books discussed under this theme reveal. In addition, Native theoreticians and philosophers Cajete (2000), Deloria Jr. and Wildcat (2001) agree with the significance of *Relationship* within Native American communities that emerge from and reinforce the bond of our support systems and very existence.

### **Cultural Themes: Time**

*Ndee Benagode’i’: Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, The People Called Apache, Kinaaldá, The Gift of Changing Woman, Less than Half, More than Whole.*

The theme of *Time* holds cultural significance because time is equated, in a fashion, to the process of coming to know. Apache cultural perspectives recognize a time

of now, a time for silence, a time to draw from deep within ourselves as we contemplate thoughts of our very existence, pondering our origin as well as who we are, both as a cultural group as well as interconnected, yet unique, individuals. These ontological inquiries and the act of pondering take place over time and are part of a maturational and Native academic process. Cajete (2005) notes that,

Finding Face-- or the discovery of one's true character, metaphorically denotes the search for self-identity, which is the essential first step in human development. Learning about who we are, where we come from, our history, and the relationships and responsibilities which support us is a foundation of self-knowledge. (p. 58)

Time involves asking the universe of time, and receiving answers. In this manner, time is related to the Universe-- in both dreams and visions. Such thoughts are expressed by Native medicine men and women in describing their relationships to the Universe.

Deloria (1999) expresses his conceptualization of *Time* when he states,

Time determines the meaning of relationships; time is a complicated concept in a living universe. The basic pattern seems to be that of growth processes, which is to say that time has qualitative packets or quanta that are regulated by the amount of time it takes an organism or entity to complete a step in maturation. In addition, every entity has a part to play in the creation of the future, and human beings had a special vocation in which they initiated, at the proper time, new relationships and events. (p. 57)

An important perspective within Apache culture is articulated by Adley and Lacapa (1981) in *Ndee Benagode'i': Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*, White Mountain Apache stories are told according to the changing season. When telling legends and stories, there is a timetable which is followed and used to regulate the time of storytelling and what is to be told. Proverbs and advice stories are to be told all year around. But our legends are told according to the snow fall. (p. 6-8)

Indeed, honoring and maintaining the time of telling stories is significant to the White Mountain Apache. We demonstrate a respect for our narratives through honoring the traditional timeframe for telling specific types of stories. In his book, *The People Called Apache*, Mails (1974) provides on possible explanation for the origin of the sacred timeframes for storytelling,

The winter season brought added closeness to the family, since it was an excellent time for discussion and stories. The children listened carefully as their father told them about the brave deeds of the people and about his own hunting, raiding, and warfare. The Apache men enjoyed storytelling, and they were eager to hear entertaining stories as they were to tell them. In the winter the child learned about Apache tradition and the history of the people, of which he was now becoming a part. (p.78-79)

Both Roessel (1993) and Seymour (1993) mention the onset of puberty for a girl as a *Time* when “she stands on the verge of her own womanhood” (Seymour, 1993, p. 8). In both Navajo and Apache cultures, preparation and assistance for the girl’s time-based

transition is critical to honor the process. The Spiritual aspect of puberty is described by Wyatt (1998a),

It is particularly noteworthy that the rites of passage at and around the time of puberty is not only a transition from childhood to adulthood, but also a transition to the spirit realm, including, newly acquired access to privileged knowledge and secrets. (p. 220)

Likewise, Markstrom (2008) affirms,

The spiritual implications of coming-of-age ceremonies also extend to the future well-being of initiates according to perceptions that a long and harmonious life can now be secured. Essentially, the spiritual significance of wide variety of female coming-of-age cannot be understated. (p. 4)

My discussions with the children who participated in this study revealed the essence of *Time* is reinforced through the coming-of-age of a young Native American female and that this process is still being observed.

In *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* Lacapas (1994) captures a *Time*, experienced by many children at some point in their developmental processes, when a child searches for his/her identity. But through the assistance of his family members he was able to find a sense of peace and belonging.

### **Cultural Themes: Ceremony**

*Ceremony* is a way of life integrated in Native American cultural activities. *Ceremony* involves unique, ritualized social gatherings for the purpose of prayers or

dances through which the Creator or Deities of the Universe are evoked to support requests for enlightenment, foretelling, blessings, healing, or to overcome any difficulties.

*Ceremony: Dance*

*Gift of Changing Woman*

Dance--recreated through symbolism of the culture and songs (retelling narratives which signify the purpose of the dance) are prayers for: thankfulness, endurance, protection, and guidance. Dances are considered sacred religious ceremonies and are facilitated by a learned member of the culture such as a medicine man or leader of the Ceeremonies.

Ceremonial dance is often a component of the rituals honoring transformation of the individual, from infancy to adulthood. These rituals include, but are not limited to, initiation, vision quests, blessings, healing, and social ceremonies. Dancing activates the quantum energy of the universe seeking a practical outcome. Hultkrantz (1980) asserts that:

Among North American Indians, the transition from childhood to adolescence or adulthood is viewed as a critical passage that reserve special recognition, especially for girls at menarche. (p. 70)

Seymour (1993), in describing the Apache puberty ceremony, reinforces the importance of ceremony as marking a transition, a developmental milestone in the life of a young Apache woman that differs significantly from perspectives of mainstream culture,

In the ceremony they call the power of the Changing Woman to the girl. The story of Changing Woman is retold and reenacted, and through the ceremony the girl receives blessings, guidance, advice, and an example of how she should live her life. As the Apache see it, during the ceremony she goes from girlhood to womanhood. There is no “adolescence” in Apache life. (p.8)

The Apache puberty ceremony is very important to the Apache people, as well as to my immediate family. My granddaughter is nearing this stage in her life and her mother (my daughter) and I would like to see her participate in this *Ceremony*. We want this for her because we want her to receive this important blessing and to have a good, long life. From “Changing Woman” came INDEH – APACHE... life came from her and forever we are grateful. She will perpetuate life until the end.

An early researcher, Hodge (1912) notes that in the numerous puberty ceremonies for girls found across North America, Native Americans remarked on the significance of the special status of girls at this time of the life span,

It was believed that whatever she did or experience then was bound to affect her entire subsequent life, and that she had exceptional power over all persons or things that came near her at that period. For this reason she was usually set apart from other people in a small lodge in the woods, in a separate room, or behind some screen. (p. 314)

*Ceremony: Song*

*Gift of Changing Woman, Wisdom Sits in Places*

Another element of *Ceremony* is Song because Song is of the Universe, and it has existed from the beginning. Song is life. Song is supernatural. Song sings the singers and it becomes energy. Songs carry energy and messages. Songs retell stories and are significant components of *Ceremony*. Seymour (1993) describes the use of song in *Ceremony* when he discusses the gift of Changing Woman,

The songs and everything in the ceremony tell the creation story of the earth. The girl goes through the creation story. She has to listen to the songs. She has to really concentrate on them while she is dancing. She is not just dancing there; she has to listen. (p. 11)

Seymour's (1993) main character is a girl who has gone through the puberty ceremony and is retelling her experience of the dance and how she was expected to conduct herself while she is dancing,

The girl and her godmother stand with dignity as they dance in place with a fast shuffling step to the sound of chanting that comes from behind them. Close to her ear the girl can hear the words of the medicine man, who serves as a religious leader and spiritual guide to his people. Today he conducts the girl's ceremony; for much of this day he will sing the chants of Changing Woman, telling the story of creation, accompanied by a chorus of men and four drums that beat a rhythm to the chants. (p. 10-11)

Songs in chant tell the stories of the people and guide the Apache people.

According to Basso (1970), the Cibecue Apache believe,

Our songs come from those things (the powers) and go back to them when we sing them. They give the songs to the people and we give them back. That is why these people sing at dances. (p. 42-43)

*Ceremony: Prayer*

*Gift of Changing Woman, Wisdom Sits in Places*

Another element, Prayer, is a significant component involved in Ceremonies because it evokes a blessing, one that will allow the ceremony to go right and be successful for the girl and her people, and will deter obstacles. Seymour (1993) incorporates this important aspect of *Ceremony* in *The Gift of Changing Woman*,

At midday, while the girl continues dancing, her family and friends line up in front of her and, one by one, each person says a prayer and sprinkles a handful of yellow pollen over her head, chest, and shoulders. This is their way of blessing her. She receives these blessings with quiet dignity as scores of people offer their prayers in turn, and soon her hair and face are yellow with pollen. (p. )

Yellow pollen is sacred and powerful, and it is used in prayer in all traditional ceremonies of the Apache people as well as those of other southwestern Native American Nations. Basso(1970) acknowledges the power that the prayers of family and friends, offered with the powerful corn pollen, result in blessings of extraordinary power for the young woman going through the Changing Ceremony,

During the Four “HOLY” DAYS, the four days following the ceremony, Changing Woman’s power continues to reside in the pubescent girl and acting

through her, may be used to cure sickness or bring rain. A medicine man commented, “At that time she is just like a medicine man, only with that power she is holy. She can make you well if you are sick even with no songs. Anyone who doesn’t feel good can come to her, it doesn’t matter who it is.” (p. 68)

The puberty ceremony symbolizes four critical life-objectives that all Apache girls seek: physical strength, an even temperament, prosperity, and sound health to an old age.

The significant aspects of *Ceremony* have emerged as dance, song and prayer. All contribute to and enhance *Ceremony*. However, *Ceremony* exists not for the sake of ceremony itself. Basso (1970) notes,

The myth of Changing Woman, and her personification by the pubescent girl, link this ceremony, *nai’es*, to the past and thus provide the *raison d’être* for its relevance to the present. Like other Apache rituals, the ultimate justification for *nai’es* stems not so much from the ceremony itself as from the long cultural tradition of which it is a product. (p. 72)

*Ceremony* is characterized through the use of dance, song, and prayer. It is revealed through Native American children’s literature as consisting of these components and representing the culture of which it is a product. When it does so, it provides culturally authentic narratives.

### **Cultural Themes: Animals**

*Between Earth and Sky*

The theme titled *Animals* was drawn from the texts of Native American children's literature books in this study due to their role in creation narratives or based on their characterization as the sole creators of the universe. This is a recurring theme encountered across many Native American cultures, especially those in which *Animals* are involved in stories about ethical or moral behaviors. Many Native American cultures honor and revere *Animals*. The people know that *Animals* came into existence before man, and *Animals* have long been prevalent on Mother Earth. The dreams of "Medicine men" revealed that in the beginning, *Animals* had the ability to talk. When men came, *Animals* communicated with humans and they still do. Therefore, they are respected. *Animals* are considered Spirit helpers. Each animal has certain qualities that are special and powerful that will be shared with human beings if the animal is respected. Cajete (2000) explains,

The Native people have understood how the world was created and how they have come into being as people. This is understood through the stories within the context of the creation stories. (p. 33)

Cajete (2000) further notes that approximately 75% of Native American narratives contain significant animal characters, evidencing the close relationships Native People feel they share with *Animals* (p. 166). Cajete further asserts,

Relationships with animals have always been an important part of Native American spirituality, that is, the idea that we are all related, that humans have a responsibility to animals. With Native people, animals have at all times been considered to have rights, and were equal to human beings in terms of rights to

their lives and to their perpetuation as species. For example, Humans rightfully and respectfully ask permission of animals for doing things with them and to them. The connection between humans and animals is demonstrated in numerous ways in Native tradition and in Native stories. (p. 168)

According to Cajete (2000), *Animals* are considered important in regards to the intimate relationship they share with Native Americans. Many Native people view their relationship to all living creatures as an important aspect of spirituality and view their reciprocal relationships with *Animals* as sacred. Traditional Native American narratives often include animal characters as main characters, with autonomy and discretion. These narratives may portray *Animals* facing moral and ethical issues and dilemmas. The narratives are teaching tools for the listener and are related in a way that allows the listener to apply their embedded lessons to unique, individual situations.

Bruchac (1996) tells the story of how the Earth was first shaped in *Between Earth and Sky*, which explains how the Cherokee people's creation narrative involves the Water Beetle and the Great Buzzard. This creation narrative of the Cherokee provides an example of how Native American narratives relate the significant role played by *Animals* and how they are remembered through the stories. This is one example of how *Animals* were viewed as sacred beings because they helped develop the earth.

Water Beetle came out to see if it (the earth) was ready, but the ground was still wet as a swamp, too soft for anyone to stand. Therefore other animals came to help dry the land.

The Great Buzzard said, “I will help dry the land.” He began to fly close above the new Earth. Where his wings came down, valley was formed, and where his wings lifted, hill rose up through the mist; this place is called the Great Smokies. And so it is that the Cherokee people, aware of how this land was given, know that the Earth is a sacred gift we all must respect and share. (p. 11)

Researchers Lowenstein and Vitebsky (1997) have ascertained that in Native American Indian narratives, *Animals* are portrayed as holy because of their powerful souls. The souls of some species may be more important, significant, or more dangerous to humans than others, but all *Animals* hold a status of honor within the spiritual universe. (p. 69)

Other narratives involving *Animals* include stories about ethical or moral behavior. One example is from the Apache people, and is a story about how spiders helped a baby robin. A robin falls out of the nest accidentally and a group of spiders is recruited by the spider that discovered her on the ground to come to help the robin back into the nest. The lesson derived from the story is great feats may be accomplished by “working together” to achieve a goal. The lone spider by herself could not help the robin, but when a group of the spiders worked together, the robin could be placed back into her nest. Another important value related through the story involves communication. The way in which the Robin and the spiders communicated with each other to obtain the goal is an important aspect of the story. Cajete (1994) asserts that,

These expressions of relationship with the animal’s world provide a rich ‘multiverse’ of experience and learning processes that Indigenous people

understood in both practical and philosophical ways; in addition, they effectively applied these understandings in a direct process of helping each individual become fully human and move toward being a complete man or woman. (p. 100)

The interrelated nature of the relationship of man and animal described by Cajete (1994) implies that Native Americans consider *Animals* as sacred, just like the earth, and as a result treat them with respect. Through valuing all living creatures, man's inhumanity to man, as well as to *Animals*, is deterred. Moreover, to think and be like a HUMAN BEING involves being humane... not just human! What kind of Human Being goes on to destroy life and the eco-system that sustains him? Chief Seattle's (1854) response to the colonizers' request to purchase land succinctly provides a world view in which reverence for all living organisms is paramount,

I have heard stories

Of a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairie,

Left by the white men who shot them from a passing train.

I do not understand.

For us, the beasts are our brothers,

And we kill only to stay alive.

If we sell him this land,

The white man must do the same,

For the animals are our brothers.

What is man without the beast?

Even the earthworm keeps the earth soft

For man to walk upon.

If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness.

For whatever happens to the beasts, happens to man

For we are all of one breath.

We will consider your offer to buy our land.

Do not send men asking us to decide more quickly.

We will decide in our time. (44-45)

The theme of *Animals* is derived from the Native American children's literature in my study that have stories about *Animals*. Most of these stories provide teaching to anyone who listens. These stories involve the origin history of our Native People, our creation stories, and stories of *Animals* assisting our Native People to survive, as the animal portray a spiritual being in the sight of the Native People. Furthermore, the professional references provide additional support on how the *Animals* in the stories are so significant in Native Americans utilize stories through teachings of how to live the Native way, how to respect all things, and how to respect the animals. Overall, the theme of *Animals* utilized in our Native stories support, guide and inform us more about who we are as Native Americans.

### **Umbrella Category 2 - Linguistic Patterns**

The second Umbrella Category emerging from the data dealt with Linguistic Patterns. I divided this category into topics repeatedly noted in the Children's literature.

These topics included Language, Bilingualism, Code-switching, and what I have termed, “Rez-talk.”

### **Linguistic Patterns: Language**

The first topic emerging under the umbrella category, Linguistic Patterns was *Language*. We talk to the Universe. The Universe speaks to us. It taught us *Language*. We know it comes from a very special entity, a very sacred place. Our language came from our hearts. It didn't speak English.

*Language* is the pathway into our Native cultures. It is that unique sound of our voices which identifies us and is particular to our own culture. Our words are beautiful. They convey our knowledge and messages to the future generations. Speak your languages. They are our histories!

The data generated by this study emerges from Native American children's literature originating from two different Native American cultures: Navajo and Apache. My curriculum program utilizes storytelling as a learning tool for Native American students. Cajete (2004) supports storytelling as a vehicle of instruction and my own delivery practices when he notes,

Cultivation of all one's senses through learning how to listen, observe, and experience holistically by creative exploration was highly valued (in traditional Indigenous education). In addition, the ability to use language through storytelling, oratory, and song was highly regarded by all tribes as a primary tool

for teaching and learning. This was because the spoken or sung word expressed the spirit and breath of life of the speaker, and thus was considered sacred. (p. 33)

The Navajo and Apache languages are strikingly similar in speech patterns and sound systems. They almost sound the same. In his description of the Navajo language, Davis (1996) states,

The Navajo language belongs to the Apachean complex of dialects, the southernmost extension of the Athabaskan linguistic family. The Franciscan friars of St. Michael's Mission were the first to develop an orthography and to compile a dictionary of the language, "The Ethnologic Dictionary of the Navajo Language," published in 1910. (p. 382)

Moreover, Davis (1996) indicates that both Apache and Navajo languages extend to the southernmost part of the United State. Apachean languages are spoken by the Kiowa-Apache Lipan, Jicarilla, Mescalero, Chiricahua, and San Carlos cultures. The experts in linguistics have characterized the movement of the Apache language as spreading from the western arctic regions of Canada to the southwestern part of the United States. (p. 44)

Peat (2002) affirms that *Language* is very important to Native Americans as it is the key to our traditional cultures. Our Elders, who are our traditional people, with our community leaders and, of course, our Native educators stress that the Native language is an expression of a society, its history, and the world in which its people live. Native languages connect the people with their land, journeys, migrations, movements, and spiritual beliefs over thousands of years through their traditional narratives. Every trapping of Indigenous science can be found within the languages that comprise songs,

ceremonies, and traditional ways of the Native People. (p. 219) Peat (2002) further asserts that the language of a people is their life,

The language of a people is their life, but in so many cases their life is endangered. In some cases the last speakers of some languages passed away earlier this century and, in a deep sense, this may also mean the end of those societies. A people can no more live without its language than a tree can grow without roots. (p. 220)

It must be noted that the Apache language is still spoken today, but the number of Apaches speaking the language is decreasing at an alarming rate. (Adley-Santa-Maria, p.131)

Through her research, McCarty (1999) has noted that since the 1970s, Native communities have been attempting to restore and revitalize their traditional languages, and some have been doing so by teaching literacy skills using their own Native languages. (p. 2-27)

Language is important to Native people because it is the soul of who we are. Utilizing our Native languages within the school educational curriculum would enhance the quality of education available to our Native students as well as any other students, all of whom would benefit from being culturally aware of and sensitive to people from non-mainstream cultures.

If the language dies, then we will diminish. Our spirit will leave, and we will be lost in the ways of the alien culture. It is my intent to convey this message by teaching language awareness and cultural attributes to my Native American students through

traditional, authentic Indigenous stories such as those of the Native American children's literature reviewed in this study. Through these stories, the students will hear renditions of their own tradition oral origins. They will be introduced to Indigenous culture, history, contemporary stories, and of course, their own languages.

### **Linguistic Patterns: Bilingualism**

The next topic emerging under the umbrella category, Linguistic Patterns was *Bilingualism*, which reflects the delivery methodology I chose to utilize with my students. It was my intent to convey the message above by teaching language awareness and cultural attributes to my Native American students. This program of instruction was facilitated, out of necessity, in English, which most speak as a first (and sadly, as a sole) language. I used bilingual books in my study to reinforce the importance of the Native languages as well as the knowledge and messages they carry within their traditional narratives.

### **Linguistic Patterns: Code-switching**

A third topic emerging from the data under the umbrella category Linguistic Patterns is titled, *Code-Switching*. *Code-switching* entails the integration of Indigenous words in a text consisting primarily of English words. The Native American children's literature books evaluated for this dissertation that incorporate Code-switching include *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*, which contains three traditional stories; "The Cooking Stick;" "The Owl Old Witch;" and "Spider Helps Robin." The

second book that utilized *Code-switching* was *The Flute Player*. Another Apache story titled, *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993) integrates the Apache language into the text. The Apache ceremony, *Na'ii'ees*, (meaning 'the ceremony is happening and the people are getting the girl ready for womanhood') is a word incorporated into the mainly English text. Another Apache word frequently utilized in the text is *Gaan*, a name of a benevolent spirit – made to hold the earth.

A Navajo story, *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994), incorporates code switching utilizing the Navajo word, "*Na'ach'aahii*, the translation for which is "painters," or "children that paint." This is the only example of Navajo language *code-switching* in this particular book.

### **Linguistic Patterns: Rez-talk**

The final topic emerging under the umbrella category, Linguistic Patterns is what I term *Rez-talk*. For the purposes of this discussion, I describe *Rez-talk* as a dialectical lingo spoken on Indigenous lands and only fully understood by people living extensive portions of their lives in these areas.

Reading and the Native American Learner Research Report (2000) also refer to this similar linguistic pattern called Indian English. The term is broadly categorized from English dialects utilized by the Native American that is different from the Standard English. The Indian English is different from Standard English in the area of grammar, phonology, semantics and rules of discourse. Furthermore, they infer that Indian English is the first language learned by two thirds of Native American youth today (Leap, 1993).

Furthermore, different diversity of Indian English provides valuable purpose in the speech communities in which they are utilized, even among individuals who speak their ancestral language, Standard English, or both. Indian English fluency is a way of reinforcing one's cultural identity for many Native Americans, and is of particular importance which Indian English is the only Indian-related language tradition that has been maintained in a community or the only such language tradition that older community member have been willing to pass on to the younger generation. Therefore, Indian English fluency becomes a highly valued social skill, and the nonstandard aspects of Indian English variety take on an even greater cultural significance. (p. 4)

*Rez talk* on the Apache Reservation is the language mixture of English and Apache words uttered together in reference to any subjects. An example of reservation *Rez Talk*; down below, kinda, innet, huh, FATCO, way over there, just there, zah, kaaay, these are just a few to mention. The examples are utterance that communicates a unique coded system only utilized by the people in that particular area, that particular generation, new generation has different coded phrases, but the *Rez Talk* is utilized within a group of people, within a specific location, and the group communicating knows each other well.

### **Umbrella Category 3 – Cultural Practices and Images**

For the purpose of this discussion, I have chosen to utilize a description of culture rather than a specific definition. Drawing from readings by Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, Brown (2009) describes culture as encompassing,

...the history, narratives, customs, traditions, spirituality, beliefs, values, and languages that contribute to a people's personal and collective identity. Culture is rooted in ancient experiences, perspectives, beliefs, worldviews, knowledge, and skills. These aspects of culture have developed, evolved, adapted, and been passed on from one generation to the next, existing in the present time as the current epistemology of a people. (p.16)

I would add to this description that the cultural aspects mentioned, in addition to having developed, evolved, and adapted over time, have been passed on from one generation of Indigenous people to the next through their oral traditions, and that it is these narratives that carry the encoded knowledge systems, worldviews, and identities of a people.

The third Umbrella Category emerging from the data involved aspects of what I have come to view through my studies in Language, Reading, and Culture as "cultural" in nature. These aspects constituted the third largest category of General Native American Textual Features revealed through this study.

The practices followed by and images meaningful to people of an Indigenous culture are manifestations of the epistemologies, entomologies, and worldviews underlying the culture. Indigenous people transmit demeanor patterns through art, beliefs, institution, ceremony, and all other processes and thoughts of the Native People.

The first topic emerging under the umbrella category, *Culture*, includes the *Significant Cultural Roles* within their communities and families described by children participating in the study.

### Significant Cultural Roles: Elders

*Sunpainters, Less than Half, More than Whole, Gift of Changing Woman, Red is Beautiful*

The first sub-topic emerging within the topic of Significant Cultural Roles is *Elders*. *Elders* play a critical role within Indigenous communities. One of the unique ways American Indian people obtain knowledge is directly through the teaching of *Elders*. The keepers of the knowledge are our *Elders*, who are within the period of life that allows them to continue the teaching and learning process through their empowered words of knowledge. The knowledge is shared, at the discretion of the *Elders*, only with those who demonstrate a readiness to learn. Learning is perceived as a life-long process that is developmental in nature, since it reflects the readiness of the learner, not necessarily an imposed timeframe such as that experienced within mainstream education. Cajete (2005) affirms the developmental nature of knowledge acquisition and wisdom developed through experience,

To attain such ideas required participation in shared cultural activities and the continuity of knowledge, perception, experience, and wisdom afforded through the understanding and experience of Tribal elders. (p. 57)

The story *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003), provides an excellent example of the wisdom and knowledge of an elder. The main character, Nashasha is the target of teasing, laughter, and cruel remarks by her classmates because of her rough chapped face. It is the elder, in the form of Nashasha's Grandmother, who builds Nashasha's self-esteem through teaching with captivating stories on how to improvise using nature's resources to

alleviate chapped skin. The wise woman realizes it is not only Nashasha's skin that is damaged... it is something far deeper that must be healed.

Cajete (1994) notes, "*To remember is a way to re-know and reclaim a part of your life.*" (p. 170) Through her Grandmother's memory, Nashasha reclaims her dignity as well as begins to "re-know" herself as this wise woman's granddaughter. She wants to be like her grandmother, who is a role model to her. Nashasha's Grandmother possesses experiential knowledge and wisdom, because at one time or another, the old woman, like Nashasha, reclaimed her life through the teaching of knowledge past.

The introduction to *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994), states that the book is a story explaining a solar eclipse. However, the book truly is a demonstration of the wisdom of Elders and how the accumulated knowledge and wisdom they hold serve to direct the lives of the children and grandchildren that will survive them,

A Navajo grandfather tells his grandson that when the sun dies the children of Mother Earth are called from the four directions to repaint the universe in all the colors of the rainbow (p. x).

As mentioned earlier, Elders play an important role in Native American cultural transmission. Davis (1996) notes that,

The role of Indian elders in traditional societies reflected their full integrations into family, clan, and tribal activities. In every aspect of Indian life, elders were acknowledged as a stabilizing influence – a constant source of reaffirmation of religious, cultural, and social values. (p. 186)

Another story, *Less than Half, More than Whole* (Lacapas, 1994), also demonstrates respect for the role of Elders and the affirmation of cultural values shared by an elder when Grandpa reaffirms the values and cultural aspects embedded in everyday occurrences, such as children making fun of one perceived as different.

In *Sunpainter* (Whitethorne, 1994), the acknowledgement and honoring of the solar eclipse through the teachings of the grandfather and the learning of the grandson through observing, listening, and reaffirming the Navajo stories and tradition is significantly metaphoric. Similarly, in *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (Lacapas, 1994), the grandson seeks answers to his questions and the grandfather's wisdom reveals the answers through visual symbolism. As reflected through these examples of Native American children's literature, the Elders hold the answers through their life experiences and a younger, less experienced person, through the respect learned, finds clarification through the teachings of the Elders.

Peat (2002) observes that,

Elders are great teachers. By tradition, becoming an Elder is part of the great circle of life and renewal. An Elder is the oral historian of the group, someone who is called upon for his, or her knowledge of how to perform a ceremony or determine a protocol. (p. 76)

The author of the book, *Gift of Changing Woman*, Van Ness Seymour (1993), obtained knowledge of the puberty ceremony through an Elder Apache, Phillip Cassadore. This is to be considered very important because a Medicine Man, such as Mr. Cassadore, is considered a respected member of the tribe. A Medicine Man is

knowledgeable in the ways of the Apache people. Cajete (1994) reaffirms the important role of Elders when he observes,

In Indigenous communities the elders, the grandmothers and the grandfathers, hold the stories of their families and their people. It is they who give the stories, the words of good thought and action to the children. They tell the children how the world and their people came to be. They tell the children of their experiences, their life. They tell them what it means to be one of the People. They tell them about their relationship to each other and to all things that are part of their world. They tell them about respect—just as their grandparents told them when they were children. So it goes, giving and receiving, giving and receiving stories — helping children remember to remember that the story of their community is really the story of themselves. (p. 170)

Elders have lived life's experiences. As Native People, from the beginning of our learning, we were told to respect our Elders and listen, and never to question them. These lessons are re-affirmed through the three examples of Native American children's literature, *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003), *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994) and *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993), each of which involved an Elder --grandfather, grandmother, medicine man-- who were acknowledged for having wisdom of life and for teachings from perceptions and experiences of life as propagated by their prior elder ancestors. It is important to remember that stories of our people, which hold our worldviews, our knowledge, our very identity, are told by the *Elders* of our community and we must always respect them and acknowledge them in that capacity.

### **Significant Cultural Roles: Woman**

#### *The Gift of Changing Woman, Wisdom Sits in Places*

In *Culture*, the important role of the *Woman* emerges from the data as one that is very significant to Native American people because she is the giver of life. *Woman* is the co-creator, without women there would be no life. *Women* play strong roles as nurturers of generosity, kindness, pride, and strength. Poise and confidence are necessary for the behavioral values and characteristics in all aspects of life. In my Apache culture, a woman's role in the culture is central to all other relationships. In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour (1993) notes that as a matrilineal society, children join their mother's clan (extended family) rather than their father's. (p.7)

The development of a girl into a good *Woman* is mentioned by Seymour (1993), when she notes,

When the girl's family chooses godparents, they look for a godmother whose good reputation commands respect in the community, someone who can be a good role model for the girl. (p. 9)

In choosing a Godmother, the parents of the Goddaughter are carefully selecting an Apache Woman in whose footsteps their daughter will follow. An acceptable Apache Woman must be respected, an achiever, and a role model for the girl to look up to for guidance throughout her life. This is an important decision that is determined by the parents of the girl because their daughter will become a mirror image of the Godmother they choose. This concept is described by Griffin-Pierce (1995) as she affirms,

A carefully chosen Godmother directs each girl. The Godmother embodies the values and sense of responsibility that the girl hopes to attain. The older woman is not related to the girl by blood, yet this ceremony links them in a continuing relationship as close as kinship. It is a way of establishing lifelong bonds of mutual aid outside the boundaries of family, thus knitting the community more closely together. (p. 169)

The molding of the girl by her Godmother is explained in *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour 1993),

A little later in the morning, the girl leans forward onto a soft pile of blankets topped with a deer hide that sits on the ground before her. Now she represents Changing Woman's children. She stretches out full length, face down, and lies still, like a lump of clay. Then she lets her Godmother move around her, massaging her from head to toe. The older woman molds the girl as if she were a baby: she touches her eyes, to make them open, and her mouth. The Godmother is "molding" her because Changing Woman's children at first were clay, which she had to mold into shape, forming their bodies. This massage is also meant to give the girl good posture and form. (p. 12)

Basso (1970) also describes the process of molding within the puberty ceremony as symbolic of preparation for the girl's life as a *Woman*,

Changing Woman's power is in the girl and makes her soft, like a lump of wet clay. Like clay, she can be put into different shapes. The Godmother puts her in the right shape and Changing Woman's power in the girl makes her grow up that

way, in that same shape. When the Godmother rubs her the right way, she will grow up strong and hard and never get tired...The Godmother does that for her so she will grow up strong and in a good shape and always be able to help out at her camp and whenever her relatives need help. (p. 66)

Subsequently, as the Godmother is shaping the girl, she is also praying, so every touch to the girl's body is a prayer for that part of the body. The Godmother is praying that the girl will feel the power of her touch and the prayers offered to USEN for strength, endurance, tirelessness, good long healthy life, and happiness for her Goddaughter. This experience is felt through both the Godmother and the girl, because each represents goodness and sacredness of the Apache females.

The role of a *Woman* is significant within Apache culture because it is the *Woman* who gives life, it is the *Woman* who is kind in her role as nurturer of the children to whom she gives birth, it is the *Woman* who is generous in everything she freely gives, showing kindness to everyone who comes into her life, possessing pride within herself.

The *Woman* demonstrates her unique, culturally-valued characteristics through her actions, through her work habits, through her tirelessness, and through her strength to care for her family, community, and her Apache tradition.

Seymour (1993) provides an example of how a 'good' *Woman* is portrayed in the Apache way of life and how important it is for an Apache *Woman* to be seen as worthy of serving as a Godmother by the parents of a girl transitioning into womanhood. Seymour's text describes the Apache *Woman* selected as Godmother. She exhibits the qualities, has the accomplishments, and enjoys the respect that will one day be seen in the young

woman she will guide through her transition into Apache Womanhood. Through accepting the role of Godmother for the ceremony of the Changing Woman, an Apache woman is honored and will be blessed with a long life in which to guide her Goddaughter.

### **Significant Cultural Roles: Man**

*Antelope Woman, an Apache Folktale, Wisdom Sits in Places, Songs of the Shiprock Fair*

Most Native Americans cultures refer to themselves as people, and they identify the “Great Spirit” as father. In the Apache Culture, *Man, Indeah*, means “the People,” and is an inclusive term that including both man and woman. Apache was created by -- In Charge of Life – USEN, a male deity. On the fourth day of creation, He made *Man*. He Made Apache...as narrated by an Apache medicine man.

In the Apache world as well as those of other Native Americans, men had an important role in the culture. Men were hunters and providers for families and tribes. They were the dancers. They were the medicine men. They performed ceremonies. They were the singers. The men were aware of their physical prowess and took an authoritarian leadership role over their people. This leadership assumption, particularly in the Apache world, is reinforced by creation narratives in which *Man* is the first being created, as he is in the Apache origin story.

The important role played by *Man* is reflected in the story of *Antelope Woman: An Apache Folktale* (Lacapa, 1992). In the narrative, a young man, very different from

those of the village, came to talk with the people. The young man taught the Apache the ways of the bow; how to make it stronger; how to hunt; and how to protect families.

He told the women that water must be honored because of the nourishment it provides for the plants, animals, and people. The young man always ended his teaching by stating, "We must respect all things great and small" (p.7-14).

It is discovered later that the young man is actually an antelope, who has come to teach his lessons. This story affirms the cultural perspective of *Man* as a leader.

Schweinfurth (2002) states,

Generally the Apaches made decisions within the context of the family, but when extra-familial advice was needed they turned to a leader, a person who commanded respect, on who was perceived to be generous and wise, and could act as a spokesperson for the group. (p. 110)

Traditionally, this person was generally a male individual. Some of the most noted Apache leaders are remembered for their bold decisions and actions. Griffith (1971) recounts the story, told by a young boy, of such an occasion,

In the summer of 1880, when I was in my seventh year, an event occurred I'll never forget. Over 300 well-mounted warriors and about 200 of their women, with a long line of laden pack mules burst in like a wild storm. Having broken out of the Warm Springs (Ajo Caliente subagency) and the San Carlos Reservations, they were led by my father's brother, Naiche, and included were mother's brother, Geronimo, along with Zele, Nanay, Beduit, Chatto, Chappo, Perico, Nogle, Chihau-hua, Benito, Chuntz, Poin-sen-ay, and Kaah-Tenny (p. ).

The warriors abhorred the terrible conditions of confinement at Ajo Caliente and San Carlos—so they escaped with their people to a better place. Without the men the people would have endured the hardships even longer.

The role of *Man* is reinforced in contemporary times through *Songs of the Shiprock Fair* (Tapahonso, 1999),

Nezbah, Kiineez, and their father walk to the fields each morning to see if any of the squash, melons, or other produce can be entered in the agricultural exhibits. They won three blue first-place ribbons the year before. Nezbah's grandfather said it because they are "Tohniio," which mean people who live in the farm area. Their father tells Nezbah and Kiineez that they must remember the planting and harvest songs (pg. 6). They meet later and walk to the exhibit hall where Nezbah's father has paintings on display. They are happy to see that he was won two blue ribbons. Nizbah's father smiles and doesn't say anything. Nezbah hugs him and hold his arm for a long time. (p. 18)

Nezbah's father was an ideal parent. He was a father figure to Nezbah. Nezbah's father was a self-sufficient farmer who grew crops and took pride in being a farmer, and provided for his family. This illustration portrays a typical male role in Native American life. *Man* is perceived as one who is self-confident, competent, and depends on no one but himself.

My data revealed Indigenous men as important role players in our Native cultures within the stories presented in Native American children's literature. They were leaders and protectors of the tribes. They were grandfathers. They were parents. They were

teachers. They were storytellers. Native American men had a very important role in the culture as hunters, providers, dancers, medicine men, performer of ceremonies, singers, and leader of their people. The stories from Native American children's literature examined in the study did not delineate other stereotypical male attributes or roles such as "warrior."

### **Significant Cultural Roles: Child**

In *Culture*, the role of child clearly emerged as a sub-topic. However, gender-specific roles played by children were clearly delineated, much like those of men and women.

#### *Girl Child*

##### *The Gift of Changing Woman, Kinaaldá, Songs of the Shiprock Fair*

In my inquiry into the response of White Mountain Apache children to a curriculum program of Native American Children's literature, the reflections of the children indicate that the role of a *Girl* is one viewed with unique expectations.

In three of the stories reviewed for this study, *The Gift of Changing Woman*, *Kinaaldá*, and *Songs of the Shiprock Fair*, the main character is a *Girl* who is portrayed as young, not having experienced life and exposed to a new environment of one sort or another. In each of the stories, the *Girl* is expected to be hyper-attentive. Farrer (1991) explains,

Apache children are socialized from birth to pay attention to their surroundings, to absorb what goes on around them, to learn through such observation, to absorb quietly without questioning. (pg. 38)

Such is the situation for the *Girl* in *The Gift of Changing Woman*,

While she dances, the girl concentrates on the meaning of the songs and pays close attention to everything she does. During earlier parts of the ceremony, and even before the ceremony began, the girl's mother, her godmother, the medicine man, and other elders gave her instructions about what was coming and how she should behave. (p. 12)

Farrer (1991) further notes,

Girls are assisted in becoming proper Apaches through the puberty ceremonial. The ceremony is a celebration of the achievement of womanhood for girls, a time of homecoming and sociability, as well as a reunion with the primary life force, Creator, who is made manifest through natural phenomena, especially through the sky, sun, and Mother Earth. Mother Earth, in turn, has as one of her proper and holy manifestations White Painted Woman, who is also ever changing. At various times in the ceremony, the girls are said to be White Painted Woman; it is her life that her heir will emulate. White Painted Woman brought the items and knowledge of Apache civilization and the exquisite gift of children, so will the girls having their ceremony renew the civilization of the Apache through their lives and works and give the tribe new life through the children each will

bear. While each girl is honored as now being a woman, she is also honored for the mother she will become. (p. 144)

These young women are viewed within the culture as naïve in their thinking and in need of guidance and instruction. The learning experiences of listening and observing are critical components to acquiring knowledge through ceremony as well as through life.

While going through the puberty ceremony, the *Girl* is guided by people who are significant in her life and who will assist her in portraying the Changing Woman--the Apache Way. The *Girl* portrays changing into a woman through this reenactment of the dance. Each part of the dance has a meaning that is a component of the whole dance. Each component signifies an aspect of the girl changing, changing through the dance; standing, kneeling, laying on her stomach with her head up, and dancing alongside her Godmother and Godfather. The significance of the dance extends beyond the *Girl* to her parents, Godparents, family, relatives, community, and the tribe, because it is conducted entirely through prayers. Prayers are said for the girl, for everyone in the tribe, for the Native Nations, for the United States, and for the Universe.

The conclusion of the ceremony is described by Seymour (1993) in *The Gift of Changing Woman*,

Facing the rising sun, the girl dances once more, knowing that this will be the last day of her long ceremony. Today she will complete her transformation, and she will be painted with the clay of White Painted Lady (a third name for Changing Woman and White Shell Woman) (p. 25)

The power of “Changing Woman” ends, and the *Girl* is leaving with the wonderful experiences of transformation and empowerment and faces a good, prosperous life ahead. Similar to the experiences of the Apache *Girl*, Celinda, the Navajo *Girl* in *Kinaaldá* experiences being at the center of the thoughts and attention of the people around her,

Inside a small building next to the Hogan, other family members are busy preparing enough food to feed 50 people. Part of the sacredness of a Navajo ceremony is the feeling of family closeness. By the time Celinda’s *Kinaaldá* is over; more than 30 family members and friends will have visited and participated. For the next couple of days, Celinda will be the most important person in the McKelvey family. (p. 19)

Cajete (1999) brings the experiences of the two cultures to a broader interpretation when he notes,

In ritual and ceremony, participants recreate an important part of their historic selves and in a metaphoric sense retrace their steps as a social group of people in process. Indeed, “to find life” and understand its manifestation within each individual self is the ultimate goal of all education. (p. 60)

In an environment completely different from those of the puberty ceremonies, Nezbah, the *Girl* featured in *Songs of the Shiprock Fair* (Tapahonso, 1999) experiences a youthful adventure at a tribal gathering, which, *Seen through the eyes of Nezbah, a young girl, the Shiprock Fair is a magical time with family and friends* (pg. ).

Nezbah and other girls experience the Shiprock Fair, giving insight into a week-end spent at this great event celebrated by the Navajo people. They see the Navajo

Nation tribal fair, the rodeos, the rides, the parades, the traditional food, and the socializing. Perhaps a Native American author will better explain the experiences of the girls at the Shiprock Fair. Bruchac (2003) notes that the fair, which often loses its glamour to jaded eyes, is a new experience for the girls,

The image of life as a circle has many meanings. The world is new in the eyes of every child, as bright and shining as the first dew on the spring grasses. (p. 143)

In *Significant Cultural Relationships*, the role of *Girl* is portrayed through the unique experiences of three distinct characters from Native American children's literature.

### *Boy Child*

#### *The Good Rainbow Road, Bidii, and Sunpainters*

In my inquiry, the role of *Boy* is one derived from characteristics, journeys, trials, and experiences portrayed with characters that were boys in the texts. The learning experiences of boys are explained by Peat (2002), a researcher who states,

Guided, in the case of a boy, by a grandparent or his father's brother, a child learns through the direct experience of watching and listening. In this learning, no one instructs or tells the child what to do; rather, the child watches and takes things in. And finally, there will be some form of public acknowledgment that skills have been learned and that the young person has acquire new knowledge (p. 70-71).

Cajete (2000) alludes to the same process,

In some tribes, young people had to plan long journeys to apply their knowledge. Self-reliance, even in young children, is based on the belief that all persons have the ability to know and to share, to bring forward great strides in understanding and knowledge. Consequently, there are many myths revolving around the learning experiences of young people, as well as their roles in bringing new knowledge to the people. (p. 101-102)

The following narrative was intended for students to become aware of problem solving, making decisions, and learning to work together to accomplish a task amidst obstacles. In the story *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), the two main characters, Tsaiyah-dzehsi (First One) and Hamahshu-dzehsi (Next One) are brothers who were chosen for an important mission by the people of their village. Their mission includes journeying westward to the home of the Shiwana, the Rain and Snow Spirits, to ask them to bring the gift of water to the village again. The text from the story reads,

Choose two boys," she said. "They will endure the long, arduous journey to the Shiwana's home. Choose them because they must go with open hearts so they will tell the Shiwana how hard it has become for our people and land here. Choose them so their hearts will be open to receive the precious gift of the Shiwana. (p. 12)

After receiving the blessings and well-wishes of the people of Haapaahnitse, the boys began their journey. They had an all-important task, to help the people and the land, and they must do all they could to take word to the Shiwana in the west.

Tsaiyah-dzehsi and Hamahshu-dzehshi must do their best so the Shiwana of the rain and snow would bring the gift of life to Haapaahnitse. (p. 19)

In contrast to boys portrayed as obedient and conforming, some young adolescent boys are portrayed as having a mind of their own, always exploring. It takes effort for them to listen. One such boy is introduced in *Bidii* (Thomas, 2000),

This is the story of Bidii, an eight-year old boy. His mother and father are always talking to him about behaving himself, but he is not a good listener. He is a very mischievous boy. This is why they call him Bidii, "Greedy." (p. 1)

Another story featuring boys is a unique story told about honoring the natural forces in *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994). Kii Leonard is a young Navajo boy who is taught about the Solar eclipse by his grandfather, who explains how to observe the event by staying inside the Hogan. Grandfather tells Kii not to eat, drink, or sleep, but to sit up throughout the event. The Grandfather explains,

This is how we show respect for Mother Earth and how she takes care of us. The sun will be reborn and the little children (sunpainters) are going to come to give back the colors of the rainbow to the earth. (p. )

This was a learning experience for Kii because he learned how traditional Indian life was tied to the patterns and cycles of Nature. It made him aware of the Universe and the terrestrial surroundings. This story is revealed in a colorful way, using exaggerated occurrences and characters to make it interesting and to attract the attention of the young boy. The story told is not the way it realistically happened, but the characters are conjured creatively to fit into the scheme of the cosmology of natural forces. The

symbols represented through the rebirth of the sun, the sandpainters, and giving back the colors of the rainbows to the earth, impress the mind more quickly than mere words and are not so easily forgotten.

