

We're Different and the Same; and That's Okay. The Navajo Nation- The People, The Culture, The History- Comes to Your Classroom

Elisabeth A. Diemer

Attached is a whole-child, developmentally appropriate unit intended for an early childhood classroom. English language arts, social studies, and writing lessons are provided for a seven day unit on the Diné people and their culture. To supplement the instruction, exploratory free-play centers such as a Hubbell Trading Post dramatic play area, Hogan building block area, art activities consisting of sand paintings, pottery and weaving, mining for turquoise (to be made into jewelry) in the sensory table, and a classroom management tool are provided to extend and enrich the learning experiences. The goal of this unit is have the young students immersed in the culture from their classroom and get a feel for what life in Navajo Nation is like today. With literature and storytelling, artifacts, maps, music and more, this unit will easily include all learning styles. Systematically, throughout the unit, on a T-chart, the teacher will record students' findings of similarities and differences in the Diné culture and their own helping them grow as learners and caring citizens.