**Code Talkers**

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| Level | K |
| Content Area | Social Studies |
| Reading Focus | Students will learn to use the comprehension strategies of Visualizing and Making Connections as they read, think, talk and write in response to the text. |
| Text Type | Informational |
| Academic Vocabulary | alphabet, America, country, custom(s), death, duty, jobs, language, letters, message, months, nation, Native American, official, patterns, radio, rock, sounds, spelling, vote, war, world |

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| **Topic Talk** | * Ask: “What do you know about secret codes? Have you heard of any codes?” Ask students to share their ideas.
* Have students think, pair, share about what the purpose of secret codes is, and when they might be used.
* Read the title of the book, and the back cover blurb, aloud.
* Show students the cover of the book. Discuss what they can see on the cover.
* Ask: “What do you think a code talker is?”
* Have students make a prediction of what this book will be about.
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| **Contents** | * Open to the contents page and read the titles of the chapters aloud.
* Explain that looking at the chapter titles before reading can help you to remember some background knowledge before you start the book.
* Model how to connect to your background world knowledge: “I have heard of the Navajo people – they are Native Americans and I know a bit about their culture.”
* Ask: “What things could you maybe connect to your world knowledge?” Have students share with a partner.
* Introduce students to “Nat the Ant” at the bottom of the page and read the speech bubble aloud.
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| **Opening Chapters** | * Read the chapter 1 title and pages 2 and 3 aloud.
* Explain that making connections to our world knowledge, just as they did with the contents page, can help them to understand parts of the text better. These are called text-to-world connections.
* Ask: “What text-to-world connections can you make on these two pages?” Have students share their ideas with a partner, or as a group.
* Before reading pages 4 and 5 aloud, asking students to visualize the text as they read and imagine it like a movie inside their head.
* Read pages 4 and 5 aloud to the students.
* Ask students how visualizing helped them to understand what was happening better in the text.
* Read pages 6 and 7 together.
* Have students look closely at the image of the field telephone. Have students think, pair, share about the similarities and differences between the field telephone and a modern mobile phone.
* Explain that by comparing the phones, they have made a text-to-world connection – connecting the phone in the text, to the phones they know about today.
* Read the chapter 2 title, and pages 8 and 9 aloud.
* Ask students to visualize together what it would have been like to be in the room for the meeting between Philip, the Navajo men, and President Roosevelt. Remind students it happened over 100 years ago. Ask: “Would it have been different to meetings today? What things would you have seen or heard?”
* Discuss how visualizing a scene (especially from history) can help you to understand the text better.
* Read page 10 and 11 aloud, pausing before the ant question.
* Ask students to think about Philip’s list of reasons on page 9. Ask: “Why do these reasons make the Navajo language a good choice for a code?”
* Have students look closely at the map, and ask them to think, pair, share as they discuss what they find surprising or important about the map.
* Read and talk about the ant question as a group.
* Set a purpose for reading from chapter 3 to the end of the book:
	+ Try to picture what you are reading as you go to practice visualizing.
	+ Try to make connections as you read to what you know about the world.
	+ Pause at the ant questions to answer them, and read the Ant Tunnel carefully.
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| As students read on independently, you can check in with them to discuss the ant questions, or personalize learning by using the *Mini-Lessons* and *Fluency, Language and Text Features* to scaffold parts of the book that might be unfamiliar or challenging.Bring students together again for reflection using the “After Reading” prompts. |

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| **After Reading** | 1. Ask: “Do you think the story of the code talkers is an important part of history? Why or why not?” Have students think, pair, share, and then discuss as a group.
2. Discuss how making text-to-world connections helps to understand the text better. Ask: “When was it really helpful to link the text to your world knowledge?”
3. Ask: “When did visualizing help you to understand this book better as you read? And how did it help?”
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| **Writing Prompts** | *Fiction* | Imagine that you are one of “The First 29.” Write a story about helping to invent the Navajo code. |
| *Informational* | Draw a timeline of the code talkers’ history, from World War One through to today. Include all the events that took place. |
| *Letter Writing* | Write a letter to one of the code talkers from World War II. Tell them what you learned about their work, and what you think of their achievements. |
| *Opinion* | Do you think it’s fair that the code talkers were very important to winning the war, but weren’t recognised for their service until much later on? Why or why not? Remember to use evidence from the text and add a conclusion. |
| *Research* | Research one of the Native American nations the code talkers came from (e.g. Comanche, Choctaw, Navajo). Answer these three questions:* What part(s) of America are they from?
* What does their flag look like, and why?
* What are important things in their culture?
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