A brief summation of such natural learning and teaching is expounded by Cajete (2000),

Participating with nature through play, work, hunting, gathering, fishing, gardening, and traveling reinforces the innate “biophilia” or sense for affiliation with the natural that is so essential in the development of the mind, body and spirit for children. They after all are the ultimate source of continuity for any culture. (p. 102)

Finally, this development of the way of thinking for youth is produced by the interplay with the natural forces. Learning by doing in the natural environment is a valuable experience. This information was incorporated in my lesson plans of my research study program.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture**

The second topic emerging under the second umbrella category, *Culture*, includes the *Practices and Manifestations of Culture* within their families and communities described by children participating in the study. In using the term *Practices*, I am referring to the habitual or customary performances or practices followed by people of a particular cultural group. These practices are socially transmitted patterns of

behavior that may be described or symbolically represented through art, belief, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Religion and Beliefs**

*The Gift of Changing Woman, Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, and Kinaaldá*

For the purpose of this discussion, *Religion* involves a belief in and reverence for supernatural powers regarded as the creative force and governor of the universe. *Beliefs* are ideas or concepts held to be or accepted as true. In an Indigenous perspective, the combinational meaning of both *Religion and Beliefs* is referred to as a *Way of Life*.

The *Way of Life* within the diverse Indigenous cultures of the Americas is complex and misunderstood, but it is more attuned to the natural Universe than the artificial Universe of concrete cities, factories, highways and farms. The Native Peoples knew about the Great Mystery, its quantum physics and its utilization for their purposes and needs. They lived nature. The cultural beliefs of Tribes are dismissed by mainstream academia as myths and tales. The so-called myths and tales of Native Americans are not the stuff and fluff of fairytales, fantasy, and ignorance, as those dismissive terms might indicate. “The world is flat” was a myth. Basso (1996) asserts that,

Myths are presented for the purpose of enlightenment and instructions and reaffirm existence. Historical tales recount events that took place ‘long ago’ when the Western Apache people, emerged from below the surface of the earth, were developing their own distinctive ways and customs. (pg, 49)

In reality, the Native Peoples were metaphysically connected to the Spirit World; a world in which what is “unbelievable” exists. The Spirit World is the source of the Deities, ceremonies, and rituals that are representative of each culture’s *Way of Life*. The inability of mainstream academia to describe or quantify this metaphysical relationship resulted in a subordination of Indigenous knowledge systems and intergenerational epistemological transmission

### *Religion and Beliefs*

Perhaps the dialectics of American Indians relating to *Religion and Beliefs* is best articulated by Eastman (2007), the first Native American Indian medical doctor (the physician at Wounded Knee) and the co-founder of the Boy Scouts of America, who states,

The original attitude of the American Indian toward the Eternal, the “Great Mystery” that surrounds and embraces us, was as simple as it was exalted. To him it was the supreme conception, bringing with it the fullest measure of joy and satisfaction possible in this life.

The worship of the “Great Mystery” was silent, solitary, free from all self-seeking. It was silent, because all speech is of necessity feeble and imperfect; therefore the souls of my ancestors ascended to God in wordless adoration. It was solitary, because they believed that He is nearer to us in solitude, and there were no priests authorized to come between a man and his Maker. None might exhort or confess or in any way meddle with religious experience of another. Among us

all men were created sons of God and stood erect, as conscious of their divinity. Our faith might not be formulated in creeds, nor forced upon any who were unwilling to receive it; hence there was no preaching, proselytizing, nor persecution, neither were there any scoffers or atheists...

There were no temples or shrines among us save those of nature. Being a natural man, the Indian was intensely poetical. He would deem it sacrilege to build a house for Him who may be met face to face in the mysterious, shadowy aisles of the primeval forest, or on the sunlit bosom of virgin prairies, upon dizzy spires and pinnacles of naked rock, and yonder in the jeweled vault of the night sky! He who enrobes Himself in filmy veils of cloud, there on the rim of the visible world where our Great-Grandfather Sun kindles his evening camp fire, He who rides upon the rigorous wind of the north, or breathes forth His spirit upon aromatic southern airs, whose war-canoe is launched upon majestic rivers and inland seas. He needs no lesser cathedral. (Eastman, 2007, pg. 3)

Such an amazing treatise for a man, who in his youth, was born and raised in the traditional nomadic way of life before reservations were created. Such a lifestyle did affect Native People's perspectives, which were free from foreign prejudices and critique from mainstream society. And that is who we are.

In describing Apache *Religion and Beliefs*, Baldwin (1965) states, Apache mythology credited Life Giver with the creation of the universe but does not go into detail. Western Apache narratives mention a legendary place to the

north where they lived long ago with the Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni. The Thunder People, according to the myths, sending light to earth.

The Apache Indian was, and still is, a deeply religious individual. He believed in a supreme being, a giver of life, and a host of other supernatural beings, with the sun and the moon and the winds playing important roles. He had an elaborate mythology telling of his origin, his culture heroes, his god. (p. 104)

In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour, (1993), discusses Apache reciprocal interaction with their Deity as part of the ceremony,

They are there to lend their prayers and support of the girl, and in the process, by joining together and reaffirming the Apache way of life, they are themselves strengthened. (pg. 9)

The girl who becomes the Apache Goddess in *The Gift of Changing Woman* is mentioned by Baldwin (1965) as he, too, describes the Apache interactions with their Deity through the puberty ceremony,

The girl's family had to collect the huge store of food and equipment necessary to put on the ceremony. All who attended had to be fed. Gifts had to be given to the medicine man who put on the ceremony and to those who assisted in the ceremony. The ceremony was to give health and long life to the girl. All those attending the ceremony shared in the girl's blessing. The rite also was a prayer for increased fertility in both crops and animals (p.115).

In *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe: The Cooking Stick*, (Adley & Lacapa, 1981) describe communication between the Apache Deity and an Apache man,

As they ran, a Spirit spoke to one man. The man was amazed as he listened to the Spirit. Then, the Spirit put power into the man that he may lead his people to the ocean. (pp. 20- 21)

The Navajo puberty ceremony is similar to that of the Apaches, but the Apache's have Masked Mountain Spirit Deities, dancers who appear as physical beings and assist with their special supernatural powers to Changing Woman during the ceremony. Roessel (1993) describes the Navajo puberty ceremony in *Kinaaldá*,

The Kinaaldá is a way for Navajo to share the culture of past generation. (pg. 2) Navajo people believe that the Kinaaldá is a way for young girls to understand what life will be like when they grow up. As participates in the Kinaaldá, a girl learns about her culture, and, for the time, she feels the responsibility of her family (pg. 9).

Marstrom (2008) affirms that Kinaaldá not only reinforces traditional beliefs, but also *... serves to firmly embed the initiate into the context of kin and culture, and numerous rituals reinforce values of connection and social responsibility* (p. 306).

These valuable cultural attributes of Native Americans narratives were transmitted in written form to my students in Native American Children's literature text. The sub-topic *Religion and Beliefs* was derived from the three narratives mentioned above and within traditional narratives describing the *Way of Life* of diverse Native

American cultures, and how it is instilled in the very existence of Native Peoples. The essence of Native American people's *Way of Life* is manifested through their significant religious and belief systems.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Prayer**

#### *Mouse Couple, Magic Hummingbird, and Sunpainters*

Prayer is a reverent petition made to God or another object of worship. Prayer exists, not only in ceremony, but in all activities. It is traditional in Native cultures to initiate activities with prayer. Each of us is taught to pray to the Great Mystery, and to give thanks for our lives. Prayer is life to us, and has been an integral part of Native life for all time. Over a hundred years ago, Eastman (1886) observed,

In the life of the Indians there is one inevitable duty- the duty of prayer-the daily recognition of the Unseen and Eternal. His daily devotions are more necessary to him than daily food. He wakes at daybreak, puts on his moccasins and steps down to the water's edge. Here he throws handfuls of clear, cold water into his face, or plunges in bodily. After the bath, he stands erect before the advancing dawn, facing the sun as it dances upon the horizon, and offers his unspoken orison. His mate may precede or follow him in his devotions, but never accompanies him. Each soul must meet the morning sun, the new, sweet earth, and the Great Silence alone. (p. )

In narratives from Native American literature books, prayers are mentioned by characters in the *Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980), *Magic Hummingbird* (Malotki, 1996)

and *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994). Malotki (1980) wrote of Prayer in the *Mouse Couple*,

“I believe there’s only one way,” Mouse said, “Prayer is the only answer. From today on we’ll go out to pray every morning and concentrate on one purpose: finding a child. Perhaps someone will then have pity on us and grant us an infant of our own. If we’re fortunate, perhaps the child will be a girl who can learn to cook for us.” (p. 2)

The Mouse Couple was persistent in praying for a child because of the faith they had in their beliefs. Prayer is taken seriously and is respected by the couple; through their persistence, their prayers were granted. Prayer is the key element to the couple’s life, as well as raising the child in the ways of their belief that prayer is an important part of life.

Malotki (1996) continues with the theme of Prayer in *The Magic Hummingbird*, Hummingbird said to Mug’ingwa (the god of fertility and germination), “Why did you forsake the people of Oraibi? The poor souls have been praying to you, but you have not responded to their prayers. Now they are starving, and all of them except a little boy and his sister had to leave the village. It is on their behalf that I came here. Please, have mercy on them and go out to the upper world again” (pg. 21). In the meantime, Mug’ingwa began to keep his promise to the hummingbird. He had agreed to leave his subterranean abode and once again watch over the land above (p. 29).

Prayer is powerful in this story, and this observation is emphasized throughout the story by the people of Oraibi praying for the harvest and the powerful prayers of the two children.

In *Sunpainters*, Whitethorne (1994) also employs *Prayer* within the story, Pipa said, “Now that the sun has died again, the Na’ach’ahii will be coming to repaint the earth. But first I must go and say my prayers to the Four Directions. To the East, to the South, to the West, and to the North I will say my blessings, and then the sun will be reborn.” (p. 15)

Outside the Hogan, Kii faced East. “Thank you, Na’ach’ahii for your colors,” he said. He turned to the South, and raised his arms above his head. “Thank you, Na’ach’ahii, for your color.” He faced West, and repeated his prayers of thanks, and then turned to the North and did the same (p. 21).

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Sacred Being(s)**

*The Gift of Changing Woman, Between Earth and Sky, The Good Rainbow Road*

For the purpose of this discussion, the word *Sacred* pertains to people, things, or forces that are consecrated or that belonging to a god or deity; things that are holy. *Being* refers to those people, things, or forces that exhibit the state or fact of existing or living; existence or life. When both words are combined, the term *Sacred Being* refers to consecrated or holy forces that live or exist as a god or deity.

Native Americans say all things are sacred. Therefore we are sacred. The unique quality of existence and purpose was taught to us metaphorically by our elders. Our

narratives long ago dealt with sacred beings who gave us messages on our life way and advice on how to live life.

The Apache cultural concept of *sacredness* is well expressed by an anthropologist, Schweinfurth (2000), who states,

A mystical kinship with the land and the natural environment was the very essence of Apache sacred life. All of nature, Apaches believed, abounded with spirit beings that were intimately-linked to the preservation of their existence. Spirit beings were perceived as sources of supernatural power, and when the need arose, supplicants could invoke the spirits to assist in the hunt, bring good health, change the weather, or, more important, influence matters of life and death. Spirits took on various forms and most often appeared within or about a sacred place in nature – a rock, a tree, a lake; in the atmosphere – the wind, the thunder; throughout the bird and animal kingdoms; and in the four tribal medicine bundles, which were primarily collections of sacred items found in nature. Persons sought supernatural power by praying to the spirit embodied in the particular object or element; for example, the spirit of the tree, the spirit of the whirlwind, the power of the medicine bundle. (p. 27)

In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour (1993) expounds,

Living in a land of mountains and hardship, the Apache people cherish especially the power they know as the Mountain Spirits. Called Gaan, the powerful and benevolent Mountain Spirits share their friendship and protection with the Apache (p. 15).

When the earth was created, it needed something to hold it steady. And so Gaan – benevolent spirits – were made to hold the earth. With the foundation of the earth resting on them, steady and secure, the four Gaan represent balance and stability. At one time the Gaan lived as people. But then they left the surface world to live within the mountains. And now they live eternally in spirit form. They are sacred. They protect the people and the land and the animals, and they can help to heal the sick and the ailing (pp. 17-18).

Such conceptualizations of sacredness by the Apache hold true for other Native American cultures. As Bruchac (1996) observes in *Between Earth and Sky*,

Long ago, a giant lived with his people (Wampanoag). A friend to them, the giant's name was Mau-shop... He turned himself into a whale, a great white whale that swam off to the East. (p. 5)

Ortiz (2004) further addresses the benevolence of the Sacred Deities in *The Good Rainbow Road*,

They were the boys who were chosen to go to the west to seek the help of the Shiwana, who were the beloved spirits of rain and snow. (p. 14)

Along with the Sacred Spirit Being's presence, the Universe's Nature is an ally to Native American People, and may help in times of need. This infused knowledge was comforting to know and recognizing that this knowledge was sacred provided further assurance. In the three stories of *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993), *Between Earth and Sky* (Bruchac, 1996), and *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), the Sacred

Beings (the giant named Mau-shop, the Mountain Spirit called Gaan, and Shiwana, a rain and snow god) were available to help in times of need.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Dance**

#### *The Flute Player*

*Dance* in Native American Tribes is part of Culture. Dancing signifies movement is life. The Universe is movement. Dancing is honoring life in the universe. Dancing evokes the Universe, the Natural Forces, and the Spirits for gratitude and the celebration of life. Dancing also emulates animals and honors their existence. Dancing provides a means of socializing. Dancing is sometimes conducted “to heal one ’s self” and may be viewed as a plea for attaining good health. Of course, dancing for a particular purpose within a ceremony may be viewed as prayer. Instruction on how to perform dance movements was conveyed by Medicine men.

Davis (1996) provides a fairly accurate description of certain dances performed by Native Americans,

Dance is specially patterned extension of ordinary bodily movement, just as singing or chanting is enhanced embellished speech. For Native Americans, dance, in partnership with appropriate oral and other acoustic expression, codifies prayer, celebration, commemoration, mysteries, identity, value and canons of excellence. In all Native American tribes, dance is considered to be inherent to the proper functioning of the culture. Dance provides a means by which religion is made tangible. Traditional dances are treasures. They must be carefully

managed. This serves as to maintain ancestral dances, to breathe new vitality into dance cultures with fresh new versions, and to discover new opportunities to dance. (p. 165)

For Native American Peoples, dancing is and will always be a way of life. Dancing is a vital part of Native American culture and is frequently mentioned in Native American Children's Literature. Lacapa (1990) discusses one type of *Dance* in the *Flute Player*,

The evening of the (hoop) dance arrived and during the hoop dance, a young boy and a young girl became very, very interested in one another. People who saw them began talking. "Look! They don't even change partners. They dance only with one another. (p. 8)

Textual descriptions of traditional dances tend to fall short because it is difficult to describe the actual dances and associated movements. However, it still is important to note that the literature reviewed is filled with images of Dance.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Music**

*The Flute Player, Kinaaldá, The Gift of Changing Woman, Bidii, Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache*

In discussing *Music* as a component of Native American life and culture, Fitzgerald (2007) states,

Music, dancing, and dramatic art is a form of self-expression which has always been characteristic of Native American is found in their music. Music is the very soul of the Indian (p. 59).

The Apache realize that the first *Music* was the noise of the Universe. It was the sound of movement of an Invisible Force throughout the Galactic darkness, and then, a crack - a roar of explosions filled the air. Then more sound of movements. Something was moving about. Soon multiple flashes of white lights lit the black darkness followed by more noise of explosions. Soon, more light flashes. It was lightning flashes. Then, the sound of thunder followed by blowing winds could be heard. That was the beginning of the first music of the Universe. Music of our inner silence can also be heard from within ourselves, and during our visions, dreams, and channels. Our voices then sing the songs heard.

Native American music is as unique as the cultures it represents. It has different, distinct sounds. Words vocalize powerful affirmations to the Universe. The vocal, assisted by the drums and the chorus in unison enhances pleasurable listening of the music. The music is exciting. Now, imagine the sound of music to these words edited by Brown (1971),

I am making sacred smoke;

In this manner I make the smoke;

May all the peoples behold it!

I am making scared smoke;

May all be attentive and behold!

May the wing creatures, and the four-leggeds

be attentive and behold it!

In this manner I make the smoke;

All over the universe there will be rejoicing!

I am sending a voice to my grandfather!

Hear me!

Together with all things of the universe.

I am sending a voice to Wakan-Tanka. (pp. 88-89)

But Native American music represents much more than self-expression. In a Native worldview, it is the creator of realities. David (1996) notes,

Indian music is composed of many forms ranging from simple short songs with many repetitions, to lengthy song cycles that take several days to perform with almost no repetitions. Scales, rhythms, and meters vary according to area, tribe, ceremony, and sometimes from individual to individual. (Across cultures) Native music is equally important as songs for medicine, prayer, initiation, hunting, trying to control nature, putting children to sleep, relating narratives. In performing these songs and dances, the Indians of today pledge their ties to a living history. (p. 363)

Native American children's literature includes many examples of *Music* as a fundamental manifestation of culture. Lacapa (1990) mentions it in *The Flute Player*,

Early the next morning, the boy went to the canyon and played his flute. People working in the cornfields said, "Listen, that sounds like the wind blowing through the trees." (p. 11)

Roessel (1993) mentions *Music* in *Kinaaldá*,

And then the chanting begins. At first, only the medicine man prays. Then, one by one, other voices join in. At last, there is a chorus of prayers. (p. 42)

Seymour (1993) includes *Music* in *The Gift of Changing Woman*,

Close to her ear the girl can hear the words of the medicine man, who serves as a religious leader and spiritual guide to this people. Today he conducts the girl's ceremony, and for much of this day he will sing the chants of Changing Woman, telling the story of creation, accompanied by a chorus of men and four drums that beat a rhythm to the chants. (p. 10)

Thomas (2000) demonstrates that *Music* is an important aspect of *Bidii's* life,

He sang a song his father always sang. A coyote was howling in the distance. An owl was hooting in the other direction. Bidii sang along. He had heard that if you sing along with them, the coyote and the owl will fear you. (p. 7)

Adley & Lacapa (1981) make multiple mentions of *Music* in *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* including,

She sings, "Let me stick to the cliff. My feet stick to the cliff, so I won't fall." (p. 48) She sings as she walks back up with her basket of children. (p. 49)

As evidenced in Native American children's literature, *Music* is an important manifestation of Native American culture and life. *Music* is significantly integrated in the lives of Indigenous people and associated with their well-being in daily life, ceremonies, and oral narratives. *Music* is portrayed as the soul of the puberty ceremonies for both Navajo and Apache girls in *Kinaaldá* (Roessel, 1993) and *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993). In the story of *Bidii* (Thomas, 2000), music is in the Navajo boy's daily

life, and he is taught singing to ward off omens (owl and coyote). In the “*Old Big Owl Witch*,” one of the *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981) the plot is centered on a witch who sings to keep herself from falling off a cliff.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Lifestyle**

*Antelope Woman, Song of the Shiprock Fair, The Magic Hummingbird*

In my inquiry into the response of White Mountain Apache children to a curriculum program of Native American Children’s literature, the reflections of the children indicate an awareness of the diversity of *Lifestyles* exhibited within Native culture. For the purpose of this discussion, *Lifestyle* refers to a way of life that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group. Texts examined in my research study have revealed several Native American lifestyles. All of the cultural lifestyles portrayed revered the Universe, its eco-systems, and all living entities. Several lifestyles are mentioned in the books featured in the study.

In *Antelope Woman*, Lacapa (1992) tells of a young man who enters an Apache village with the intent of sharing his knowledge and values with the Apache people so that they will be able to obtain knowledge, attitude, and proper values through respecting and being thankful for all things great and small, not just on special occasions, but also as a part of everyday life. The *Lifestyle* depicted is one of people of humility who demonstrate respect and thankfulness of the entities around them.

In *Song of the Shiprock Fair*, Tapahonso (1999) relates the experiences of Nezbah’s family as they prepare for and attend an annual event. The anticipation of the

fair holds a clue to the significance of the event, a time when Nezbah's relatives gather together to enjoy an annual ritual. An emphasis on respect and obligation within a family (the gathering of relatives that stay with Nezbah's family), ritual (rising early to attend a parade), and the anticipation and attendance of an annual social event (the Shiprock Fair) demonstrates adherence to a *Lifestyle* that focuses on tradition, the interdependence of family members, and on the social aspects of being part of a larger community of Native people.

In *The Magic Hummingbird*, Malotki (1996) reveals the even more traditional lifestyle of the people of Oraibi, which is indicated by the traditional annual planting of corn. The corn is a traditional food, but is also a metaphor of life for the Hopi people. Subsistence, survival, tradition, religion, and belief are all part of the *Lifestyle* describe by Malotki. Revealing the narratives of different *Lifestyles* exhibited by members of Native American cultures makes students aware of the variances of lifestyles which may not be like their own and reinforces the directive to respect all things.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Body Wear**

*Kinaaldá, The Gift of Changing Woman, and Mouse Couple*

Originally Native American *Body Wear* was not made from cloth. Different styles of body wear were derived from the animals that inhabited the immediate terrestrial environment of the region. If one lived in a cold climate, then one wore furry animal hides formed into a jacket or trousers. If one resided in hot temperatures, one wore smooth animal hides. Like clothing, footwear, which was also made from animal hides,

reflected the climate of the people who made it. Later in time, when cloth was introduced, Native Americans began wearing clothes made from cotton fabric. Soon, headbands, bandanas, shirts, and breech cloths became the body wear of choice.

Ornaments such as bracelets, wristbands, hair ties, and other things became added features of body wear. Feathers adorned certain regalia on war and ceremonial items. Feathers signified honor, and represented protection from danger.

*Body Wear* worn by the characters in the books used in this study are described by the authors. In *Kinaaldá*, Roessel (1993) tells of the dress First Woman made for Changing Woman from a perfect buckskin (one without an arrow hole.) She adorned the dress with turquoise, abalone shell, obsidian, and a white bead. The dress was accessorized with white-beaded moccasins and a skirt and leggings made from white beads. She even made sleeve fringes and a wristlet of white beads to go with the dress (p. 16-17).

In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour (1993) describes *Body Wear* similar Changing Woman's dress. The young Apache woman wears a buckskin top, with fringe and cone-shaped tin tinklers. The top hangs over a colorful, tiered cloth skirt. The clothing of the Apache woman is accessorized with a beaded necklace and high-topped moccasins. In her hair, a white feather hangs down her back and a piece of abalone shell dangles over her forehead. The woman carries a yellow cane adorned with, bells, eagle feathers, turquoise, and ribbons (p. 10).

In *Mouse Couple*, Malotki (1980) refers to the Hopi wedding garments, which are made of cotton cloth woven on a traditional loom (p. 49). Baldwin (1969) describes the traditional clothing worn by Apaches,

Apache women formerly wore a two-piece dress of buckskin, an upper poncho-like garment and a medium length skirt. Knee-high moccasins completed her costume. Perhaps the most important part of their apparel was their thigh-high moccasins made of soft buckskin with rawhide soles. The hard sole frequently projected beyond the big toe an inch or two and turned upward. Commonly the upper leggings were turned down in folds to the knee or below, the fold forming handy pockets in which to carry objects. (p. 75)

As these descriptions reveal, my young Native American students were exposed to different tribes and the *Body Wear* unique to them.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Hunting**

#### *Antelope Woman and Flute Player*

*Hunting* was a way of life for Native American as the Universe provided wild-game for sustenance. Buffalo, elk, deer, and small game were available. These animals were respected and honored. Prayers and rituals were performed before a hunt. Hunting did not involve mass killings, as was a later practice of the colonizing forces. Native Americans were taught to conserve and think of others. This was a form of game management. Baldwin (1965) describes traditional hunting practices of North America,

Hunting to secure food was man's primary occupation, though some hunting was an individual affair, most hunting was done in organized groups. The Deer was the most important big game animal. Other game hunted included Antelope, occasionally Elk, less frequently Mountain Sheep, Cottontail Rabbit and Wood Rats. Animals hunted for their fur were the Badger, Beaver, and Otter. Birds such as the Eagle were killed or trapped for their feathers. (p. 62)

Native American stories reviewed through my study depicted a variety of *Hunting* activities. In *Antelope Woman*, Lacapa (1992) incorporates aspects of a hunt,

Listen, my son. As we go to hunt today, let me tell you of the people who lived here long ago, and why we honor all things around us, great and small (p. 1). "He went to the men, sat, down, and began telling them of ways in which to hunt and protect their families. He said, "When hunting, remember to respect all things great and small (p. 8). She saw the young man helping an elderly man make a bow. He said. 'This is how to make it stronger and, remember, as you hunt with this bow, respect all things great and small. (p. 11)

Similarly, in the *Flute Player*, Lacapa (1990) also includes a hunt,

A few days later, the boy's uncle came to him and said, "It is time you learned to hunt. It is time that you go with us instead of staying here with the woman-folk." So the boy went on the hunting trip. (p. 21) It was a good hunt and there was much game to take to the village. (p. 28)

A manifestation of Culture, *Hunting* appears in both *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992) and the *Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990). In these two books, *Hunting* is portrayed as

an important component of culture. It is demonstrated as relevant to the Apache men when a stranger comes to the village to share his knowledge of respecting all things great and small. *Hunting* is tied to the cultural conceptualization of time - time is essential during the developing year of a youth as it is to the timing of a hunt. The element of time is reinforced when the hunt is deemed a success. Within these two stories it is revealed that hunting is an important event in a male's life. To be a provider, is important, but even more important is to learn the significance of the procedures to follow when hunting, to pray before the hunt, to respect the animal, and to share meat parcels. This is an invaluable sub-topic, which demonstrates a need for lessons dealing with how Native Americans hunt, and the teachings surrounding *Hunting*.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Food**

*Kinaaldá, Less than Half, More than Whole, and the Mouse Couple*

Mother Earth provided. Wild game was plentiful. Water provided fish. Plants produced berries, nuts, wild onions, and many edible fruits. These were healthy foods from the Creator. Native Americans lived off the land. Young Chief (XXXX), a Native American of the Cayuse culture from the state of Washington, articulated a Native American perspective of Mother Earth as a provider for sustenance when he said,

I wonder if the ground has anything to say? I wonder if the ground is listening to what is said? I wonder if the ground would come alive and what is on it? Though I hear what the ground says. The ground says, It is the Great Spirit that placed me here. The Great Spirit directs me, Feed the Indians well. The ground, water and

grass say, the Great Spirit has given us our names. We have these names and hold these names. The ground says, The Great Spirit placed me here to produce all that grows on me, trees, and fruit. The same way the ground says, It was from me man was made, The Great Spirit, in placing men on earth, desired them to take good care of the ground and to do each other no harm. (p. 81)

The Great Spirit directing Mother Earth to “Feed the Indians Well” applies to all Native Americans. Knowing the Sense of Place and belonging to Mother Earth was a comfort for Native Americans, and they thrived in their home environments—living off the land!

In Native American ceremonies, food is prepared in a special way and shared with all. Roessel (1993) elaborately describes food preparation in *Kinaaldá*,

Much of a Kinaaldá ceremony centers around the making of a cake in the earth. First, a hole about 4 feet wide and 11 inches deep is dug in the ground outside the Hogan (p. 30). Celinda is inside the Hogan getting the batter ready. The recipe is simple: cornmeal, hot water, and a sweetener made from wheat. Baking soda keeps the batter lumpy (p. 31). After nearly three hours of grinding corn, mixing batter, and sewing corn husks, the preparations are almost complete. Now, cornmeal is placed out of the Hogan to where the fire has been burning over the hole in the earth. Then he pours the batter into the ground (p. 37). The paper bags are removed from the oven and Lucy slides a knife into the cake to see if it is cooked. Perfect. Celinda is relieved. It is believed that if the cake is still goeey when the sunrises, the young will have a hard life. (p. 44)

In *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*, Lacapa (1994) mentions the good food that Saiya always had included liberal amounts of Chili bread, hominy stew, and frybread, which covered her table (p. 19). Malotki (1980) repeatedly mentions the Hopi people's most sacred food in *The Mouse Couple*,

Each year as it turns summer, the people plant their corn (p. 2). The ear was small, but the two children were overjoyed. Right away they roasted it, broke it in half, and eagerly devoured it (p. 10). Four times in all, the hummingbird brought corn for them, on the fourth day the boy pulled a large ear of fresh corn from the niche (p. 12).

The stories reviewed in this study incorporate the many different types of traditional foods people from Native American cultures enjoy. The texts consistently mention that the food is special, significant, and a gift of the earth. Such reinforcement of traditional understandings of food as a gift from Mother Earth as directed by the Creator, food as a shared communal experience, food as a way of life, and food as a metaphor for life can raise student awareness of food within their own culture as well as in the culture of others.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Shelter**

*Kinaaldá* and *The Gift of Changing Woman*

It is a necessity for any people to dwell in a *Shelter* to protect themselves from the extremes of the environment which might range from a harsh heat to a bitter cold.

Additionally, *Shelter* helps to maintain their safety and to keep people safe from

dangerous intruders. Native Americans utilized the natural environment to build shelters from durable trees, smaller plants and other building materials found in the immediate environment. Brush shelters, wigwams, wicki-ups, hogans, and stone and adobe pueblos are examples of the structures that were utilized at the time of European contact for *Shelter* by some cultures in the Southwest. I only mention a few types of dwellings, but there are different types of *Shelter* specific to the many Native American cultures. In *Kinaaldá*, Roessel (1993) describes the traditional dwelling constructed and inhabited by the Navajo people,

A Hogan is the traditional home for Navajos. It is an octagonal (eight-sided) building with a stove in the middle and a chimney through the center of the roof. The door always faces the east. The reason is so the sun can shine through the door in the morning and make sure you are not sleeping too much. (p. 19)

In the Apache culture, home is referred to as *where the Deities live*. In the case of the Changing Woman ceremony, the temporary four-pole structure, which is erected as a skeletal tipi, represents the Holy Dwelling where White Painted Woman lives. Seymour (1993) describes the structure in detail in *The Gift of Changing Woman*,

She stands in the center of a framework of four poles, which represent the home of White Painted Lady. The poles are slender young trees that have been stripped bare except for the tender leafy branches at the top above where the poles meet and are tied together, and the clusters of leaves shiver in the morning breeze. As before, while she dances, a large chorus sings with the medicine man, accompanied by four drums (p. 25). After completing a stately and solemn tour of

the circle of people, the procession, now including the chorus, moves through the four-sided poles structure, once in each direction. Joining the procession, the people in the crowd follow their faces and clothes flecked with the paint of White Painted Lady (p. 29).

In the Native American children's literature reviewed for this study, two texts contained very specific descriptions of traditional Apache (the *Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour, 1993) and Navajo (*Kinaaldá*, Roessel, 1993) *Shelter*. Both authors recognized the close relationship of the ceremony to the traditional dwellings, and appropriately described the purpose for each one. In doing so, not only are students exposed to the variety of dwellings utilized by different Native American cultures, but they may also recognize the practical as well as ceremonial purposes of *Shelter* unique to each culture. This information may seem trivial, but some students have never left their reservations and have not seen different dwellings. They do not know about other cultures off the reservation.

### **Cultural Images**

The third topic emerging under the umbrella category, *Culture* includes *Images* described by children participating in the study. An *Image* is a vivid description or representation of a concept, idea, being, object, or event. *Images* are representative in nature, and may consist of characters, figures, marks, icons, pictograms, or even visions within our own minds. Symbolology is an important aspect of Native American cultures, which were all oral cultures. Although there was no recorded sound symbol correlation

for “reading” visual materials, Native people were and still are quite adept at reading the environment about them and representing that environment through images. Often, images symbolizing natural elements, forces, or beings are utilized in communication and to convey meanings.

### *Cultural Images: Symbol*

*Sunpainters, Antelope Woman, Mouse Couple, and Less than Half, More than Whole*

Many teachings about Native American culture to the following generations are explained by utilizing animated symbols to express a concept of an existence of how things or events occur. Creative Native American minds formulated unique narratives to transmit information that needed to be comprehended and not forgotten. At times, these narratives were created using epic figures, symbols, or animated events to help the listener understand the information or lesson being transmitted and to remember it accurately. In *Sunpainters*, Whitethorne (1994) relates a story explaining the changing of seasons, the re-coloring of the Earth, with affective aspects interjected by providing the *reasons* for the colors changing,

We human beings believe that the colors of the rainbow bring us happiness and good health. So when the colors change within the Four Sacred Mountains, the Na’ach’aahii come. They come from the Four Directions, each carrying a little paintbrush and a bucket of paint. Each painter is responsible for a color of the rainbow. At a time like this, the Painters come together to repaint or add new colors, new life, to the world (p. 9). Now these children live in the Four

Directions: in the East, in the South, in the West, in the North. A long, long time ago there was joy and happiness within the Four Mountains. One day everything turned red and, purple and dark, and sadness came to the valley. Mother Earth called out to her children, “My children from the East, my children from the South, my children from the West and the North. Come and renew the sun. the Human beings are afraid, Come bring your brushes, and your little ladders, and anywhere there is a dull color, give it back the colors of the rainbow.” (p. 11)

In *Antelope Woman*, Lacapa (1992) incorporates the use of an epic character, one that has the ability to transform from human to non-human form at will,

Just as she reached the trees, she saw him jump through four hoops; then something happened. (p. 17) Looking back at her, the young man nodded, but she noticed he was not a man anymore. He was an antelope. He motioned for her to follow him, and she did (p. 19). She began to go through the hoops, one after another. As she jumped through the fourth one, she felt herself changed. (p. 21)

The symbols of the story of the young man turning into an Antelope after jumping through four hoops are a symbol of a concept of an existence of how things or event occurs.

In *A Broken Flute*, Seals (2005) reviews many of the examples of Native American children’s literature featured in my research. In discussing the images utilized within the books, she says, “These are exceptional books, with truly beautiful illustrations. They also show the value of narratives being told by people who know what they are doing. In Lacapa’s words, ‘This is our spirit in print’ (p. 324). An example of the

vivid imagery utilized in Native American children's literature is contained in *The Mouse Couple*. Malotki (1980) creates vivid *Images* of Sacred Beings.

Mouse entered the kiva. Once inside, he saw a young man who was in the process of putting on some beautiful clothes and painting himself with brilliant colors (Sun) (pp. 13-14) Men both young and old, women, young girls, children – all were people living in the underground chamber. Although these people looked like humans, there was something about their appearances that made them seem very powerful (cloud people). (pp. 18-19) He was shocked to see how grotesque they were. Their hair was especially awful. It was tangled mess, sticking out in every direction (wind people). (p. 29)

Native American people coming from the oral tradition utilize symbolism and allegories to present narratives. This fact is reinforced in my study of Native American children's literature. Lacapa (1994) employs these interesting techniques in *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*, when he addresses the burning question posed by a very vulnerable young boy who wants to understand his "true" identity. The issue of 'blood quantum' is, as Seale (2005) notes in *A Broken Flute*, "a huge issue for Native people. Apart from New Age wannabes whose 'great-grandmothers were Cherokee princesses,' there are many for whom the questions of who's a 'real' Indian is a serious one; whether a 'mixed-blood,' the polite term, or 'half-breed.'"

Tony asks himself, Why am I less than half? Grandpa follows him in and says, "I like what I see, you are not like anyone else." Tony sees the pictures around the mirror, of people of all sizes, shapes, and colors. Grandpa shows him corn with

many colors is a gift to the people, "...so you are a gift from the Creator, You are a whole beautiful person. When Tony looks into the mirror again, he sees someone who, like the corn, was more than whole. (p. 42)

Tony's question about who he is--are answered in a kind and gentle manner. When his grandfather likens the person that Tony is to a colorful ear of corn, he finally receives an answer that has meaning for him. As Seals (2005) notes, "This is an honest, wonderful book, graced with Michael Lacapa's usually beautiful illustrations (p. 324)".

### **Summary**

This chapter explored the prior context of the General Native American Textual Features presented in a graphical depiction and is explained in detail. The Data collection and analysis for this study examined Textual features derived from Native American children's literature written mostly by Native Americans. The text concept incorporated from each book was placed into a specific general Native American Textual Features designated as Umbrella Categories. In the categories: (1) Cultural Themes, (2) Linguistic Patterns, (3) Cultural Practice and Images, and their relate sub-themes were displayed. This formatted standardized graphic table with the related themes is a foundation for the student responses to examine the appropriate theme categories for manageable interpretation. This will be utilized in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE: NATIVE CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO LITERATURE

The textual analysis of the children's responses to the literature led to the organization of the data into three umbrella categories of Native American Textual Features. These umbrella categories were either cultural or linguistic in nature, as noted in Chapter Four. The first Umbrella Category, which I titled *Cultural Themes*, involved seven distinct cultural themes the children repeatedly mentioned in their responses to the literature. Within three of the main themes, related sub-themes emerged from the data and are shown in the table 9.

General Native American Textual Features	
First Umbrella Category: Cultural Themes	
Major Themes	Sub-Themes
Story Telling	Ethics Teaching Self-Image/ Cultural Identity
Sense of Place	Sacred Directions Sacred Places
Deep Knowledge	
Relationship	Kinship Family Association
Time	
Ceremony	
Animals	

**Table 9 First Umbrella Category: Cultural Themes**

### **Cultural Theme: Storytelling**

The first theme that emerged from the student responses to the Native American children's literature is *Storytelling*. The descriptive narratives that characterize Native American *Storytelling* involve the origin of our people, our identities, our knowledge systems, our way of knowing and being, which are embraced by members of the community, as told by the elders. Narratives are transmitted orally and by physical expression (body language, facial expressions, gestures, posture, body position, and physical expression) through songs, chants, ceremony, dance, and ritualized storytelling.

Our oral traditions are utilized to convey across generations all that we are and hope to be. The Apache people use our narratives to teach our children. One of the most important learning outcomes we hold as a culture are for our children to conduct themselves as Apache people, with dignity and respect for all things, especially their elders. In our culture, the elders are our teachers and professors; the knowledge they have gained throughout the course of lifetimes is important to pass on to the next generation.

The stories, *Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990) and *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992), are derived from traditional White Mountain Apache oral tradition, which is the way Apache philosophy and elements of Apache culture are inter-generationally transferred to the Apache children from an early age through the introduction to and repetition of narratives. The content of the narrative stresses the importance of respect for all living things. Several children recognized storytelling as an element of the texts as well as the main cultural lessons of the texts:

**SAMSON:** *The Antelope Woman is about a father telling his son to honor all things great and small. Flute Player (Lacapa, 1990)*

**SAMSON:** *The Antelope (Woman) is about a father telling his son to honor all things great and small. There was a woman that knew how to get up early and she knew how to gather woods and berries. She also knew how to take care of her family and she also knew how to make really strong basket and she was also really special to them. Some of the young men from other walks right past them with her eyes closed. Antelope Woman (Lacapa, 1992)*

The response of SAMSON to *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992), reflects on the traditional use of narratives being employed by the student when he retells the story in his own words. It is clear the student listened to and comprehended the story, and that the imagery allowed the characters to come alive for him. The story of *Antelope Woman* is being retold in great detail through the responses of this particular student, who chooses to focus on the way *Antelope Woman* demonstrated her knowledge and abilities through her actions.

*Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992) successfully conveys to one student how an Apache Woman conducts herself within Apache society and in doing so demonstrates how Apache people “honor all things great and small.” This was the key precept of the story, and SAMSON responded by repeating this key phrase in his retelling, which then impacted the other students as they were reminded, once again, of the central lesson of the story.

*The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), reflects the White Mountain Apache philosophy that it is important to know that there is a proper time for everything. Therefore, when delivering narratives, there is a timetable which must be followed. There is a proper time of year for certain types of storytelling as well as for what may be revealed at the appointed time. Just like the story of the “Old Owl Witch” from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), Apache elders, older men and women, relate proverbs, sayings, and advice stories.

The student responses to the “Old Owl Witch” in *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981) reveal their individual understandings of the story. The students indicated the story was meaningful to each of them as they reiterated the lessons learned from the story, mentioning that the story is telling them to behave and listen. Most of the children also indicated their comprehension of what would happen if they do not choose to follow the directives of the story; the Big Owl Witch will come down and get you!

**JOSEPH:** *I’m saying that the story is to teach the young Apache children to listen, behave, and if you don’t the Big Owl Witch will come down from the mountain and take you away while you sleep at night.*

**PAULA:** *Yeah, and the story was told in a way that made you behave and listen to what your family trying to tell you.*

**SAMSON:** *Yeah me too, the story was read and I listen because if don’t the old lady will come and get me during the night.*

PAULA relates that “the story was told in a way that made you behave and listen to what your family is trying to tell you.” Similarly, SAMSON noted, “I listen because if don’t the old lady will come and get me during the night.” These responses indicate that the students are connecting with and comprehending the cultural lessons contained in the story. By identifying appropriate behaviors and describing the consequence for failure to adhere to such behavioral norms, the children have moved beyond mainstream “rules and consequences” often posted in classrooms throughout the school building into culturally specific expectations of behavior and related consequences that are far from those normally articulated by mainstream educators (name on the board, miss recess, call a parent, etc).

Traditional narratives, with their emphasis on animals (The Big Owl Witch will be coming down from the mountain to take the misbehaving children away in her large burden basket), the ecological, interdependent relationships shared by all organisms, a sense of time and place, and knowledge of oneself as well as one’s own people help students to recognize and embrace their own unique cultural identities. As Cajete (2003) notes, teaching and learning using the unique stories of Native American knowledge honors connections to our distinct heritages and instills in our children a sense of cultural identity (p. 23).

### *Storytelling: Ethics*

Within the theme of *Storytelling*, three sub-themes *Ethics*, *Teaching*, and *Self-Identity* emerged. Two of the sub-themes, *Ethics* and *Teaching* demonstrate an inter-

related nature; these sub-themes are often intertwined in the everyday learning experiences of Indigenous children. The traditional learning process for Apache children often involves trial and error, and part of Apache *Teaching* philosophy includes allowing children to attempt tasks without adult interference and even to fail in the trial and error process in order to help them develop their experiential backgrounds and critical thinking skills while emphasizing cooperative problem solving. Such skills and experiences are highly valued within the Apache culture. In *How the Spider helped the Robin*, from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981) one student immediately described the gist of the story,

**ANGELEA:** ... *when you work together, you accomplish more stuff, like when the Robin and Spider helped the Robin go back home...In the tree...*

The student noted that when you work together you accomplish more, as when the Robin and Spider helped the Robin go back home. This student's response and the responses of her classmates indicate that the children were able to identify and understand the embedded lessons of the story. By first identifying examples of teamwork and cooperation throughout the story, and noting that teamwork facilitates the accomplishment of any task, students were then able to identify more subtle cultural *Ethics* and values embedded within the story, such as having respect and compassion for other creatures of the earth.

Other examples of students identifying embedded cultural *Ethics* and values are evidenced in student responses from *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), a story of

two pueblo boys and how they accomplish their task by working together and enduring the task no matter what comes their way.

**ANGELICA:** *...learn from this book...don't give up.*

**JASMINE:** *You keep on going.*

**MARIA:** *...this story about...helping.*

Student responses reveal the children have recognized the traditional values of compassion toward others and perseverance within the story. They were able to overtly indicate the two pueblo brothers in *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004) evidenced both. The Robin, Spiders, and the pueblo brothers are examples of characters in Native American narratives that metaphorically guide the listener. As evidenced in the student responses, this is how cultural *Ethics* and values are introduced, reinforced, and learned through traditional Apache *Teaching* philosophy and methodology.

The story of *The Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980) provides further example of embedded cultural *Ethics*.

**LYNDA:** *...to respect others*

**CORRINE:** *And help your elders.*

**LYNDA:** *Help you parents.*

**LYNDA:** *If you want something...You try hard to get it.*

As evidenced in their responses, the children are clearly pulling the embedded cultural values from the narrative.

*Storytelling: Teaching*

Within the theme of *Storytelling*, a second sub-theme emerging from the data is *Teaching*, which, as stated earlier, is inter-related with the first sub-theme, *Ethics*. The students' responses suggest that respecting others and helping elders and parents are values that are highly regarded in the narratives, and therefore, within Apache culture. In addition, the responses further indicate that love is an important motivation for *Teaching* as well as a valuable *Teaching* tool. This is an embedded lesson in the story of the *Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980).

**CORRINE:** ...*love for the daughter.*

**LYNDA:** ...*try hard to get what you want ...because the father loved his daughter.*

**BF4:** *And they loved each other.*

As evidenced in the response from LYNDA, the tie between *Teaching*, which is motivated by and facilitated through love, to *Ethics* is clearly perceived when exposed to traditional narratives.

Cajete (1994) contends that Native American *Teaching* honors connections through nature, family, community, and spiritual ecology. The Native American children's literature utilized in this study reinforces this contention. The relevancy of the inter-related connections of nature, family, community and the spiritual ecology of the Apache culture is suggested by the students' responses, which indicate that the *Teaching* and learning process introduces, reinforces, and honors these connections through the oral tradition of *Storytelling*.

*Storytelling: Self-Image and Cultural Identity*

Within the theme of *Storytelling*, a third sub-theme emerges, one that suggests inter-related conceptualizations of *Self-Image* and *Cultural Identity*. Within this element of the Native American textual features, the students portray themselves in terms of their associations through family, clan, and community to demonstrate an emergent sense of self-identity. After listening to Lacapa's (1992) story of the *Antelope Woman* (1992), the children discussed how the story affected them.

**SAMSON:** *Part of the story reminded me of my culture.*

**KORDELL:** *What the story of Antelope Woman makes me think about is my grandparents – when my grandma was like that Woman working so hard.*

**KORDELL:** *And how it make me feel; like I want to go through Four Hoops and come out an Antelope. And I would like to run into the cactus without getting hurt on my feet.*

These responses reveal ways in which the students associate the story to their own life experiences. SAMSON notes that the story reminds him of his culture, suggesting that some aspect of the story reinforces his own *Cultural Identity*. KORDELL found familiarity in the character of Antelope Woman, associating the work ethic she demonstrated in the story with the cultural value of working hard exhibited by his grandparents. Although KORDELL does not articulate having a work ethic as part of his own self-identity, he is beginning to evidence the recognition of a cultural pattern, hard work being something adults do not shy away from.

Later, KORDELL discusses the transformative nature of one of the characters, who by jumping through hoops, transforms from human to antelope. Although people from outside the Apache culture might dismiss his musings as “fantasy,” Apache people do believe in transformation and the fluidity of the spirits of living entities, as discussed in the Changing Woman Ceremony in Chapter 4. Through the narrative, this young man is provided an opportunity to expand his *Self-Image* in a culturally appropriate manner.

Further student responses indicate the children are acquiring knowledge about their own cultures through the stories as well as integrating the newly acquired knowledge with pre-existing knowledge. In the discussion following *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993), one student has already begun to discuss the book at home.

**LISA:** *Are you going to have one... I am.*

**LISA:** *My mom had a sunrise dance.*

**LISA:** *Has she talked to you about it already...yeah.*

This particular student’s responses demonstrate familiarity with the ceremony and anticipation of her own, although the book did provide new insight into the ceremony for her. The responses reveal that she understands the ceremony is a significance event in a woman’s life, and thus part of her own *Self-Image*. In time, she will grow to understand the impact that participation in the ceremony will have in her own *Cultural Identity*, and the cultural significance, which may never have been introduced or discussed with her before her exposure to the narrative, will surely help her understand the facets of a woman’s role within Apache culture as she awaits her own ceremony.

Within the cultural theme of *Storytelling*, aspects of *Ethics*, *Teaching*, *Self-Image*, and *Cultural Identity* are embedded in the stories utilized in this study. The children's responses indicate they process the stories by referring back to their own life experiences, their own prior knowledge, and their own personal relationships to create further meaning from the embedded lessons. As Deloria and Wildcat (2001) note, knowledge and understanding come from those people and entities with whom we share relationships. Apache people realize that we are dependent upon not only our families, clans, and communities in order to live, but also those that share our world on Mother Earth. Discovering meaning through relationships is the key to our existence and perseverance as a people and a culture. Based on the student responses, the way in which we educate our children through narratives expressing the Apache way of life has relevance to their learning, ethics and values, self-image, and cultural identity.

### **Cultural Theme: Sense of Place**

The second major recurring theme that emerged from the student responses to the Native American children's literature is *Sense of Place*. As with the first theme, *Storytelling*, the second theme, *Sense of Place* emerges from Native American descriptive narratives involving creation and the origin of the people; however, these narratives provide explanations of the relationship of Apache people to one another, people from other cultures, sacred beings, creatures of the earth, and inanimate elements of the environment including the wind, the earth, the sky, and the universe. Again, these

narratives are conveyed through songs, chants, ceremony, dance, and ritualized storytelling.

In the response to the story of *Between Earth & Sky* (Bruchac, 1996), the students reflect on their understanding of what is sacred in statements identifying where Apache people go to pray, and why this is a special place.

**CF4:** *What does 'sacred places' mean...Where we go to pray.*

**DEBBIE:** *It's a special place.*

**LISA:** *The salt banks, down by Salt River. They use the salt to pray with, they use the salt to cleanse the food; they use the salt in so many ways.*

One of the sacred places on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation is down by the Salt River. Apaches view salt as sacred because we utilize the salt to pray with and to cleanse the food. The responses provided by the children in the discussion indicate meaning from the story was derived through their prior knowledge of places deemed 'sacred' within the culture and the concept of 'sacredness' which the story helped to further develop.

### **Cultural Theme: Deep Knowledge**

The third major theme from the student responses to Native American children's literature is *Deep Knowledge*; the sacred, sometimes secret knowledge of Native American beliefs associated with knowledge and historic experiences of the Apache people, stories, relationships, places, ceremonies, spirituality, and religion. In the story of the "Cooking Stick" from the *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley

& Lacapa, 1981), the students' responses indicated a source of deep knowledge in the stick, as well as an example of the relationships such an entity is interested in creating.

**MARIA:** *I like it when the cooking stick showed up, or started talking to the girl and boy when they were back at their camp.*

**TSCHAWN:** *The stick told the two children don't cry and that I'll tell you what to do.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Cooking stick started to talk to the children and before it didn't talk, and this is exciting to me because I never knew a stick could talk.*

**ANGELICA:** *Also, the stick told them, I will tell you what food to pick and carry me around with you.*

**JASMINE:** *Yeah, and the stick told them that they were old enough to get married.*

**MARIA:** *Yes, I liked the story a lot because I like the talking stick, and I love the part when the stick told the children that you must marry and start a new village.*

These responses indicate the significance of the cultural values and beliefs for these students; they see respect for the cooking stick as part of the Apache directive to respect all things. The students remain open to listening to and learning from that which, in mainstream culture, would be identified as an inanimate object - the cooking stick. The cooking stick provides support, guidance, and knowledge to the two children who were stranded all by themselves. The response of the students indicates that they comprehend

and respect significant message, the *Deep Knowledge* (to survive and continue on with their lives), that the cooking stick provided the children.

Another example of *Deep Knowledge* in Native American children's literature is evidenced in the story *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), which elicited the following student responses identifying the topics of *Deep Knowledge*:

**MARIA:** *Protecting nature.*

**EZRA:** *Making them be strong and healthy*

**AM2:** *By helping them out and doing stuff.*

**ANGELICA:** *Knowledge*

The students' responses reveal both recognition of *Deep Knowledge* within the text as well as relevance of that knowledge to their lives. In discussing the sacred knowledge, students acknowledge that it will help our people, but that we must live healthy and continue to be strong in order to utilize the knowledge. The nature of the student responses imply their comprehension that personal, valuable knowledge is passed on, and that they can continue to gain deep knowledge through formal learning ("protecting nature," and "helping them out" through "knowledge").

### **Cultural Theme: Relationship**

The fourth major theme that emerges from the student responses to Native American children's literature is *Relationship*, within the area of family, kinship, clan, and association with each other in friendship and courtship. In response to the story titled *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992), one student noted,

**KORDELL:** *What I don't like when they all run away from home, because the people over there didn't like twins, so they run away.*

In this particular response, the implication of the importance of a family staying together was evident in the student's reaction to the people of the Apache village not accepting the twins. This cultural value of respect for the family unit is clearly inferred by the discomfort the student shares at the thought of the twins being rejected. The student understands that the *Relationship* shared by family members is important – that the association with each other, the acceptance of one another, is a critical aspect of family.

Another student responded to *Sunpainter* (Whitethorne, 1994), evidencing the value of *Relationships* she holds in her perspectives,

**KAILA:** *That the little boy acting very like an adult and respect his grandfather and helps him.*

This student's response indicated that she believed an important aspect of the story involved the boy respecting his grandfather by acting appropriately (like an adult) and helping him. The Relationship between the two main characters in the story was recognized by the student and their close familial *relationship* was revealed through the actions of the boy toward his grandfather.

White Deer of Autumn (1992), states that to teach by example is the key in Native American tribal life. "Because little eyes are constantly observing and little ears are keen and attentive, Indian adults were careful to set good examples (pg. 6)." Respect and helping are so important in a familial relationship within Apache culture. Through her

response, the student demonstrates her understanding of the behaviors associated with such a *Relationship*.

In *How the Spider Helped the Robin* from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), another aspect of *Relationship* is explored through the student responses,

**KAILA:** *He had to ask his cousin to help the Baby Robin to his nest in the tree.*

**VANGIE:** *And then, build a spider web that went up the tree and tied the Robin with the web...*

**KAILA:** *The part when he asked his cousin for help.*

**SJANTE:** *And that's how the Spider helped the Robin back into his nest.*

**KAILA:** *Teamwork*

**SJANTE:** *It's cool... like it when they did teamwork to get the bird back into the trees.*

**KALIB:** *And it was the only way it could work, it work together.*

The students' responses indicate that they understand *Relationship* is critical in performing a challenging task and that asking for assistance to perform the task is not only acceptable, it is essential. The students noticed and commented on the *Relationship* the Spider had with his cousin, one that empowered him to ask for help from this family member. The students indicate that team-work was the only way the spider could get the Robin back into his nest. It took the efforts of more than one individual to get the Robin back into the tree.

Deloria Jr. and Wildcat (2001) reaffirm that the understanding of very complex relationships (such as those of kinship), as well as knowledge and understanding, come from our relatives; they are developed through relationships with and dependence upon the wisdom and sharing of elders in order to live the Apache way, that which is understood by the students as a critical aspect of *Relationship*.

### **Cultural Theme: Ceremony**

The fifth major theme that emerged from the student responses to the Native American children's literature is *Ceremony*, which is a unique social gathering for rituals of prayers or dances for blessings of enlightenment, of healing, and of overcoming obstacles in one's life. These blessings of protection and guidance are acknowledged through thankfulness and endurance.

A ceremonial event for a young woman takes place in *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993). Student responses indicate an awareness of the function of ceremony within the Apache culture,

**PAULA:** *A girl is going to have a Sun Rise Dance and they're explaining how it's going to happen. And they're telling who can all come. The first two days it's only going to be the family members. Then the last to be the family members. Then the last two day the friends. The friends can come.*

**PAULA:** *How long does each ceremony usually..*

**LISA:** *Her godparents (helps)*

**DEBBIE:** *She get painted (third day)*

**SAMSON:** *Her godfather (paints her)*

**All:** *And then come the crown dancers.*

**PAULA:** *The first time I saw them I was so sacred of the Crown Dancer*

**SAMSON:** *On the Clown, what is his job...To help the girl sometimes  
(Clown)*

**SAMSON:** *Why do the Apaches have Crown Dancers... My grandpa told  
me they help her go through the dance on Saturday and Sunday. They  
have it different ways (Crown Dancers)*

**SAMSON:** *The brush (to paint the girl)*

**JOSEPH:** *Like the mud... is like they go by the river or something and  
find like some of that brown stuff. And they put it in bowl then they pour  
water in it and mix it up (what they paint the girl with)*

**JOSEPH:** *Like clay...but it kinda gets like paint.*

The responses of the students indicate that they understand the Apache *ceremony* of the “Sunrise Dance” or the girl’s performance of the dance called the Changing Woman. The students’ responses specify the different responsibilities of the important individuals involved in the *ceremony*; the Changing Woman, the Singers, the Crown Dancers, the painter to bless and mold the girl, and the people who come to participate in the dance.

In Apache tradition, the *ceremony* is supported by the family, relatives, clan, and the community, and the variety of people that can come to the *ceremony*, which are all indicated in the student responses. In addition, they note the *ceremony* length, which is

described through what happens and who can participate on each of the ceremonial days. *Ceremony* and ritual are sacred to the Apache People, and each ceremony holds special significance. In many ceremonies, dance honors the change of self, and as in this particular book, the transition is one from childhood to adulthood. The specific details provided by the students indicate the value they place on understanding the significance of the *ceremony*, as well as the symbolism within it.

### **Cultural Theme: Time**

The sixth major recurring theme that emerged from the student responses to the Native American children's literature is *Time*. Adley & Lacapa (1989) refer to Apache perspectives on time and sequence when they note, "Timing relates to the natural sequences of events" (p. 8).

Since the beginning of time, the Apache people observed the natural order of the Universe. As a result of this emphasis on order and time, the White Mountain Apache philosophy places significance on the concept that there is a proper time for everything. As mentioned in Chapter 4, due to experiences of the Warfare Period, Apache people internalized the importance of following ritual in a sequential, timely order. In the first student response to *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993) in the section above, one student's response indicates an awareness of the function of time and sequence within the Apache culture,

**PAULA:** *A girl is going to have a Sunrise Dance and they're explaining how it's going to happen. And they're telling who can all come. The first*

*two days it's only going to be the family members. Then next to the last to be the family members. Then the last two days the friends. The friends can come.*

**SAMSON:** *Her godfather (paints her)*

**All:** *And then come the crown dancers.*

Not only does PAULA note the length of the Sunrise ceremony, but also the sequencing of invitees; from the family, to the community, to friends. The student indicates her knowledge of the traditional temporal order by stating who can participate in the initial and subsequent days of the ceremony. The student responses indicate they understand the sequence of the ceremony and how long the ceremony lasts. Such ritualized emphasis on *time* within the Apache culture is indicative of the attention and respect that it is accorded in both ceremony and in everyday life.

A second aspect of *time* evidenced in the story is emphasized through the concept of transition. The girl is, in proper sequence, transitioning from a girl into a woman. Of course the transition is not one that happens in just a few days; however, the gradual nature of the transition is reinforced by the length of the ceremony and the endurance over *time* the girl being honored is expected to demonstrate.

### **Cultural Theme: Animals**

The seventh major recurring theme from the student responses to the Native American children's literature is *Animals*. *Animals* are a part of many Native American creation stories. In some, they might even represent the sole creator of the universe.

*Animals* are frequently incorporated into stories about ethical or moral behaviors, dilemmas, and decisions.

In *How the Spider Helped the Robin* from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), student responses to indicated they had no trouble at all identifying with the animals in the story, or in recognizing the importance of the lessons in their own lives,

**KALIB:** The Spider told the Robin where to tear the web so they could save the web

**KALIB:** When they attached the web to the baby Robin, so the Spider would go down and the Robin would go up.

**KAILA:** Teamwork

**VANGIE:** Teamwork

**SJANTE:** It's cool...like when they did teamwork to get the bird back into the tree.

**DM3:** Teamwork it a daily thing, in school, to help clean, work, wash clothes

**KALIB:** Because it helps you accomplish more stuff

**DM1:** And it makes the job easier to finish

**DM2:** Faster to get the job done.

The student responses indicate their view of the importance of teamwork being utilized by the tiny spiders, who, “working together” to get the baby robin back up the tree, were successful.

Embedded in the story of cooperation is embedded knowledge, which was evidenced by the students' awareness of how the web was utilized by the spiders to hoist the Robin back up to the nest. It was the spiders who showed the Robin how to cut the web so it could be recycled and be used again. Responses indicate the students comprehended both the ethical and moral messages generated through the depiction of teamwork by the spiders and robin, the cooperation between the spiders and robin, and the accomplishment of a difficult task by not giving up. The Native American children's stories portray animals as wrestling with ethics and morality, which enables the listener to pull lessons that are appropriate at his or her level of personal, maturational development.

### **Second Umbrella: Linguistic Patterns**

The second umbrella heading emerging from the data under General Native American Textual Features was Linguistic Patterns, which were repeated patterns of communication observed in either the narrative or dialogue portions of the texts. The features that were identified and included in this category involve bilingual words or phrases that demonstrated the use of two languages (an Indigenous language and English), code-switching (a term denoting the concurrent use of more than one language, or language variety, in oral or textual communication), and *Rez-Talk* (coded language commonly used on Indigenous nations and reservations that include words or terms holding particular meaning or significance for members of the community but which, for non-community members, would seem confusing. For example, "Nellie's car is *stampeding the ghost road*").

In examining the linguistic attributes of the study texts, I utilized Edward Sapir's (1921) classic definition of language,

Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols.

These symbols are, in the first instance, auditory and they are produced by the so-called "organs of speech" (Chapter 1, paragraph 7, Great Books Online).

With Sapir's description of a singular system of symbols, including those that are expressed orally, textually, and through non-verbal communication, we can then view the confluence of languages within the communicative repertoire of the texts utilized in this study (as well as those of individual characters represented in the texts) as including bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, and Rez-Talk.

The integration of Indigenous (Native American) language(s) and/or *Rez-talk* with English was identified in the Native American children's literature books examined. Of the fourteen texts used, two are deemed bilingual (both in Navajo and English) and one is deemed trilingual (Navajo, Keres, and English).

The identification of the first Linguistic Pattern category, titled *Bilingual with Indigenous Language*, is a result of observed patterns of bilingualism within some of the texts. *Bidii* (Thomas, 2000), and *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003) incorporate both the Navajo and English languages equally. *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004) is communicated in the Keres (a Puebloan), English, and Spanish languages.

The Sub-Linguistic Pattern category is titled *Code-Switching* and refers to the concurrent use of an Indigenous language, or language variety, and English. *Code-*

*switching* is evidenced in all three of the narratives included in *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*: “The Cooking Stick,” “The Owl Old Witch,” and “Spider Helps Robin.” In addition, *The Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990) incorporates the use of *code-switching*, as does the Apache book, *The Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992). In each of these examples, the text of the story is written primarily in English, with specific, repeated phrases. Another book, *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994), incorporates *code-switching* utilizing the Navajo word, “*Na’ach’aahii*, which may be translated as “painters,” or “children that paint.” However, this singular example is the only use of Navajo in the book.

In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour (1993) integrates the Apache language into the text through *code-switching*. The word for an Apache ceremony, *Na’ii’ees*, occurs frequently within the text. This Apache term roughly translates to “the ceremony is happening and the people are getting the girl ready for womanhood.” A second Apache word incorporated into the text is *Gaan*, a name of a benevolent spirit – one who is made to hold the earth.

The final Linguistic Pattern category *Rez-Talk*, is evidenced most specifically in Ortiz’ (2004) *Good Rainbow Road*. *Rez-Talk* refers to slang words or terms commonly used on Indigenous nations and reservations that hold particular meaning or significance for members of the community. Those who are neither familiar with nor from the community may be confused by the literal meaning of the word or term being used. Ortiz (2004), for example, elicited a response referring to Fatco bridge.

**TSCHAWN:** (There is) *A place here on the reservation that is similar to that, by FATCO bridge.*

For those from the Fort Apache area, Fatco is neither a place name nor the name of a river; rather, it refers to the Fort Apache timber company.

Another student, in discussing *Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), notes,

**JASMINE:** (I) *Seen that somewhere before, at down below.*

Down below is a reference to the location of White River – the actual river below the community. Very few people would recognize immediately the “other name” for the river as being *down below*.

My friend, Gilbert, has often advised friends that it is time to “unhitch the trailer.” In Navajo communities, no one familiar with the vernacular of the Navajo Nation would even dream of touching the ball hitch on the back of the “chitty.” Instead, whoever is on the receiving end of the advice would know that now is the time for some dead weight or baggage in his/her life to be left behind because it is getting in the way of progress.

It was my intent to convey language awareness and cultural attributes to my Native American students through the use of stories with texts evidencing Indigenous language incorporation or Indigenous slang use. Through these stories, students hear traditional oral narratives from their heritage languages and culture that include cultural elements, history, contemporary experiences, and, of course, Indigenous words and phrases from their own languages as well as the languages of other Indigenous people.

Language is important to the Apache people because it carries the soul of who they are; it is their identity. Utilizing Native languages within the school educational

curriculum would enhance the quality of education not only for our Native students, but also for non-Indigenous students, allowing them to become receptive to and culturally aware of people from diverse cultures.

### **Third Umbrella: Cultural Practice and Images**

The third umbrella heading emerging from the data under General Native American Textual Features was *Cultural Practice and Images*, which encompasses the concept of living out a Native Way of Life. Brown (2009) describes culture as including, *...the history, narratives, customs, traditions, spirituality, beliefs, values, and languages that contribute to a people's personal and collective identity*. I would add to this description that the cultural aspects mentioned, in addition to having developed, evolved, and adapted over time, have been passed on from one generation of Indigenous people to the next through their oral traditions, and that it is these narratives that carry the encoded knowledge systems, worldviews, and identities of a people.

### **Culture: Significant Cultural Roles**

The first topic emerging under the umbrella category, *Culture*, includes the *Significant Cultural Roles* within their communities and families described by children participating in the study.

*Significant Cultural Roles: Elders*

The first sub-topic identified under significant cultural roles is *Elder*, an important relationship in the unique way American Indians obtain knowledge through intergenerational teaching and learning. From *elders* and through their empowered words of knowledge and existence, knowledge is transferred from one generation to the next. When responding to *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004), students identified the role of elder as one of significance in supporting and assisting others as well as modeling appropriate behavior and responses in given situations,

**EZRA:** *The old woman* (who helped them)

**ANGELICA:** *The boys* (who she helped)

**JASMINE:** *She was blind.*

**JASMINE:** *She almost step into the fire, but the boy helped her*

**ANGELICA:** *She said thank you for helping me*

**ANGELICA:** *And then she asked why he didn't go across*

**MARIA:** *And he was frightened and she decided to help him because he helped her out.*

**JASMINE:** *She told him to tied a bow and arrow to his, I mean an arrow head on his bow and arrow and hum, he had to make it go across, and it was a special arrow, it made a rainbow road over the canyon and that helped him get across.*

The students' responses to the story indicate that they recognize that the Elderly Woman had a significant impact on the boy's ability to continue his journey with his

brother. Recognition for the mutual respect shared by the boy and the Elderly Woman was evidenced by JASMINE's observation describing the boy warning the Elderly Woman, who could not see, that she was too close to the fire and about to step in it. Further, ANGELICA and MARIA: mentioned that the Elderly Woman thanked the boy for helping her and assisted him by telling him how he could cross the canyon to join his brother and continue his journey.

Student responses further note that the Elderly Woman had special knowledge that she used to instruct the boy in how to make a rainbow bridge. By noting her knowledge, which was shared across generations with the boy, the students demonstrate an understanding of the important teaching role of the Elderly Woman.

Student responses to *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003) offer insight into how the children tend to connect the aging process to experiential background and knowledge development,

**VANGIE:** *Looking at the woman's face, it shows so many things, her wisdom... a lot of details.*

VANGIE notes that an Elderly Woman is viewed as wise due to her facial features. The student's interpretation of the facial features of this Elderly Woman is based on the character within the story; they are attributing knowledge and wisdom reflective of her years, which are indicated by her well worn, wrinkled face.

In Apache culture, being an *Elder* is a status that is highly regarded because elders are perceived as possessors of experiential understanding and knowledge (elders are great teachers), the stories they tell (elders are oral historians), and especially the innate

compassion they have for the grandchildren (elders teach respect and demonstrate how to respect one another). VANGIE's response indicates her awareness of the esteem and high regard afforded elders within the culture.

Bruchac (2003), states that elders and children were meant to be close to each other. It is no accident that, in every part of the world, there is often a special understanding and bond between children and their grandparents. Nowhere are elders more cherished or children more loved than in American Indian communities, especially those most in touch with their traditional heritage and culture (pg. 143). VANGIE's response evidences knowledge of such a close relationship. For a child of this age to make a direct connection between the details of an *Elder's* face and the experiences they evidence is quite remarkable.

#### *Significant Cultural Roles: Woman*

The next sub-category emerging from the data analysis is *Woman*, which is a very important role *Woman* is the nurturer, the model of values, the example of behavior, the giver of life. Such attributes and characteristics make *Woman* an empowered role within Apache culture. In *The Cooking Stick*, one of the *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), *Woman* is portrayed as embodying empowerment through the attributes and characteristics described above.

**ANGELICA:** For me, when the mother of the girl told the girl to go back because the mother forgot her brush and the girl went back and that was when the boy followed her back to the camp.

**JASMINE:** I learned that you must hurry when you're told to do something.

**JASMINE:** Because something could happened like what happened to the boy and girl.

Student responses indicate that respect for the *woman* was being demonstrated by the girl when she listened to and obeyed her mother. The girl did what she was told without hesitation, and such actions demonstrate respect in Apache culture. The *women* of Native people are empowered with knowledge, strength and endurance as evidenced through their daily actions; they are, therefore, highly respected.

Children at an early age are told to respect their Elders, especially a *woman* figure because she gives life, and this ability alone is highly honored by Native People.

JASMINE's observation that "you must hurry when you're told to do something because something could happened like what happened to the boy and girl," suggests that she has already internalized the importance of doing what you are told to do in a timely matter. By noting that one must quickly complete the task assigned by a person in a significant cultural role or else consequences will follow, JASMINE is reinforcing a strong Apache value embedded within the narrative.

The students discuss another text (*Between Earth & Sky* Bruchac, 1996), in which the role of *woman* is significant,

**DEBBIE:** *Brave* (describe the young woman)

**SAMSON:** *Brave and... Pray* (describe the young woman)

**LISA:** *Pray to the Thunder Beings*

**DEBBIE:** *She gave thankful, she didn't cry or scream when she was going down the waterfall because she knew that the Thunder Beings would help her.*

**LISA:** *So, she asked for help*

**PAULA:** *When she believed... faith*

**PAULA:** *Remember she always... Gave gifts every seasons*

**PAULA:** *She just trusted in him to help her... Thankful*

**CF5:** *Respectful*

**DEBBIE:** *Graceful*

**LISA:** *Faithful*

**PAULA:** *The lady (who in the story is respectful)*

**All:** *The Thunder Being (who is grateful)*

**All:** *And faithful*

**PAULA:** *The Thunder Being*

**DEBBIE:** *The Lady*

**LISA:** *The Lady*

The students described the young *woman* portrayed in the story as Brave, Prayerful, Thankful, Faithful, Giving, Respectful, and Grateful. These descriptions provide insight into the significance of *woman* as a role model through her actions.

Having these revered qualities is very important in the daily life of an Apache woman. Within the culture, people notice how a *woman* conducts herself. Since the young *woman* in the narrative exhibited so many characteristics highly regarded by her

people, it was not surprising that the Great Thunder Being, “God of the water fall,” noticed the young *woman*, also. In fact, as the narrative explains to the children, he wanted the woman as his wife because of her qualities and her faithfulness.

Another embedded lesson from the story reinforces for the children that a good *woman*, like the one in the story, “will be taken care of.” This *woman* knew that because she was a good, faithful, spiritual woman, she would be safe. The students recognize that, indeed, she was saved by the Thunder Being, who recognized, respected, and desired her qualities. The student responses indicate that they understand the honorable role of a *woman*.

#### *Significant Cultural Roles: Man*

The next sub-category emerging from the data analysis is *Man*. Men have traditionally held an important role in the culture as providers and leaders of the people. In the story, *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992), a young *man* holds such an important role. Students note that the young *man* respects his elders, and that it is later revealed that as a “visitor” among the people, he is there to show them many things,

**SAMSON:** *I like it how the young man makes a strong bow for a(n) elderly man*

**SAMSON:** *I like it how the young man turned into a(n) Antelope*

SAMSON views this being, which came into the Apache village as a *man*, as a respectful, helpful entity that shares his knowledge with the people. Through his first response,

SAMSON evidences a familiarity with the traditional roles played by a *man* in the community. He views the antelope/man as a teacher who demonstrates respect for the elder through his kind and patient actions.

In his following response, SAMSON acknowledges that he likes the way the young man turned into an antelope after going through a particular process. The event of the young man turning into an Antelope allows this story to explore two dimensions: the life *here* as an Apache man and the life in the next dimension as an Antelope.

SAMSON's fascination with how the young *man* transformed evidences a developing comprehension of the two worlds and a related process of change that occurs when the man/antelope passes through the four hoops.

Hoops are sacred in the Apache tradition, this concept is reinforced in the narrative by the young man passing through the four (a sacred number) hoops to complete the transition from *man* to Antelope. Again, embedded in this narrative are aspects of the respected role of *Man* in the Apache culture, embodied through the sharing of wisdom (how to make Apache bows stronger) his compassion for the elderly (taking time to make a bow for the elder), and desire to help the people become more knowledgeable.

#### *Significant Cultural Roles: Child*

In Culture, the role of child clearly emerged as a sub-topic. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, gender-specific roles played by children were clearly delineated, much like the distinct roles of adults. Native children are cherished by their extended family, and

revered as those who will follow to carry on the ways of the people. White Deer of Autumn (1992), states that, for a child of an Indian Nation, education is ongoing, a lifetime of experiences. An Indian child in a traditional situation is assured of one thing; he or she will never be without a home and loving relatives (pg. 6). This understanding is reflected in the responses to *The Old Owl Witch* from Adley and Lacapa's (1981) *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*.

**DEBBIE:** Because he/she did not listen to Dad, Mom, Sister or Uncle.

**PAULA:** I remember being scared because the way my grandmother told the story, when I was young and she made it real.

**JOSEPH:** I remember this story when I was young and I tell my brother the story they to can listen and not misbehave.

**LISA:** Buse Shawn (Apache name for The Old Owl Witch)

**PAULA:** My mom would tell me if I don't behave Bushe Shawn would come and get me.

**DEBBIE:** And she goes up a mountain and sings a song so she won't fall off.

**DEBBIE** They say she runs fast.

**All:** She carrying... A burden basket.

**JOSEPH:** With naughty kids in their (burden basket) and she boils them... is that true?

**PAULA:** The yellow rock thing... it says it in the book.

White Deer of Autumn (1992) states that, the Native American children are taught certain types of behavior, depending on the tribe,

When an Indian child misbehaved, the relatives didn't scold. They didn't spank. Parents, grandparents, and relatives alike would come up with other ways to help a child understand the dos and don't of tribal life. They were simply told what was proper and what was not. In some case, a child needed more than just being told to act right. They were reminded of the different powers in the world. Some of these powers sought out children who acted badly. Most Indian tribes had a version of the "boogeyman" (pg. 9).

White Deer of Autumn's assertion is true of Native American culture. There was no spanking or physical punishment in the Native world; only when the western schools came did spanking begin. Creatively, Elders taught children ways of discipline without spanking. Children are highly regarded and accorded the respect they deserved as human beings and members of the community. They are considered the future, an extension of those that came before and the ones who will continue a particular, sacred way of life.

Loud and disrespectful children in the Apache World are told by their parents that the Old Owl Witch will come down from the mountains to the dwellings of the children that misbehave with a huge burden basket. She carries the misbehaving children back to the mountain in her burden basket, where she will boil and then eat them. Of course, these particular stories were designed to keep the little ones in line. With the admonition that Bushe Shawn was waiting, parents and elders of the community were removed from

the role of disciplinarians and elevated to the role of “protector,” attempting to protect the children from her vengeance.

Responses from the students indicate an intimate familiarity with the Old Owl Witch, who some even refer to by her Apache name, Bushe Shawn. Interestingly, the children actually attempt to verify their understanding of the facts from the original oral narrative through the textual version (JOSEPH asks PAULA to clarify if it is true that Old Owl Witch boils the children, which she does using the book as a definitive source of information).

Children in traditional Indigenous settings develop a strong sense of capability and self-confidence due in large part to the willingness of their elders to allow them freedom to explore their world. Native children are often given a tremendous amount of responsibility within the family, responsibility that is earned through their demonstrated ability to assume accountability – for younger siblings, for the family’s livestock, for family resources. In response to *Songs of the Shiprock Fair* (Tapahonso, 1999), students responses provide insight into their sense of competence as capable, able individuals, things in the Holbrook Fair? Yeah, I did.

**MARIA:** *Have*

**JASMINE:** *Yeah, guys made it over there.*

**ANGELICA:** *Yeah I had one of mines over there, too.*

**JASMINE:** *Mine was from Art, I got second place.*

**JASMINE:** *And I got (recognition) from Apache, too.*

In the conversation above, the girls are discussing their experience with a county fair. The students acknowledge their experiences with entering and exhibiting artwork in the local fair. The students exhibit confidence in acknowledging that they, even as children, can participate in such an exhibit and furthermore, can receive recognition in the form of an award for their demonstrated abilities. Within the context of traditional Indigenous roles, it is so important for children to explore their own creativity and competencies, which they choose to display only when *they* are comfortable in doing so.

Childhood is a time of new. The excitement of being recognized for mastering competencies and developing skills is new, recognition, which may not always involve the western idea of “winning,” affirms their incremental accomplishments along their journeys. The students’ responses indicate the different, unique ways a child can represent herself, through creation, through being who she is, through being a child.

### **Practices and Manifestations of Culture**

The second topic emerging under the second umbrella category, Culture, includes the *Practices and Manifestations of Culture* the children participating in the study describe within their families and communities. The term *Practices*, as I explained in Chapter Four, refers to habitual or customary performances or practices to which people of a particular cultural group adhere. Practices are patterns of behavior that are socially transmitted. These practices can be described or represented symbolically through products of human work and thought such as belief, art, music, and even institutions.

*Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Religion and Beliefs*

The concepts represented in the sub-category *Religion & Beliefs* constitute a way of life in many Native American cultures, a way of life in which cultural beliefs, deities, ceremonies, prayers, and rituals are intimately connected to one another, to the earth, and to the universe. In *Cooking Stick in Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), the responses provided by the student proves familiarity with Apache deities, their powers, their abilities, and their roles as protectors of the Apache people,

**MARIA:** *I learned that the Spirit have a lot of power because he gave the Crown Dancer power to lead the people from the village to the Red Sea.*

**MARIA:** *Yes, that's how the Apache people were saved by the Spirit telling the Head Crown Dancer how and where to lead the Apache peoples to a safe place, away from the soldiers.*

**EZRA:** *I like the part when the Head Leader of the Crown Dancer split the ocean wide with his stick or wand and then the soldiers came and the water started to come down onto the soldiers and they soldiers drown.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Yeah, and then Crown Dancer used his stick to split the water in half.*

Apache people recognize the power wielded by the Head Crown Dancer (Gaan) is intense. The Gaan has been blessed with the power to lead and protect the Apache people. Our oral traditions attest to these abilities, and such an incident is related through the story of the cooking stick.

In *The Gift of Changing Woman*, Seymour (1993) accurately affirms these observations, “In everything about the Gaan (Crown Dancers), from the symbols depicted on them and what they represent, to the sounds they make, is related to nature and the powers of the world” (p. 19). They are sacred. They protect the people and the land and the animals, and they can help to heal the sick and the ailing (p. 18). The responses provided by the student participants reinforce the understandings of the Gaan and their powers. These understandings are relevant to the development of religious and belief systems unique to their Apache tribe.

As children develop a sense of the deities of their culture, they are forming a perspective on the powers ascribed to these deities. The student responses overwhelmingly evidence awe in describing the power utilized by the Gaan in saving the Apache people from the soldiers. The power evidenced by the Head Crown Dancer is especially noteworthy, as indicated by their responses.

One of the manifestations of cultural symbolism is encountered in the text of *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993), which describes the wooden wands carried by the Gaan. “In each hand, the dancers carry a wooden wand that is painted with a zigzag line signifying the power of lightning, a good power, associated with rain (p. 19). The responses provided by EZRA and TSCHAWN both mention the wand carried by the Crown Dancer and allude to the powers it possesses.

In processing *The Cooking Stick*, the students identified the knowledge held by the Spirit. They identified the Spirit’s willingness to share that knowledge with the Head Crown Dancer, they noted that this newly transmitted knowledge was then immediately

put to use by the Head Crown Dancer to lead the Apache people to safety, and they describe the ability of the Head Crown Dancer to use his power to split the ocean to bring the Apache people to safety before he again used these powers to drown their persecutors. Through their responses, the children evidenced comprehension of the complex relationships shared by spirits, the Gaan, the Apache people, and the forces of nature. Additionally, the children indicated an understanding of the shared knowledge, and the results of sharing the knowledge on the welfare of the Apache people. Finally, the children spoke to the overarching theme of being cared for and protected by these divine forces.

*Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Prayer*

The next sub-category emerging from the category Culture is *Prayer*. Student responses in this category provided rich insight into their experience with the concept of *Prayer*. Exposure to *prayer* is initiated in Native American life at an early age. Children are taught about the Great Spirit, other deities, and prayer as an everyday event.

*Prayer* is equated to life by many Native American people, who see this form of communication as the preferred means of communication with the spiritual forces of life. In *prayer*, gestures, words, and thoughts are used to request strength, help, and a variety of blessings. *Between Earth & Sky* (Bruchac, 1996) led to a conversation in which the students discussed “the Apache” way to pray,

**PAULA:** Do we face East when we pray?

**SAMSON:** The house door supposed to face East.

**DEBBIE:** It's the Apache way to pray toward the East...toward the Sun.

**DEBBIE:** Remember when you kill an animal you're supposed to face the head toward the sun, where the sun rise.

**LISA:** Have you prayed before the sun rises?

**PAULA:** Have you done that?

**All:** Yeah, yes, yes.

The students' conversation affirms that they have an idea of the correct direction to face when praying and, in fact, even know how Apache and some other Native American tribes adhere to the practice of orienting their dwelling to the East and position the door so that it faces the rising sun. However, none indicated that the practice is to enable the sun to shine on the house at the beginning of each new morning. In Apache belief and religion, the sweat hut and all ceremonies must be oriented to face East. Ann Skidmore (2008) remembers that her grandmother would open the front door of the 'wickiup' each morning so the sun's rays would penetrate the dwelling.

The children express the importance of timing in their discussion of *prayer*. In Apache culture, a person is up early to greet the sun. When preparing to pray, we face East before the Sunrise. In addition, the students all indicated that they have prayed before the sun rises. The Apache people offer prayer in the morning, just as the sun rises or when the sun is coming over the mountain.

Further discussion indicates the children understand the function of *prayer* and are able to provide examples of their own way of offering *prayer*. Ann Skidmore (2008) notes that the Apache people utilize prayer in every aspect of their lives, from driving, to

ceremonies, to building a fire, even in the creation of a cradleboard (including every step between collecting the materials to laying the baby in the cradleboard), each activity is performed simultaneously with *prayer*.

The children explored some of the traditional religious and belief systems that are being taught and practiced in Native societies after hearing the story of Grandfather (Pipa) and his grandson (Kii), as told in Whitethorne's (1994) *Sunpainters*,

**KAILA:** *And he wanted to pray with his grandfather.*

**DEBBIE:** *And it's so wonderful how the little boy grandfather can pray and reborn the Sun and the clowns who are in different colors and dazzlers. Horizons are pretty colors.*

In discussing the traditional use of *prayer* and its performance, the students reiterated the importance of the role played by elders in a family. One student, in noting that the grandfather can pray for the rebirth of the sun offers, not only offers a reason to respect the elderly grandfather, but also offers insight into the Navajo belief that the sun dies and is reborn through prayer.

*Sunpainters* describes a solar eclipse and incorporates the Navajo belief that during the event, the moon passes between the earth and the sun and casts a black shadow on the earth's surface by interfering with the light of the sun. During this special event, the painters, who are the children from the Four Directions, come together to repaint, add new colors, and a new life to the world. During the eclipse, Grandfather tells Kii that he must go and say *prayers* to the Four Directions so that the sun will be reborn.

Another book incorporating traditional *prayer* is *The Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980). As students discussed the story, they return to the topic of the purpose of *prayer*,

**PAULA:** *In our culture people also pray for each other. Parts of the story reminded me of my culture. Praying for your children, and tradition of young caring for the old.*

**PAULA:** *If someone is determined to do something and pray hard over it (it) will really happen. Health reasons, for family struggles, and for family.*

In their discussion of how the Mouse Couple want a child, pray for one, and are subsequently blessed with a child, the children continue to discuss the purpose of prayer in relation to personal blessings and familial relationships. The students demonstrate their comprehension of the importance of prayer by alluding to prayer within their own culture and how they pray for one another, for the children, for the family, and for the old.

The students' responses from both *Sunpainters* and the *Mouse Couple* indicate their ability to describe how *prayer* is utilized out of respect in the Native Way, and to recognize that this respect is modeled by elders, such as grandparents who continue to honor Indigenous religion and belief systems. The incorporation of belief, religion, prayer, and blessings into oral traditions of a people creatively impresses in the minds of its children the importance of these elements in the traditional life of the People.

*Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Sacred Being(s)*

The next sub-category identified by the participants' responses to Native American children's literature is *Sacred Being*. As introduced in Chapter 4, the term *Sacred Being* refers to consecrated or holy forces that live or exist as a god or deity. Apache people view *sacred beings* as those who give us messages on our life's way offering advice on how to live it.

The unique quality of existence and purpose was taught to us metaphorically by our elders through our oral traditions. Native Americans, whose ontological perceptions are ecological rather than environmental in nature, recognize the interdependence of entities of the universe that are all of equal value and importance (Galda, 2010). Apache people believe that all things are sacred. Therefore we are sacred.

The following responses are from this subcategory, from *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe: Cooking Stick* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981),

**MARIA:** *I learned that the Spirit have a lot of power because he gave the Head Crown Dancer power to lead the people from the village to the Red Sea.*

**MARIA:** *Yes, and that how the Apache people were saved by the Spirit telling the Head Crown Dancer how and where to lead the Apache people to a safe place, away from the soldiers.*

**EZRA:** *I like the part when the Head Leader of the Crown Dancer split the ocean wide with his stick or wand and then the soldiers came and the water started to come down onto the soldiers and they soldiers drown.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Yeah, and the Head Crown Dancer used his stick to split the water in half.*

In the story of the *Cooking Stick*, the Apache people were running to safety from the soldiers and their leader was a Crown Dancer, whose powers came from the Spirit, that gave the power to divide the sea and allowed the Apache people to follow through to the other side of the sea, and then the sea swallowed up the soldiers. Spirits are powerful beings who give the people messages to live and survive because the people believe and had faith in the *Sacred Beings*, referred to as Spirit. The student responses indicate that they understand that a *Sacred Being* is a Spirit and how powerful and protective the Spirit is for the Apache people who believe in the Sacred Being Spirit.

Other responses from *The Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980), are as follows.

**LYNDA:** *That he gave people advice. (Leader of the North Winds)*

**KALIB:** *Kind of people, special people.*

**CORRINE:** *Believe, because there more older and experience than you are.*

The student responses mention the North Wind giving people advice, and describe them as kind and special people, indicating how they comprehended that the North Winds is a *Sacred Being*. Furthermore, the North Winds are special because they are prayed to every time a person prays within the Native people beliefs. It is said that the “Sacred Being” was with us during the Winds of our birth on Mother Earth.

One more book that refers to *Sacred Being* is *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993), and a student response is as follows:

**DEBBIE:** *What are the Crown Dancer for, they protect you and they protect the animals.*

The student response about the Crown Dancer, implying a sacred being, which protects you and the animals, indicates how the student understands the significance of a Crown Dancer and how important it is--to the Apache people and the animals.

In addition, in *Between Earth & Sky* (Bruchac, 1996) the students' responses are as follows:

**LISA:** *He cares for them, Mau-shop. (Giant)*

**SAMSON:** *He brought them wood and he caught food for them.(the people)*

**DEBBIE:** *They didn't thank him. (the people)*

**PAULA:** *The Creator told him that he had done enough.*

**LISA:** *He turned himself into a white whale.*

**DEBBIE:** *He went to the East.*

The responses of the students is from a story by a tribe called Wampanoag, and how once a giant lived with his people and a friend. The giant treated the people like they were his children; he cared for them but the people did not appreciate the Giant.

The students' responses indicate that they comprehended what one sacred being can do for people, and how as individuals we must appreciate and give thanks for being cared for by another person. In addition, if you don't appreciate the care given, then it will stop. As this happened, The Creator, a magnificent being told the Giant his work was done, then the Giant transformed into a White Whale. The students indicated that it was

time for the Giant to leave--had done enough work, his work was completed, and the people needed to be on their own.

In the stories incorporating the *Sacred Being*, students comprehended the important Sacred Beings, and how they come to give messages, to give power, and provide protection, for the people. Moreover, student responses indicate that they do understand *Sacred Beings* and how they have powers that can be utilized in different ways to provide for people in support and guidance to live a long life.

*Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Dance*

*Dance* in Native American Tribes is a significant component of Culture. *Dance* signifies life through movement and honors the universe through an expression of gratitude and celebrates life in joyful enthusiasm. *Dance* evokes forces within the earth to rise from the ground and to energize the dancer and the universe. Dancing is a way of life for many Native Americans. Dancing also emulates animals and honors their existence. Dancing provides a means of socializing. Dancing is sometimes conducted to heal one's body, mind or soul and may be viewed as a plea for attaining good health. Of course, dancing for a particular purpose within a ceremony may be viewed as prayer. Instruction on how to perform *dance* movements is traditionally conveyed by Medicine men.

In *The Flute Player*, Lacapa (1990) describes an Apache hoop dance, which has been planned by the women of the tribe. During this Hoop Dance, the Flute Player danced with one of the girls from the community. When the children discussed the story, they alluded to the social aspect of the dance,

**DM1:** *Have a Hoop Dance with partner.*

**DM4:** *They only see each other.*

**VANGIE:** *They like each other.*

Because the Flute Player and the girl dance exclusively with one another, the students infer that they must like each other. Student responses reflected comprehension of the dance, its arrangement by the woman of the village, and the social nature of the Hoop Dance.

Another book that involves dance is *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993). Responses from the students demonstrate an understanding not only of the length and sequencing of the event, but also of more specific details and responsibilities,

**LISA:** *My mom, she had a Sunrise Dance*

**LISA:** *Yeah, she has talk to me about it already*

**PAULA:** *A girl is going to have a Sunrise Dance and they're explaining how it's going to happen, and they're telling who can all come. The first two days it's only going to be the family members. Then the last two day the friends. Her friends can come.*

**PAULA:** *Four days. (How long does each ceremony usually last?)*

**DEBBIE:** *What happens on the third day at the ceremony? She gets painted.*

**SAMSON:** *Who does the painting? The Godfather.*

**SAMSON:** *What does he use to paint the girl? The brush.*

**JOSEPH:** *It that the yellow pollen he paints her with or is it a different thing? Like the mud, it like they go by the river or something and find like*

*some of that brown stuff. And they put it in bowl then they pour water in it and mix it up.*

**JOSEPH:** *Like clay, but its kinda gets like a paint*

The student responses to the *Gift of Changing Woman*, involving a ceremonial (Sunrise) dance, which is a vital part of an Apache maiden's transformation into a woman, demonstrate they understand the different stages of the ceremony and expectations for each stage. Throughout the conversation, students repeatedly alluded to the significance of the Sunrise Dance.

Student responses to the two types of dances, the social Hoop Dance and ceremonial Sunrise Dance, indicate their ability to differentiate between the various forms of Indigenous dances, their significance to the students as well as the community. Interestingly, the students demonstrate their comprehension of the significance of the dances to those who participate in them.

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Music*

*Music* is the representation, by voice or instrument, of the movement of an invisible force. At times, *music* incorporates unique, distinct sounds, rhythms, and patterns with words that are powerful. Music may even be utilized to evoke emotions, thoughts, or desires. In responding to the *Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990), students demonstrated a variety of observations,

**SJANTE:** *He's playing his flute and they think it the wind blowing through the trees.*

**KALIB:** *Because I like horse, and the boy is on a horse and playing a flute.*

**SJANTE:** *She went to her father's field and it showed planting corn and she wanted to hear the guy fluting playing.*

**VANGIE:** *And he told the girl that he likes to play the flute.*

**ANGELEA:** *I like the story because it has all the beautiful illustration, and it reminds me of my mom and dad.*

SJANTE's response notes how the music of the flute is heard throughout the land as a metaphor, like the wind blowing through the trees, while the story elicited images of ANGELEA's parents. Both these responses recall key elements of the plot, specifically the almost magical response to the music of the flute and the way in which the young man and the young maiden come together through the flute's music. Music has been traditionally associated with the courting of Native people and the student responses indicate the story reminds them of their own parent's courting days.

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Lifestyle*

In my inquiry into the response of White Mountain Apache children to a curriculum program of Native American Children's literature, the reflections of the children indicate an awareness of the diversity of *Lifestyles* exhibited within our Native culture. For the purpose of this discussion, *Lifestyle* refers to a way of life that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group.

The students responded to a lifestyle represented in the book *Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994),

**KAILA:** *I love it that the little boy and his grandfather still live in the traditional way and respect what mother earth gave to them.*

**KAILA:** *The way the pictures the little painters, and when he was wondering why this has happened.*

The students seem to value that the little boy and his grandfather are portrayed as living the traditional way and that both the characters demonstrate respect for the blessings of mother earth and all she has given them.

In the story, the grandfather tells his grandson about the children of Mother Earth, the painters, and the children that paint during the eclipse. The children come from the four directions carrying little paintbrushes and buckets of paint. Each painter is responsible for a specific color of the rainbow and the painters repainted or added new colors (new life) to the world. The students recall and express attitudes and values exhibited by the grandson and grandfather. The students' responses suggest that they themselves value some of the Navajo beliefs expressed through the story of the 'painters.'

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Body Wear*

The next subcategory, *Body Wear*, emerges as a cultural element within the stories reviewed. Many generations ago, the body-wear of the Apache people was not made from cloth, but instead, it was made from the different skinned animal hides associated with the animal and habitats of our part of the world. Later, when cloth was

introduced, it was made into *clothing*, and Native American began wearing clothes made from cotton fabric.

In describing the attire of the woman in *The Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990), student responses focused on the similarity between the clothing of the main female character and Apache camp dresses,

**VANGIE:** *Yes, even the women's dresses look like a camp dress.*

The women in this Apache folktale are wearing calico cloth dresses traditionally worn by Apache women called *camp dresses*. These camp dresses (shirt blouse and skirts) are similar to those traditionally worn by Mexican women, and were probably adopted from Mexicans neighbors. Even the shells worn as traditional adornment were traded for with neighboring cultures. Students' familiarity with the traditional dresses of Apache women indicate that they are interested in a pattern of familiarity between the illustrations within the books reviewed and in the attire of people within their own communities.

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Hunting*

*Hunting* is the next sub-topic emerging from the data analysis, and refers to a way of life for Native American people who relied on the plants and animals within their territories for nourishment. Wild game was respected and honored by the Apache people, who understood that their own lives were sustained by the lives of the animals that they hunted and ate. The following is a response from a student to *Antelope Woman* (Lacapa, 1992),

**SAMSON:** *I enjoyed the book, because it reminded me of me, my Uncle and my cousin. We went hunting but we didn't shoot no deer up in the mountain.*

SAMSONs response indicates the traditional practice of *hunting* is alive and well within the Apache community. One of the realities of this traditional reliance on the land for sustenance is that the hunters did not always come back with food for the community. Therefore, when a hunt *was* successful, Apache tradition called for a formal recognition of the blessing. A response to *Between Earth & Sky* (Bruchac, 1996) refers to such a practice of demonstrated thankfulness,

**DEBBIE:** *Remember when you kill an animal you're suppose to face the head toward the sun, where the sun rise.*

These responses demonstrate an understanding of the aspects of *hunting* – the children remember the hunt, what was being hunted, the location of the hunt, and the proper procedure to follow once the animal is killed. Out of respect for the animal and the Creator, recognition of the kill is immediate and follows a tradition that is, undoubtedly, almost as old as *hunting* itself.

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Food*

The next subcategory is *Food*, sustenance for all living beings. Food is provided by Mother Earth, from the beautiful land and waters she has provided. Natural *Food* was a gift from the Gods. It was medicine. Native Americans were healthy. Native Americans lived off the land and appreciated its many blessings.

After European colonization, our ancestors were forced to deviate from utilizing the natural *foods* of the land for nourishment and their traditional *food* preparation techniques. *Food* imposed by the colonizing forces was highly processed and refined, removing important nutrients and fiber. Along with the *food*, cooking oils were introduced, which added empty calories in the *food* preparation process. When Native people began to ingest the newly imposed refined *food* prepared with the new method of frying it in oil, we began to feel unnatural changes in our bodies. This unnatural way of preparing and eating refined foods is still being practiced today, a residual reminder of the colonization of Indigenous nutrition (Wilson, p. 256). One of the most notorious *foods* resulting from the colonization of Indigenous diets is fry bread, which is considered a main staple of Native American diets and is showcased in *Bidii* (Thomas, 2000).

*Bidii*, whose name translates to “Greedy” from Navajo, is hungry and begins eating fry bread, an experience to which the children’s responses indicate they can all relate. The expression on the faces of the parents when their son has more than one piece of fry bread in his hands is indicative of their disapproval of *Bidii*’s perceived greed. The children collaborating in this project immediately responded to the depiction of fry bread in both the text and illustrations,

**KALIB:** *Fry Bread. (Bidii eating)*

**DM3:** *Maybe he’s hungry. (Bidii)*

**VANGIE:** *Look at the expression on mom and dad’s face.*

The student responses not only indicate intimate familiarity with the fry bread, but also immediate recognition of the disapproving expressions on the faces of the adults witnessing such gluttony.

Another book that refers to *food* is *Sunpainters* (Whitethorn, 1994); however, in this example, the food being described truly is Indigenous,

**KORDELL:** *The bread look like rocks.*

**KAILA:** *I really want to try the blue meal bread. It looks good. And the way the author describes it.*

**DEBBIE:** *And I want to try the Blue Cornmeal I only had tasted the soup one.*

**DEBBIE:** *I like how the author describes the Blue Cornmeal.*

Blue Cornmeal is a traditional dish that is prepared in different ways by Native American people of various cultures. The student responses suggest a familiarity with a foodstuff shared across cultures, as well as an understanding that it may be prepared in different ways. The children discussed the Blue Cornmeal bread eaten by the grandfather and grandson. They described the Blue Cornmeal as looking like a rock appearing to tastes good. DEBBIE's response alludes to an awareness of other ways to prepare Blue Cornmeal.

Another book, *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003), also refers to acorns used for food,

**SJANTE:** *What a good solid dish and all the nuts gone out, Ummm, Acorn Stew.*

**KALIB:** *I love Acorn Stew.*

**VANGIE:** *I bet that recipe was handed down orally not written. I bet your mom learned from her mom and who taught you and so on, but just telling them, my mom learned from my dad's mom (learning how to cook Acorn Stew).*

**ANGELEA:** *Now my mom is trying to show me but it's hard.*

After reading the narration of the food the students alluded to the traditional dish of the Apache people, the Acorn Stew--the ground acorn mush. The *food* of the Apache people is described by the students, including how Acorn Stew is prepared through oral instructions passed down from previous generations, and who the transmitters of such knowledge are. The responses indicate that the students are familiar with traditional food prepared by Apache people and how the recipe is inter-generationally transferred (who teaches who). Additionally, the students' delightful enthusiasm about the Acorn Stew was clear throughout the data. Differences and similarities in food preparation between tribal cultures is an aspect of *Food* that student responses indicate they comprehend from the story.

#### *Practices and Manifestations of Culture: Shelter*

The final sub-category within the category of Culture is *Shelter*, which is a place to live, to keep safe, to remain protected away from adverse environmental conditions, or to seek assistance. One student alluded to a type of shelter sought by an animal in *The Flute Player* (Lacapa 1990),

**KORDELL:** *And how it make me feel; like I want to go through Four Hoops and come out an Antelope. And I would like to run into the cactus without getting hurt on my feet.*

Another student, in noting an example of cooperation in *How the Spider Helped the Robin* from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (Adley & Lacapa, 1981), also alludes to the functions of shelter,

**ANGELEA:** *... when you work together, you accomplish more stuff, like when the Robin and Spider helped the Robin go back home...In the tree...*

### **Cultural Images**

The third topic emerging under the umbrella category, Culture includes *Images* described by children participating in the study. An *Image* is a vivid description or representation of a concept, idea, being, object, or event. *Images* are representative in nature, and may consist of characters, figures, marks, icons, pictograms, or even visions within our own minds. Symbology is an important aspect of Native American cultures, which were all oral cultures. Although there was no recorded sound symbol correlation for “reading” visual materials, Native people were and still are quite adept at reading the environment about them and representing that environment through images. Often, images symbolizing natural elements, forces, or beings are utilized in communication and to convey meanings.

### *Cultural Images: Symbol*

The first sub-topic emerging from the data under Culture is *Images*. *Images*, as described in Chapter 4, are vivid descriptions or representations of a concept, idea, being, object, or event that are representative in nature. *Images* include characters, figures, marks, icons, pictograms, or even visions within our own minds. Native American cultures, which were all oral, relied on symbology to communicate visual and sensory experiences.

Elder storytellers and teachers knew from their own life experiences how to convey practical and metaphorical lessons orally to help young people learn survival skills, a necessary body of knowledge for many Native people. However, Elders and teachers knew words alone weren't always enough to support comprehension. They believed, much like contemporary educators, that experiential learning supported both comprehension and memory. However, if one couldn't experience learning in context, then feelings and thoughts were elicited to support learning.

Within Native learning, wisdom was not to be ignored. Indigenous ontology and epistemology were the lenses used to determine what to think and to induce strategies for thinking. This was done in a manner to help young people follow a process of problem solving involving consideration of the problem, critical analysis, and identification of possible solutions. Within the culture, critical thinking and problem solving are taught creatively. Exploring and discovering experience is encouraged, and through this process the learners create their own truths with the added ability to act based on their experiential knowledge.

In contemporary times of western-centered teaching and learning conceptualizations, texts are employed to convey messages. Subsequently, illustrated drawings are combined with word texts to improve comprehension of children's literature by students. These illustrations attempt to place the readers in the story to approximate reality. Visual input reinforces concepts in the mind; therefore, it is used in children's literature.

In discussing the beautifully illustrated *Flute Player* (Lacapa, 1990) the students identify images that they recall,

**ANGELEA:** *I like the story because it has all the beautiful illustration and it reminds me of my mom and dad.*

**ANGELEA:** *Yes, the illustration of the Apache people, does that make a difference, yes, because it has pretty designs and it has lot of Apache people.*

**ANGELEA:** *Because the kids want to learn some story about their culture.*

**VANGIE:** *And they probably want to learn about how it was long time ago.*

**ANGELEA:** *And it has different designs.*

**ANGELEA:** *Because the design is really important in the Apache culture.*

The responses of the students to the illustrations indicate that the illustrations elicit recollection of the children's past experiences in the community, with the Apache Culture, and with stories of the past. Additionally, ANGELEA notes the importance of design in

Apache Culture. Already, she recognizes that some designs are recognizable as Native, or more specifically, Apache.

The next story is *The Mouse Couple* (Malotki, 1980) and the students' responses are as follows,

**JAGGO:** *That blue thing. (Wind)*

**JAGGO:** *Shape, a tepee. (Wind)*

**KORDELL:** *Shape, sharp. (Wind)*

**LYNDA:** *Wind, it can be rough. (Wind)*

**MATTHIAS:** *Moving. (Wind)*

**CORRINE:** *Hairs look all tangle, yeah. (Wind Beings)*

**CORRINE:** *What's in their mouth, smoke. (Wind Beings)*

**MATTHIAS:** *What's in their mouth, straws. (Wind Beings)*

**LYNDA:** *What's wind direction, all four directions. (Wind Beings)*

**CORRINE:** *Hair, it's in a bun, looking. (Wind Beings)*

**LYNDA:** *Navajo.*

**LYNDA:** *Symbolize a mountain, a warrior. (Butte Being)*

**KORDELL:** *Shape like, a triangle. (Butte Being)*

**LYNDA:** *Looks like a mountain. (Butte Being)*

The students' responses to the illustrations of the Wind Beings and the Butte Beings indicate their understanding of what the *symbols* represent. The students' indication is by the way they describe beings, for example, the wind, color is blue, shaped like a tepee (sharp, rough), straw in mouth (blowing hard, moving), and hair is tangled. The symbols,

of the wind; tepee, straw in mouth, and hair tangled is another example of how wind is illustrated from the text and the students understand the illustration and symbols.

The next illustration is from *The Good Rainbow Road* (Ortiz, 2004),

**JASMINE:** *I like the drawing.*

**JASMINE:** *Illustrations of, it has a rainbow, rock, road, flowers, and clouds.*

**JASMINE:** *Seen that somewhere before, at down below.*

**JASMINE:** *I saw the mountains, the clouds and the rainbow.*

**MARIA:** *Illustration, because its interesting. It reminds me of our reservation.*

**JASMINE:** *It remind me of, of after when it rain, sometime I picture these kinds of color in the rainbow.*

**TSCHAWN:** *The drawing. Color.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Because it has mountains, waters, and the background color.*

**TSCHAWN:** *A place here on the reservation that is similar to that, by FATCO (Fort Apache Timer Company, sawmill) bridge.*

**ANGELICA:** *The drawing.*

**ANGELICA:** *Illustration, it reminds me of going up the mountain.*

**ANGELICA:** *The characters in the illustration, Armond and son.*

**ANGELICA:** *It reminds me of, maybe a grandma and a son, or grandson.*

**ANGELICA:** *That we can learn more about the tradition.*

**ANGELICA:** *The Apache Tradition.*

**EZRA:** *To respect.*

**AM3:** *Hum, because it good, the drawings.*

**ANGELICA:** *That we can learn about the tradition.*

**ANGELICA:** *The Apache Tradition.*

**EZRA:** *To respect.*

The students' responses to the illustrations are expressed through the understanding of the illustration; the vivid colors, nature, whether, environment, family, and the Apache Tradition, also respect. The experience of the illustrations from the text is felt through the student responses also, through the response of respect, reminding them of a family member and of the Apache Tradition, similar story to the Apaches, this indicates the understanding of the illustration and how powerful it has affected the student through their personal responses.

The next story is *The Sunpainters* (Whitethorne, 1994) and the student responses are as follows,

**KORDELL:** *The illustrations are so beautiful.*

**KAILA:** *Everything in the this book looks so real, because the author and illustrator made it look so real, they also made you feel like you can travel back into the Navajo times.*

**KAILA:** *I notice all of the people, the way the author/illustrated them, they look so real, like they are going to pop out of the book.*

**KAILA:** *It is so amazing how he created the little kids. (illustrator)*

**DEBBIE:** *I think this book is real interesting because only one person has written and illustrated by himself.*

**DEBBIE:** *I had real enjoyed this book. What I had noticed is this book almost about Mother Earth and how the clowns repaint the trees and flowers.*

The students' responses to the illustrations indicate that they understand the illustrations through the expression of the beauty of it, that the characters look real, that you can go back in time to that day and time, about the illustrator writing about his own past experience with his grandfather, plus the significant how the illustration is of Mother Earth and the significant characters, clowns, repaints the earth. The students discuss how the illustration helped them remember past experiences with grandparents plus how the character are realistic and how the environment is so colorful around them as well as in the illustrations.

The last book that the students refer to illustration is *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2004),

**SJANTE:** *The paintings, It was pretty.*

**SJANTE:** *It's look all easy too, the way they did the lines and the curves.*

**DM4:** *What do think they use for all the colors, probably things from nature.*

The student responses indicate that the painted illustrations were pretty, and that the illustration was easily drawn using lines and curves. This alone indicates that the student does understand the process the illustrator endures when creating an illustration. And the student response that the color represents nature is an indication that the students' responses of the illustrations are understood thoroughly. instructional messages it comes from the illustrations from the stories and from the symbols within the illustrations of the stories.

### **Summary of Student Responses**

This summary is an overview of students' response from the three General Native American Textual Features umbrella categories that emerged from the data - A. Cultural Themes, B. Linguistic Patterns, and C. Culture.

#### **First Umbrella Category: Cultural Themes**

In the first umbrella category, Cultural Themes, the most common theme identified in student responses was *Animals*. Nine of the fourteen Native American children's literature stories focused on *animal* characters that were either main characters or otherwise embedded in the story.

The students attributed their ability to identify with the moral of *How Spider Helped the Robin* in *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*: (Adley & Lacapa, 1981) to the story being about their tribe as well as the use of animals to teach the lesson. The story, which involved a group of spiders using teamwork to help a baby

Robin return to his nest, elicited student responses demonstrating comprehension of the concept of cooperation; if everyone works together, the job will get done. Responses also indicated that the students retained a working understanding of the importance of planning; if you want to accomplish a task, it must involved planning and teamwork.

The second highest number of student responses in the umbrella category Cultural Themes dealt with *Storytelling*. Within *Storytelling*, the highest level of student responses fell into the sub-theme *Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People*. This data suggests that within the fourteen Native American children's literature texts utilized in this project, students commonly recognized elements of themselves or their own lives within the stories.

Students empathized greatly with the main character in *Red is Beautiful* (John, 2003), a Navajo girl, who is made fun of. The students could relate to similar circumstances they experienced in their own lives and expressed the remorse they had for the girl. This is only one example of how the students perceived themselves in similar circumstances of *Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People* within the story. The students reported their responses to this story were higher because the story replicated their own experiences and made the students become more interested. The lowest incidence of student responses in the umbrella category Cultural Themes was within the theme Time, which had no student responses.

The lack of responses from the students suggests that perhaps, in their childhood perspectives, *Time* is not yet an important factor in their reading or in their lives. It is also possible that the lack of responses may reflect a lack of the teacher stressing the

importance of time within her presentation. Student responses indicate that in their young lives, time is not a major focus. During this time, a child is free to play, have fun and be free of responsibilities.

### **Third Umbrella Category: Culture**

Within the Umbrella Category, Culture, the highest number of responses received from the students was in the category of *Practice and Manifestations of Culture*. In considering significant individuals in their lives as well as in the 14 texts of the study, students identified a number of *Significant Cultural Roles*.

Of the fourteen Native American children's texts presented, ten have a *Woman* as the main characters or with a major supporting role in the story (a mother figure, a role model, a leader, a sacred *woman*, or a wise *woman*). Based on their responses to *Between Earth and Sky* (1996), and *Antelope Woman* (1992), the students consider *Woman* to be an important cultural role in their lives

In discussing *Between Earth and Sky* (1996), the student responses described a story in which a *woman* lost her paddles and goes over a waterfall in her canoe. The woman, a spiritually abiding person who offers prayers to the Thunder Being, is saved from death during her plunge over the waterfall. She trusted her life to the Thunder Being and believed that this being would protect her. In noting the ways in which a respectable woman should portray herself and her loyalty to her spiritual Gods, students were able to identify the importance of guidance and teaching provided by females acting in the role of *Woman*.

In a sense, students interpreted the story through their own lived experiences with a mother or grandmother, viewed as a compassionate role model to look up to for advice and instruction on how to behave. Through classroom discussions and activities this was visually replicated by the boys and girls participating in the study.

Among the *Significant Cultural Roles* discussed by the student participants, the second highest number of responses referenced the role of *Boy*. The student responses to *BiDii* (2000), which boasts a main character that is a boy, indicated the naughty nature evidenced by Bidii is one that the entire group of students could relate to from experiences in their own childhood.

The students could also relate to the two main characters in *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) because eight out of the twenty students were boys, had uncles, cousins who were boys and the boys are usually strong and are heroes in the stories. The lowest response was from the subcategory, *Girl*, and this is different than the outcome I would have predicted based on the two books, one on the coming-of-age ceremony and the other on female teenage adolescents experiencing fun at a local fair.

I expected the majority of responses to be *girl*, especially since twelve out of the twenty students in this research were female. The students' responses were to two books, *The Gift of Changing Woman* (1993), which had eleven responses, and *Songs of the Shiprock Fair* (1999), with one response. The students' responses indicate that they are not fully aware of their own culture ceremonies and that mainstream contemporary life is present in their life and the traditional culture life style is changing.

In the main category of *Culture*, Sacred Beings had the highest responses under the sub-category *Practice and Manifestations of Culture*. The book that the students responded to the most was, *Between Earth and Sky* (1996). It had several sacred beings as the main characters in Native stories. The second highest responses were from the book titled, *The Mouse Couple* (1988); this story mentioned the four sacred beings from the four sacred directions. The stories appealed to the students because of how the Sacred Beings were represented as mighty and powerful, to teach, to provide, to protect.

The lowest responses from the subcategory, *Practice and Manifestations of Culture*, consist of the following three; *Hunting, Music, and Shelter*. First, *Hunting* was a topic in three of the fourteen books. For example, a student mentioned hunting in the story of *Antelope Woman* (1992) and commented that the young man in the story helped the elders, and taught them how to hunt. Second, *Music* was mentioned in four of the fourteen books. In one of the books, *The Flute Player* (1990), a response from a student wanting to hear the guy play his flute was noted. Third, *Shelter* was mentioned in four of the fourteen books, but the responses were limited to those of animals and the traditional orientation of Apache homes. Perhaps the teacher's presentation didn't stress the importance of shelter, or maybe because the students are young and shelter is not taken seriously and their interest is focused on cultural elements other than shelter.

Overall, it appears the three categories, *Hunting, Music, and Shelter*, were not that important or interesting to the students judging from the low number of responses compared to those in other categories. But again, the teacher's presentation had an effect on the lack of responses.

Of the three sub-categories emerging from the data under the umbrella category *Culture*, the greatest responses noted were to *Cultural Images*. Symbols, found in illustrations in *Antelope Woman*, *The Mouse Couple*, and *the Good Rainbow Road*, appealed to the students. In all of these books, the illustrator was Michael Lacapa, an Apache illustrator from the students' own tribe of the White Mountain Apaches.

The illustrations presented in the story of *Antelope Woman* depict the Apache Way of Life and the students identified with that because it's relevant to who they are. The illustrations consist of Apache women wearing their calico skirt camp dresses, which are still worn by Elder Apache women for daily wear, or during coming-of-age ceremonies and other special occasions.

In the *Mouse Couple* story, the illustrations consist of different jagged, geometric representations of the Sun, Wind, Clouds, and Mountain figures, authentic to the designs of the Hopi people. Students stated that the description of the sacred beings along with the illustrations created images in their minds. The students understood the composition of the illustrations because the teacher, an artist, taught them different concepts of visual images, native designs, and authentic illustrations of both the Hopi and Apache Cultures. The high levels of recognitions by the students were evidenced through the frequency of their responses to symbols and images contained in the books. As mentioned, when the artist's renderings came closer to the students' own tradition and culture, more students referred to the artwork in their responses. The same can be said for the unique geometric designs that the students were drawn to.

The preceding summary was an overview of student responses. Next will be a summary of the responses from myself, the Principal Investigator, to the General Native American Textual Features from each category; A. Cultural Themes; B. Linguistic Patterns; and C. Culture.

### **Group Interview**

As previously mentioned, Frankel & Wallen (2003) state that qualitative research investigates the quality of relationships, activities, or materials... that there is greater emphasis on holistic description in which, Geertz (2000) describes as “thick description” (p. 6). Furthermore, Franenkel & Wallen state that researchers describe in detail all of what goes on in a particular activity or situation rather than comparing the effects of a particular treatment (such as experimental research) or describing the attitudes or behaviors of people.

Franelkel (2003) states that interviews are opinions and researchers ask questions to find out what people *think* about some topic or issue. Answers to such questions call attention to the respondent’s goals, beliefs, attitudes, or values. Sets of expectations for all interviews are the following:

- *Respect the culture of the group being studied*
- *Respect the individual being interviewed*
- *Be natural*
- *Develop an appropriate rapport with the participant* (p. 459-460).

In May, I interviewed the students in groups of 2 – 3 to ask about their perspectives related to the discussion groups and to Native American children’s literature. The following are the questions that were asked followed by the responses of the students. The first set of interview questions is called, *Background*, and the second set of interview questions is called, *Details of the Experience*.

### **Background**

The first set of interview questions is from the student’s background of reading and their experience with literature.

*Question 1: What kind of reading do you do outside of school?*

**TSCHAWN:** Newspaper

**ANGELICA:** Magazine

**MARIA:** Mostly chapter books

The responses of the students indicate that they have literature at home that can be easily accessed at the local store and in the local newspaper. In addition, one student response indicates that MARIA has chapter books. The different array of literature at home indicates that the students do have the opportunity to read different types of reading in their home environment. This is an important question dealing with the student having literature in their home-life plus the different types of genre section.

*Question 2: What has been your experience with reading before fifth grade in school?*

**KORDELL:** Accelerated Reading

**CORRINE:** Library books

**LYNDA:** Drop Everything and Read

**TSCHAWN:** I mostly read fictions

**ANGELICA:** Same here, fictions

**MARIA:** Mostly chapter books

The students' responses to the question of experiences with reading before fifth grade indicate that they were exposed to different types of reading programs that enhance reading. In *Accelerated Reading*, the students accumulate points for each book they read and pass a comprehension test. *Drop Everything and Read* is a program where the students are given time to read, in some cases it's the students choice to select a book or a book is assigned. The library within the school provides different types of books for the students to read. Then some of the student choices of books are fiction and chapter books. This question is to obtain information about the students' previous reading experience prior to fifth grade and an indicator of significant types of literature the students read.

*Question 3: What kind of books have you read in school?*

**JAGGO:** Goosebumps

**BM2:** Paint the Chow Dogs

**LYNDA:** Sharks

**JAGGO:** Harry Potter books

The students' responses to what type of books they have read indicate that the books listed are chapter books, genre composed of Fantasy, Magical, Informational, and Animal. This selection of the student interview indicates the type of books they prefer

and this information tells the principal investigator that Native American children's literature is not part of their choice. Not having any reading influences about Native Americans will enhance the student experiences with reading a different type of reading that they have no experience with, inside or outside the classroom.

### **Detail of the Reading Experience**

The following questions are from the second set of interview questions detailing the reading experience.

*Question 1: Talk to me about the literature discussion of these books. What was that experience like for you?*

**KORDELL:** *Yeah, because, yeah, I like it because it talks about the kinds of tribe and the kids in class are trying to read about their own tribe, too.*

**JAGGO:** *Because I like this Apache one, it about the Flute Player because it reminds me of my dad.*

**CORRINE:** *So we learned about Apaches.*

The student responses to the interview question provide information about their experience with Native American children's literature. The students reported enjoying the dialogue of the different types of tribes represented and the books on their own tribe. JAGGO commented on the books of the Apache titled, The Flute Player, because of the memories of his father and how this experience helped him relate to the story. CORRINE response indicates that the student learned about the Apaches. The responses indicated that they have had personal experiences with the literature and that they have learned

about themselves, Apaches, through the literature. Furthermore, the different Native American children's literature from the Southwest Region that represented five or more different tribes had an effect on the students' experiences that were positive, enjoyable, informative, and they can relate them to their own family relationship.

*Question 2: What has reading in school been like for you in fifth grade? What has talking about books been like for you in fifth grade?*

**MATTHIAS:** Fun, because you can learn about how the Navajo and Apache lives.

**JAGGO:** *Great, because you can explain it better.*

**ANGELICA:** *Book represents culture.*

**MARIA:** *Book represents issue of culture.*

The interview questions asked the students about the experiences reading and talking about the books. The responses of the students indicate that the talk was informative and they have learned more about the Navajo and Apache tribes. The students indicate that the talking was a great experience because the explanation of the books were given in a way that they learned more. The students indicated that the books represented the culture within the literature. This informs the principal investigator that the students learned more from the dialogue about the different tribes represented in the literature, the discussion was a learning experience, and the students also indicated that each book represented a culture of the tribe represented. This information is important to how the discussions brought out information about how Native American children's literature educated them on the different tribes. When a question arose, the teacher as

well as the students explained more in detail the tribe that was in question, and that each book represented a culture. The cultures of the more than five tribes represented in these books were recognized and comprehended by the students.

*Question 3: Tell me as much as you can about reading Native American children's literature?*

**MATTHIAS:** *The Antelope Woman, just to learn about the tribe, the illustrator, and the other stuff.*

**KORDELL:** *The magical words, from the painting.*

**JAGGO:** *The Flute Player, because I haven't seen a man play the flute, yet.*

**CORRINE:** *Gift of Changing Woman; the tribe- White Mountain Apache.*

**KORDELL:** *Less Than Half, More Than Whole; the tribe- Apache.*

**LYNDA:** *Antelope Woman; the tribe, Apache.*

**JAGGO:** *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Apache.*

**JAGGO:** *The Flute Player; the tribe, Apache.*

**CORRINE:** *Red is Beautiful and Song of the Shiprock Fair and Sunpainter; the tribe Navajo.*

**EZRA:** *Bidii and Kinaalda'; the tribe Navajo.*

**ANGELICA:** *Navajo. (Sunpainters)*

**JASMINE:** *Apache. (Antelope Woman)*

**EZRA:** *Hopi. (The Magic Hummingbird)*

In reply to this question the students recalled the tribes they most affiliated with, Navajo and Apache. The students name the stories that they have experience reading, named all the Apaches stories, five Navajo stories, and one Hopi story. Plus, KORDELL indicated the illustrations of the literature are one component that is recognized and remembered. All the students' responses to the question indicate that they recalled the Native American children's literature.

*Question 4: What discoveries did you make/what did you learn through reading books?*

**CORRINE:** *Antelope Woman, it reminds me of my grandfather told me about hunting, of hunting before I went hunting and passing native folktales.*

**JAGGO:** *Less Than Half, More Than Whole; it reminds me of my cousin, who name is Quentin, he white and he always asking his mom why he not dark or white like (he's part white, part native, so you see what he going through).*

**JAGGO:** *The Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe: The Old Owl Witch; because it teaches us not to be naughty.*

In reply to this question the students recall that the characters in the story reminded them of a relative or friend who they have learned from or they considers as a friend. In addition, the student indicated that the story provided guidance of appropriate behavior. In all three stories the students responded from the Apache stories and this brought their personal memories of experiences with family members or friends, and especially the story of the Old Owl Witch captures Apache children who misbehave. The

students' responses indicate that the students learned through experiences passed on from family members that the story reminded them of. They responded that stories of the Apache people should be respected through listening and the knowledge obtained must be applied to the student's own life.

*Question 5: Did you find the characters similar to yourself or others in your family?*

**JAGGO:** *Less Than Half, More Than Whole; it reminds me of my cousin, who name is Quintin, he white, and he always ask his mom why he not dark or white.*

**KORDELL:** *Antelope Woman, Apache book; because it reminds me of my grandfather when I go hunting and my uncle, that's all.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Bidii, the little boy, because I am naught at my house.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Bidii, I don't know, when I was small, I was always naught, I never listen and I learn the hard way.*

In responses to the question the students' experience with the text indicated from the stories above that either the characters reminded them of a friend, a grandfather, an uncle, or also the character is a self-image of themselves. Within the stories the students have connected with the text through their own experiences and this has provided a deeper understanding of the story pertaining to their identity of one self, knowledge obtained by elders of the family, and acknowledgement of one self through the characters. The experience of the text and the connections of the students retelling their own experiences are very important and provide personal learning experiences.

*Question 6: How did you think you were different from the character?*

**JAGGO:** *It doesn't remind me, because I am not greedy like this boy in this book named, Bidii.*

**CORRINE:** *The Magic Hummingbird; because no wooden hummingbird can come to life, I can't relate to the character.*

**MATTHIAS:** *The Sunpainters, by the Navajo, can I am not lazy.*

In responses to the question the students indicated that in three different books they saw themselves not like the character and surprisingly, the characters comprise of being all males and more over, the responses are from two males and one female. The male noted that he was not greedy like BiDii. In one of the stories the student could not relate to the main character, The Magic Hummingbird, because they could not comprehend how the bird came to life. The male responses indicated that he is not lazy, and in the story it did indicate that the Navajo believe that when the eclipse happens you can not be lazy, nor lay down. All three responses of the students indicate the perspective of the students is different from the character in the story. This is an acknowledgement of the students that they have experienced the text in a critical way by being different from the character. Three students identify themselves as being different from the characters that either having a negative response.

*Question 7: How do these books help you understand yourself better?*

**KORDELL:** *The Apache books are neat.*

**MATTHIAS:** *The Apache live forever.*

**KORDELL:** *Yeah, you learn your lesson about Buchol Saan, Old Owl Witch.*

**CORRINE:** *Hum, The Flute Player, because it teach me Apache stuff.*

**ANGELICA:** *Red is Beautiful, They talk about their life, not to talk about people.*

**MARIA:** *The Magic Hummingbird, help your family.*

In response to the question the students indicated that their acknowledgement of the values in Native American children's literature books was a positive experience. The students acknowledge the lesson learned; how one conducts self in a righteous way, and the acknowledgement of one's own culture, self image is being acquired through the teaching, plus the empowerment to change through learning about the Way of Life.

*Question 8: How does it help you understand others better?*

**PAULA:** Not being naughty and listening to your parents.

**LISA:** *Butche Shawn put them in the basket.* (naughty kids)

**SAMSON:** *The kids are put in the basket.* (naughty kids)

The student responses to understanding others better is stated within each student's reply. The responses are an indication that the stories they have read do provide teachings and values, from the characters actions, from the moral of the story, from listening and hearing the story told by an Elder of the Nation. This is an acknowledgement of the students learning through the stories by understanding themselves as well as others.

*Question 9: How do these books help you understand your life better?*

**PAULA:** *The Mouse Couple; Hopi, I learn if you pray for something it might come true.*

**SAMSON:** *The Good Rainbow Road; Pueblo- Folktale, I learn being brave and doing stuff for your tribe.*

**LISA:** *Less Than Half, More Than Whole; Apache, Hum about three boys going to the lake. The lesson, don't trust people because they look different from you. And don't treat people the way they don't want to be treated.*

**SAMSON:** *Between Earth and Sky; Native American sacred place. This reminds me of three sacred places, and keeps you secrets there.*

The narrative stories that were read aloud to the students in a small group provided empowerment and comprehension of students' lives better. The students' responses implied that prayer is powerful, perhaps because of the outcome of the Mouse Couple in the story being blessed with a child. And through this the student learned that prayer is influential in their daily lives that can result in a prosperous life. Other student responses indicated learning about bravery, treat people with respect, discharge one's responsibility for the tribe, and acknowledging sacred places.

*Question 10: What did you learn about the issue of culture? Racism? Relationships?*

**ANGELICA:** The Magic Hummingbird; it the bird that bring the food to the boy and girl (relationship).

**JASMINE:** The Flute Player, a boy and a girl get to know one another (relationship).

**MATTHIAS:** The Sunpainters, because it always want to make new paint (relationship).

**KAILA:** Be learning form other tribes like what to do and their stories.

**MARIE:** What stories can do.

**VANGIE:** That story and the language it's teaching us through our tribe.

**SJANTE:** Good one and good tribe.

**ANGELEA:** Learn about your great grandparents and to learn how to read better.

**MARIE:** So you can learn about different tribes.

The students' responses of the questions about their learning about the issues of culture, racism, and relationship indicate several areas of what culture is to the student as well as to their Native Nation. The narrative stories are meaningful to the student and as well as the people of Indigenous culture are expression of the epistemologies, entomologies, and worldview underlying the culture. Indigenous people transmit patterns through art, beliefs, institutions, ceremony, and all other processes and thoughts of the Native People.

*Question 11: What is your culture? What did you learn about culture through the Native American children's literature?*

**MARIA:** *Apache.*

**EZRA:** *Navajo and Apache.*

**TSCHAWN:** *Apache, the language.*

**KORDELL:** *White Mountain Apache.*

**KORDELL:** *Mom, White Mountain Apache.*

**KORDELL:** *Father, White Mountain Apache (Eagle).*

**CORRINE:** *White Mountain Apache.*

**CORRINE:** *Mom, White Mountain Apache.*

**JAGGO:** *Me and my brother, my mother (Bear Clan) both White Mountain Apache.*

**JAGGO:** *My father (Road Runner Clan) he with my grandmother from the White Mountain Apache.*

The students' responses indicate that they have learned from the different tribes represented in the stories as well as their clan. It is very important for the students to know what Native Nation they are from, what clan they come from and the knowledge they have that their clan comes from the mother side of the family. And also, the clan of the father side because we must not date or marry the same clan, because that would be like marrying our brother or sister. Within the statements of the students they represented a lot of information about themselves, who they are, and who they recognize (father, mother, brother, grandmother), these are important key people in their lives. In addition, the students recognized their language because this is so important because our language is our identity. The reflections of the children indicate that cultural aspects of Apache society are an integral part of their lives.

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about themselves, who they are, and who they recognize (father, mother, brother, grandmother), these are important key people in the student lives. In addition, the students recognized their language because this is so important because our language is our identity. The reflections of the children indicate the cultural aspects of Apache society are an integral part of their lives.

### **Summary**

This chapter focused on the responses of the fifth-graders to authentic Native American children's literature placed within their own cultural context and that of other Native cultures. The Native American literature stories were presented to the students. Then the structured pre-planned questions were asked to elicit responses from the stories revealed. Data was retrieved from student group interviews, and literature discussions. The data collection and analysis explored the children's responses to fourteen literature books written by Native Americans, and several by non-Natives. The textual analysis of the children's responses to the literature led to the organization of the data into three umbrella categories of Native American Textual Features. Finally, at the end, the Principal Investigator summarized the responses created from the Native American children's literature text into the three major categories of the Umbrella categories reflecting Native American Textual Features: Recurring Cultural Themes, Linguistic Patterns and Culture. After all these functions, the next step was to proceed to Chapter Six: Finding and Implication of the research study.

## CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study is titled: *Stories That Matter: Native American Fifth Graders Responses to Culturally Relevant Text*. This research came into existence through my own teaching experience instructing fifth graders at a Fort Apache Indian Reservation school. I realized how significant it would be for a teacher to provide culturally authentic Native American children's literature and incorporate it in to a reading curriculum to produce positive results. The findings from the previous study revealed that students acquired interest in the literature that contained Native American stories, particularly their own Apache tribe and the surrounding Southwestern tribes of the United States. The purpose of this study was to examine Native American texts for cultural themes and Native American children's responses to these books. Culturally authentic children's literature was used to gain insights into children's perspectives of the interactions with the literature throughout this study.

In defining culturally authentic Native American children's literature, seven questions were posed to evaluate the cultural authenticity of the literature. The study focused on Native American's literature, especially from the White Mountain Apache Tribal Reservation where the research was conducted. The revitalization of the Tribe's oral stories came into actuality through the Language Committee of the Johnson O'Malley, a federally funded program. The oral stories were translated into written documents by two young Native writers with the approval from JOM Committee affiliates, tribal educators, and distinguished elders of the tribe.

The purpose of this study was to examine Native American children's responses to Native American children's literature. Culturally authentic children literature was used to gain insights into children's perspectives as they engaged with these books and each other through responses within the literature circles. The study is placed within the theoretical framework of multicultural literature and focuses on Native American children's literature written mostly by Native American authors and renderings by Native illustrators. The use of Native American authors raises issues of accuracy and authenticity, along with the challenges faced by Native American researchers and educators in selecting Native American children's literatures. In addition, reader response theory about the transactional nature of reading serves as the theoretical framework for examining students' responses to literature.

My study focused on Native American children's literature textual features and then used these features to examine students' responses and their perspectives of engaging with culturally authentic Native American children's literature. The theoretical and methodological foundations of my research came from professional references that examine Native American children's literature and culture--on what was viewed as constituting "cultural" representations of Native American life, actions, and thought. This review of the literature formed my initial categories for examining the textual features of the 14 Native American children's books used in this study. These categories were then adjusted based on the actual analysis of the books to see which were relevant for this set of texts. The final set of categories from the textual analysis was then used to examine fifth graders' responses to literature within their own cultural context and that of other

Native cultures. As my research embraced readers and texts from Native American background and perspectives, I have relied on Native American cultural perspectives as a lens, but this talk was significant to other elements of culture, such as, for example, gender and class. The particular focal point took into account the ways in which culture was inclusive in Native American children's literature as well as within the practices that Native American readers bring to an interpretation of literacy texts. The intent of this research was to provide the best portrait possible for Native American elementary students at Apache Elementary School through examining their responses to Native American children's literature in literature circles. Data collection included field notes, audio tape recordings, interviews and artifacts.

### **Summary of the Research Findings**

This study focused on fourteen Native American children's literatures; the following is the list of the literature and genre, numbered as they are represented in the following list:

1. *The Flute Player* (1990)- Folktale- Apache
2. *Antelope Woman* (1992)- Folktale- Apache
3. *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994)- Contemporary- Apache/mix
4. *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981)- Traditional-Apache
5. *The Mouse Couple* (1988)- Folktale- Hopi
6. *The Magic Hummingbird* (1996)- Folktale- Hopi
7. *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004)- Native American Tale- Keres, Trilingual
8. *The Gift of Changing Woman* (1993)- Traditional- Apache
9. *Between Earth and Sky* (1996)- Legends- 11 tribes
10. *BiDii* (2000)- Contemporary- Navajo, Bilingual
11. *Kinaalda'* (1993)- Contemporary/Traditional- Navajo
12. *Sunpainters* (1994)- Contemporary/Traditional- Navajo
13. *Songs of Shiprock Fair* (1999)- Contemporary- Navajo
14. *Red is Beautiful* (2003)- Contemporary- Navajo, Bilingual

Of the fourteen Native American children's books twelve are Native American authors and two non-Native Authors. There are fourteen Native authors and two Non-Native authors. The illustrators consisted of twelve Native illustrators; one Native photographer, and two non-Native illustrators.

The fourteen Native American children's literature are composed of four different types of genre, and is identified as such; four folktales, six contemporary, and four traditional narratives. The oldest book was published in 1981, then 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2003 and finally the year 2004, are the published dates.

***Research Question One: What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's books?***

Table 10 that summarizes the textual features identified in the fourteen texts based on the sub-categories of Cultural Themes, Language Patterns, and Cultural Practices and Images.

Table 10 Summary of Findings for the Textual Analysis

<b>General Native American Textual Features: Principal Investigator</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>A. Cultural Themes</b>															
1. Storytelling	2	1		16	32	34	2	2	12		1	8		1	111
a. Ethics				2							1			1	4
b. Teaching		2		1					5	1	2	4		1	16
c. Self Images/Own	5	1	7	4		2	8	1	4	1	3	1			38
2. Sense of Place	2	1	2	4	1	1	2	4	4	3	1	1	10		36
a. Sacred Directions									1		1				2
b. Sacred Places		3				3			7		3		1		17
3. Deep Knowledge		1		6			2		1		8			4	22
4. Relationship		2							5						7
a. Kinship				1											1
b. Family	1	4		2		2		1	1	1	1		13	1	27
c. Association		2		6						3			6	2	19
5. Time	2	1		7			1						5		16
6. Ceremonial								48			25		6		78
7. Animal		1	2	9	2	13				13				1	41
<b>B. Linguistic Pattern</b>															
a. Bilingual: Language	1	1		3			2		2	2	2	1	2	2	18
b. Code-Switching	1	1		5			2				2	1	2		14
c. Rez Talk	1			1			1	1							4
<b>C. Cultural Practices &amp; Images</b>															
Important Roles a. Elders		1	15				8		5	1	1	16	5	8	60
b. Woman	1	15	2	1	4			7	2	4	2		5		43
c. Man		14	3		50		2		5	4	3		5		86
d. Children				8		6	1			1			7		23
i. Girl	9		2	1	14	4		11			2		12	4	49
ii. Boy	8		24	1	1	7	14		5	15		22	2		99
2. Culture														1	1
a. Religion & Belief	1	1									1				3
b. Lifestyles											8	1	1		10
c. Pray	1				4			1	2			1			9

d. Body-wear								8		4	2		6		20
e. Hunting	2	1					1								4
f. Sacred Being				5	25	4		17	18		1				70
g. Food				1		3	3			1		1	3	1	13
h. Dance	4							3					7		15
i. Music	2			4				3		4			7		20
j. Shelter								1			1				2
3. Images															
a. Symbols/Illustrations	19	25	17	42	23	24	25	19	13	26	35	21	16		333
Totals	22	44	0	77	67	9	54	9	83	26	0	24	20	23	

This study was constructed based on the textual features and the procedures conducted to provide evidence of the number of findings containing authentic depictions of Native Americans. The theoretical and methodological foundations of my research came from professional references of examinations of the Native American children's literature views--on what constituted "cultural" representation of Native Americans which provided a basis for examining the textual features in these books.

Native American children's literature contains identifiable, cultural textual features. Tables 6A distinguish the cultural textual features identified within the books as an answer to my first research question. The analyses support the idea that when reading culturally authentic Native American children's literature, students do have the opportunity to read culture.

***Research question two: What types of talk about that these textual features do children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature?***

*Students' Response to the Books*

The three major themes from the textual analysis --*Cultural Themes, Linguistic Patterns* and *Cultural Images and Practices*--were used in the second research question to analyze the data consisting of generating 37 reader response categories to represent how participants made sense of these textual features. This summary is an overview of the responses from the students to the Native American textual features of the books. The following is the student responses based on frequency: *Between, Earth and Sky* (1996) with 83 tallies, then following with *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache* (1981)

with 77 responses and the third highest from the story *The Mouse Couple* (1988) with 67 tallied responses from the students'. Below in Table 11 is the tally of the students' responses to Native American children's literatures

The highest tally of the students responses' was from the book *Between Earth and Sky* (1996) written by a Native Abenaki Joseph Bruchac and illustrated by Thomas Locker (Non-Native ). This book is a compilation of legends from 11 Native American Nations, published by Voyager Books-Harcourt.

The second highest tally of students' responses came from *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* by the White Mountain Apache Language & Culture Program (1981), retold by Apache Elders, Helen Crocker and Mary V. Riley, and finally written in a narrative format by Karen Adley (Apache) and Michael Lacapa (Apache), and illustrated by Michael Lacapa (Apache). The book is composed of three Apache stories, accompanied by illustrations. The stories are traditional narratives, and are narrated in metaphoric tones.

The third highest responses came from the animated story of *The Mouse Couple* (1988). The story is a Hopi folktale. The author is Ekkehart Malotki a non-Native who teaches Hopi language, and the publisher is KIVA Publishing from Walnut, California.

### **The Significance of Storytelling as Teaching**

In the General Native American Textual Features in the category, *Cultural Themes*, the students had many responses related to *Storytelling: Teaching*, with a tally of 61 and *Self Images/Own* with a tally of 45. Within the Teaching subcategory, 32 responses come

from *The Mouse Couple* (1988), then *Red is Beautiful* (2003), and *Antelope Woman* (1992). The following is some of the responses of the students in regards to the stories identified as high responses, plus the teaching from the story.

Table 11 Native American Textual Features Identified in Children's Responses to 14 Native American Children's Literature: Cultural Themes

<b>General Textual Features</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>A. Recurring Themes</b>			X											<b>11</b>
1. Storytelling	X	X												X <b>11</b>
a. Ethics			X						X					<b>9</b>
b. Teaching		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X <b>61</b>
c. Self Images/Own	X	X				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	<b>45</b>
2. Sense of Place	X		X											<b>2</b>
a. Sacred Directions				X										<b>14</b>
b. Sacred Places								X						<b>14</b>
3. Deep Knowledge			X		X									X <b>15</b>
4. Relationship														
a. Kinship			X						X		X			<b>6</b>
b. Family		X	X									X		<b>7</b>
c. Association			X											<b>11</b>
5. Time														
6. Ceremonial							X					X		<b>12</b>
7. Animal	X		X					X	X					<b>22</b>

*The Mouse Couple* (1988) preserves an authentic traditional narrative and provides a quality children's book based on cultural sources. The teachings of the story are about the importance of prayers, respect for Elders, Parents, Yourself, etc., assistance of one another, love for one another, and the need to be determined in actions. The following is the students' responses to this book:

CORRINE: *Prayers... feathers... feelings*

JAGGO: *Kept on praying...*

LYNDA: *To respect others.*

CORRINE: *And help your elders.*

LYNDA: *Help your parents.*

LYNDA: *Respect your parents, and ...*

CORRINE: *Love for the daughter*

LYNDA: *If you want something ... you try hard to get*

In the category of *Storytelling: Self Images/Own*, the highest tallies came from the story *Red is Beautiful* (2003) and *Antelope Woman* (1992). The students experienced the text through visualizing their grandparents and uncles, and how they were hard working people plus the learning from the elders. The story is about a mystical happening that inspired the students and more important reminded them of their own culture. The following is some of the response of the students about how they see themselves and their own Native people.

SJANTE: *I like ... the part where grandma want her to learn everything before her grandmother dies.*

*SJANTE: I like that because ... because before my grandma use to tell me that before and my grandpa did too but he died too. And he use to tell me make you learn this and make sure you're responsible.*

*KORDELL: Remind me of my grandma.*

*KORDELL: What the story Antelope Woman make me think about is my grandparents when she was like that Woman working so hard.*

*KORDELL: And how it make me feel like I want to go through Four Hoops and come out an Antelope. And I would like to run into the catus without getting hurt on my feet.*

*SAMSON: I enjoyed the book, because it reminded me of me, my Uncle and my cousin. We went hunting but we didn't shoot no deer up in the mountains.*

*SAMSON: Part of the story reminded me of my culture.*

It is very important for the children to know who they are and where they come from; their responses reflect Apache understandings of our relationships with one another, other people, the earth, and the universe. *Storytelling* provides information about where a people come from, why they were created, how familial and extended relationships are essential, and how we must attribute our own existence to our environment.

### *Socialization*

One interesting finding is from the category of *Socialization*, a subcategory of the Cultural Theme of *Relationships*. Most of the responses came from *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981). I feel this is interesting that this was the story the students were drawn to because all the students are Apache from this tribe and they really took to this book. The following is some of the students' responses to this book:

CF4: *It's telling that you should listen to who your family, people who are older than you.*

PAULA: *Yeah, and the story was told in a way that made you behave and listen to what your family trying to tell you*

JOSEPH: *I'm saying that the story is to teach the young Apache children to listen, behave, and if you don't the Big Old Owl Witch will come down from the mountain and take you away while you sleep at night.*

PAULA: *I remember being scared because the way my grandmother told the story, when I was young and she made it real.*

ANGELEA: *Yes, they talk to one another and help each other out.*

KAILA: *The part when he asked his cousin for help.*

KAILA: *He had to ask his cousin to help the Baby Robin to his nest in the tree.*

KAILA: *Teamwork.*

SJANTE: *Teamwork it a daily thing, in school, to help clean, work wash clothes.*

This book is composed of three stories and each story the students' responses indicated that they lived an experience through the *Relationship of a Kinship, Family, or Association*. Being an Apache this is the Way of Life. The learning is done through stories focused on respecting the elders and parents and helping each other to complete a task as part of everyday life. A second sub-theme of storytelling that surfaced during data analysis is associated with the individual's self-learning concerning who s/he is in this world. *Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People* is conveyed through oral storytelling describing the past, through narratives that have moral values that Native American people incorporate into their ways of living, learning, and acknowledging themselves as individuals.

#### *Sense of Place*

In the sub-category, *Sense of Place*, the following are some of the responses of the students from *Between Earth and Sky* (1993). This book contains legends of Native American sacred places. Bruchac (1993), Abenaki poet and author, notes that sacred places of the landscape of North America are filled with places that hold deep, sacred meaning to the Native people. Many of those sacred places are connected to lessons that we all need to hear. Within the students' responses they also noted the knowledge of where the sacred places are located and acknowledgement of this as a special place to pray. This is an indication that they have their own experiences of sacred places on their Indigenous Nations plus know the proper ways to pray.

CF4: *Where we go to pray.*

DEBBIE: *It's a special place.*

SAMSON: *People pray there ... the Land is clean.*

PAULA: *...sacred place, the White Mountain ... Mount Baldy*

The sense of belonging to a very specific place is multi-faceted and incorporates the purpose of belonging, a sense of home, a sense of harmony, respect for the forces of nature, and communicating with the balance and harmony of the terrestrial environment and the Cosmo-Universe. For many Native Americans, including my own Apache people, a *Sense of Place* is defined through location, referred to as the sacred places, the four directions, and the role of languages that is tied to the landscape.

#### *Ceremonial A Way-of-Life*

In the subcategory of *Ceremonial*, the following indicates the students' responses to the text of *The Changing Woman* (1993). The author developed this book through visiting an Apache Medicine Man who taught her about the Apache Way of Life and through this dialogue she was advised to learn so that others will better understand, appreciate and respect the Apache people. This book conveys the ceremony as the Apache people sees it themselves, and all the illustrations are paintings by Apache artists. The students' responses to this book of the Changing Woman reveal their knowledge of the Apache ceremony called, *Na'ii'ees*, meaning the ceremony is still happening and the people are getting girls ready for womanhood. In English the title of the ceremony means the Gift of Changing Woman. The following are their responses about their own experiences--a mother going through this ceremony, being young, the

purpose of the Crown Dancers, and the sacred Way the Apache people conduct this sacred ceremony to honor an Apache girl coming-of-age. Through the *Ceremony* the girl will receive blessings, guidance, advice, and an example of how she should live her life.

LISA: *My mom, she had a sunrise dance.*

All: *And then come the crown dancers.*

PAULA: *The first time I saw them I was so scared of the Crown Dancers.*

SAMSON: *My grandpa told me that they help her go through the dance on Saturday and Sunday. They have it different ways.*

JOSEPH: *... Like the mud ... they go by the river or something and find like some of the brown stuff. And they put it in bowl then they pour water in it and mix it up.*

*Ceremony* is a way of life integrated into Native American cultural activities. *Ceremony* involves unique, ritualized social gatherings for the purpose of prayers or dances through which the Creator or Deities of the Universe are evoked to support requests for enlightenment, foretelling, blessings, healing, or to overcome any difficulties. *Ceremony* is characterized through the use of dance, song, and prayer. It is revealed through Native American children's literature as consisting of these components and representing the culture of which it is a product. When it does so, it provides culturally authentic narratives.

### *Animals*

In the subcategory of *Animals*, the responses come from the story, *Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981), a book designed and developed by the White Mountain Apache Johnson O'Malley Language and Culture Program under the Tribal Education Department. The content of this book contains a story of *Spider Helps Robin*. The students' responses indicate how they perceived the story as a learning experience of how to work together to get a task accomplished, how to ask for help, and how long ago, the animals did talk to one another. But more over, this story teaches students that it is important to communicate and work toward a goal to accomplish anything in life. The following are students' responses to this story:

SJANTE: *And that's how the Spider helped the Robin back into his nest.*

KAILA: *Teamwork.*

SJANTE: *It's cool ... like it when they did teamwork to get the bird back into the tree.*

KALIB: *Because it helps you accomplish more suff.*

The theme of *Animals* is derived from Native American children's literature in my study that contains stories about *Animals*. Most of these stories provide teaching to anyone who listens. These stories involve the origin and history of our Native People, our creation stories, and stories of *Animals* assisting our Native People to survive. The animal portrays a spiritual being in the sight of the Native People. Furthermore, the professional references provide additional support on how the animals in the stories are significant in the ways that Native Americans utilize stories through teachings of how to

live the Native way, how to respect all things, and how to respect the animals. Overall, the theme of Animals utilized in our Native stories support, guide and inform us more about who we are as Native Americans.

*Deep Knowledge of Coming-To-Know*

In the sub-category of *Deep Knowledge*, the students' responses are from the books, *Between Earth and Sky* (1996) and *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981). In *Between Earth & Sky* (1996) the introduction of the book notes that, the landscape of North American is filled with places that hold deep, sacred meaning to the native people, and some of the locations are where special ceremonies took places. In addition other places are related to stories from long ago. The dialogue of the students' responses about different sacred places included discussion of a sacred place on the reservation. The place they mentioned is sacred to the Apache people because this is where salt is collected, and salt is a very important because of how it is utilized in the ceremonies to pray with and for food. The following are the students' responses to this story:

LISA: *The salt banks, down by Salt River. They use the salt to pray with, they use the salt to cleanse the food, they use the salt in so many ways ... I thought the river had salt in it.*

*Deep Knowledge* in coming-to-know or 'finding life' involves participation in cultural activities to maintain the understanding, observation, and knowledge through understanding of one's self. In *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe*

(1981) the story *Cooking Stick*, is told by Mary V. Riley a distinguished elder of the tribe. The story is about the origin of the Apache people, how the Apache people had to flee from the soldiers, and how the Head Crown Dancer led the people to the ocean. At this same time a mother asked her daughter to go back and get her brush. The girl ran off and a boy not her relative ran after her. These two children got left behind and returned back to their camp. When this happened, a stick lying near them started speaking to them and helped them survive through his guidance and knowledge of the Apache Way of Life. The students' responses came from this section of the story. The dialogue suggests that this story was a learning experience, both for the two children characters and the students learning that the stick could talk and teach.

*MARIA: Yes, I liked the story a lot because I like the talking stick and I love the part when the stick told the children that you must marry and start a new village.*

*MARIA: I like it when the cooking stick showed up, or started talking to the girl and boy when they where back at their camp.*

*TSCHAWN: Cooking stick started to talk to the children and before it didn't talk and this exciting to me because I never knew a stick could talk.*

*AM1: Also, the stick told them, I will tell you what food to pick and carry me around with you.*

*Deep Knowledge* is critical to Native people, and is inherent in narratives dealing with knowledge that is passed down to the younger generation through narratives that explain the occurrence of natural events, knowledge of natural resources, and knowledge

obtained through participating in ceremony. Learning, listening, experiencing and respecting is learned through the actions of the Native youth leading to understanding the Native Ways of conducting one's self or applying the knowledge gained to help other people.

### *Language*

Within the *Linguistic Pattern*, my findings from the students' response indicate high responses related to (1) *Bilingual: and Language*, (2) *Code Switching*, and (3) *Rez Talk*. In the (*Linguistic Pattern: Bilingual and Language*, it was my intent to convey the message by teaching language awareness and cultural attributes to my Native American students. This program of instruction was facilitated, out of necessity, in English, which most speak as a first (and sadly, as a sole) language. I used bilingual books in my study to reinforce the importance of the Native languages as well as the knowledge and messages they carry within their traditional narratives. Language is important to Native people because it is the soul of who we are. Utilizing our Native languages within the school curriculum would enhance the quality of education available to our Native students as well as any other students, all of whom would benefit from being culturally aware of and sensitive to different languages. I incorporated three Native American children's literature books to include bilingual books using Navajo, Spanish and Keres Pueblo languages. Through these stories, the students heard renditions of their own traditional oral origins. They were introduced to other Indigenous cultures, history, contemporary stories, and of course, their own languages as well.

*Linguistic Pattern*, (2) *Code Switching* involves the integration of Indigenous words in a text consisting primarily of English words. The Native American children's literature book evaluated for this dissertation which incorporated code-switching includes the following three stories. The first is titled: *The Old Owl Witch*, from the book, *The Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe* (1981). I noticed the students were starting to code-switch in their talk when referring to the Old Owl Witch by the Apache name: *Buchoh Saan*. This story is about the Old Owl Witch that comes down from the mountain carrying a huge Burden Basket, and she finds children that are naughty or misbehaving. She catches them and puts them in her big basket and takes them back up the mountain where she lives, throwing them into the hot boiling water to cook. The students' responses indicate that they understand who this old witch woman is and know her by her Apache name, *Buchoh Saan*. The students in the fifth grade classroom consisted mostly of students who understand the Apache language but can't speak it fluently. This story has made an impact in their own lives because they picked up the Apache name for the witch.

LISA: *Buchoh Saan*

PAULA: *My mom would tell me if I don't behave Buchoh Saan would come and get me.*

Another Apache story titled, *The Gift of Changing Woman* (Seymour, 1993) integrates the Apache language into the text. Seymour researched Apache prior traditions in *When the Rainbow Touches Down*, her examination of Native American art which led to, a detailed description of that Apache Nation's Na'ii'ees ceremony (known in English

as the Gift of Changing Woman), a four-day celebration of the Apache puberty ceremony, which encompasses the transition from girlhood to womanhood. The story focuses on the Apache spiritual beliefs that are significant to the Apache people for each part of the ritual and the roles played by the girl's family, godparents, the medicine man and the Gaan, four dancers who represent the Mountain Spirits and assist the girl. The Apache ceremony, *Na'ii'ees* (implies 'the ceremony is happening and the people are getting the girl ready for womanhood') is an Apache word incorporated into the English text. Another Apache word frequently utilized in the text is *Gaan*, a name of a benevolent spirit – who holds the earth in place. The following are the students' responses to this book:

LISA: *My mother had a naiiees, or Sun Rise Dance.*

All: *And then the Crown Dancers... Gaan are the strength...*

SAMSON: *The Gaan, help the girl... prayers, guidance through the dance.*

JOSEPH: *The Yellow pollen is used in the Naiiees... for prayer for her...*

SAMSON: *For Blessing...*

The significant aspect of *Ceremony* emerged as dance, songs and prayers. All contribute to and enhance the ritual of Native American cultures. Another element of Prayer is involved in Ceremonies because it evokes a blessing, one that will allow the ceremony to go right and be successful for the girl and her people, and will deter any obstacles. *Ceremony* involves unique, ritualized social gatherings for the purpose of prayers or dances through which the Creator or Deities of the Universe are evoked to

support requests for enlightenment, foretelling, appreciation, blessings, healing, or to overcome any difficulties. Of course language is of prime importance in the ceremonies because all of the rituals are conducted in the Native language, in this case, Apache language.

In *Linguistic Pattern*, the sub-category of *Rez Talk* was derived from the students' responses to the text and group interviews. For the purposes of this discussion, I describe *Rez-talk* as a dialectical lingo spoken on Indigenous lands and only fully understood by people living extensively on the reservation. Rez Talk is a mixture of Apache and English words spoken together in everyday language. This is because we are accustomed to hearing the English language and its everyday usage has taken over Native American minds. The bombardment of that language has conditioned us to respond in English rather than Native language. As a result a combination of Apache and English words is uttered when speaking to create Apache-English Rez Talk. The following are the responses of the students *Rez-talk*, from the book; *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004):

JASMINE: *Seen that somewhere before... At down below.*

TSCHAWN: *... a place here on the reservation that is similar to that ...  
by FATCO...*

*The Gift of the Changing Woman* (1993), is the next book where the students used *Rez-talk*:

SAMSON: *Innet ... I was scared of the Crown Dancer, too.*

SAMSON: *Kkaay... scared...*

*Rez-talk* is also associated with being able to talk in a comfortable environment and expressing who you are by voicing your own opinions without hesitation, so that talking the “talk” of the *Rex-talk* will continue.

### *Cultural Values*

Within *Cultural Practice* and *Images* my findings indicated a high response from the students in these categories: (1) *Important Roles: Woman & Boys*, (2) *Prayer*, (3) *Sacred Beings*, and (4) *Food*. *Important Roles: Woman* had the highest response and is discussed first and then *Boys* will follow. It is the *Woman* who gives life, it is the *Woman* who is kind in her role as nurturer to the children to whom she gives birth, it is the *Woman* who is generous in everything she freely gives, showing kindness to everyone who comes into her life, also possessing pride and confidence within herself, are attributes. The following are responses of the students about the role of women from the book, *Between Earth and Sky* (1996):

DEBBIE: *Describe the young woman... as Brave.*

SAMSON: *Brave and ...Pray.*

LISA: *Pray to the Thunder Beings.*

DEBBIE: *She gave thankfully... she didn't cry or scream when she was going down the waterfall... because she knows that the Thunder Beings would help her.*

PAULA: *When she believed... faith.*

PAULA: *She just... just trusted in him to help her... thankful.*

DEBBIE: *Grateful.*

All: *And Faithful.*

In the early Native American Way of Life for young boys, the development of the way of thinking for youth was produced by the interplay with natural forces. Learning by doing in the natural environment was a valuable experience. In *Important Roles of Boys*, the reflections of the children indicate that the role of boys includes their characteristics, journeys, trials, and experiences. The following are the responses of the students from the story; *BiDii* (2000) which is about a Navajo boy who is greedy but learns to change his way through his own misbehaviors:

KALIB: *He like to eat like us and ride horses to.*

DM4: *Yeah, I like him... I am like him.*

DM4: *He was naughty/*

KALIB: *He learned his lesson... when he was showing off.*

DM1: *When we get embarrassed... we ahh maybe start to cry.*

VANGIE: *Sometime my ear turns red.*

DM4: *The impression of the book was that I felt... embarrassed... embarrassed for him.*

The high number of responses to the important roles of woman may be due to the student ratio of twelve girls to eight boys in the class. The girls may have been more interested in the role of women in the literature. The highest number of responses by the boys was most likely due to their interest to the male character, who was mischievous and that was who they identified with. *BiDii* was like them. In *Culture: Images*:

*Symbols/Illustrations* the following are the students' responses to *Antelope Woman* (1992) on this topic:

VANGIE: *I like the illustration of the lady making a burden basket, it, that what the Apache people do ... my grandmother, she just make burden baskets ... she teaching me ... I know how*

From the story of *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) the students' responses were

MARIA: *Yes, because it's good... the drawing.*

ANGELICA: *That we can learn about the tradition.*

ANGELICA: *The Apache Tradition.*

And from the story of *The Flute Player* (1990) the students' responses were:

VANGIE: *Yes, even the women dress, does look like camp dress.*

VANGIE: *I like the illustration of the lady making a burden basket, it that what the Apache people do.*

VANGIE: *Yes... the illustrations of the Apache people... yes it makes a difference... because it has pretty design and it has a lot of Apache people.*

VANGIE: *Because the kids want to learn some story about their culture.*

ANGELEA: *And it has different designs.*

ANGELEA: *Because the design is really important in the Apache culture.*

An *Image* is a vivid description or representation of a concept, idea, being, object, or event. *Images* are representative in nature, and may consist of characters, figures, marks, icons, pictograms, or even visions within our own minds. Symbology is an important aspect of Native American cultures, which were all oral cultures. Many

teachings about Native American Culture to the following generations are explained by utilizing animated symbols to express a concept of an existence of how things or events occur. Creative Native American minds formulated unique narratives to transmit information that needed to be comprehended and not forgotten. At times, these narratives were created using epic figures, symbols, or animated events to help the listener understand the information or lesson being transmitted and to remember it accurately.

### **Transmitting Cultural Images and Symbols**

The largest pattern of the student responses derived from the frequency tallies among the Native American children's literature was *Cultural Practice and Images*. Participants focused on the subcategory of *Images* with 77 responses to represent how participants worked to make sense of the illustrations. The highest tallied response for *Illustrations* was from *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004), *The Mouse Couple* (1988), *Antelope Woman* (1992) and *Sunpainters* (1994). The following is an overview of the books and some of the students' responses from these books about the illustrations.

The illustration of *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) are full of color and landscapes that are familiar to the students. As Simon Ortiz writes, "The Good Rainbow Road is located in the Native American world, but it is not limited to that world. Even considering humankind's many ethnic and racial differences, we are all part of each other as people and the rest of all Creation, and our stories join us together" (p. x). This is the foundation of *The Good Rainbow Road*, and on that road young readers will broaden their understanding of humanity's common bonds. The students' responses reveal how

the illustrations identify the environment, the world they know and have experienced, and how they live through the memories reflected in the illustrations. The following are some of the students' responses:

JASMINE: *Illustrations of ... it's has a rainbow, rock, road, flowers, and clouds.*

MARIA: *It reminds me of ... of after when it rain, sometimes I picture these kind of color in the rainbow.*

MARIA: *Illustration ... because its interesting, it reminds me of our reservation.*

ANGELICA: *Illustration ... it reminds me of going up the mountain*

ANGELICA: *It reminds me of ... maybe a grandma and a son ... or a grandson.*

JASMINE: *I like it ... it's cool.*

MARIA: *The illustration ... it's a rainbow and it has a lot of different kinds of shapes in it and different colors.*

EZRA: *Like the reading the book ... the drawing and all that.*

EZRA: *Illustrations... this one, where he jumping over the fire.*

EZRA: *Because of the colors, and just the colors, that's it.*

ANGELICA: *The characters in the illustration ... Armond and son.*

The second highest set of responses in *Images and Symbols: Illustration* is from *Mouse Couple* (1988), and the third highest set of responses is to the book *Antelope Woman* (1992). Both of these books were illustrated by Michael Lacapa of Apache,

Hopi, and Tewa descent. His illustration of his earlier work reflects patterns and designs of Native basketry and pottery that influenced his art, but the flow of the images became more complex, more that of a vision. The responses of the students indicate their experiences with these images and symbols in the illustrations and how they make sense of each one. The following are responses of students toward both of the books mentioned:

JAGGO: *That blue thing...*

JAGGO: *... shape... A tepee...*

KORDELL: *...shape...Sharp*

LYNDA: *...wind...it can be rough*

CORRINE: *...hair looks all tangle...yeah*

BF5: *...what's in their mouth... straw*

LYNDA: *...symbolize a mountain... a warrior*

KORDELL: *...shape like... a triangle*

LYNDA: *...looks like ... a mountain*

SAMSON: *It was kind of magical because some two young people turned into antelope.*

KORDELL: *I like it when she run through the four hoops and turn into a antelope.*

SAMSON: *The bright colors as they turn it an antelope, magical, the images of the changes... of the colors make it come to live...*

MATTHIAS: *Throughout the story the colors of the illustration makes the story real... like your part of the story.*

The fourth highest set of responses is to *The Sunpainters* (1994), from the Navajo illustrator, Baje Whitethorne, a Navajo artist making children's books about Navajo life, using a-story-within-a-story. Grandfather Pipa calls Kii Leonard into the hogan to tell him that the sun "has died"-- a solar eclipse has washed the surrounding mountains in deep purples and reds. This experience is conveyed through a Native American perspective with illustrations that in brilliant colors and in traditional Navajo patterns. The students' responses are indications that they made sense of the illustrations through the colors, the environment, and the characters in the story. The following is the responses of the students of this story:

KORDELL: *The illustrations are so beautiful.*

KAILA: *Everything in this book looks so real because the author, and illustrator made it look real, they also made you feel like you can travel back into the Navajo times.*

KAILA: *I think I love most about the story is drawings, and the paintings.*

KAILA: *I noticed all of the people, the way the author/illustrated them; they look so real, like they are going to pop out of the book.*

KAILA: *It is so amazing how he created the little kids (Illustrator).*

KAILA: *And the Great Rainbow color.*

DEBBIE: *I think this book is real interesting because only one person has written and illustrated by himself.*

DEBBIE: *I had really enjoyed this book. What I had noticed is this book almost about Mother Earth and how the Clowns repaint the trees and flowers...*

Many teachings about Native American culture to the following generations utilize animated symbols to express a concept of an existence of how things or events occur. Creative Native American minds formulated unique narratives to transmit information that needed to be comprehended and not forgotten. At times, these narratives were created using epic figures, symbols, or animated events to help the listener understand the information or lesson being transmitted and to remember it accurately.

**The third question: What are children's perspectives about reading and discussing Native American children's books?**

In answering this question I conducted a group interview of the students to obtain information about the students overall perspectives of utilizing the Native American children's literature in this study. The first set of interview questions is called, *Background*, and the second set of interview questions is called, *Details of the Experience*. Each set of responses is based on the high responses of answering the questions.

The students' responses to the question of experiences with reading before fifth grade indicate that they were exposed to different types of reading programs that were aimed to enhancing reading. This question obtained information about the students' previous reading experiences prior to fifth grade and indicated significant types of literature the students read.

The students' responses to the types of books they have read indicate that the books listed are books that are chapter books from the genres of Fantasy, Magical, Informational, and Animal. The books used in the study enhanced student experiences with reading utilizing a different type of reading that they had not experienced with outside or inside the classroom.

The student responses to the interview question provide information about their experience with Native American children's literature in the study. The students reported enjoying the dialogue of the different types of tribe. The responses indicated that they have had personal experiences related to the literature and that they have learned about themselves, Apaches, through the literature. Furthermore, the different Native American children's literature from the Southwest Region that represented five or more different tribes had an effect on the students' experiences that were positive, enjoyable, informative, and they could relate to their own family relationship.

The interviews indicated that the students believed that they learned more from the dialogue about the different tribes represented in the literature, the discussion was a learning experience, and that each book represented a culture of the tribe.. This information is important to how the discussions brought out information about how Native American children's literature educated them on the different tribes. When a question arose, the teacher as well as the students explained more in detail about the tribe that was in question. The cultures of the more than five tribes represented in these books were recognized and explored by the students.

The students indicated that the characters in the story reminded them of a relative or friend who they have learned from or they consider as a friend. In addition, the student indicated that the story provided guidance of appropriate behavior. The most influential stories were the Apache, and these stories brought their personal memories of experiences with family members or friends, especially the story of the Old Owl Witch who captures Apache children who misbehave. The students' responses indicate that the students learned either through past experiences that the story reminded them of or through understanding that stories of the Apache people should be respected through listening and the knowledge obtained must be applied to the students' own life.

The narrative stories that were read aloud to the students in a small group provided assistance and understanding of the students' own life. In addition, the stories provides acknowledgement of Deep Knowledge of one of the Nation's sacred places. Over all, the students' responses indicate that the stories offer insights into the Way of Life of the Native People, being a prayerful person, meditation brings positive outcome in one's life, knowing who you are and respecting each other for who they are, and the Deep Knowledge of each individual of the particular Nation who obtains the knowledge because of the purpose of that sacred place.

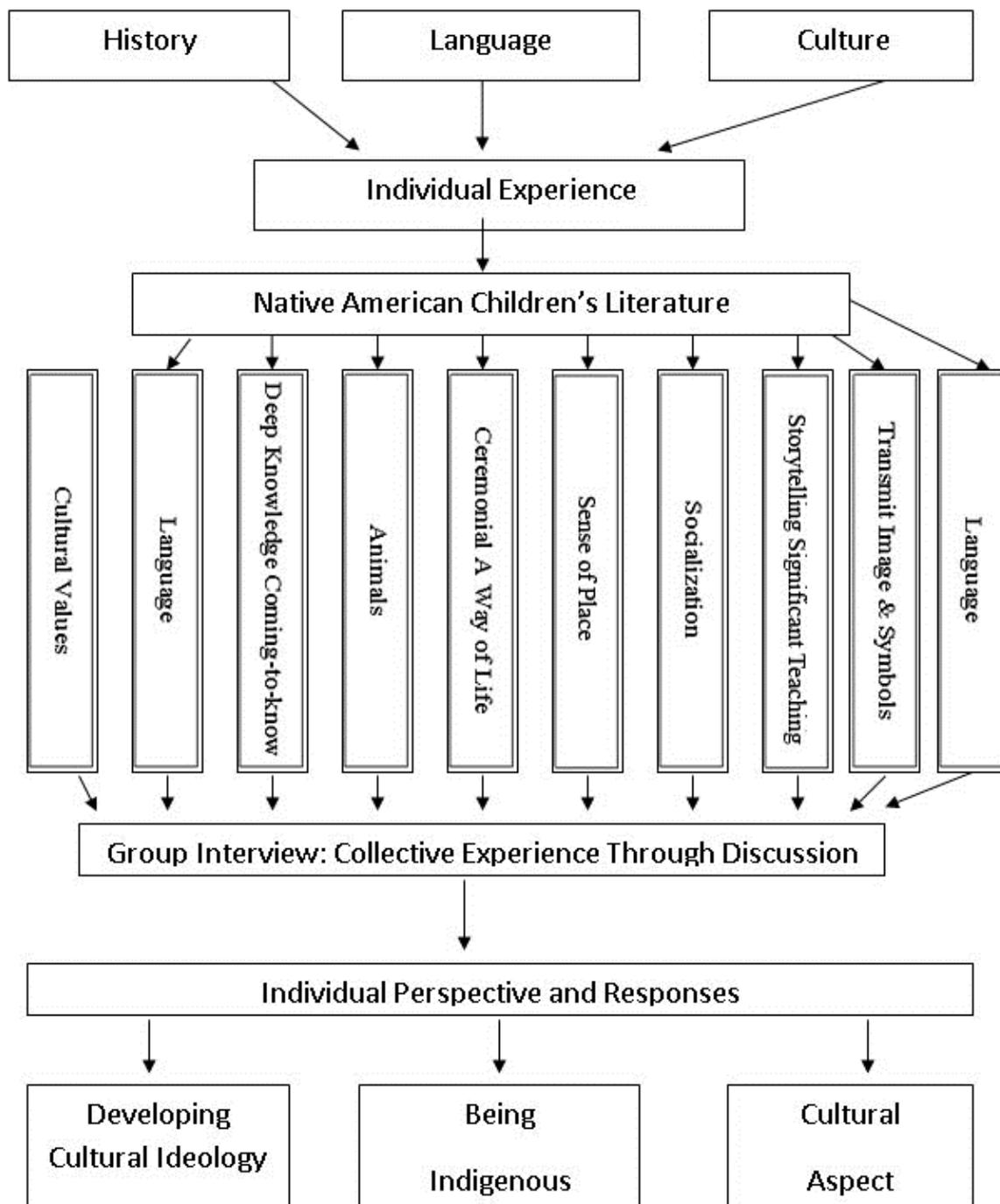
### **Summary of Key Findings**

Research question one asks: What Native American textual features are identifiable in fourteen Native American children's book? I have constructed my own research based on the textual features and the procedures from Wanda Brooks study on

multiple perspectives about authentic depictions of African Americans. Subsequently, my study focused on Native American children's literature textual features and used these features to examine students' responses and their perspective of culturally authentic Native American children's literature. The theoretical and methodological foundations of my research came from professional references of examinations of the Native American children's literature and culture--on what was viewed as constituting "cultural" representations of Native American culture. This review of the literature formed my initial categories for examining the textual features of Native American children's literature. These categories were then adjusted based on the actual analysis of the books to see which were relevant for this set of texts.

Research question two asks: What are the types of talk that children engage in through literature circles of Native American children's literature? As the children engaged in literature discussions of culturally authentic literature they shared individual experiences with the Native American children's literature based on their knowledge through the reading, culture and language. The responses of the children revealed the content of the discussion through dialogue of the Native American children's literature that evoked the group experiences. Then, the outcome of the collective group experience the children reflected the types of talk and responses over time.

Research question three asks: What are children's perspectives on reading Native American children's literature? Each child's experience with the Native American children's literature developed within the collective group experience that affected their personal engagement through the talk of the students.



**Figure 1 Summary of Key Findings**

### *Implications of the Study*

The implications of this study are organized by the implications for classroom teacher, teacher educators, publishers, authors, illustrators, researchers, and Native people. Each part discusses implications for the respective group. The implications are followed by limitations in the research, suggestions for further studies, and the significance of the study.

#### *Implication for Classroom Teachers*

The implications for teachers, especially those of Native American students, are significant because I believe that classroom teachers play an important role in determining the curriculum that is taught and how the instruction is delivered. Given the nature of this study, one of the major implications is written for the classroom and Native teachers, in relationships and instruction. Being a teacher in a classroom, we must utilize different approaches geared to the learning needs of American Indian students and adjust our teaching to match the learning needs of these students.

#### *Opportunities to Identify with Culturally Authentic Native American Children's Literature*

Teachers must provide children with experiences that enable them to see themselves in the literature. It is very important that children who are Native Americans have the experience of reading literature that is about their own Native Nation as well as

other Native Nations. Particularly, in Apache stories, “our responsibility is that of telling our White Mountain children of this generation our traditional White Mountain Apache stories through written form” (Adley & Lacapa, 1981). I believe that by seeing images of themselves in the literature the children’s individual and cultural experiences were validated. Living through the literature occurs by having available books about their own culture.

I believe that through reading books about their own culture the children were drawn to the stories. Through this the Native American children’s literature contains identifiable, cultural influences that increased the background knowledge of the children about Native cultures. Rosenblatt (1995) notes that the reader draws on past experience of life and language to create meaning from the printed words, and it is possible to see how through these words the reader reorganizes past experience to attain new understanding (p. 25). The children reading culturally authentic literature may have past experiences of life they can relate to, and also text they know about and so place within their own cultural context. For that reason, the children may acknowledge more about what they are reading, making it necessary for the teacher to continue to provide children with experiences in reading and responding to culturally authentic literature.

Reyhner (192b) urges teachers not to use basal readers and textbooks designed for teaching suburban, middle-class white children. Instead, he proposes reading books that are culturally relevant and appropriate for American Indian students. The Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (Brown, 1992) suggests that art teachers should recognize the cultural heritage of American Indian students as an asset; create, warm, accepting environments

to encourage risk-taking in learning and skills; provide contextual clues; adapt content and concept to American Indian students' current skill levels; and incorporate frequent comprehension checks. These two research studies incorporate language development and reading instruction for teachers of Native American children.

It is important for teachers to provide literature that contains identifiable, culturally influenced textual features, and illustrations that express accurate images. Reese (2008) and Mihesuah and Wilson (2004) recommend the importance of literature that has relevance to students, how to use books, the selection of the books, and how they interact with kids around the books. Mihesuah and Wilson (2004) describe a four-point framework for the process of indigenization. Indigenizing means: 1) To carve a space where Indigenous values, and knowledge are respected. This is creating an informed environment within the children's literature arena that supports Indigenous nations building by replacing inaccurate information and displacing stereotypes of American Indians. 2) To create an environment that supports research and methodologies useful to Indigenous nation building. 3) To support one another as institutional foundations are shaken. There is a need to support others in the field of children's literature and inform them by being honest about the place of Indigenous people in history. And 4) to compel institutional responsiveness to Indigenous issues, concerns, and communities by purchasing well-written books by and about American Indians, that are set in the present day and books that accurately portray the past without dehumanizing anyone.

In relation to guidelines for evaluating and selecting Native American literature for the classroom, I would utilize the evaluation form I have created. The questions that

are asked include; 1). How does the book define cultural authenticity? 2). Is the book from an insider or outsider perspective? 3). What experiences does the author have with the culture? 4). For what reasons did the author choose to write this book? 5). What are the criteria for evaluation? 6). Does the book go beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes of the culture? 7). Who has the power? The evaluation takes time, but it is time well spent. Reese (2007) states that, instead of assuming that books are accurate, we need to research the book using print and Web sources and, compare what is learned from these sources with what is in the book (p. 254). I strongly believe that the teacher must know every book in the classroom, especially Native American children's literature. The book must be evaluated for cultural authenticity and be accepted as such, because we must become informed about the books we choose to promote for children in the classroom. Books that are problematic in terms of authenticity can still be used in the classroom but need to be framed within a critical discussion with students.

### *Opportunities for Literature Discussion*

Within literature discussions the students talk about their reading and generate the kinds of talk about issues that are meaningful to them. The children's literature circle is a safe place for the children to talk about issues and connections with each other.

Responses begin with the reader's background experiences, allowing evocation and evaluation while reading, a process in the aesthetic experience. Louise Rosenblatt's reader response theory suggests that there is much potential between two ways of experiencing a

text: reading for understanding (efferent response) and reading as engagement with a text (aesthetic response). Dewey (1939) taught us that, “the primary source of social control resides in which all individuals have an opportunity to contribute and to which all feel a responsibility” (p. 56). Through literature discussion children are able to tell stories, engage in the social nature of learning, experience reading as transaction, and consider the importance of interpretation (Eeds and Peterson, 1997).

Teachers need to provide children with time and space to have literature discussion and provide demonstrations so that meaningful discussions can take place. This allows the children to take part in the discussion of the literature by having time to talk and having the engagement of informal talk and dialogue about the books along with in-depth talk to collaborate and make sense of the talk. I noticed that time during the dialogue the talk was not focused, but giving the children time to share allowed the conversation to develop into a deeper discussion of the book.

### *Culturally Relevant Teaching*

Teacher may be able to better facilitate the learning of all students by adapting their methods of instruction so that a broad range of learning needs are supported (Diessner & Walker, 1989). In doing so, both American Indian students and non-Indian students can be provided with familiar, comfortable and successful experiences while also being exposed to learning in new ways. The classroom modifications that support the students as learners include, but are not limited to a) supplementing traditional forms

of instruction with cooperative learning strategies, b) providing multisensory instruction, and c) increasing the holistic emphasis in student learning.

Steps should be taken to minimize the difficulties arising from such sociolinguistic discontinuities, starting with an effort to learn about the languages and cultures of American Indian students' communities. Also, increasing wait-time, in other words, "the time a teacher pauses after asking a question and also after a student's response, this is an effective method for reducing the sociolinguistic discontinuities American Indian students face in the classroom (Boseker, 1994; Littlebear, 1995; Tharp & Yamauchi, 1994). The increase wait-time is to promote the consistency with the communication patterns of many American Indian communities.

In integrating multicultural perspectives into the curriculum there are four hierarchical levels, with the fourth level being of greatest value according to Banks (1997). These approaches include: 1). The Contributions Approach consists of inserting ethnic heroes or heroines and discrete cultural elements into the mainstream curriculum, without changing the curriculum's goals and salient characteristics. 2). The Additive Approach is characterized by the addition of content, concepts, and themes, and perspective to the curriculum (p. 235). 3). Transformative approach changes the fundamental assumptions, structure and perspectives of the curriculum with the goal of enabling students to view concepts and issues from the perspective of the various cultural, ethnic, and racial groups issue, or concept being studied (p. 237). 4). The Social Action Approach is a continuum of the transformative approach, that required students to make decisions and take action related to the concept, issue or problem studied in the unit

(p. 239). This final approach is to empower the students and help them become skilled participants in social change.

Costantino and Hurtado (2000) state that American Indian children need a supportive, challenging and culturally relevant learning environment to foster their learning development and to provide them with pertinent experiences, background knowledge, and cognitive strategies (p. 52. ). The approach or sufficient background for understanding the text is a crucial factor in reading comprehension (Adams & Collins, 1979; Carrel, 1983a, 1983b, 1983c; Carrel & Wallace, 1983; Rumelhart, 1977). This research area of background knowledge is called *schema theory*, and according to this theory, reading comprehension becomes efficient if the reader is able to relate the written material to his or her own prior experience or knowledge of structures, called *schemata* (Adams & Collins, 1979; Rumelhart, 1980). The difference lies in what the reader brings to the reading task. The cultural background of minority students is the culture embedded in the reading material they encounter in school. For that reason, teacher must be particularly sensitive to reading problems that result from difference between students' background knowledge and the implicit cultural knowledge that a text presupposes (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

Language is a critical component that must be integrated in the classroom curriculum, in particular Native peoples languages of the local communities used to develop stories of their own lives. McCarty and Dick (2003) note that the re-envisioning of curriculum is to embrace the lives and stories of children and families from the local community (p. 105). Research in revitalize the Native languages has been further

indicated by Krauss (1998). The Native Alaska Language Center reported that of an original 300 languages indigenous to North America, 210 were still being spoken (McCarty, 2002c, 2003; McCarty, Watahomigie, & Yamamoto, 1999). Of those languages, only 34 (16%) were still being naturally acquired as a first language by children. By the last 1990s, fully 84% of all surviving Native North American languages had no new speakers to pass them on. Language loss is now proceeding at such a rapid rate, Krauss (1998) writes, “that we stand to lose more indigenous North American languages in the next 60 years than have been lost since Anglo-American contact” (p. 10).

#### *Teacher Educators*

One implication is the needs to educate teachers by providing professional development for teachers and curriculum development to integrate multicultural perspective into the curriculum. Native American Literacy Curriculum Project indicates the need to form a team of cultural specialists, curriculum developers, writers, and artists to work collaboratively and develop curriculum units. In addition, interdisciplinary learning consists of the student learning outcomes of social studies, literacy development, language development, reading skills, and writing skill, and the strategies of storying, retelling, language experience, story structure, now and then, and compare and contrast. In addition these stories can also contain written language of the Native people that can be read by children and revitalize the Native language.

Another area that promotes teacher education is providing course work for undergraduate and graduate students in the area of Native American children's literature. I have developed a course on Native American children's literature in the classroom. This course analyzes and discusses Native American children's literature through all the genres of traditional, contemporary, poetry and historical children's literature and its relationship to language, reading and culture. The students will learn how to evaluate Native American children's literature for cultural authenticity by providing Native books from the United States, Canada, and the world. The students will experience children's literature by reading, exploring, discussing, evaluating, creating and engaging in books written for children. Participant will study authors, poets, illustrators and publishers who write and develop literature for children plus become familiar with references sources related to Native American children's literature that support these studies. Graduate-level requirements include an in-depth research paper and other projects.

#### *Publishers/Authors/Illustrators*

In understanding that citizens of a society have been socialized into narrow views of American Indians, Reese (2008) argues for the conceptualization of writers, illustrators, teachers, librarians, parents, editors and reviewers. To support of them requires presenting persuasive and well reasoned critiques of problematic books and supplying Indigenous perspectives and factual information without accusation and judgment. Supporting includes listening with an open mind to their words, and encouraging American Indian authors and illustrators by using and recommending books.

Reese argues we must compel institutions that publish, review and purchase children's literature to be responsive to Indigenous issues, concerns, and communities. Those who have worked to bring about responsiveness to Indigenous perspectives are Oyate, and the American Indian Library Association, which both point readers to well written books that they deem accurate (p. 61-62).

Writers must read more history and they must use sources more critically, as well as editors, book reviewers, librarians, and teachers, who publish and select and use their books. Most Native authors and illustrators do not go to New York to pursue well know publishers, they have to be looked for and encouraged to submit manuscripts and portfolios.

In Native American children's literature, Bradford (2007) notes that books which represent the identity formation of Indigenous children living in contemporary settings offer a crucial corrective to the many texts by non-Indigenous authors and illustrators that persist in treating Indigenous cultures as locked into ancient and unchanging modes of thought and behaviours, or that depicts Indigenous adolescents within shallow paradigms that are characteristic of "problem" or "issues" novels. The creation or production of Indigenous novels for adolescent young adult readers has lagged behind publication for younger readers and there must be a push for more Indigenous authors and illustrator in producing novels and books for , adolescents and young adults.

Bradford (2007) notes that numerous Indigenous authors tell comparable stories about the problems they face when writing for mainstream audiences, and that systemic forms of interference occur in mainstream publishing companies as the processes of

selection, translation, editing, and marketing typically shape Indigenous texts into mainstream products. In addition, she further notes that the access to publishing houses in settler societies favor those for whom English is their first language, and the minority status of Indigenous readerships ensures that mainstream publishers produce relatively little Indigenous writing except that which can readily be marketed to non-Indigenous readers. Therefore, publishing houses in settler societies are dominated by the Eurocentric cultures that maintain their purchase on political power and cultural production (p. 46).

These problems indicate the importance of the publisher being part of the community such as Selina Bookshelf Press and Storyteller Publisher. Slapin (1990) notes that few Native writers and artists are being published by mainstream presses, and few children have even a passing knowledge of the real histories and culture of Native peoples. The publisher must be located in the region of the authors and illustrators in order to provide books that are culturally authentic because it matters to them. Outside publishers often don't know Native people because they are not part of the community. Publishers need to use other strategies to connect with Native Author/Native Illustrators. In addition, they need to use strategies appropriate for the culture. In addition, the small presses must make a commitment to the authors and illustrators to work with them closely.

### **Further Research**

Other research that needs to be pursued pertaining to the Indigenous education research in reading relates to cultural relevance, traditional knowledge and culturally-based curriculum resources. The Native Nation preparation for teachers being trained in learning or relearning the heritage languages as part of teacher preparation needs to be researched. In addition, more research is needed in the area of projects in different Native Nations that focus on curriculum in literacy and utilize Native cultural specialists, curriculum developers, writers and artists to work together in developing curriculum units and develop strategies for the curriculum. Research is needed to integrate different subject areas within literacy, and to produce stories with illustrations of the Nation's Way of Life, to create a culturally appropriate reading curriculum for the Nation as well as the state. Further research is needed on ways to encourage more Native authors, illustrators, publishers, and photographers.

### **Conclusion**

Stories matter in the lives of Native Americans when members of a community or small groups of relatives gather together to hear narratives which are told by the elders of the tribe. The story conveys information about the specific Native American culture of the community. Narratives are transmitted through Native language, which supports the maintenance of Native identity. They carry information about the origin and history of the people. Embedded in these stories is the important knowledge that we, as Native Americans from specific tribal cultures, must acquire in order to survive and to conduct

ourselves appropriately. Both the narratives and the language that conveys them are place-based in the sense that they are tied to the land, especially the knowledge of where we came from, where we live, how we survive, and our way of life.

Deep knowledge is another key element to our culture; explaining knowledge of Native American ceremonies, narratives, places, relationships, religions, and beliefs that are culturally unique and sacred to individual cultures. Often, this knowledge is kept secret from non-members. Deep Knowledge reflects the most significant values and beliefs in the life of a Native American. Learning the ways of Native American life and how to relate to all of this is to enter the Universe

Identity is associated with the individual learning about who s/he is in this world. Self-Image/Knowledge of One's Own People is conveyed through oral storytelling describing the past, through narratives that have moral values that Native American people incorporate into their ways of living, learning, and acknowledging ourselves as individuals.

Culture as been developed, evolved, and adapted over time, having been passed on from one generation of Indigenous people to the next through their oral traditions. It is these narratives that carry the encoded knowledge systems, worldviews, and identities of a people. The practices followed by and images meaningful to people of an Indigenous culture are manifestations of the epistemologies, entomologies, and worldviews underlying the culture. Indigenous people transmit patterns through art, beliefs, institution, ceremony, and all other processes and thoughts of the Native People.

Jacob and Jordan (1993) note that cultural difference theory focuses on discontinuities between the cultures and languages of these students' homes and communities with the culture and language of the mainstream American society and the public schools. The minority students come from backgrounds that equip them with linguistic, cognitive, and interactional styles that are not fully supported by typical public schools, which instead usually support styles of white, middle-class students. These discontinuities often result in systematic and recurrent miscommunication in the classroom, as well as failure to acknowledge and build upon the knowledge and abilities that minority students bring with them to school (p. 3-13)

Ogubu (1978) suggests that although discontinuities in linguistic, cognitive, and interactional styles may present challenges to American Indians and other minority students, cultural difference theory is inadequate because it fails to explain why some minority groups in the United States are academically successful despite the fact that members of these groups encounter such discontinuities in their educational experiences.

Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) argue that to understand Native people over time, we must strive to understand their theories of the origins of life, their ethics to maintain life, and their methods of constructing the past and envisioning the future. Native theories and histories are expressed in accounts of creation, which we study as we would study philosophy or science; they share a status as systems of thought and explanatory theories guiding human decision making over the centuries. In addition, they guide human beings to observe, organize, explain, cope and plan. Therefore, Native epistemologies also have public and private spaces. Clans possess proprietary rights to

knowledge or skills as historians, storytellers, potters, administrators, or guardian (p. 23-24).

The theories of the Native people in their stories come from the Elders who are the knowledge holders. This knowledge is passed down from generation to generation through stories to survive and plan for the future. The story communicates information about the specific Native American culture of the community. Narratives are transmitted through Native language, which supports the maintenance of Native identity. As such, this research is embedded with theories of origin of life among the Apache, Navajo, Hopi, Keres, and other Native tribes, and each one has their own theories of the Way of Life of their own tribe. The students in this study indicated the Way of Life as they know it through their responses of the Native American children's literature. Stories reinforce what children are taught by their parents of their Native culture and which also reinforces their Native beliefs. And they will carry the message to the future generation – their children.

Bradford (2007) indicates that Indigenous textuality engages in processes of self-representation, using the language of the colonizer to construct Indigenous narratives and meanings. The Indigenous texts for the children, similar to non-Indigenous texts in general, are created primarily for Indigenous readers as they are represented to a wider audience of values, practices, and narratives of the Indigenous cultures. They thus entail two audiences--the children of the cultures in which they are created and non-Indigenous children for whom they are both understandable and emblematic. In addressing these two

particular audiences, the Indigenous text does offer a path toward cultural understanding for the youngest citizens of postcolonial societies (p. 69).

This statement by Bradford provides information on how Indigenous texts provide understanding of that particular language and culture of Native people. Some of the Native American children's literature that was utilized in this study evoked the students' own knowledge of code switching and of rez talk. The students' responses indicate they connect with the literature of their own Apache tribe through the Apache language code switching and rez talk. This is an indication that students do have knowledge of their Apache language and that providing bilingual literature will begin the process of revitalizing the language through Native American children's literature.

Reese (2004) notes that the greatest need is for more Native American children's literature that provides a contemporary perspective. These books are best written by Native American authors (Cullinan and Galda, 1994) but non-Native people have demonstrated that careful research and sensitive writing can result in a quality children's book that should also be a part of the classroom library. As teachers work on building their collections of Native American children's literature, they must bear in mind that books about Native Americans recognized by the staff at Reading Rainbow or other such entities may be problematic. The best tools a teacher can use to aid in selecting books about Native Americans are selection and evaluation guides written by Native people. In addition, it is also helpful to read books reviews written by Native people (p. 181) Native children must learn that being Indian and being successful are not mutually exclusive

(Szasz, 1992). Non-Native children must learn that Native Americans are alive and well in the 2000s. Quality children's literature can help both groups of children.

The Native American children's literature which was utilized in this research was first evaluated for cultural authenticity before this study began and later utilized in literature circles as the children responded to the texts. And within the group interviews students' responses to the text provide indications of their perspectives of how culture is portrayed by each tribe represented. Moreover, the literature empowers students through their own knowledge of their tribal culture plus learning other Native cultures and languages.

Cajete (1994) states that the Indian educator involved in Indian education issues must consider alternative cultural possibilities of education. Cajete's approach is to encourage a teacher to create curricula through constantly creating models and applying them to actual teaching situations. This work explores a culturally-informed alternative for considering contemporary education for American Indian people. It is a translation of foundational Tribal education principles within a contemporary framework of thought and description. It advocates developing a contemporary, culturally-based, educational process influenced with traditional Tribal values, orientation, and principles, while simultaneously employing the most appropriate concepts, technologies, and matters of modern education (p. 17).

The implications of this study for culturally based education incorporating Native American children's literature in classroom include focusing on the features of literature in the categories of Cultural Themes, Language Patterns and Cultural Practices and

Images as the base for students' responses to literature. And furthermore, students' responses indicate their vast knowledge of their own culture, language, and history of their people.

Native American fifth graders responses to culturally authentic Native American children's literature indicate that these books affect the students' identity of who they are. I say this because throughout the study the students read about the history, language, and culture of their Native people. It is evident through this study that we know about the enthusiasm, interest, and self reflection that students from Native American background use to respond to texts. As teachers we can utilize this analysis to better develop our curriculum and instruction geared to Native American students with prior cultural knowledge of themselves through their learning experiences. The study also support understanding how readers from a similar ethnicity respond to Native American textual features represented in culturally authentic Native American children's literature.

In this study, I analyzed fourteen Native American children's books and made known that Native American textual features are identified in these stories. I then analyzed the books according to the features: a). Cultural themes; b). Linguistic patterns; and c). Cultural practices and images. Within the writings there were various portrayals of cultural practices in the books, and these depictions helped to characterize the stories as culturally authentic Native American children's literature.

This study indicates that using culturally authentic Native American children's literature provided the children with the opportunity to read about Native American people, just like them and so reaffirmed their cultural beliefs and identity. Furthermore,

through the literature discussion, the children's individual experiences were revealed through storytelling, along with their culture values, socialization, and language patterns. Through this talk the students acknowledged their own culture through the stories, through their family members, through learning from each other's talk about different cultural issues and through their self images of themselves as individuals in a contemporary world.

The literature provided a unique place where the students could see themselves within the text that had become relevant to their own lives through the teaching of their Elders and older family members of the tribe. The students revealed that through the talk and the literature, text and images, students acquired knowledge of their own cultures and of other cultures but more importantly they disclosed prior knowledge of their own Apache Way of Life. Furthermore, their use of code switching and rez talk portrayed how the students felt comfortable and openly expressed views in the literature circle, in talking about the books, and learning from each other. This finding initiated my thinking about the significance of Apache language, and that it should be incorporated in a school system to revitalize the Apache language which is being lost at an alarming rate on the White Mountain Apache Reservation.

Utilizing relevant literature to which Native American children can connect and integrating these books into the curriculum has been a positive experience. This is rewarding because the students learned about their own Apache culture as it also brought their prior knowledge of the culture into the discussion, and reinforced their beliefs about it. Ada and Campoy (1999) noted that the true purpose of reading is for the reader to

dialogue with the text, and that reading reaches its highest relevance when the reader discovers the meaning that the text can have for her or his own life (p. 6). I believe my research revealed several issues which the students have related to and also significantly enhanced contemporary Native students' knowledge of literature about their own Apache people and surrounding Native Nations. This literature acknowledged the history, language patterns, cultural practices and images. A Native educator providing Native literature to Native students is a great endeavor, because most schools throughout America do not understand or use culturally appropriate programs. They still adhere to the old ways of memorizing dates, facts and statistics which is mechanized and boring. The imposition of forced teaching from textbooks about alien ways disassociates many Native American students from their own teachings. Moreover, reading about mainstream society in mainstream literature is not too interesting for Native American students--it is perceived as something from an alien world. This disenfranchising of culturally appropriate literature by schools threatens students' self images, and if the young Native students are not in a supportive curriculum they perceive that they are not a part of the school system. They lose interest and drop out. Many schools do not have a wide range of Native literature for Native students to read. Therefore, I think it is time for an educational reform. Integrating Native American literature into a school curriculum is a natural approach to education which is effective. Not having an abundance of Native American children's literature is disheartening. That is why it's important to also encourage Native authors and Native illustrators to produce more books for our Native people.

A final point to leave my readers is that reading is my life because it's an adventurous imaginary journey into reality and creativity. The literature I used had little critical thinking or problem solving themes, but students were still excited about reading the literature about their own culture and as well as other Native cultures. With this in mind, I hope an interest of reading has been regenerated for these young Native Americans and possibly sparked one of the student's attention to write about their Apache people. Furthermore, the knowledge of the students' responses acquired from this study may be valuable to educators, researchers, and parents who could utilize this information to better educate the Native children as well as all children, so they become life long readers in the world of imagination.

I will close with a statement by one of our Native American Elders,

*Let us boldly implement what our ancestors practiced and take the time to bring forth the knowledge, values, and ceremonies, social and political institutions that bring out the spirit of every human child, no matter what age.*

That is why stories matter--the self discovery of every Native child is the knowledge of one's self, and to obtain this knowledge is through the stories, either from a storyteller or from culturally authentic Native American children's literature. The teaching must continue through Elders, families, communities, education within the curriculum, and through our Native languages.

## APPENDIX A STUDENT CONSENT FORM

**Student**

Project: Stories That Matter Through Native American Children's Literature: Fifth Graders' Response to Culturally Authentic Texts

**You are being asked to read the following material to ensure that you are interested in the nature of this research study and how you will participate in it, if you consent to do so. Signing this form will indicate that you have been so informed and that you give your consent, Federal regulations require written informed consent prior to participation in this research study so that you can know the nature and risks of your participation and can decide to participate or not participate in a free and informed matter.**

**Purpose**

You are being invited to participate voluntarily in the above titled research project. The goal of the project is better understand how to utilize Native American children's literature to gain insights into children's perspectives through talking and thinking in literature circles.

**Selection Criteria**

The Principal Investigator (Angeline P. Hoffman) and the teacher of the fifth grade class will discuss the requirements for participation in this study with you. To be eligible to participate, you must be a student in the Seven-Mile Elementary fifth grade class. A maximum of individuals will be in enroll in this study. Overall, a maximum of 20 individuals may participate. Only those students enrolled in this fifth grade class may participate. Your teacher in this fifth grade class will also be a research subject in this study.

**Procedure(s)**

The Principal Investigator will audiotape students and their teacher during in class activities and will read and collect class assignments, such as reading journals, written format, and reading or language arts written assignments that are the topics in the daily written journal. The Principal Investigator would also like students and teacher permission to collect and read written class assignments and daily journals.

Any student who does not want to have their voice audio-taped will not be audiotaped; students who do not want their voiced recorded. Any name mentioned on the audio or videotape will be dubbed out.

Angeline P. Hoffman will also be a participant observer in the classroom and will be interacting with students during the literature circle time.

**Risks**

Your decision whether or not to participate in the study will not affect your grade in the Seven-Mile fifth grade class. All students will have the opportunity to view the audio-tapes of class sessions to be sure they approve of the recording. Any student who does not approve the audio-tape or video-tape segment they are in, the Principal Investigator will delete that section of the tape or delete the entire tape.

### **Benefits**

There may be no direct benefits to you for your participation in this research. However, this study is significant if the classroom observations and documentation contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the use of Native American children's literature to gain insights into children's perspective through talking and thinking in literature circles. Due to the fact that little research has systematically documented understanding of learning and identified perspective through Native children's education, this body of knowledge may provide valuable insight to the literacy learning of Native American students. It may help to make improvement for students' literacy (reading and writing) and learning success.

### **Confidentiality**

The names of all who participate (students and teachers), the school, the location of the school, will not be revealed if the data is used for presentations or publications. The data collected will only be seen by the Principal Investigator of this project, Angeline P. Hoffman. During the taking of field notes in class, fake names, initial or other coding will be used so that no one student may be identified. Once data or information are collected and entered into the computer, any information with reference to the coding of each student and the teacher will be safely locked in the cabinet in LRC office for 6 years until it is destroyed with a paper shredder. All data on the computer will be entered with fake names. Once the project is completed, all data on the computer will be permanently deleted. All videotapes and audiotapes will be locked in a cabinet in the LRC main office for 6 years. The tapes will then be erased and destroyed.

### **Authorization**

**Before giving my consent by signing the form, the methods, inconveniences, risks, and benefits have been explained to me and my questions have been answered. I may ask questions at any time and I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without causing bad feelings. My participation in this project may be ended by the investigator for reasons that will be explained. New information developed during the course of this study which may affect my willingness to continue this research project will be given to me as it becomes available. This consent form will be filed in an area designated by the Human Subject Committee with access by authorized representative of the Language, Reading, and Culture Department. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form. A copy of this signed consent form will be given to me.**

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Subject's Signature

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Date

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Parent's Signature

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Date

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**INVESTIGATOR'S AFFIDAVIT:**

I have carefully explained to the subject and parent the nature of the above project. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the persons who signed this consent form was informed of the nature, demands, and benefits, and risks involved in his/her participation.

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Signature of Investigator

---

Date

## APPENDIX B SAMPLE PARENT/STUDENT PERMISSION FORM

March 2007

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

This spring I will be conducting a study in Ms. Gruse classroom to describe students' perceptions as readers within the context of the classroom and engagements encountered within the classroom, specifically literature circles. I am interested in better understanding how I can help students grow in how they think and talk about Native American Children's Literature through their perspective and themselves and other literate people. Your child will participate in literature circles as part of the regular classroom activities. This study has not or will not involved special testing or removal from the classroom.

I am writing to ask for your permission to use tape recorded literature discussions and interviews for my study, collect writing samples, and possibly take photographs of the classroom activities. These items will be used by me to better understand your child's learning.

The result of this study will be kept confidential and reports of this study will not include the names of the children,

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact at (520) 461-8744 or email at [hoffmana@email.arizona.edu](mailto:hoffmana@email.arizona.edu).

Sincerely,

Angeline P. Hoffman

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I give my consent:

\_\_\_ For my child to be audio taped in small group discussions and participate in teacher conducted interviews.

\_\_\_ For photocopies to be made of writing and drawing my child makes related to the study focus.

\_\_\_ For photographs to be taken of my child participating in activities related to the study.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECTS DISCLAIMER FORM**  
(Interview)

Title of Project: Stories That Matter Through Native American Children's Literature:  
Fifth Graders' Response to Culturally Authentic Texts

You are being invited to voluntarily participate in the above-titled research study. The purpose of the study is to examine Native American children's response and perspectives to Native American children's literature. You are eligible to participate because you are in Ms. Gruse's fifth grade class.

If you agree to participate, your participation will involve a group interview(s) about your reading experiences throughout the literature discussions. The interview(s) will take place in a location convenient for you and will last approximately 10-15 minutes. You may choose not to answer some or all of the questions. During the interview(s), written notes will be made in order to help the investigator review what is said. Your name will not appear on these notes.

Any questions you have will be answered and you may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no known risks from your participation and no direct benefit from your participation is expected.

Only the principal investigator and an authorized representative of the Language, Reading and Culture department will have access to your name and the information that you provide. In order to maintain your confidentiality, your name will not be revealed in any reports that result from this project. Interview information will be locked in a cabinet in a secure place.

You can obtain further information from the principal investigator, (Angeline P. Hoffman, Ph.D. candidate, etc.), at (520) 461-8744. If you have questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may call the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program office at (520) 626-6721.

By participating in the interview(s), you are giving permission for the investigator to use your information for research purposes.

Thank you.

Angeline P. Hoffman

## Interview Questions

### Interview 1: Background

- What kinds of reading you do outside of school?
- What has been your experiences with reading before 5<sup>th</sup> grade in school?
- What kind of books have you read in school?

### Interview 2-Part 1: Detail of the Experience

- Talk to me about the literature discussion of these books. What was that experience like for you?
- What has reading in school been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade? What has talking about books been like for you in 5<sup>th</sup> grade?
- Tell me as much as you can about reading Native American children literature?
- Talk to me about the literature discussions of these books? What was that experience like for you?
- What discoveries did you make/what did you learn through reading books?
- Did you find the characters similar to yourself?.
- How did you think you were like the character? How did you think you were different from the character?
- How do these books help you understand yourself better?
- How does it help you understand others better?
- How do these books help you understand your life better?
- What did you learn about the issue of culture? Racism? Relationships?
- How has reading this book changed you?
- What is your culture?
- What did you learn about culture through the Native American children's literature?
- How have reading these books from and about Native American children affected you as a reader and a learner?
- Have you changed your ideas about reading?

## APPENDIX C EVALUATION

**Evaluation: Books and Printed Materials**

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**Evaluator Name:****Title of Book:****Tribe Represented:****Author Name:****Author Background:****Illustrator Name:****Illustrator Background:****Genre:****Traditional:****Contemporary:****Poetry:****Publisher:****Year:****Age Level:****Children:****Adolescent:****Date:****Hardback:****Paperback:**

- A. Does the book define cultural authenticity through its content and illustrations? Explain.
- B. Is the book from an insider or outsider perspective? Explain.
- C. Does the author and illustrator have experiences that are significantly related to the culture represented in the book? Explain.
- D. What is the criteria for evaluating for cultural authenticity? (stereotypes, accuracy? Explain.
- E. What is the author's perspective, intention, and representation in writing this book? Explain.
- F. Does the author includes values, beliefs and attitudes of the Native Americans in the Story? Explain.
-

**G. Who has the power? (Author, illustrator, or the Native American in the story)**  
Explain.

<b>Answer</b>			<b>Questions</b>
Yes	No	N/A	1). Would this book help American Indian children and be proud of their heritage?
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	2). Would this book encourage a positive image of American Indian for the Non-Indian reader?
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	3). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problems presented?
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	4). Are all of the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	5). Are the American Indians stereotyped in this material? Through the illustrations?  Through the content?
Comments: (pg.)			
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	6). Are the American Indians given credit for their Contribution to Western Civilization?
Comments: (pg.)			
Yes	No	N/A	7). Considering the time period or setting of this material, do the; illustrations/situations authenticate the Indian way of life?
Comments: (pg.)			

Yes    No    N/A

8). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with American Indians based on his/her background and or/ research?

Comments: (pg.)

Yes    No    N/A

9). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?

Comments: (pg.)

**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this printed material.**

**Comments:**

**Rating for this material:**

**Acceptable**

**Unacceptable**

**Why?**

**Evaluation: *Flute Player***

© 2005 Angeline P. Hoffman

**Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** April 2, 05

**Title of Book:** The Flute Player

**Hardback:** No

**Tribe Represented:** White Mountain Apache

**Paperback:** Yes

**Author Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Author/Illustrator Background:** He has been formally trained as a Fine Art Artist, with an MFA from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona. He has worked with the Apache tribe, developing education material, and has been "artist-in-residence" at a number of schools state-wide. His stories were learned from elders of the tribes and he is dedicated to their preservation.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** Michael Lacapa remembers the White Mountain Apache storytellers as he listened to and learned from them as he was growing up. The Apache Language and Culture Program was at one time, the catalyst for all cultural information for the Tribal Education Department. All staff members committed themselves to the creation and development of culturally relevant education material.

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary**            **Historical**

**Publisher:** Northland Publishing            **Publisher Year:** 1990            **City:** Flagstaff AZ

**Age Level:**                            **Children** Yes                            **Adolescent**

**1). Does the book Define cultural authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, based on the Apache Folktale of an Apache Flute Player

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Insider perspective, Born in Phoenix Arizona, Michael Lacapa moved to Whiteriver Arizona on the Apache reservation at the age of one. He is the 2nd of eight children with ethnic roots residing from the Hopi, Tewa and Apache Indian tribes.

**3). The need for authors to have experiences with the culture; does the author?**

Yes, the author has experience with the culture, He began his formal teaching career at the Phoenix Indian High School and then Chaparral High School in Phoenix. Michael left his high school teaching duties to work with the Apache Tribe in developing multi-cultural educational curricula for native school-age children. From this work came Michael's first co-authored/illustrated book, Ndee Benagode'i (Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe). Michael's storytelling talents were also rooted from this project as storytelling was developed as a teaching tool in the development of teaching materials. Michael then return to the class room from 1982 to 1984 to teach art at Whiteriver Elementary School.

**4). the reasons authors choose to write this book?**

Michael's stories were learned from elders of the tribes, and he is dedicated to their preservation.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

**7). Who has the power?**

The belongs to the people of the White Mountain Apache tribe because they gather stories from the elders of the tribe and produce literature that are culturally relevant educational material. The story is an Apache Folktale

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<u>Answer</u>	<u>Questions</u>
---------------	------------------

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** The story is retold through the author by the consent of the White Mountain Apache Tribal Education Department and through the Apache Elders. The literature contains the creation and development of culturally relevant educational materials. The story is about the Apache youth, the Apache people's yearly events, the Apache women role, the courtship of an Apache boy and Apache girl, the roles of the Apache girl and Apache boy, the Apache family unit, the Apache Medicine Man role, the Apache boy musician has a flute player, and the life cycle of the Apache people.

**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** The book is based on the Apache Folktale, every event portrayed the Apache Way of Life and it encourages a positive image of the Apache people. The story is told from generation to generation and now it is put in a book for every child to read, Native American or Non-Native American.

**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** The events of the story is sequential, from the social dance, to the Apache boy and girl meet, to the Apache boy telling the girl that he plays the flute, the Apache girl informs the boy that she goes to her father's corn field, he plays his flute and she put the leaf in the river if she like his playing. This went on for sometime, and they grew fond of one another. Eventually, the boy was old enough to learn how to hunt so he went on his hunting journey and was unable to play his flute for the girl. The girl became heartbroken, which eventually made her ill, and she died. When the boy returned from the hunt he immediately ran to play his flute for the girl. No leaf returned. Then he found out from the girl's brother that she had died. He played the flute at her grave sight for the

last time because he was never seen again. To this day, the Apache people believe that they can hear him playing for the girl through the sounds of the wind.

---

**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Based on the events that occurred throughout the story, all the important facts were included to make the story reveal the love of the two Apache couple, and there were no omissions.

---

Yes    **No**    N/A    **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** Based on the facts that Michael Lacapa himself is an Apache, his authentic Illustrations are authentic of the Apaches of the Apache people (young/old), the clothing (Apache camp-dress), the moccasin (Apache is different from most tribes), the dance (Social dance/Hoop dance, is still be performed), the Apache flute (still played, only by Apache man), the Apache baskets (Burden Basket to carry food/supplies; Tus' Basket Covered with pitch, to hold liquid), the Apache blanket (saddle blanket; to hold supplies and the shawl; used by the older Apache woman), the Apache Medicine Man (To perform healing, prayers, blessing, ect.), the Apache Land (over one million acres), corn field (every family unit has a corn field, river (there is over fifteen rivers/stream), canyon (endless canyons).

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **Through the content?**

**Comments:** Based on the acknowledgement of the author, all the cultural information was gathered by the Apache Language and Culture Program for the Tribal Educational Department of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. This committee that Michael Lacapa is a member of creates and develops Cultural Relevant Educational Materials.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, Michael Lacapa stories were learned from the elders of the tribe and his dedication to their preservation. Also the White Mountain Apache story was collected by the Apache Language and Culture Program for culture information for the Education Department.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** The illustrations and situation does authenticate the Apache Way of Life and is develop through the Apache Language and Culture Program of the White Mountain Apache Tribal Education Department, to create and develop a culturally relevant educational material.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, Michael Lacapa the author/illustrator of *The Flute Player* (1990) is qualified to write this book because he is from Apache, Tewa, and Hopi descent, and he lived on the Fort Apache Reservation during his youth. He is also an accomplish storyteller and educator, a member of the Apache Language and Culture Program for the Tribal Education Department.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** This literature is composed of the Apache Folktale and is written by the committee of Apache educators and elders of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The mission of the committee is to create and develop culturally relevant educational materials about the Apache stories. The quality piece of this literature is based on the story full of events, issues, and problems that face the two main characters, the Apache girl, and the Apache boy. In the specific details of the story enhances these characters and develop different experience through the characters and the readers. With this in mind I feel this literature, *The Flute Player* (1990) is a quality piece of literature.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

This book, *The Flute Player* (1990) would help Native American children identity the uniqueness of their tradition. This specific literature also encourages a positive image of the Native American for the Non-Native American reader. There are different perspectives of the events that include issues or problems within in the story; this provides an opportunity for the reader. In addition, all of the important facts including included in the story and none are omitted. The Native American is not stereotyped in either the illustrations or the content. The Native American is given recognition throughout the story and in the acknowledgement section at the conclusion of the story. In considering the time period or setting of this book, the illustration does and the situations do authenticate the Apache Way of Life. The author is qualified to write this book about a Apache story because of his Apache decent, his live lived on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, learning the stories through the elders of the tribe and being a committee member of the Apache Language and Culture Program for the Tribal Educational Department and their mission is to create and develop cultural relevant educational material.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      **Acceptable**    **Yes**                      **Unacceptable**

**Why?**

The story, *The Flute Player* (1990) is evaluated as acceptable based on the author/illustrator knowledge of the Apache tribe, begin a descent of Apache, Hopi and Tewa, he lived on the Fort Apache Indian reservation, and throughout his childhood he heard the stories being told by the elders, he educational background working with the Native/Non-Native children to enhance his Apache and Hopi tradition through his literature and storytelling, and he is associated with the White Mountain Apache Language and Culture Program from the Tribe Education Department.

## **Evaluation: *Antelope Woman***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** Dec. 09

**Title of Book:** Antelope Woman

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Apache

**Author Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Author Background:**

Michael Lacapa an author and illustrator of books for children including *The Mouse Couple* and *The Flute Player*. He is of Apache, Hopi and Tewa decent, he has gained inspiration from traditional Apache storytellers, while utilizing his cultural roots and his gift of being a trained artist in developing his stories filled with designs and patterns found in basketry and poetry indigenous of the Southwest region.

**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Illustrator Background:**

As an artist, Michael Lacapa, incorporates colors that are bold and his variety of brush strokes reinforce the storyline in each illustrations. He is one of many artists in his culture, he recognizes his gifts as one from the Creator, "The Creator allows my hands to change the surface of paper with paint and the ink, and he allows my voice to share the truth found in the stories."

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:**

In his acknowledgement he give many thanks to Dr. Joseph Rubin, a close friend of his who he termed, fanned the fire of the Antelope Woman story; and to Dr. Ekkehart Malotki, for opening the door of opportunity and allowing Michael to step in. In addition, sharing and talking to Richard Sanchez and Byrd Baylor, were especially helpful. Michael is eternally grateful to his mother, Antonio Kessay Lacapa, from who my desires were fed and nourished as a child. And thanking his Home Boytz, Ron and Rondi Vinnedge, Larry, and Marva Fellows. Finally, Mr. Lacapa thanks his wife, Kathy, and his children; Daniel, Rochelle, and Anthony, his family, who reflected his love and patience when his nights, weekends, and months spent working on this book.

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary**            **Historical**

**Publisher:** Northland Publishing            **Publisher Year:** 1992            **City:** Flagstaff, AZ

**Age Level:**                            **Children** Yes                            **Adolescent**

**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes Why?**

The book defines cultural authenticity by illustrating the Apache People, the way they dressed in their time, and with their beautiful homeland sketched accurately. The terrain features matches the homeland of the Apaches. The narratives came from the stories of the old people.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Insider Why?**

This storyline is written as a second person account and most Native stories are narrated as such. The author is familiar with his people. This is an accurate portrayal of the Apaches.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

The author has lived among his people on the reservation. He knows the language, the culture, and the land. From his experiences he developed the narratives of the story.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The author was encourage and supported by his fellow colleagues, mentors, close friends, well-known authors and especially his mother, that nourish this Apache story into an Antelope Woman folktale.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?****6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

In order for a book to be accurate it has to have input from one who knows about a particular culture. One who knows the customs, language, values, beliefs, and attitudes which reaffirms accuracy. By knowing, stereotypes will not exist.

**7). Who has the power?**

The Apache people have the power because the story came form traditional oral storytelling, and how the Apache people should respect the Antelope Woman, including all things great and small. The people have an obligation to pass this story on to the future generations. It will be remembered.

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**Answer**


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**Questions**


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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:**

Based on the Apache Folktale, the moral of the stories will provide guidance for the American Indian Children to identify similar stories and be proud of their own heritage throughout the story. This Apache folktale features a mysterious young man who comes to a village speaking of reverence for all things great and small. A young woman, mesmerized by his teaching, follows the young man one day as he leaves the village, and see him disappear through four sacred hoops. Suddenly, when he emerges from the four hoops, he is an antelope. Then he make a gesture for the young woman to follow and she does. *The Antelope Woman* (1992) is a story that teaches us about love and the need to honor family and all life. It tells us why the Apache people never hunt or kill antelope.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:**

The literature sustains the American Indian in a positive image through the story in teaching about love, and the need to honor the family and all of life.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:**

A resourceful young Native American woman is intrigued by the appearance of a mysterious stranger – actually an antelope in human disguise. Western man's thinking about animals as dumb is debunked in this tale. To Native American animals have a great intelligence. This awareness is in our people as related to the story and other tales. They perceived that animals are from other dimensions. Another perspective, is when he maiden marries him, but then they are shunned by her people, the couple chooses to return to his antelope family and live out their lives as antelope. Yes, that is the different perspectives presented.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:**

The important facts are included based on the assistance of Dr. Joseph Rubin and Dr. Ekkehart (authors of many books; Hopi Indians, Tales, Legends, ect.). In addition, sharing and talking with Richard Sanchez and Byrd Baylor (Author of Native Children's literature) were helpful. This story is retold by Michael through his cultural roots and the storytellers of the Apache people.

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material:**

The illustrations and word content combined in the story about the Apache tale is authentic, based on my knowledge of the Apache World.

**Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:**

The illustrations provide authentic pictures of the Apache world; clothing (woman wear And men-brief cloth warrior body-wear, including; footwear (Apache moccasin, with the Toe protector), the water-proof pitch basket, and the burden basket; the wick-up shelter, The Apache cradleboard (used to carry infant), and the landscape of different parts of the Apache land filled with river, streams, canyons, yucca, and cactus with prickly pears. Michael Lacapa has provided authentic pictures of Apache in their world environment, evidence by his Apache descent and his cultural roots.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:**

No. the content of this story is from the origin of the Apache storytelling, and this story provide teachings through different examples given by one of the main characters, the mysterious Apache man that comes into the Apache village.

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**Yes** No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the story about the Apache people, a part of history is revealed to understand our culture which is important to social scientist and medical doctors that is the contribution to the Western society.

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**Yes** No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:**

The authenticity of the illustrations and situation in this story is based on the author and illustrators background, from being an Apache and using his cultural knowledge, his natural gift of creativity and his research through his fellow scholars and fellow writers/illustrator to authenticate the Apache tale.

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**Yes** No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:**

Yes, based on Michael Lacapa background, being a decent of Apache, his knowledge of the Apache culture, and his childhood years on the Fort Apache reservation, his educational background in being a well-know artist and author of Native Children's literature.

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**Yes** No N/A **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:**

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Yes, the Apache Folktale of the, *Antelope Woman* (1992) is a quality piece of writing because of the moral of the story, the positive impact it has on children of all ages, and how relevant it is to the Native American children. The Native American children can

relate this story, through the content of the story and as well as through the illustrations of the story.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

This literature would help American Indian re-identify and be proud of their own heritage because it's a Folktale story. This Native American children's literature does not portray negative image for the non-Indian readers. The different perspectives presented is that this is written of Native American. This is a first book I have read written by a White Mountain Apache. The mythical history is also the first to be put on paper. A mythical tale told orally from Apache Elders then retold simply with colorful sketches of authentic Apache clothing, and appropriate landscape setting. This tale revering all things great and small. The plants, animals and the beautiful universe, and the love for a family no matter the predicament there face with, as related by antelope beings portrayed as animated characters teaching these percepts. The pictures and narrated words explain the story better for clarity. The author is qualified to write this book. This book is a quality piece of literature written for children.

Based on the evaluation, the book is authentic because the author/illustrator is Native and originates/grew up on the Apache reservation. He states in the section about the author, he give credit to the people he associated with and his scholars who gave him the guidance and support for accomplished writing his book. Michael lived on the Fort Apache Reservation all his childhood life, this provided the cultural awareness of his own people and his passion for art in which was developed as time progress and through his educational endeavor to received a B.A. and M.A. in Art.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      **Acceptable**                      **Unacceptable**

**Why?**

Based on the evidence of the evaluation form and the author/illustrator's background; being of Apache decent, with his cultural roots involving his childhood years spent on the Fort Apache reservation, plus through his Apache family values and beliefs reinforce authenticity.

*Antelope Woman* (1992) is retold and illustrated by Michael Lacapa and is an Authentic Native American children's literature book based on his living ethnic background and with his educational background also through his educational endeavor, his association with his scholars, authors, and illustrator of Native Children's literature.

**Evaluation: *Less Than Half, More Than Whole***

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**Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman **Date:** April 8, 2005  
**Title of Book:** *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* **Hardback:** Yes  
**Tribe Represented:** Hopi, Apache, Tewa, and Mohawk  
**Author Name:** Kathleen and Michael Lacapa  
**Author Background:** Kathleen Lacapa joined her husband, Michael, in writing *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994), for their three children, Rochelle, Anthony, and Daniel, and for all children who come from multicultural background and their probable struggle with the question, "Where do I belong?" Kathleen is of Irish, English, and Mohawk descent, and Michael is Apache, Hopi, and Tewa. They both worked with school-age children in and around the White Mountain Apache Reservation, and live with their children in Taylor, Arizona. Michael launched his career as an illustrator with his book, *The Mouse Couple* (1988), and went on to write *The Flute Player* (1990), and *Antelope Woman* (1992). *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* is Kathleen's first book.  
**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa  
**Illustrator Background:** The illustration design represents the various cultures, and comes from many different ethnic background.  
**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** Michael presents the concepts, terms, and designs with the references from the specific ethnic background.  
**Genre:**        **Traditional**    **Contemporary** Yes    **Historical**  
**Publisher:** Northland Publishing    **Publisher Year:** 1994        **City:** Flagstaff, AZ  
**Age Level:**                    **Children** Yes                    **Adolescent**

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, this book does define cultural authenticity through the authors' narration of their own experiences with their children, and how different physical cultural attributes can make a child ponder about their own identity. This book is a great informative book on how one child of multiracial lineage faces this issue of looking different than full blood Native Americans and in questioning his light skin complexion, the relatives explain his different appearance. The culture of the Apache, Hopi and Tewa, is to respect their Elders because they are knowledgeable and full of wisdom. And this story portrays how the Elders helped the main character find his identity within himself. Yes, this book defines cultural authenticity within the story, within the characters of the story, and within the authors of this book.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Insider perspective, as written from their own children's experience, and portrays their youngest son's journey in search for the answer to his question about who he is.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the author's own children encountered their own identity crisis and through the main characters of the story an explanation is revealed.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The authors chose to write this book to educate other children who might be faced with the same issues his children encountered, of questioning their own physical appearances coming from a diverse family, a father coming from a different ethnic group than the mothers.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criteria for evaluation is based on the content of the story and how it supports any child who experiences the issue of coming from a diverse family, when the parents are from different ethnic groups, and their physical appearances are of multiracial attributes. The content of the story assist the readers, and the main characters relate their experiences of attempting to identify who they are. The writers of the story have experienced this same issue with their own children.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

Yes, this book portrays the values of being a family--with relatives that possess love and concerns for any probable situations. The story came from an actual family unit and actual incidents of identity inquiry. The belief of a family concerns and its resolute to deter any harm comes from living within a family that is closely united. The attitude of the characters to assist a family member portrays the support needed for Tony to understand who he is. This book deals with the children who are caught up in identifying who they are.

**7). Who has the power?**

The author and the storyline have the power, and the children who had identified who they are through this story--the diverse family have the power. The power of influential persuasion to formulate one to act based on a possessed knowledge. The power is given through the four people Tony asked about who he was Less Than Half? And Tony finally found the power within him to identify that he is. The power is the children within the story and the children who read the story.

<b>Answer</b>	<b>Questions</b>
<p><b>Yes</b>    No    N/A</p>	<p><b>a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?</b></p> <p><b>Comments:</b> Yes, amidst the identity issue, the identity Native American was claimed. When Tony asked his sister and brother, "What does it mean when someone says you're half, or less than half? They knew what he meant because they had asked this same question when they were young. The answer to this question was answered through four people, his siblings--brother and sister, his grandmother, his uncle, and his grandfather. This book will support Native American children's identify and they would be proud of their tradition through the content and illustrations. It is about them. It is their identity.</p>

**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the author stated that his book is for all children who come from multicultural backgrounds and struggle with the question, “Where do I belong?” And through the story the question is answered through a relative of Tony. The issue of identity is a real life question which surfaces among multicultural peoples. This story, positively reinforces the legitimacy of acknowledgement of approval that its okay to be of certain color. This is Universal. This promotes a positive image for all children.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, the different perspective of the events, issues and problems are revealed, first, through his grandmother answering the question by using a metaphor of explaining the butterfly with its beautiful pattern and multi-colors resembles Tony. Secondly, his siblings, his sister tells Tony, answer the question, “It means you are not all one race, we are part Indian, and part Anglo, sometimes you wonder where you belong.” Thirdly, his Uncle answers the question by using a horse as an example to explain the horses unique colors, narrating that it is strong, proud, and has a lot of good markings that also resembles Tony. The Uncle says, “Without the different colors, it would not seem so special and it reminds me of you. Fourthly, when Tony’s Grandfather who answered the question using a multi-color corn analogy, saying “the creator did not give this gift only in one colors. I keep this bundle here so I will remember the gift the Creator has given me and my family of many colors. This corn is like you, it is one of great beauty because of it colors. And just as the corn with its many color is a gift to the people, so you are a gift from the Creator. You are not half a person because of your color, my son, you are a whole, beautiful person.” The statements narrate the different perspectives that reveal Tony’s question of who he is. The answers were given in a unique way by the Native American family.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Yes, based on the experience of the author’s own children who have gone through wondering which race they belong to because of their skin complexion, they are half Native American and half Caucasian. I didn’t recognize any inordinate narratives of the story.

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the book: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, because the story is from a Native American and is based on actual events. The illustrations are contemporary and they reveal the characters accurately, and the designs throughout the book are from several Native American

tribes.

Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, because the content was written from the perspective of the author's own family, with three children who are of mix lineage. And the three children are recognized throughout the story as well as the relatives of the family. The family brings together the wisdom of the Elders from the family unit. The Elders, the Grandfather is the person who acknowledges Tony's identity through the symbol of the multi-colored corn and how he informs Tony how special he is being the individual he is, and the grandmother mentioning a beautiful butterfly's multi-colored pattern resembling Tony.

Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, the Native American are given credit by the Author's identifying who they are as Native Americans and contributing to the awareness of children's issues of mix lineage in their book.

Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, even though it's a contemporary genre, the illustration and content of the situations authenticate the Native Way of Life on and near the reservation of the White Mountain Apache.

Yes No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the authors are qualified to write this book, because the book is about their own children's issue of "Where do I belong?" because the mother is from an Irish, English, and Mohawk descent, and the father is Apache, Hopi and Tewa. The story reveals the background of the authors' family and the research is--how each child had to go through the stages of finding out who they are. The authors learned from their own children, and from their elders. The Native American believes that Elders hold the answers, and in this story the Grandfather identified with Tony and show him who he is.

Yes No N/A **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, because this story derives from the experiences from the authors own children and the different events in the story provides information that can assist children with this same kind of issues, coming from a family where the parents are from different

descent. The quality of the literature is also revealed through the illustrations and designs of beautiful colors and markings, that attracts anyone that reads the book. It is authentic Native American literature.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

The book has given the identity back to the children being Native American through the events, issues, and the problem facing Tony, the main character who is searching for his identity. The question he asks is the title of the book, *Less Than Half, More Than Whole*, what does that mean? The story enhances a positive image for both Native American and Non-Native Americans because of searching for the answers and receiving the answer through symbols within nature, within animals, and within plants. This teaches respect for all living things. All the facts are self evident. The family unit provided a way in answering the questions fully. The Native American portrayed in the story were not stereotyped, the illustrations were contemporary and encompassed the unique Native American designs in the illustrations. The content of the story is factual based on the authors' own experience of their own children facing the identity issues within the family. The authors' are qualified to write this story because they created this story from their own experiences with their own children, and the authors are authenticating the story through illustration. This book is a quality book because it provides an understanding how one family deals with a problem, and the problem is solved through the assistance of the Elders of the family. The lesson learned from Tony's was that he was not Less Than Half, and he was like the corn--More Than Whole. This shows the unique child he was. This past spring, I interviewed (the late) Michael Lacapa, and this book came up in our discussion, and he stated that the Tribal enrollment system continues to change, and the issue of the blood quantum, More Than Half, Or Less Than Half became the primary issue in our tribal enrollment.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      **Acceptable Yes**      **Unacceptable**  
**Why?**

The evaluation of this book, *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994) is acceptable based on the authors' understanding of issues of multicultural family, where the father and mother are from two different descents. Their own children have faced this issue as they were growing up and now the youngest is also facing this issue of identity. With the assistance by Elders of the family, provided Tony with examples of how being of more than one descent was, and the examples supported Tony finding the answer himself. This book is of great quality for the reason that the lessons learned throughout the book and the strong family unit is what make this book acceptable and is relevant to any child who reads this book.

**Evaluation: *N'dee Benadgode'i : Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe***

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**Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman **Date:** August 2005  
**Title of Book:** Ndee Benadgode'i' Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe  
**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** White Mountain Apache Tribe

**Authors Name:** Karen Adley and Michael Lacapa

**Authors Background:** Both Apache authors are part of the White Mountain Apache Johnson O'Malley Language and Culture Program that develop this book. Both authors are educators.

**As Told by:** Helen Crocker and Mary V. Riley

**As Told, Background:** Both Helen Crocker and Mary V. Riley are distinguish Apache Elders of the White Mountain Apache Tribe and they had wished to tell the stories of our Apache People. The book consists of three stories told by two Apache Elder Women. Helen Crocker told the stories of Old Big Owl Witch and Spider Helps Robin.

Mary V. Riley told the story of The Cooking Stick

**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Illustrator Background:** Michael Lacapa's illustrator expertise derived from his knowledge of the Apache Way of Life through living on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation and through the guidance of the Language Committee of JOM Language and Culture Program.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** Our special thanks to the Language Committee of the Johnson O'Malley Apache Language and Culture Program under Tribal Education. The committee's membership has been an instrumental part in guiding and directing in the authenticity of the contents of this book. Language Committee members consists of; Homer Beatty, Mary Endfield, George Grigg, Joanna Hinton, Billy Kane, Linda McCrerry, Lucia Nozie and Violet Zospah.

**Genre:** **Traditional** Yes **Contemporary** **Historical**

**Publisher:** by the White Mountain Apache Language & Culture Program

**Publisher Year:** 1981 **City:** Whiteriver, AZ

**Age Level:** **Children** Yes **Adolescent**

**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes Why?**

Yes, this is the first book of the White Mountain Apache tribe, in which oral stories were written to continue the stories of the tribe. And the stories are told by two Apache Women Elders of the tribe who had heard from their relatives before them. Furthermore,

the stories were retold, written, and guided and directed for authenticity of these contents by the Elders, the authors, and the Language Committee of JOM.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Insider, the perspective of this book was composed from the White Mountain Apache Tribe, consisting of Elders of the Tribe, the Apache Authors, and the Apache Language Committee from the Johnson O'Malley project. This project was important to the tribe to develop culturally authentic stories of the White Mountain Apache tribe. It was the tribe's intent to have stories of the culture written into a book format

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the authors have had life experiences in their own culture. Both are Apaches and have lived the Apache culture, and to hear stories about the people from two well known grandmothers from their White Mountain Apache Nation was an honor. These two Elderly women storytellers were born in the early 1900's to late 1920's. Their stories were full of life's adventures, including the many so-called mythical stories they heard when they were children. To have these stories retold to the authors was a unique experience and privilege. Especially since the two were young Apaches willing to listen.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

This book was designed and developed by the White Mountain Apache Johnson O'Malley Language and Culture Program under the Tribal Education Department. And the committee's membership has been an instrumental part in guiding and directing in the authenticity of the contents of this book. They feel that it their responsibility to tell our White Mountain Apache children of this generation our traditional White Mountain Apache stories through written form.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criteria for evaluation was based on checking the authenticity of the stories based on the derivative of who told stories and who re-told the stories to avoid inaccurate stories , and the background of the writers with cultural lineage serves their understanding the complexity of cultures that deters assumptions. The story was told and retold, and written, and checked for its authenticity through a committee of all Apache members, who wanted this book to represent the White Mountain Apache Tribe authentically.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

Yes, the stereotype of the bloodthirsty Apaches is not in this book. Origin of values, beliefs, attitudes came from oral stories told by the Elders and Shamans of the tribe. The holy men received stories in dreams or visions. This method of receiving messages was perceived as accurate. This book includes some of the many beliefs of the White Mountain Apache Tribe through the story of the Cooking Stick, Old Owl Witch, and Spider Helps the Robin. The attitudes of the Apache children are formulated through the stories of, Old Owl Witch, and Spider Helps the Robin, and The Cooking Stick. The

storyteller and the listener convey the teaching of each story; the discipline and advice, and the greater respect for life and people of the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

### 7). Who has the power?

The White Mountain Apache Tribe has the power, because telling the story of their people with the expert assistance from the two Apache Women Elders, two Apache Authors, and the Apache Language Committee of the Education Department to produce an accurate cultural book. This book has a purpose and a meaning that must be told and retold to the Apache children, because it's the responsibility to tell the Apache traditional stories through written form.

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#### **Answer**

#### **Questions**

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

#### **Comments:**

Yes, because these stories in this book have a purpose and a meaning. By reading discipline and advice stories, the White Mountain Apache children will have greater respect for life and people. For example, the Cooking Stick and Spider Help Robin is an advise story. And the story of the Old Owl Witch provides discipline. All three stories support the children to identify and be proud of their tradition. The stories within the books of the Three Stories of the White Mountain Apache tribe supports the retelling of the Apache stories and through this come a sense of pride of learning of the moral foretold in the stories. Each readers will have difference experiences of the stories based on their prior knowledge but will have an awareness of the Apache stories.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

#### **Comments:**

Yes, because the stories give opportunities for the readers to learn about discipline or advice for both Native American and Non-Native American readers. The stories provide the reader of Non-Native American to learn about the Apache people; through the stories, through the illustrations, and the morals of the stories. The positive images of the three stories of the Apache people, landscape, dwellings, body-wear, non of the images are of negative representations of the Apache people.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

#### **Comments:**

Yes, first part of the book tells of the events that must take place in order to tell a story and what type of story to tell within a specific season. The first story tell of the issues Apache people face when the soldier came, and how the leader of the Crown Dancer assists the Apache people across the Red Sea. But two children were left behind, and they return to their camp site. There the Cooking Stick provided guidance throughout their life. The second story, of the Old Owl Witch, consisting of problems with naughty children and how this Witch came down the mountain to collect naughty children and take them back up the mountain to boil and eat them. And the third story of how the Spider help the Robin, when the Robin fell out of the nest and the Spider came to help the Spider back up to the nest by facing the problem, and the different events had to occur to get the Robin back up in the nest. All the perspectives are presented through the purpose of advice or discipline from the content of these stories.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:**

Yes, all the facts are included based on the knowledge of the stories of the two Apache Woman Elders. The Elders of the tribe are highly considered because of their vast knowledge of the Apache Way of Life plus the important facts are included in the story. Only the Elders would know the stories of the Apache people, and they have obtained the story through Apache Elders when they were young, so it pasted through generation and generation. It is important to the creators of this book that the Apache children learn about their stories as well as other children.

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Yes   **No**   N/A   **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:**

No, none of the Native American was stereotyped of the illustration. All the illustrations are authenticated by the Way the Apache people dressed and the landscape, and the dwelling (wicki-up). The illustrations are full of color and correct images of the Apache people, their natural environment, their images of how they have lived is accurate and do portray stereotype in no matter, shape or form.

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Yes   **No**   N/A   **Through the content?**

**Comments:**

No, the content of the story are not stereotyped, based on the where the stories came from and the revising of the story through the Apache Language Committee. The content of the stories where given orally by Two Apache Woman Elders of the tribe who has obtain the stories through storytelling of their younger days. The authors wrote down their

stories and presented it to the Apache Language Committee to look over and approve the story on its authenticity, so their will be no stereotype in the story of the Apache.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the White Mountain Apache Tribe are given the full credit of developing this book and their involvement to the Western development would be writing a book that consist of their stories to be shared openly. The White Mountain Apache Tribe are recognize for their development of this books, as well as the Elders who told the story and the authors who wrote down the story and the Apache Language Committee who approved the stories for it Apache authenticity.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the illustrations authenticate the White Mountain Apache Tribe Way of Life and that would include the time period or setting of the story. The Cooking Stick time period is the beginning of time, the story of The Old Owl Witch is a story composed of both the past and of contemporary setting based on the illustration, and then Spider helps Robin, in set in the past when the animal could talk to one another. Yes, the illustration and situation portrays the Apache people Way of Life in the time period and setting.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:**

Yes, both Apache authors plus the two Apache Elder Women are qualified to write this book based on their background and their research of the stories. All the Apache people who where involved in retelling and writing the story are White Mountain Apache and have lived on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation most of their life. The knowledge they have obtained of the story can only be known through living the Apache Way of Life on the reservation. As well as the Notible Apache Elders Women who are respected by the Apache people of their knowledge of the Apache Way of Life and has promoted educating the Apache Youth throughout the Apache communities as well as in the mainstream society. The Apache authors have their Bachelor Degree in Education and as dedicated their life toward educating our Apache Youth. The Apache Language Committee consist of Apache Elders of our Tribe who purpose is produce authentic stories of the Apache people. The authors, and the Apache Elders and Apache committee members are qualified to write this book about the White Mountain Apache tribe.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:**

Yes, this book is a quality piece of literature written for children for the purpose of reading the oral stories of the White Mountain Apache tribe and also to past down these stories to the Apache youth. The stories represent the Apache people and how stories provide guidance, and direction of anyone who reads the story. The quality of this literature incorporates the stories of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. This book is the first book of stories that represent the Apache Nation and this is provided for both Native American and Non-Native American children. This book consists of three stories; The Cooking Stick, The Old Owl Witch and Spider Helps the Robin and the content of the stories have teaching and portray the Apache people Way of Life. The book will provide information that is not obtained in any other book and the children will learned something from each story.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

**Evaluation for this literature:**

**Acceptable**

**Unacceptable**

## **Evaluation: *The Mouse Couple***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

<b>Evaluator Name:</b> Angeline P. Hoffman	<b>Date:</b> Spring 2006
<b>Title of Book:</b> The Mouse Couple	<b>Hardback:</b> Yes
<b>Tribe Represented:</b> Hopi	<b>Paperback:</b>
<b>Author Name:</b> Ekkehart Malotki	
<b>Author Background:</b>	
<b>Illustrator Name:</b> Michael Lacapa	
<b>Illustrator Background:</b>	
<b>Acknowledgement/Author Notes:</b>	
<b>Genre:</b> <u>Traditional</u> Contemporary    Historical	
<b>Publisher:</b> Kiva Publishing Inc. Publisher	<b>Year:</b> 2005 <b>City:</b> Walnut, CA
<b>Age Level:</b> <b>Children Yes</b> Adolescent	

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, the terrain features including the color of the land and the dwellings atop the mesas relate to the homeland of the Hopi Pueblo people. The characters of the story are illustrated with Hopi regalia--the body-wear clothing, necklaces, ear rings, as well as their peculiar hair style which is Hopi. Also the Hopi motif design is prevalent on the characters. These attributes mentioned defines Cultural Authenticity. The content of the narratives mentioning Nature, such as the wind, the sun, the clouds, the butte possessing powers, and talking to them is Native American concept.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

The narratives relate the story from someone who knows, an inside perspective like a Native American is telling a story. The mentioning of the different Hopi villages comes from someone who lives and knows the area.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the author knows for storytelling to be accurate the narrator should know the attributes of the subject. He has toured Hopi land many times and is familiar with the terrain and the villages including the people. He has studied the language and speaks it. He got this story from a Hopi man and therefore perceives it to be accurate.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

**7). Who has the power?**

The book has the power because it will carry on the story for many generations to come. When the traditional oral storytellers are gone this book will rekindle storytelling orally. The Hopi people also have the power because they are carriers of the story and they have an obligation to continue the story for many generations to come.

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<u>Answer</u>	<u>Questions</u>
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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes. This book is about a traditional Hopi folktale told from a Hopi, but was printed into a narrative format by a non-native author. It relates to the Hopi pueblos. The Hopi children will be proud of this story. The story is from their tribe. It is about their culture

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, it would. The mentioning of prayer as a ritual to be effective for calling forth your needs is a positive method to activate your energy to make things happen. This activity enhances positive image of Native Americans. Native Americans do this praying.

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the story is from the perspective of Native American mind which is their story.

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?</b>
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**Comments:** The Hopi Culture portrayed is authentic. The artist illustrator whose father was Hopi knows the culture. The artist would recognize any omissions and he would let the author know, if there was any omissions about the Hopi tribe. Therefore there are no significant omissions.

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Yes	<u>No</u>	N/A	<b>e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?</b>
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**Comments:** No, there is no stereotyping. The Native American tribe portrayed in the book is that particular tribe.

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Yes   No   N/A   **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No there is no stereotyping. The Native American tribe portrayed in the book is that particular tribe.

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Yes   No   N/A   **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:**

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Yes   No   N/A   **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, the illustrations authentically portrayed the land, the renderings of the nature spirits, the Hopi people, their dwellings in that particular time frame and all of which is the same today. That is the Hopi way of life.

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Yes   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, although the author is non-native, he speaks the Hopi language and teaches it. He has written many bilingual articles on Hopi semantics and has produced two more Hopi culturally related books including this book. His work of course was consulted by the Hopi people. He lives near the Hopi land.

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Yes   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book is authentic. Amazingly the illustrations matched the content narrative of the story. It was very colorful. The content was narrated simplistically and easily understood.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**  
**Comments:**

Evaluation for this literature:      **Acceptable**                      **Unacceptable**  
 Why?

**Evaluation: *The Magic Hummingbird***  
 © 2005 Angeline P. Hoffman

**Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** July 6, 2005

**Title of Book:** The Magic Hummingbird

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Hopi

**Paperback:**

**Author Name:** Ekkehart Malotki

**Author Background:** Ekkehart Malotki, Ph.D. is a professor of languages at Northern Arizona University, where he teaches German, Hopi, and Latin. His work as a philologist and ethnolinguist concentrates on the preservation of Hopi languages and culture and the recording and analysis of rock art in Northern Arizona. In addition to bilingual works involving Hopi semantics and Hopi oral literature, he has published a children's book the Mouse Couple, and co-authored the rock art work Tapamveni: The Rock Art Galleries of Petrified Forest and Beyond. He also contributed Hopi titles for Godfrey Reggio's movies Koyaanisqatsi and Powaqatsi. Since 1986 he has been working with a team from the University of Arizona on the comprehensive Hopi Dictionary Project.

**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Illustrator Background:** Michael Lacapa was is an artist, and educator. He earned his B.A. in Art Education at Arizona State University and has completed graduate work in painting and printmaking at Northern Arizona University. Of Apache, Tewa, and Hopi descent, he works with school-age children in and around the White Mountain Reservation, and lives with his wife and three children in Taylor, Arizona. *The Magic Hummingbird* (1988) is Michael's fifth illustrated children's book. He started in 1988 with *The Mouse Couple*, authored and illustrated *The Flute Player* (1990) and *Antelope Woman* (1992), and co-authored (with his wife Kathleen) and illustrated *Less Than Half, More Than Whole* (1994).

**Narrated by:** Michael Lomatuway'me

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes/Translator's Notes:** The objective of this book is two-fold. First, it preserves an authentic folktale in an age when not only is the art of storytelling declining throughout the world, but whole bodies of oral tradition are vanishing into oblivion. Second, it attempts to fill a perceived void in the availability of quality children's literature based on ethnic sources. *The Magic Hummingbird* (1988) is an authentic example of Hopi oral literature. Naasiwam Tootsat Pokta, the Hopi version, was related to me in 1984 by Michael Lomatumay'ma.a. Michael Lacapa's artwork makes the transition from live storyteller to printed page possible.

**Genre:**              **Traditional** Yes              **Contemporary**              **Historical**

**Publisher:** KIVA Publishing Inc.      **Publisher Year:** 1988              **City:** Walnut, CA

**Age Level:**              **Children** Yes              **Adolescent**

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, the story, *The Magic Hummingbird* (1988) is an authentic folktale based on the work of the author's preserving the Hopi oral story through this story. And, by the collaboration of the Hopi narrator, translator, and illustrator expertise and knowledge of the Hopi Way of Life that make the story culturally authentic. Also, portraying the original story and revealing the history of the Hopi people how they survived, especially how the children of the story were heroes, and how the readers learn from the story. This is what everyone that was involved in producing this story entails, the purpose of revealing this story, an authentic story, of the Hopi people, and the history of them.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Outsider, the author Ekkehart Malotki is a professor of languages at Northern Arizona University, this is why he is considering an outsider, sense he is not a tribal member. But Ekkehart work as a philologist and ethnolinguist focus on the maintenance of the Hopi language and culture is his expertise area in producing this story makes this story authentic. In addition, his collaboration with the narrator and illustrator who are from Hopi descent and are knowledgeable of the Hopi Way of Life make this story authentic.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the author has experience with the culture, by his work as a philologist and ethnolinguist concentrates on the preservation of the Hopi language and culture. Furthermore, the story was collected and translated by Ekkehart Malotki and narrated by Michael Lomatuway'ma and illustrated by Michael Lacapa. All the people involved in the creation of this story, all have invested their lives in preserving the Hopi oral stories, an author, an Hopi narrator, and an Hopi illustrator. The author is experience with the culture of the Hopi culture, through its tradition, language, culture, and illustration, by utilizing people of the Hopi tribe to develop a authentic story of the Hopi people.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The reason for the author to write this book comes from this age of political correctness, he saw too many original stories watered down either to oversimplify or to eliminate any unpleasantness. Famines have occurred in the Hopi history, and children may have been abandoned at such life-threatening times. But the abandonment of children can also be viewed as a literary device by the originator of the story, enabling him to narrate it from the viewpoint of the children and thus elicit the listener's sympathy. And this device allows the story teller to create the opportunity for the children to become, if not actual heroes, at least instrumental in the survival of Oraibi. This is one of several reason why the author choose to write this book, the content, the purpose of the story, the storyteller objective, the history, and preserving the oral story of the Hopi people.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criteria for evaluation is from the establishment of the story and the people who are involved in the process and the story it self of the Hopi people oral story of the Magic Hummingbird.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

The author and illustrator concentrate on the Hopi culture, language, develop and collaborate on the development of this story, *The Magic Hummingbird* (1988). Furthermore, the objective of this book is to preserve an authentic folktale that is the art of storytelling of oral tradition. And the availability of quality children's literature based on ethnic sources.

**7). Who has the power?**

The Hopi people, the story is preserving an authentic folktale and the story availability of quality children's literature based on ethnic sources. The ethnic sources comes from the transition from live storyteller to text, original translation of ethnographic literature that depicts the Hopi stories, images, and the Hopi Way of Life, this is why the Hopi has the power.

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**Answer                      Questions**

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, because in the translator note's it provides the objective of this book; preserves an authentic folktale and to fill a perceived void in the availability of quality children's literature base on ethnic sources.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, the story is about a circumstance that faces the Hopi people in the village of Oraibi and what they had to do to survive. The parents of two children left them in Oraibi but through the help of the Hummingbird the children were provided food and the parents were found. The story has a problem but the problem is solved through the Hummingbird. As Native American people storytelling is told for the children to learn about the different types of circumstances that happen and how it can be overcome through the beliefs of the Native American, through powerful beings. This story will provide the Non-Native American a story of the Hopi people and the learning that takes place within the storytelling.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, the different perspectives on the events, issues, or problems are presented to the Hopi people of Oraibi, the people leaving the village except the two children who are aided by a Hummingbird, through food and finding their parents. The Hummingbird and the God of Fertility and Germination, Muy'ingwa are powerful being who helped the children and the Hopi people endeavor this famine.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant**

omissions)?

**Comments:** Yes, based on the beginning of the story where the translator's note states that this story preserves this authentic folktale plus the author is very knowledgeable in the Hopi language, and culture. The author seeks information and research through the narrator Michael Lomatuqay'ma and through his association with the Hopi people.

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Yes No N/A **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material:  
Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, the illustration is drawn by a Native Hopi artist who has seen the Hopi ceremonial dances and is from the Hopi village Oraibi. The illustration are authentic drawing of the village, the landscape, the crops, the brother and the sister are drawing similar to the Kachina Dolls of the Hopi people. The clothing of the girl is authentic plus the way the girl hair is up in two buns, is how the Hopi girl wear their hair. The hair style of the boy and the necklace he wears is authentic what Hopi boys wear. The God of Fertility and Germination, Muy'ingwa, is the actual Kachina God of the Hopi people. The Kiva is a spiritual place and it does have four stages in it and the illustration is authenticate how the KIVA resembles.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, the Native Americans are not stereotyped in the content of the story because of the author's expertise in the Hopi Language and culture, plus information provides an authentic example of Hopi oral literature. Naasiwam Tootsat Pokta, the Hopi version, was related to me in 1984 by Michael Lomatumay'ma.a.

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Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement  
to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, the Native American are given credit for their involvement to Western development by the story preserves an authentic folktale in an age when not only is the art of storytelling sharply declining throughout the world, but whole bodies of oral tradition are vanishing into oblivion. And the story is an attempt to fill a perceived void in the availability of quality children's literature base on ethnic sources.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the  
Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American  
Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, the time period or setting of this story through the illustration and situation authenticate the Native American Way of Life based on the bilingual works involving Hopi semantics and Hopi oral literature in the development of publishing a children's book. The Magic Hummingbird is an authentic example of Hopi oral literature.

The Hopi version literature based on ethnic sources plus the illustrator displayed the essence of the story in culturally relevant imagery.

**Yes**   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and /or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author is qualified to write this book of the Hopi people based on his background and research experience in the field of the Hopi Language and Hopi Culture.

**Yes**   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, this is a quality piece of literature written for children based on the author research of Hopi oral storytelling and the Hopi oral literature, improved the readability of the original translation, researching the ethnographic literature for description and the depiction of the Hopi fertility god Muy'ingwa. This book attempts to fill a perceived void in the availability of quality children's literature based on ethnic sources.

**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:** My evaluation of *The Magic Humming* (1988), written by Ekkerhart Malotki and illustrated by Michael Lacapa is based on the positive response to each questions. The Native American and Non-Native American reader will experience the story of how the two children lived through the famine with the help of the Hummingbird and the God Mug'ingwa. This story provides a positive identity to both children and adult because of the hardship one faces and how we learn through the experiences of our own lives. The author and illustrator have vast knowledge in the Hopi Way of Life, through Hopi studies from the language, culture, and artwork. This book is authentic through the content and the illustration portrayed authentic artwork drawings of the Hopi village, crops, landscape, the boy and girl, the hummingbird and the God Muy'ingwa. Furthermore, the story provides different perspective, events, and issues that portrays the Hopi oral traditional story. The author and illustrator are both qualified to write and illustrated this book based on their knowledge of the Hopi people and their acknowledgement of the Hopi people. In addition this is a quality literature book that nay child, Native American or Non-Native American will experience and learn through the story on Native Hopi stories.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      **Acceptable Yes**      **Unacceptable**  
**Why?**

The evaluation of this book, *The Magic Hummingbird* (1988), written by Ekkehart Malotki and illustrated by Michael Lacapa is acceptable because of its authenticity of

Hopi folktale, the story is retold through a narrator of the Hopi people, the powerful beings of the Hopi people who assist the people in the time of need, the content and illustration do not stereotype the Native American people, the events, issues and perspective of the story is clearly revealed in the story. The author and illustrator are qualified to write and illustrate this book based on their knowledge of the Hopi language, culture and artwork. And author knowledge production of this book and the assistance with the Hopi narrator, his knowledge in the Hopi language and Hopi culture. The illustrator is from the descent of the Hopi people and has vast knowledge in the Hopi way of life and this has enhanced and authenticated his artwork of the Hopi people. The evaluation of the literature is acceptable based on the content of the literature and the authentic illustration by author and Hopi artist.

## **Evaluation: *The Good Rainbow Road***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** July 6, 2005

**Title of Book:** The Good Rainbow Road

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Kere Pueblo

**Author Name:** Simon Ortiz

**Author Background:** Simon Ortiz is a poet, fiction writer, and storyteller. He is a native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico, where he grew up at Deetsyaamah, a rural village area in the Acoma Pueblo community. As a native writer, he insists on telling the story of his people's land, culture, and community, His stories are marred by social, political, economic, and cultural conflicts with Euro-American society. Ortiz's story stresses vision and hope by creating struggle and resistance against human and technological opposition, the ever present problem of encroachment to Native Americans.

**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Illustrator Background:** Michael Lacapa is of Apache, Hopi and Tewa descent. He grew up on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, where he first heard the old stories told by the elders. After completing high school, he attended Arizona State University, where he received a degree in Secondary Art Education. He returned to the reservation to teach and to develop traditional stories into books.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) is not a traditional Native American story. It is not a story that is told in any Native cultural community. It is not traditional in any technical meaning of the word, because the story is a contemporary creative work by the Native author, Ortiz, who wrote this book. However, it contains elements of traditional storytelling. These elements are common to and recognizable by the universal human cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. One of those elements is belief in the power of language and memory. As a community, we have languages with which to communicate and relate to each other as people and to the world around us, and we have had an all-abiding memory since the beginning of time and since human culture became aware of Existence within it. Our stories join us together. This is the basis of *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004).

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary** Yes            **Historical**

**Publisher:** The University of Arizona            **Publisher Year:** 2004            **City:** Tucson AZ

**Age Level:**            **Children** Yes            **Adolescent**

#### **1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, the book is written from someone who knows the language as it is narrated in the Keres pueblo language. The illustrations correlate to the pueblo culture, the body wear clothing, and the beautiful landscaped terrain they reside on. The pueblo design motif on objects indicates the cultures symbols of the Pueblos.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

The narratives are relayed from an insider perspective. The story is told from a second person account and the narrator tells a story the way old traditionalist would tell a story. Only a person who knows the way Native American tell stories would narrate the story the way it is narrated here.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

In order for an accurate portrayal of a culture the author must know about it. The author has lived among his people and he knows the language. Furthermore, he has heard traditional stories.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The author had written this story ten years prior, at a friend's suggestion he decided to have it published in a different way, but with a Native American language narratives alongside the English language, including Spanish.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The story must accurately portray Native Americans. The author should know the peoples customs, their values, beliefs, and attitudes. The author should also know the language and the homeland of the people.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book? Yes.**

Adding the Keres Pueblo Native American language to the narratives goes beyond the accuracy as it deviates away from stereotyping. The story is written by a Native American who knows the values, beliefs and attitudes of his culture.

**7). Who has the power?**

The power is in the book and the people who are obligated to transfer this story to the coming generations. This story of struggle gives vision and hope for a better life in the future. This concept will sustain a culture to survive in any stressful environment. It is a good model to follow.

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**Answer                      Questions**

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**Yes    No    N/A    a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, because it is written by a Native author, along with a collaborative effort by different cultures to bring the story out as a book. *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) is located in the Native American mind because of the storyline and its terrestrial landscape which is familiar to the Pueblos of Arizona and New Mexico. This illustration of their people, their language, and land in a book format is something they would be

proud of. It is their identity. Yes, this book does help Native American children identify and be proud of their traditional heritage. This is the story of two courageous boys, of how they saved their village. Two brothers are chosen for an important mission because they must go with an open heart so they can find and tell Shiwana--the rain and snow spirits, how hard it has become for their people and the drought on their land.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, because through the story infused a positive image of the two young brothers chosen to take a journey to find Shiwana. The brave brothers obey and take on the responsibility and travel a difficult mountainous and dangerous terrain to accomplish the task, to help their people, the men, women, and children, to bring back--water--life to the people, land and the animals. Through this story the Non-Native American reader will go through the experience the boys went through—the obedience, cooperation, encouragement, goal setting and decision making. These traits are of Native Americans' heritage, and this will provide a positive image of the Native American as portrayed in this book.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the different perspective is the Native American way of storytelling's viewpoint, that particular narration of metaphoric teaching explaining events, morality, self identity, and behavior written on paper. Not oral presentations. These aspects were in the story and this gave a different perspective presented.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Yes, the writer attempts to be accurate as possible. His story about the Pueblos, his people, his language, and his reservation land terrain features, were illustrated by Native experts in written words and sketches. Therefore no omissions existed.

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Yes   **No**   N/A   **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, Native Americans were not stereotyped in the illustration based on the author who is Native American, and acquires vast knowledge of illustrating Native Americans in his books, and is a writer of Native American children's literature. The illustrations are authentic based on the illustrator's expertise in Native American artwork; his bachelor of Art Education from Arizona State University, plus growing up on the Fort Apache Reservation, hearing stories told by the elders. Moreover his continuing support

to educate his Apache children on the reservation and the surrounding communities of the White Mountain region indicates his devotions to his Native American people.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, the content is written by a Native American literature writer, who has vast knowledge in his own Acoma Pueblo teachings and upbringing. As a Native writer, he insists on telling the story of his people's land, culture and community, with stories marred by social, political, economic, and culture conflict. However, his story stresses visions and hope with creative struggles and resistance against human and technological oppression.

---

Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, from the beginning of the book, stating, the story is especially for our people who remain as always one with our land, culture and community. The section, about this book, portrays the author's details about how this story provides commonalities to and recognizable through the cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. The author's collaboration with Beverly Slapin of the Oyate organization, how she recommended Michael Lacapa, a Native illustrator, for this book, and how Michael added an important visual dimension to the story as noted by the author. The English and Spanish language texts were the narratives, but the Indigenous language translation of Keres, a pueblo language, is what the author wanted it to be--the lead one, in *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004), it is twofold he asserted. First, the Indigenous, or First language of the Americans are Native American or Indian; and Second, because Keres is the First language, the authors wanted its presence to be a manifestation of the fact that Native land, culture, and community are the original and primary evidence of the Western Hemisphere. Additionally, our history is our land--we contributed that to Western Development.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, considering the time period or setting of this literature the illustration and situation authenticate the Indian Way of Life during the time period in the day of old. The clothing, the hunting gear and moccasins, and other regalia match the time period. The terrain depicted is the land of the Hopi's--another Pueblo culture. The village situated atop the plateau, with the white cap mountains as a background is the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, or Mount Taylor in New Mexico.

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Yes No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native**

**American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author is qualified to write this book of Native American based on his background, being a Native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico and his publishing of several Native Literature books. In addition, his several awards; the National Endowment for the Art, Reader Digest Award; Lannan Foundation's Artist in Residence, "Returning the Gift" Lifetime Achievement Award, WESTAF Lifetime Achievement Award, and the New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in Art reinforces his credibility of Native American Literature writings.

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**Yes    No    N/A    i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book is a quality piece of literature written for children based on the author and illustrator's expertise in Native American literature and Artwork, plus this story is an easy read. The story comes from the authors own experiences dealing with social, political, economic, and cultural conflict which stresses vision and hope. The other Native author provides authentic illustrations based on his experiences in Native artwork, and his own lifetime experiences living on and off the reservation.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

The book, *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004), is written by Simon Ortiz, and illustration by Michael Lacapa, provides a Native American and Non-Native American readers positive images of the Native American because it is written by a Native author supported by a collaborative effort with other cultural illustrators to ensure accuracy to bring the story out as a book. This book has a landscape setting which is familiar to me, Flagstaff's snow capped mountains and the village atop the plateau. This could be first, or second mesa villages. The storyline is contemporary, but takes on a near traditional oral storytelling with its metaphoric messages. This story was of struggles, vision and hope. A story of a Pueblo village faced with a drought as the lake and stream near it had run dry with no rain or snow expected. The drought laden Pueblo land was taking its toll on the people, including the food crops, and migration of the wild game animals. People were starving and arguing amongst themselves. Children were crying. It was not a happy time. This was the scenario given. It was such an excellent story because of the mixture of traditional and non traditional way of storytelling. The Native Americans were not stereotyped in the illustrations. The author/illustrator who is a Native American had vast knowledge in Native illustration and is an author of Native American children's literature. The content of the story is not stereotyped of the Native American because the content is written by the author who has experiential knowledge of his own Acoma Pueblo teachings. From the beginning of the book, the author noted that, this story is especially for our people who remain as always one with our land, culture, and community. That is so true. Overall though, this story has commonalties to other different non-Native American cultures of storytelling. It contains memory and the belief in the

power of language. Other non-Native cultures will recognize the story as theirs. It is Universal. The section about this book, portray the author's details about how this story provides commonalities to and recognizable through the cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. The author's collaboration with Beverly Slapin of the Oyate organization, how she recommended Michael Lacapa, a Native illustrator, for this book and how the author noted that Michael added an important visual dimension to the story. The Indigenous language translation of Keres, and Spanish, English, is what the author wanted to take a lead in this story. First, the author noted his Pueblo Keres language plus other Native languages as the language to be remembered as a primary connecting link to the land, culture and communities of the Western Hemisphere. And the author wants the languages' presence to be a manifestation of the fact that Native land, culture, and community are the original and primary evidence of the Western World. The author is qualified to write this book dealing with Native American based on his background, being a native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico and his publishing of several Native Literature books. This book is a quality piece of literature written for children based on the authors and illustrator's expertise in Native American literature and Native American Artwork. It is an easy read for young students.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      Acceptable                      Unacceptable  
**Why?**

The evaluation for this literature is acceptable based on the evaluation questions in which all the responses were positive and this literature didn't portray Native American in both, content and illustration as negative. The Native author and the Native illustrator are well known for their writing and the illustrations. .

## Evaluation: *The Gift of Changing Woman*

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### Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** July 6, 2005

**Title of Book:** The Good Rainbow Road

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Kere Pueblo

**Author Name:** Simon Ortiz

**Author Background:** Simon Ortiz is a poet, fiction writer, and storyteller. He is a native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico, where he grew up at Deetsyaamah, a rural village area in the Acoma Pueblo community. As a native writer, he insists on telling the story of his people's land, culture, and community, His stories are marred by social, political, economic, and cultural conflicts with Euro-American society. Ortiz's story stresses vision and hope by creating struggle and resistance against human and technological opposition, the ever present problem of encroachment to Native Americans.

**Illustrator Name:** Michael Lacapa

**Illustrator Background:** Michael Lacapa is of Apache, Hopi and Tewa descent. He grew up on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, where he first heard the old stories told by the elders. After completing high school, he attended Arizona State University, where he received a degree in Secondary Art Education. He returned to the reservation to teach and to develop traditional stories into books.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) is not a traditional Native American story. It is not a story that is told in any Native cultural community. It is not traditional in any technical meaning of the word, because the story is a contemporary creative work by the Native author, Ortiz, who wrote this book. However, it contains elements of traditional storytelling. These elements are common to and recognizable by the universal human cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. One of those elements is belief in the power of language and memory. As a community, we have languages with which to communicate and relate to each other as people and to the world around us, and we have had an all-abiding memory since the beginning of time and since human culture became aware of Existence within it. Our stories join us together. This is the basis of *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004).

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary** Yes            **Historical**

**Publisher:** The University of Arizona

**Publisher Year:** 2004    **City:** Tucson AZ

**Age Level:**            **Children** Yes

**Adolescent**

#### 1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?

Yes, the book is written from someone who knows the language as it is narrated in the Keres pueblo language. The illustrations correlate to the pueblo culture, the body wear clothing, and the beautiful landscaped terrain they reside on. The pueblo design motif on objects indicates the cultures symbols of the Pueblos.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

The narratives are relayed from an insider perspective. The story is told from a second person account and the narrator tells a story the way old traditionalist would tell a story. Only a person who knows the way Native American tell stories would narrate the story the way it is narrated here.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

In order for an accurate portrayal of a culture the author must know about it. The author has lived among his people and he knows the language. Furthermore, he has heard traditional stories.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The author had written this story ten years prior, at a friend's suggestion he decided to have it published in a different way, but with a Native American language narratives alongside the English language, including Spanish.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The story must accurately portray Native Americans. The author should know the peoples customs, their values, beliefs, and attitudes. The author should also know the language and the homeland of the people.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book? Yes.**

Adding the Keres Pueblo Native American language to the narratives goes beyond the accuracy as it deviates away from stereotyping. The story is written by a Native American who knows the values, beliefs and attitudes of his culture.

**7). Who has the power?**

The power is in the book and the people who are obligated to transfer this story to the coming generations. This story of struggle gives vision and hope for a better life in the future. This concept will sustain a culture to survive in any stressful environment. It is a good model to follow.

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**Answer                      Questions**

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**Yes    No    N/A    a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, because it is written by a Native author, along with a collaborative effort by different cultures to bring the story out as a book. *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004) is located in the Native American mind because of the storyline and its terrestrial landscape which is familiar to the Pueblos of Arizona and New Mexico. This illustration

of their people, their language, and land in a book format is something they would be proud of. It is their identity. Yes, this book does help Native American children identify and be proud of their traditional heritage. This is the story of two courageous boys, of how they saved their village. Two brothers are chosen for an important mission because they must go with an open heart so they can find and tell Shiwana--the rain and snow spirits, how hard it has become for their people and the drought on their land.

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**Yes** No N/A **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, because through the story infused a positive image of the two young brothers chosen to take a journey to find Shiwana. The brave brothers obey and take on the responsibility and travel a difficult mountainous and dangerous terrain to accomplish the task, to help their people, the men, women, and children, to bring back--water--life to the people, land and the animals. Through this story the Non-Native American reader will go through the experience the boys went through—the obedience, cooperation, encouragement, goal setting and decision making. These traits are of Native Americans' heritage, and this will provide a positive image of the Native American as portrayed in this book.

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**Yes** No N/A **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the different perspective is the Native American way of storytelling's viewpoint, that particular narration of metaphoric teaching explaining events, morality, self identity, and behavior written on paper. Not oral presentations. These aspects were in the story and this gave a different perspective presented.

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**Yes** No N/A **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Yes, the writer attempts to be accurate as possible. His story about the Pueblos, his people, his language, and his reservation land terrain features, were illustrated by Native experts in written words and sketches. Therefore no omissions existed.

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Yes **No** N/A **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, Native Americans were not stereotyped in the illustration based on the author who is Native American, and acquires vast knowledge of illustrating Native Americans in his books, and is a writer of Native American children's literature. The illustrations are authentic based on the illustrator's expertise in Native American artwork; his bachelor of Art Education from Arizona State University, plus growing up on the Fort

Apache Reservation, hearing stories told by the elders. Moreover his continuing support to educate his Apache children on the reservation and the surrounding communities of the White Mountain region indicates his devotions to his Native American people.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, the content is written by a Native American literature writer, who has vast knowledge in his own Acoma Pueblo teachings and upbringing. As a Native writer, he insists on telling the story of his people's land, culture and community, with stories marred by social, political, economic, and culture conflict. However, his story stresses visions and hope with creative struggles and resistance against human and technological oppression.

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Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, from the beginning of the book, stating, the story is especially for our people who remain as always one with our land, culture and community. The section, about this book, portrays the author's details about how this story provides commonalities to and recognizable through the cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. The author's collaboration with Beverly Slapin of the Oyate organization, how she recommended Michael Lacapa, a Native illustrator, for this book, and how Michael added an important visual dimension to the story as noted by the author. The English and Spanish language texts were the narratives, but the Indigenous language translation of Keres, a pueblo language, is what the author wanted it to be--the lead one, in *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004), it is twofold he asserted. First, the Indigenous, or First language of the Americans are Native American or Indian; and Second, because Keres is the First language, the authors wanted its presence to be a manifestation of the fact that Native land, culture, and community are the original and primary evidence of the Western Hemisphere. Additionally, our history is our land--we contributed that to Western Development.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, considering the time period or setting of this literature the illustration and situation authenticate the Indian Way of Life during the time period in the day of old. The clothing, the hunting gear and moccasins, and other regalia match the time period. The terrain depicted is the land of the Hopi's--another Pueblo culture. The village situated atop the plateau, with the white cap mountains as a background is the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, or Mount Taylor in New Mexico.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author is qualified to write this book of Native American based on his background, being a Native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico and his publishing of several Native Literature books. In addition, his several awards; the National Endowment for the Art, Reader Digest Award; Lannan Foundation's Artist in Residence, "Returning the Gift" Lifetime Achievement Award, WESTAF Lifetime Achievement Award, and the New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in Art reinforces his credibility of Native American Literature writings.

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**Yes**   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book is a quality piece of literature written for children based on the author and illustrator's expertise in Native American literature and Artwork, plus this story is an easy read. The story comes from the authors own experiences dealing with social, political, economic, and cultural conflict which stresses vision and hope. The other Native author provides authentic illustrations based on his experiences in Native artwork, and his own lifetime experiences living on and off the reservation.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

The book, *The Good Rainbow Road* (2004), is written by Simon Ortiz, and illustration by Michael Lacapa, provides a Native American and Non-Native American readers positive images of the Native American because it is written by a Native author supported by a collaborative effort with other cultural illustrators to ensure accuracy to bring the story out as a book. This book has a landscape setting which is familiar to me, Flagstaff's snow capped mountains and the village atop the plateau. This could be first, or second mesa villages. The storyline is contemporary, but takes on a near traditional oral storytelling with its metaphoric messages. This story was of struggles, vision and hope. A story of a Pueblo village faced with a drought as the lake and stream near it had run dry with no rain or snow expected. The drought laden Pueblo land was taking its toll on the people, including the food crops, and migration of the wild game animals. People were starving and arguing amongst themselves. Children were crying. It was not a happy time. This was the scenario given. It was such an excellent story because of the mixture of traditional and non traditional way of storytelling. The Native Americans were not stereotyped in the illustrations. The author/illustrator who is a Native American had vast knowledge in Native illustration and is an author of Native American children's literature. The content of the story is not stereotyped of the Native American because the content is written by the author who has experiential knowledge of his own Acoma Pueblo teachings. From the beginning of the book, the author noted that, this story is especially for our people who remain as always one with our land, culture, and community. That is so true. Overall though, this story has commonalties to other different

non-Native American cultures of storytelling. It contains memory and the belief in the power of language. Other non-Native cultures will recognize the story as theirs. It is Universal. The section about this book, portray the author's details about how this story provides commonalities to and recognizable through the cultural community no matter the ethnic identity or geographic locale. The author's collaboration with Beverly Slapin of the Oyate organization, how she recommended Michael Lacapa, a Native illustrator, for this book and how the author noted that Michael added an important visual dimension to the story. The Indigenous language translation of Keres, and Spanish, English, is what the author wanted to take a lead in this story. First, the author noted his Pueblo Keres language plus other Native languages as the language to be remembered as a primary connecting link to the land, culture and communities of the Western Hemisphere. And the author wants the languages' presence to be a manifestation of the fact that Native land, culture, and community are the original and primary evidence of the Western World. The author is qualified to write this book dealing with Native American based on his background, being a native of Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico and his publishing of several Native Literature books. This book is a quality piece of literature written for children based on the authors and illustrator's expertise in Native American literature and Native American Artwork. It is an easy read for young students.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      Acceptable                      Unacceptable  
**Why?**

The evaluation for this literature is acceptable based on the evaluation questions in which all the responses were positive and this literature didn't portray Native American in both, content and illustration as negative. The Native author and the Native illustrator are well known for their writing and the illustrations. .

**Evaluation: *Between Earth and Sky***

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**Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman **Date:** Fall 2006  
**Title of Book:** Between Earth and Sky **Paperback:** Yes  
**Tribe Represented:** Wampanoag, Senca, Navajo,  
 Cherokee, Papago, Hopewell, Cheyenne, Bellow,  
 Walapai, Abenaki  
**Author Name:** Joseph Bruch  
**Author Background:** Joseph Bruchac is an Abenaki poet and author. He retells ten  
 Native legends of the scared landscapes of Native Americans. The stories awaken the  
 sacred places of the universe, the above, below, and within us all.  
**Illustrator Name:** Thomas Locker  
**Illustrator Background:**  
**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:**  
**Genre:**            **Traditional X**            **Contemporary**            **Historical X**  
**Publisher:** Voyager Books \* Harcourt, Inc. **Publisher Year:** 1996 **City:** San Diego  
**Age Level:**            **Children X**            **Adolescent X**

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, it does. These stories were written by a Native American author who has written several books on Native Americans. The stories were collected from Native Americans across America. The author has advocated accuracy therefore the books were drafted as accurately as possible.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

It is from an insider perspective, the author heard stories from Native Americans about special places which are sacred.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the author is Native American. He is of the Abenaki tribe and has lived the life. He has written several books on Native Americans.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The author is intrigue about the different Native American cultures and their special places which are sacred.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criterion for evaluation has to be accurate, and for accuracy the writer has to be Native American because the Native writer is more perceptive about his or her particular culture. Furthermore, one who has lived on the reservation and knows the language is apt to write truthfully about their cultures.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

A Native Author who has immense knowledge about other Native American cultures goes beyond stereotypes. If one knows about a culture they are writing about, then there would be no stereotypes. Accuracy supersedes stereotypes.

**7). Who has the power?**

The written history has the power because of the historical stories of Native Americans which may be transferred to the future generations. The message of sacred places within the Native American homeland exists for connections to the underworld--mother earth and her natural powers, and the Cosmic Afterworld.

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<b>Answer</b>	<b>Questions</b>
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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the book teaches young Native American about the many indigenous cultures with their different stories about their sacred places. This is a story about their relatives, the people and their cultures. This is the heritage that they come from. They would be proud of their people and themselves.

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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the Native American have stories which teaches lessons about the sacred places. The stories have explanations about the unique existence of people, animals and landscape of a peculiar homeland. The metaphoric explanations were uniquely designed to convey the existence of the way things were formed and how they look today.

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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem Presented?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the perspective of Native American tribes and their stories are presented, this is what makes it different. It is their stories.

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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, The author is Native American who has written over eighty books on Native Americans and his own tribe. Any Native American author who writes books about their people wishes to present real stories in truth because they have experienced misrepresentation of Native Americans in books.

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Yes No N/A e). **Are the Native American stereotyped in the material:  
Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, due to the accuracy of the stories. The stories matched the terrestrial landscape of the people's homeland narrated.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, the content of the stories did not contain any negative stereotypes. The only stereotype was the Native Americans love for the land, their sacred places with the spirits and the beautiful stories behind it.

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Yes No N/A f). **Are the Native American given credit for their involvement  
to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, indirectly the stories lead to mental formulations of the new perspectives of the natural world which Native Americans revere. The mental formulation of respect for the Natural world which is more often overlooked contributes to Western development.

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Yes No N/A g). **Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the  
Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American  
Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, the long ago inhabitants respect for the land, and the existence of natural forces and derivative of the world made by the Creator is truly Native American Indian thought. This book possesses that.

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Yes No N/A h). **Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native  
American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author has written many books on Native Americans and he has lived and visited the people of different Native Nations. This is how the stories were derived.

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Yes No N/A i). **Is this book a quality piece of literature written for  
Children?**

**Comments:** Yes it is. The narrative is written in a simple format for children to easily understand the content. The content and the illustrations evoke the children's imagination to place themselves in the story. The narratives and the paintings are beautiful. It conveys the message of the Native American people.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

These stories were written by a Native American author who has written several books on Native Americans. The stories were collected from Native Americans across America. The author Joseph Bruchac advocated accuracy therefore the books were drafted as accurately as possible, written from the perspective of a Native American and the illustrations matched the people to their land. The stories within this book; *Between Earth and Sky* portray an accurate rendition of the Native American people. The stories are written in a simple poetic format easy to understand for children. The author Joseph Bruchac is Native American, from the Abenaki tribe and has lived the Native life. He has written several books on Native Americans, it is from this I noted that he is an insider, as the author acquired stories from several Native Americans Nations about their special and unique places which are considered sacred. The author is intrigued about the different cultures of the Native Nations and their special places which are sacred. The criterion for evaluation of the book titled: *Between Earth and Sky*, has been evaluated as accurate, and the writer being Native American--is perceptive about several Native Nation cultures. Furthermore, Joseph Bruchac has lived on his own Reservation and knowing the people and the language he is apt to write truthfully about other cultures. Joseph Bruchac, a voracious Native writer who has immense knowledge about other Native American cultures goes beyond stereotypes. Being a Native Author he knows about a certain cultures and his writing portrays non-stereotypical texts and illustrations. His accuracy supersedes stereotypes. His writing of the history of the Native American people has the power to transfer that knowledge to the future Native Nations youth. The message that this book carries about the sacred places within Native American homeland exists to make our connection to the underworld of mother earth and her natural powers, and the Cosmic Afterworld when called upon.

**Evaluation for this literature:      Acceptable Yes      Unacceptable**

**Why?** Based on the summarization of the story, *Between Earth and Sky*, plus the knowledge based from the Native American Author, Joseph Bruchac, who is well-known throughout Native Indian Country for his writings of over eighty Native American literatures. The collection of stories from different Native Nation give accurate narration of that particular Nation, and each stories define the Nation represented in the story. The focus of this evaluation is about culturally authentic Native American children's literature, and this book is accepted as accurate based on the author's background knowledge of the Native Nation and the message of empowerment of each story.

## Evaluation: *BiDii*

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### Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature

<b>Evaluator Name:</b> Angeline P.Hoffman	<b>Date:</b> Jan. 2006
<b>Title of Book:</b> BiDii	<b>Hardback:</b>
<b>Tribe Represented:</b> Navajo	<b>Paperback:</b> Yes
<b>Author Name:</b> Marjorie	
<b>Author Background:</b>	
<b>Illustrator Name:</b> Patrick Begay	
<b>Illustrator Background:</b>	
<b>Acknowledgement/Author Notes:</b>	
<b>Genre:</b> Traditional <u>Contemporary</u> Historical	
<b>Publisher:</b> Salina Bookshelf <b>Publisher</b> <b>Year:</b> 2000 <b>City:</b> Flagstaff, Arizona	
<b>Age Level:</b> <u>Children</u> Adolescent	

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, it does. Some Navajos have taken to owning sheep introduced by foreigners. This is their cultural activity now. The illustration of the characters clad in their clothing with their headgear, footwear, and jewelry adornment, and with their peculiar hair style identifies them as Navajos, although these accoutrements are not a part of the culture originally.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

It is from an insider perspective. The events in the book relate to Navajo Sheep owner activities, bridling horses, untying hobbles, brushing horses, herding sheep, and dipping sheep. These activities are narrated in the book. It is from a Navajo perspective as it is written by a Navajo.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

The author has the experience with the culture. She knows the activities of the modern day Navajo sheep owners.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

The reasons for writing the book is not mentioned, but the author dedicated the book to her grandchildren.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The author has to know the culture and the written material has to be authentic. This criteria makes it authentic.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

The illustrations have to match the cultural attributes of the people. The Navajos sketched in the stories matched the Navajo people. The terrain features depicted also identified the Navajo homeland. That is

authentic. Moreover, the text was written in Navajo.

**7). Who has the power?**

The story has the power because it reveals to the readers the character of mischievous boy which the readers can relate to. It makes the reader aware of their behavior. This story is a teaching tool for instilling appropriate behavior. The Navajo parents would also have the power. They have the ability to carry this message to children by relating to the story.

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<b>Answer</b>	<b>Questions</b>
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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?</b>
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Yes, this book would support young children's identity. They will identify with the characters of their own tribe. The Navajo children will especially be proud of their culture. Their tribe is depicted in a book.

**Comments:**

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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, because it is a moral story of a Navajo boy and how the parents advise the young boy.

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<b>Yes</b>	No	N/A	<b>c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the perspective of the Navajo is narrated mentioning events, issues and problem. The text was written in Navajo.

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<b><u>Yes</u></b>	No	N/A	<b>d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?</b>
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**Comments:** Yes, the accurate portrayal of the Navajos by the narratives and illustrations relating to this particular story implicates factual basis of the storyline.

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Yes	<b><u>No</u></b>	N/A	<b>e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?</b>
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**Comments:** No. The accurate portrayal of the illustrations rendered by the illustrator and the authors knowledge of the people thwarts stereotyping.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No. The accurate portrayal in the narratives eliminates stereotypes.

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Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** This story has the power to contribute appropriate behavior to children, and the Navajo people's history, their lifestyle is displayed on paper, like a photograph. Curious Westerners will view the book for future references.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, although the Navajos were attired in foreign clothing such as the hat, pants, skirts and jewelry it portrayed an accurate body wear for the time period of the setting depicted.

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Yes No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author is qualified. She knows the Navajo culture as she has written an accurate portrayal of the Navajo people including her collaboration with illustrator who matched the environment to the people.

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Yes No N/A **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, the book displayed a simple written format including the graphics. The story could easily be comprehended and the culture identified.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:** The setting takes place in Navajo country. This is a story of a young Navajo family whose son is mischievous and does what normal boys sometimes do. The boy runs into problems. Bidi, the main character of the story, this young Navajo boy is a free spirited youth who is not affected by imposed authority by his parents. His free spiritedness confronts his parents. Bidi doesn't conform to what his parents tell him to do. So the annoyed parents dislike his mildly rebellious attitude. The grandmother like any grandmothers would do for their grandchildren is to support or defend them, even though they were mischievous. Anyhow, Bidi's grandmother defends him when he is scolded by his parents. But Bidi's mischief of being greedy, that he is taking more than what he should be eating, and lastly, showing off to his friends by jumping over a wide water trough, he slips and falls backwards into the water. His friends laugh and make fun of

him. This story teaches how inappropriate behavior is not appropriate and that misbehavior may get you into all sorts of problems. This story will relate to the young readers--of themselves, and their experiences, and make the readers aware of the consequences of misbehavior. This storyline is simplistic and easy to understand and was easy to relate to. The context was narrated in English and Navajo. The illustrated renderings matched the time period of the scenario of the Navajo family depicted in the story. The illustrator also included the landscape setting which showed Navajo land terrain features which was authentic. This story was written by someone who knew Navajo. [Swinomish]

**Evaluation for this literature:**      Acceptable                      **Unacceptable**

**Why?** This was an excellent story for young children. It is an easy read. The illustrated renderings correlated to the Navajo people.

## **Evaluation: *Kinaalda'***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** July 6, 2005

**Title of Book:** *Kinaalda'*

**Hardback:**

**Tribe Represented:** Navajo

**Paperback:** Yes

**Author Name:** Monty Roessel

**Author/ Photographer Background:** Monty Roessel is a Navajo photographer and writer who specialized in contemporary Native Americans, especially the Navajos. Upon graduating from the University of Northern Colorado, he worked for various newspapers as a photographer and editor before becoming a freelance photojournalist. His photographs have appeared in many magazines, including; *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Arizona Highway*, *The New York Time Magazine* and *Sport Illustrated*. Roessel's work included in books such as *Baseball in America*, *Photographing Arizona*, *Native America* and *Beyond the Mythic West*. He also works on a personal project documentation of Navajo's perspective and contemporary Navajo Way of Life.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** By Michael Dorris, *Kinaalda'* (1993), provides an insider's view into just such a world, that of the contemporary Navajo people. If we ourselves Navajo, we will probably nod often while reading these pages, affirming the familiar, approving that this tribal family keeps alive a traditional coming-of-age ceremony. If we belong to another tribe, we will follow this special journey of initiation and education with interest, gaining respect for a way of doing things that's rich and rewarding.

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary** Yes            **Historical** Yes

**Publisher:** Lerner Publications Company            **Publisher Year:** 1993            **City:** Minneapolis

**Age Level:**                            **Children** Yes                            **Adolescent**

#### **1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, this book defines the cultural authenticity by the voice of the Celinda, who is participating in the *Kinaalda'* ceremony, and she tells her experience as she goes through each event of *Kinaalda'* and through the photographs that enhances the telling of the story. The photographs portrays the Navajo people Way of Life in honoring, coming-of-age ceremony, and Celinda's *Kinaalda'*. This ceremony is performed throughout the Navajo Nation, but you must be invited to witness this blessed event and it's a privilege to be invited. An invitation must not be taken lightly, because this ceremony is sacred to the Navajo people, and the girl being honored through the ceremony only happen once in a life time of a Navajo girl. This book is a definition of Culturally Authentic literature based on the appropriate text and photographs of the ceremony, *Kinaalda'*. It is Navajo.

#### **2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Insider, the author/photographer is a Navajo who specializes in contemporary Native American, especially Navajo. He obligates himself to document the Navajo Way of Life to promote and educate people of all walks of life.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, the author has experienced the culture of the Navajo people, importantly being a Navajo person he believes in promoting his Navajo Way of Life by documentation.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

To promote and documenting Navajo perspective in today's contemporary Navajo.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criteria for evaluation is from a Navajo perspective, from a Navajo girl who is a witnessing the ceremony of her own Kinaalda.' Her experiences and the procedures she must abide by to complete this ceremony.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

The criteria of values, beliefs and attitudes are part of the story, because of the retelling of this ceremony, through the voice of Celinda, who is recognizing the importance of this ceremony through every phase.

**7). Who has the power?**

The Navajo people have the power, because the author/photographer writes the story from the voice of the Navajo girl, Celinda, narrating telling her experience as she take part in this ceremony, Kinaalda'. This is where the power is, within the retelling of the event, through the voice of the Navajo girl, and the Navajo people who participates in this ceremony honoring the girl.

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Answer	Questions
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**Yes    No    N/A    a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the title of this book, *Kinaalda'*, is a coming-of-age ceremony of a Navajo girl. It takes place when a girl has her first menstrual cycle. The ceremony lasts two to four days. Navajo people believe that the Kinaalda' is a way for young girls to comprehend what Life will be like when they grow up. As she participates, she learns about her culture, plus the huge responsibility and work involved in this ceremony by her family members. The story does support Native American children (especially) young girls who are about to embark on their own coming-of-age ceremony. It identifies who they are as Native Americans and proud of their tradition by taking part in their traditional ceremony, as in this story of Kinaalda'.

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**Yes    No    N/A    b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book would enhance a positive image of Native Americans for the Non-Native American reader because this book provides accurate information about the coming of age ceremony, it identifies the Navajo people and where they live. It also

identifies the stages of the ceremony, and the responsibility of the Navajo girl participating in the ceremony. This will give the reader an inside view of how this Navajo ceremony takes place and the significance or purpose of the girl changing into a woman. This information allows the reader to share in the experiences of other cultures. This real life experience is not falsified. Exposure to this literature helps develop the understanding of diverse cultures. It breaks down arrogance, shallow perceptions, and the barriers of prejudice.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives of the events, issues, or problem, presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the author has provided the different events of the ceremony from the perspective of the Navajo, it incorporates the meaning of ceremony, the significance of the girl participating in the (Kinaalda') ceremony, as well as the people involved in the ceremony, the molding of the Navajo girl by the Godmother, the praying, the running--which signifies strength and endurance of the Navajo girl, and the creation of the cake which signifies maturation, this ceremony involves the girl and all her female relations.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Yes, because events of the Kinaalda' is presented in detailed narratives and format that can be understood by the reader. The girl comments of her obligation to herself to accomplish the numerous tasks involved in this ceremony and the blessing she has been given throughout the duration of the ceremony, plus the satisfaction of completing this ceremony and (feeling) different, to becoming a Navajo Woman.

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the book: Through the illustrations?(Photographs)**

**Comments:** No, because the story is told through the voice of the Navajo girl participating in the ceremony. The Navajo relatives guiding her through the ceremony, the medicine man offering prayers, and the people gathered to participate in the event, this is what actually takes place in the ceremony. This is authentic. There is no stereotyping here. The photographs illustrate the actual (Kinaalda') ceremony.

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, because the content is through the voice of the Navajo girl who is participating in this ceremony, Kinaalda', she is retelling the ceremony as it happened to her. This is a unique event, because most ceremony such as this one is mystifying and sacred and you have to be invited to witness this blessed ceremony.

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Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** No, but the implication that the Mysterious Native Americans further educate western man about the diverse cultures which promotes knowledge and understanding of the complex societies. A brief glimpse of healing the body and the mind is mentioned.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, the time period or setting of this material does illustrate, authenticate the Navajo peoples Way of Life through the ceremony, Kinaalda'. This is done by the photography of the ceremony as it is taking place, and the story is told by the Navajo girl who is participating in the ceremony, Kinaalda'. In this manner, this does authenticate the Native American or rather the Navajo Way of Life.

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Yes No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the author is Navajo. He lived the life of his people. He specializes in writing and photographing contemporary Native Americans--especially Navajo. Roessel's work on this personal project documentation is from a Navajo perspective, and the Navajo life, is the reason why this is an authentic quality piece of literature written for children.

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Yes No N/A **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, because it provides accurate information about the ceremony, Kinaalda', which is told through the voice of a young Navajo girl who is participating in the ritual of the Changing Woman. The quality of this literature is the story itself, it is about Native culture, and a young girl their age, the age with which they can relate to, plus the photographs, its authenticity. The reader can understand the ceremony through the narration fused with the photographs to convey the meaning.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:  
Comments:**

My response on the book, *Kinaalda'* (1993) is based on the evaluation from the questions and comments, the positive response of the sixteen questions of the Native American

literature; the impression of the reader to be proud of and reflect on their own identity and traditions. This is realized through this Navajo girl's participation in this Changing Woman ceremony in the story. The perspective of the Non-Native American reader about the Native American experience will promote positive image, plus the authentic representation of the Navajo people and their Kinaalda' ceremony, as it is actually happening through the photographs and text. The author has provided the different phases of the ceremony with the explanation of each event; the young girl who is participating in the ritual of transforming from a girl to a woman, the people involved in the process of the ceremony--the prayers voiced by the Medicine Man and the Navajo people, the symbolic molding of the girl from the Godmother, and the running (for life) activity that signifies long active 'healthy' bountiful life, and how she must endure and possess strength, and the making of the cake which signifies her life being created and completed --the significance of the 'Changing Woman' ceremony. All the important facts of the ceremony, and the people involved--through the Navajo expertise--are included in the story. Within the story, *Kinaalda'* (1993), the Native American or rather the Navajos are not stereotyped in the content nor the photographs of the sequential events of the Kinaalda' ceremony. The Native American is recognized throughout the story by the Navajo author and photographer who convey the actual Navajo experience with a camera. The time period or setting of this book does illustrate the situations that authenticate the Navajo people's Way of Life through the ceremony, Kinaalda'. The author is qualified to write this book about the Navajo people because he has lived the Navajo Life and knows the ceremony, Kinaalda'. Moreover, he specializes in writing and photographing Contemporary Native Americans, especially the Navajos. Roessel works on special project documentaries of contemporary Navajo lifestyle. This is a quality piece of literature written for children because it provides insight of the ceremony, Kinaalda' from the voice of a young Navajo girl who is participating in this ritual and by the photographs taken of the events. The quality of the literature is the story itself. The cultural explanation of the ritual is Native American. The above statement is the reason why this book, *Kinaalda'* (1983) has a positive response of the story, which is acceptable as an authentic Native American book.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      **Acceptable Yes**      **Unacceptable**  
**Why?**

The evaluation of the book; *Kinaalda'* (1983) is written and photographed by Monty Roessel--is acceptable based on the knowledge, background experience, and careful research conducted by the Roessel. The text and photographs of this ceremony, Kinaalda', reveals the authenticity of the Navajo story because it provides accurate information and actual photos of the ceremony as it is happening, and especially the voice of Celinda, narrating her experience of the ceremony as she goes through each stages and the accomplishment at the end of the ceremony (where) she feels like a Navajo, just like her mother, aunt and grandmother, and to continue the Navajo Way of Life.

## **Evaluation: *Sunpainters***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** June 17, 2005

**Title of Book:** Sunpainters

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Navajo

**Author Name:** Baje Whitethorne

**Author Background:** Whitethorne's is best known for works that reflect his childhood memories and environment of this early life on the Navajo reservation near Shonto and Black Mesa in Northern Arizona.

**Illustrator Name:** Baje Whitethorne

**Illustrator Background:** The illustrator has a hidden miniature Navajo village in each of his illustration.

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:** In the Navajo tradition nature is respected with rain, flooding, earthquakes, solar and lunar eclipses. In the story of Kii Leonard, Baje shows children, (and adults, too), are taught the Navajo way to be still and pray when Mother Earth causes the ground to tremor as she raises her voice or crack her back. Baje also wishes to pass on Navajo culture and tradition through his award-winning artwork, and he gives thanks for everything we take from Mother Earth, Baje states that this is an important to know this.

**Genre:**            **Traditional** Yes            **Contemporary**            **Historical**

**Publisher:** Northland Publishing            **Publisher Year:** 1994            **City:** Flagstaff AZ

**Age Level:**            **Children** Yes            **Adolescent**

**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, this book defines cultural authenticity, through the story which reveals the Navajo Way of Life through the Navajo Eclipse, and how the Navajo observe their traditional ways of prayer, and respect. The Culture Authenticity come from within the story itself and how Kii learns from his grandfather about the Navajo eclipse and how important it is to learn about your tradition and culture, through stories of the tribe from the elders.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

It is from an Insider perspective, because he come from the Navajo tribe, and is taught the Navajo Way of Life.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

The author is Navajo and has lived on the Navajo reservation and learned about his culture through storytelling, and being taught the Navajo Way of Life, through prayers and respecting Mother Earth, Father Sky, and the Little Painters, and he has lived it.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

Shonto choose to write this book because he remember seeing an eclipse when he was young just like Kii Leonard in the story, and hearing the story of the Little Painters, from

his elders. He also remembers cooling himself by resting his cheek on the metal back of a blue chair while he waited for the eclipse to pass, and drawing red circles on every surface in sight afterwards – on paper bags, pieces of board, the side of the stove, even the Hogan wall! This story resembles his own experiences witnessing an eclipse and the story about the Little Painters, and he lives this event through this story.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

The criteria for evaluation is based on the author's own story of his childhood and how the stories from the elders have taught him how significant it is to apply it to his life as well as the life of the Navajo children, by retelling the story through the text and through the illustration.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

The values, beliefs and attitudes are revealed through the main characters, Grandfather and his grandson. The grandfather is a role model for the grandson, who respects, listens, and follows the lead of his grandfather. His grandfather tells him what not to do during an eclipse, and tells about how the sun dies and how prayers will bring the sun back to life. And from the four directions the Sun Painters--Mother Earth's children which represent the four directions will repaint the colors of the rainbow back on Earth.

**7). Who has the power?**

The characters in the story and the Navajo people, because the story is about them relative to the eclipse which is Navajo and how the author retold the story that his grandfather once told him when he was young. The power of information is carried on.

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**Answer**

**Questions**

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, because the story is a contemporary children's literature retold by Baje Whitethorne, told to him by an elder of the Navajo people. Explaining a Solar Eclipse, a Navajo tells his grandson that when the sun dies the children of Mother Earth are called from the four directions to repaint the earth in all the colors. The story provides information about the Navajo belief of how the solar eclipse is honored and respected through Mother Earth and Father sky, and especially the Navajo people. This story brings the understanding of the Navajo people beliefs of the eclipse and through this story the Native American children will be proud of their Native traditions; and especially the Navajo people.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:** Yes, because this story provides information about a grandfather and a grandson's relationship, of the knowledge passed on by the elder to his grandson, about the eclipse and the Navajo people's ritual. In the Native American culture, to show or teach is done out of respect. The show of respect between the Native American elder and

the grandson is conducive to respectful behavior, and the respect for natural occurrences, such as the eclipse would lead one to also respect the natural environment. This is a positive role model for reverence of all things.

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**Yes** No N/A **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:** Yes, the Solar Eclipse, were omens to some of the Native American tribes. But in this story, from the Navajo's perspective of the eclipse, Kii Leonard and his grandfather Pipa, observed the traditional ways. The grandfather was a role model for the grandson. In the Navajo traditional way the grandson is taught to practice what to do during an eclipse. The story told—honors Mother Earth and Father sky which continues through this story of the Sunpainters. The different perspective of the events, issues or problem are presented through the story and information about the eclipse is given at the end of the story to fully understand the belief of the Navajo Way of Life.

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**Yes** No N/A **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:** Yes, to a certain extent, that the origin of the story which is seemingly Native American, is perceivable as the way Native Americans would tell a story. The mention of the four directions, the belief of being human, rebirth, good health, happiness, and praying as the sun is eclipsing, plus witnessing other spectacular events and giving their special explanations of their occurrence in a unique way--and giving thanks--is significant to Native Americans. The author mentions a juniper tree which is prevalent on Navajo land. This author imparts authentic description of Native American storytelling. Important facts are noted at the end of the story about the Solar Eclipse, its definition and other scientific information, also the significant messages about this event thru Native American thoughts and of the Navajo people.

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Yes **No** N/A **e). Are the Native Americans stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:** No, the story is contemporary and is written by a Navajo. The clothing, background, landscape, and dwellings are all authentic, as based from the authors own experiences of the story, and the illustrations of the Navajo setting. The author is Navajo and has lived on the Navajo reservation where he obtained his stories and illustrational portraits.

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Yes **No** N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:** No, the story is developed through the telling of the story from an elder of the family and the author brings that story alive through writing the story into this book.

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**Yes** No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:** Yes, the Native American are given credit for their involvement to Western development, by writing about the story the author heard when he was a child and recreated it into a contemporary piece of Navajo literature. The story tell about the eclipse and how its viewed differently from each Native American tribe, and the author contribute the story of the Navajo sun painters bringing color back to the world. The author gives full credit to his grandfather for this story and he recognize the Navajo people who observe this event and observe the Navajo Way of Life.

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**Yes** No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:** Yes, the illustration and situation are authenticated by the living the Navajo Way of Life, through the author's retelling the Sunpainter story about the Navajo eclipse. This story is based on the contemporary time period and setting of the story is in Navajo country. Furthermore, the fact that the story is derived from the author's grandfather, and retold by his grandson, the story is being passed on from one generation to another, to continue the Oral tradition of story telling.

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**Yes** No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:** Yes, the author is qualified to write this book dealing with this Navajo story, as told by his grandfather, a Navajo elder. Shonto Begay is a Navajo author and is more than qualified to write this book because of all the stories told to him by his grandfather on the Navajo reservation.

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**Yes** No N/A **I). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for children?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book is a quality piece of literature written for children, because it's a contemporary authentic Native American children's literature that is retold by Shonto Begay. This story reminds him of his childhood when he would listen to his grandfather retell stories, and this is one of the stories. Within--the retelling of the story comes the Navajo belief of how one must bring offerings of prayer, fast, and honor the forces of Nature, then the sun or moon would indeed be reborn, as told by Shonto. This is one example how this story is a quality literature for children of all ages to read and learn about the Navajo Way of Life through storytelling of the Navajo eclipse.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:**

**Comments:**

The story is retold about the solar eclipse by Baje Whitethorne, who is a Navajo author and illustrator. Through Baje's own childhood experience of storytelling from his grandfather and other elders of his Navajo tribe, he developed this authentic Native American children's literature. The story will bring a sense of pride to both Native Americans and Non-Native American children because of the content and illustration of the story. This story brings the understanding of the Navajo people's belief of the eclipse, with Kii Leonard and his grandfather. The grandfather, Pipa, has a vast amount of knowledge by his metamorphic explanation of "Why the sun has died today," and what will happen, and the repainting of the Universe. Through the narration he provides practices of what to do when the sun dies. The Shamans of the whole communities, and people made prayers, offerings to strengthen the sun or moon. They believed that by offering prayers, fasting, and honoring the forces of Nature, the sun or moon would be reborn. The information from Pipa, and the notes of the story convey a response to the readers of this particular book, as it provides information about the author retelling an authentic Navajo story, the beliefs of the Navajo's.

**Evaluation for this literature:**      Acceptable Yes      Unacceptable  
**Why?**

The evaluation of this literature book titled, *Sun Painters: Eclipse of the Navajo Sun* (1994), is written and beautifully illustrated by Baje Whitethorne. This story is retold by Whitethorne, based on his childhood storytelling from his grandfather. The book provides information about the Navajo Eclipse. The grandfather Pipa explains the event of the eclipse to the Grandson Kii. When the grandfather states, "Why the sun has died today," he explains the Navajo perspective; beliefs from the Shaman to the scientific information. The story content and illustration is authentic and provide information that will make both Native American and Non-Native American children learn from the reading. From the above statement this book is acceptable through the content and the illustration of how the Navajo eclipse took place, through the eyes of Kii and his grandfather's teaching how to observe this incredible event.

## **Evaluation: *Songs of the Shiprock Fair***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

<b>Evaluator Name:</b> Angeline P. Hoffman	<b>Date:</b> Spring 2007
<b>Title of Book:</b> Songs of the Shiprock Fair	<b>Hardback:</b> Yes
<b>Tribe Represented:</b> Navajo	<b>Paperback:</b>
<b>Author Name:</b> Luci Tapahonso	
<b>Author Background:</b> Ms. Tapahonso was born and raised in Shiprock, New Mexico, where the annual fair is a part of Navajo life. A prizewinning poet and Professor of English, she was honored in 1992 when she served as Grand Marshal of the Shiprock Navajo Fair Parade. This story is written to celebrate the memories and stories this event evokes for all Shiprock residents.	
<b>Illustrator Name:</b> Anthony Chee Emerson	
<b>Illustrator Background:</b> Mr. Emerson maintains a dual career as a fine artist and a commercial painter. He lives in the Four Corners area, where he has a art gallery in Farmington, New Mexico, and he features his own paintings and the artwork of this talented family. His unique painting style emulates the simplicity of Navajo folk art, and he state that he is in tune with the spirit of the Shiprock Fair.	
<b>Acknowledgement/Author Notes:</b>	
<b>Genre:</b> <b>Traditional</b> <b>Contemporary</b> X <b>Historical</b>	
<b>Publisher:</b> KIVA Publishing INC <b>Publisher Year:</b> 1999 <b>City:</b> Walnut, California	
<b>Age Level:</b> <b>Children</b> X <b>Adolescent</b>	

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**1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity? Yes or No, Why?**

Yes, it does. The book is written by a Navajo author. She knows the life of Navajo people, and with the collaboration of a Navajo artist illustrator they produced an authentic animated book.

**2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

The author is Native American. She is Navajo. The author through her children's excitement, and her past experiences as a child attending the Shiprock fair narrated her experiences on paper.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

The author has lived the life as a Navajo, and she was once a little girl, and she knows from her own experiences. This has more meaning because of the actual reality of experiences the author had.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

Through the author's children's excitement about the fair and her past experiences of attending the Shiprock fair produced this book. The author has written poetry of her culture and considers writing more. She has written several books beside this one.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

For authenticity of the stories the author should know about her subject, one must know about the culture and language. The author of this book is Native American. She is Navajo. She has lived the life and she knows her people.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

The book is from the perspective of the narrator who is Native American and she has written from her experiences as a young girl attending the Shiprock Fair. Her collaboration with a fellow Navajo to illustrate the storyline of the book, she instructed the artist to correlate the narrative with the sketches.

**7). Who has the power?**

The Navajos people have the power. It is their contemporary history of happening in the social life to be shared for future generations. The power of knowledge is invaluable information for a culture to thrive.

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<u>Answer</u>	<u>Questions</u>
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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?</b>
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**Comments:**

Yes it would. Seeing their culture depicted in a book instills a sense of pride. Other Native cultures see themselves experiencing their own fair activities in their homeland.

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?</b>
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**Comments:**

Yes, the Non-Native would correlate their similar experiences with Native American experiences about the fair activities. They can relate to the story, and its commonality to their experiences, and makes it a positive feeling, the Navajo people are like anyone else they enjoy leisure entertainment activities.

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?</b>
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**Comments:**

Yes, the different perspective is the one narrated by the Native American. It is coming from their perspective.

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<u>Yes</u>	No	N/A	<b>d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?</b>
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**Comments:** The author has lived the life depicted in the story as narrated on paper. It is from her actual experiences which encourages her factual storytelling about her culture.

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Yes   No   N/A   **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material:  
Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:**

No. The Native Americans are like any other Americans except, they live in a different location, they dress in modern clothes except for the Elders who dress semi-traditional. The illustrations were authentic.

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Yes   No   N/A   **Through the content?**

**Comments:**

No, the content is akin to social leisure activities of Native Americans. The writing is Native American, so stereotypes are not prevalent in the story.

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Yes   No   N/A   **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement  
to Western development?**

**Comments:**

Yes, indirectly, Native Americans are contributing to Western society by conforming to Western way of contemporary lifestyles.

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Yes   No   N/A   **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the  
Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American  
Way of Life?**

**Comments:**

Yes, although in contemporary times the adoption of the way of Western Society, the Navajo still retain their tradition such as, their ceremonial dances, to their particular hair style, wearing moccasins, and planting. This is authentic. The illustrations of Navajos dressed in semi-traditional clothing were depicted and the landscape matched the homeland of the Navajos, particularly the location of Shiprock where the story took place.

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Yes   No   N/A   **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native  
American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the author is Navajo she has lived her life as a Native American. She's lived on the reservation. Moreover, she has written several books and poetry on Native Americans. She is qualified.

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Yes   No   N/A   **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for**

**children?****Comments:**

Yes, this book is a quality piece of literature written for children. The narratives are easy to read, as it describes the events, characters, and the feelings of a child during the Shiprock Fair. The illustrations are colorful. The depictions makes one's easy to comprehend the culture you belong to, your family, the art, lives and the sense of place.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:****Comments:**

This quality literature was written in a unique poetic style and small portion of the Navajo language was utilized in the story. The story was written by a Navajo who through her experiences narrated the storyline. She recreated her experiences as a child attending the Shiprock fair through the main character Nezbah. The setting is on the Navajo reservation. Along with the storyline a Navajo artist illustrator sketched the events with the people accurately. The renderings were colorful and easy to identify such as the landscape, the Navajo people, and the events. This is authentic literature.

**Evaluation for this literature:****Acceptable****Unacceptable****Why?**

This literature is of good quality in content and illustrations. The Navajos were depicted accurately. I recommend this literature for children in schools throughout Arizona and New Mexico and Utah. This is an excellent book for children especially Native Americans. This book with it colorful animated pictures and the narrated prose in poetic style is unique. The book reveals the excitement and fun of the Shiprock Fair and how the Navajo people young and old like the activities plus the ceremonial Yebchi dance. The narrator and the sketch reveal the atmosphere of the activities.

## **Evaluation: *Red is Beautiful***

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### **Evaluation: Native American Children's Literature**

**Evaluator Name:** Angeline P. Hoffman

**Date:** August 2005

**Title of Book:** Red is Beautiful

**Hardback:** Yes

**Tribe Represented:** Navajo

**Author Name:** Roberta John

**Author Background:** Roberta grew up on the Navajo reservation. Currently, she is employed in Window Rock, AZ. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University in 1987, then her Master of Arts degree in Communication at Brigham Young University. Ms. John worked on and off the Navajo reservation in public relations and news reporting. She now writes for young readers of all cultures. She perceives writing imaginary stories is a way to help build positive self-esteem for the youth. In addition, she feels that this could be used as teaching tools to educate the world about the Navajo people.

**Illustrator Name:** Peter A Thomas

**Illustrator Background:**

**Acknowledgement/Author Notes:**

**Genre:**        **Traditional**    **Contemporary** Yes    **Historical**

**Publisher:** Salina Bookshelf, Inc    **Publisher Year:** 2003    **City:** Flagstaff, AZ

**Age Level:**                    **Children** Yes                    **Adolescent**

#### **1). Does the book Define Cultural Authenticity?**

Yes, this story is how the Navajo Culture is utilized in everyday life, through family unity, healing, and through utilizing natural resources. This story is of a Navajo family and how a relationship between a Grandmother and a grand-daughter develops through the teasing experience of a young Navajo girl by other school children in school because of her chapped face. Consequently, the Grandmother assists her granddaughter with her deep knowledge of utilizing a particular red rock to take away the chap face. It was from a native rock used by Navajos for ceremonial purposes. Through this secret the Grandmother gives Nashasha the love she needs, to empower her granddaughters' self-esteem. From this experience many years later in life she goes into a successful cosmetic business selling "chiih" the skin elixir which promotes healthy smooth skin. Subsequently, the grandmother also promoted the importance of using natural resources from Mother Earth for healing and protection of the body. It was the Holy Peoples intention to be fulfilled by her.

#### **2). Is it from an Insider or Outsider perspectives? Why?**

Insider, Roberta is a Navajo woman, who lived on the Navajo Nation reservation and her interest and passion is creating writing for young reader for different cultures. Also she

utilized this book to educate the world about the Navajo Way of Life, through this particular story.

**3). The need for author to have experiences with the culture, does the author?**

Yes, Roberta has experienced her Navajo culture. She has lived on the Navajo reservation and is working on and off the Navajo reservation for her writing career. She notes that this book can also be used as a teaching tool to educate the world about the Navajo people. She is Navajo, and the story is told from her perspective and her experiences with the Navajo culture.

**4). The reasons authors choose to write this book?**

Her purpose in creative writing is to help build positive self-esteem among the youth and to utilized this book as a teaching tool to educate the world about the Navajo people. This book does educate the readers about the Navajo people through the two main characters; Nashasha and her grandmother.

**5). The criteria for evaluation?**

Is from the story content of the two main characters, and how the Grandmother's deep knowledge of her Navajo Way of Life provided healing for her Grand-daughter. In addition the deep knowledge obtained by the Grand-daughter enabled Nashasha to produce a cosmetic business and educate the world about utilizing natural resources from Mother Earth for healing and protection of the body. Furthermore, the Navajo family is a strong family unit which helps each other during time of need as illustrated in the story. The healing takes place through the love and compassion the Grandmother has for her daughter; this makes this story meaningful and educational.

**6). Criteria that goes beyond the accuracy and the absence of stereotypes to also include values, beliefs and attitudes; does the book?**

Yes, the book does include values, beliefs, and attitude within the content of the story. The values consist of the Nashasha's learning the values of being a Navajo girl, through her Grandmother's teaching plus the beliefs of the Navajo Way of Life with the deep knowledge. The indifferent attitude of Nashasha changes through her Grandmother's guidance, support, comfort, and through her grandmother providing Chiih, to transform her chapped face to a smoother facial skin.

**7). Who has the power?**

The Navajo people, the power is within the content of the story. The power is composed of the Deep Knowledge of the Navajo Way of Life; their oral tradition of passing on what they know to their youth, so they can be resourceful, and successfully adept Navajo. This is what the Grandmother provided for her Grand-daughter who later became successful, and she continued the teaching taught by her Grandmother.

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**Answer**

**Questions**

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **a). Would this book support Native American children identify and be proud of their tradition?**

**Comments:** Yes, this book does promote self discovery of self. The grandmother empowers Nashashas' to identify who she is through her teachings and Nashashas learns about the traditional Navajo healing and protection from the native rock used for

ceremonial purpose. Nashasha becomes aware of who she is and the Navajo teaching about the natural resources, its healing, and protection from the “chiih” which has change Nashashas’ life.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **b). Would this book promote a positive image of Native American for the Non-Native American reader?**

**Comments:**

Yes, because the story is familiar to all school children, the story of Nashasha foretells issues of peer pressure, teasing, and discrimination. These are important issues that Native and Non-Native face in one time or another in their own lives. And the story tells how Nashasha overcomes these issues with the guidance of her Grandmother’s support which promotes her positive image of being a Navajo girl.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **c). Are different perspectives on the events, issues, or problem presented?**

**Comments:**

Yes, this book is written through the eyes of the Navajo. It is written by someone who has lived a life as a Navajo. That is the Navajo perspective. The problem Nashasha had was difficult to overcome, being teased at school through peer pressure and discrimination by Nashasha’s own classmates. This was a bad school experience. Nashasha’s self-esteem was affected by these issues, but her Grandmother was the support system she needed to overcome all the problems she faced at school. And how Nashasha’s problems stop after her skin healed and became smooth, she was not teased by the students at school anymore. Because of her Grandmother’s Deep Knowledge about Navajo cures, and healing, Nashasha overcame her problems.

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**Yes**    No    N/A    **d). Are all the important facts included (e.g. no significant omissions)?**

**Comments:**

Yes, based upon the content of the story. The author presents a realistic scenario which occurs in Native American Country. It is written by someone who has lived a life as a Navajo. This story is written by her perspective.

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Yes    **No**    N/A    **e). Are the Native American stereotyped in the material: Through the illustrations?**

**Comments:**

No, the images of the Navajo Grandmother and Grand-daughter are not stereotyped as depicted in the illustrations. Since the story is in contemporary times, Nashasha is wearing modern day regular clothing, blue jeans and a shirt. The Grandmother is wearing traditional Navajo clothing, and the turquoise jewelry on her, plus her hair being bunned

up, is the Navajo hair style for woman. The illustration of a boy herding sheep is authentic. This herding still occurs in Navajo country.

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Yes No N/A **Through the content?**

**Comments:**

No, this story is not stereotypical since it includes day to day issues that most people encounter in schools. This is a contemporary account of a Navajo girl, and her Grandmother, of how the girl overcomes teasing at school. The content of the story is familiar to all school children dealing with peer pressure, teasing, and discrimination. This story does not stereotype the Native American in the content of the story.

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Yes No N/A **f). Are the Native American given credit for their involvement to Western development?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the Navajo provide Deep Knowledge about a Natural Resource from Mother Earth that heals chapped skin, and also the story educates the world about how important the Natural Resource is to Native Americans.

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Yes No N/A **g). Considering the time period or setting of this book, does the Illustration/situations authenticate the Native American Way of Life?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the illustrations authenticate the Navajo Way of Life. The contemporary story is illustrated through eyes of a Navajo, on a Navajo reservation, at the local school and at Nashashas's Grandmother's place in a Hogan. The illustrations authenticate the Navajo Way of Life, through the Hogan dwelling, through the contemporary and Navajo traditional clothing worn by the people.

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Yes No N/A **h). Is the author qualified to write a book dealing with Native American based on his/her background and/or research?**

**Comments:**

Yes, the Roberta John is a Navajo woman who grew up on the Navajo reservation. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from Arizona State University and a Master of Arts degree in Communication from Brigham Young University. Her interest is writing fictional stories for the youth of all cultures. She wants to help build positive self-esteem among the youth utilizing the stories as a teaching tool to educate the world about the Navajo people.

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Yes No N/A **i). Is this book a quality piece of literature written for**

**children?****Comments:**

Yes, because the content of the story deals with issues children faces and this book will reveal how the main character, Nashasha, overcomes her problem through the help of her Grandmother. Students are drawn to books like this for guidance in their own life and the story is about a Navajo family supporting each other during a time of need. This is a teaching tool that educates children.

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**Based on your own response, please summarize your evaluation of this literature:****Comments:**

This is an interesting story written by a Native American woman. It is narrated through a Navajo perspective, perhaps from a personal experience of someone she knew or heard about. In my own experiences I have heard similar stories about this particular problem, a realistic event in children's lives in all cultures. The writer relates to the happenings in a school and to a Navajo reservation family. So the author recreates this story through a young Navajo girl having a problem with chapped facial skin. The young girl is teased about her problem. A relationship develops between a grandmother and granddaughter. The grandmother comforts her granddaughter and reveals a secret herb which makes chapped skin problem disappear. Throughout the Native American family abounds deep knowledge of our own sacred belief of how to utilize the gifts of Mother Earth to provide healing and nutrients to sustain our Way of Life. This important knowledge is given in the story. Also, the love of family members in Native American societies is displayed in the story. The way the family members handled and resolved the young girl's difficult problem is a teaching tool on how to deal with family matters. This story was narrated in a simple easy read content. The illustration settings, the land, its terrain features, the people, and their dwellings are authentically portrayed as Navajo.

**Evaluation for this literature:      Acceptable                      Unacceptable**

**Why?** The children's literature is acceptable. It is an easy read. The illustrations are authentic in the narratives and renderings. It is valuable book for young children.

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