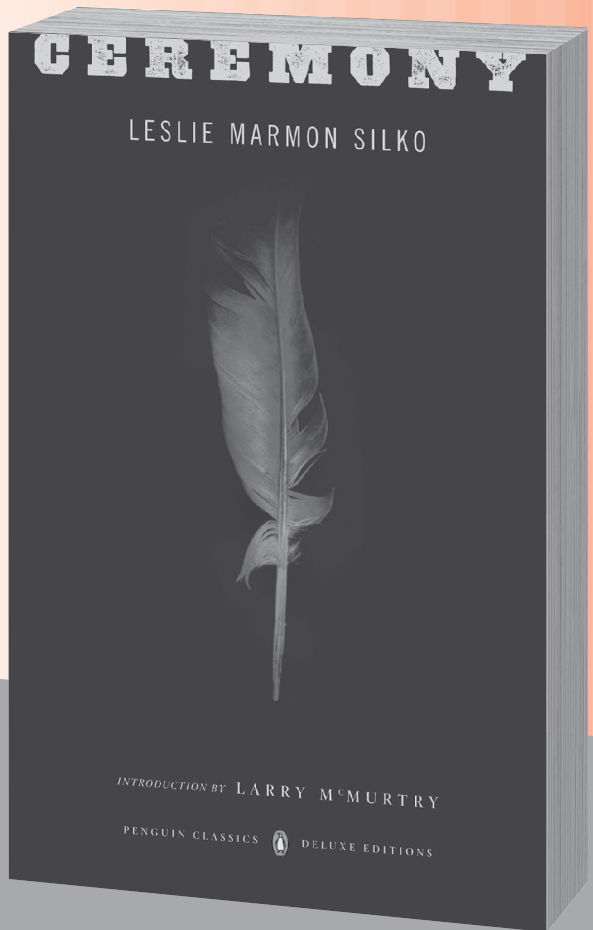


TEACHER'S GUIDE

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE PENGUIN CLASSICS EDITION OF

CEREMONY

BY LESLIE MARMON SILKO



BY TREY ADCOCK AND JUAN SANCHEZ MARTINEZ

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INTRODUCTION

We are honored and humbled to develop this teaching guide for Leslie Marmon Silko's classic novel, *Ceremony*. It is not redundant to say that Silko's *Ceremony* (1977) is itself a ceremony, one that we are all a part of. More than a novel, it's a braid of healing, storytelling, and resilience. Based on the Laguna Pueblo and the Diné territories in New Mexico, and set along deserts, mesas, water springs, ceremonial houses, kivas, and filthy bars on isolated roads, *Ceremony* covers the creation time to World War II, goes back to the dreamtime, and jumps again to post-war America on the reservation. Tayo, the main character, is searching for healing after losing his cousin in battle, but he doesn't know that his pain is bigger than him—it covers not just the Laguna and the Diné veterans, not even the Native American veterans, but all veterans: the Americans, the Japanese, and all who have been involved in perpetrating and ignoring the wounds of war. The story is complex and operates in a non-linear way, thus challenging western norms of knowledge and storytelling. *Ceremony* reminds the reader that not only humans, but places, too, keep memory, and that the materials extracted from the ground or from the forests to build bombs, bullets, tires, or provide energy for destruction sooner or later will disturb the balance of that land. And that imbalance is what calls for a ceremony.

Younger readers might identify Tayo's mental state as a result of posttraumatic stress disorder, while contemporary experts on Native American Health and Wellness might contend that Tayo and other characters are also caught up in intergenerational trauma carried forward from first contact. Throughout the novel, Silko offers brief anecdotes of boarding schools, scenes of violence against Native women, references to the imposition of Christianity through missions, alcoholism, and various forms of discrimination. Therefore, in thinking about Tayo's struggle, one must consider at least two underlying histories that overlap: the American nation-state's and the Laguna nation's. Through both form and content, Silko invites dialogue between the past and the present, native and non-native. Students thus can use *Ceremony* as a reflective tool for their own cultural leanings, biases, and understandings.

Ceremony can also be a jumping off point for the exploration of political and social issues that American Indian communities continue to deal with, such as deforestation, mining, water and land rights, among other pertinent topics. An example of Native resistance to these issues can be clearly seen in the ongoing political battle at the Standing Rock Sioux reservation resulting in the largest gathering of Native nations in over two hundred years. Published in 1977, *Ceremony* is a landmark literary achievement that remains highly relevant forty years later.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

In "Special Problems in Teaching Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*" (1990), Paula Gunn Allen defines the sacred as any material drawn from ritual and myth. *Ceremony* certainly fits this definition and is a reminder of the care educators must take when teaching this novel and associated materials. Gunn prompts us to think of the ethics and responsibility of venturing into the sacred as Silko does. Gunn also discusses the embedded bias and cultural misunderstandings toward Native people that her students bring into the classroom. Thus, a disclaimer is needed. The authors of this teaching guide are not Laguna Pueblo, nor do we claim to have a deeper understanding of Laguna Pueblo culture and traditions than most, and although we both work with indigenous communities, we tread carefully. We have attempted to promote activities and resources that highlight the voices of Native people, particularly those of the Laguna Pueblo people themselves, while also working to dismantle students' deeply ingrained stereotypes.

Resource: http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/docs/Special_Problems_in_Teaching.pdf

BUILDING CONTEXT

Silko masterfully weaves the history of the Laguna Pueblo into the characters, landscape, and stories of the novel. The following activities aim to deepen students' knowledge about the historical and cultural influences that permeate the novel. Students will also begin to understand the different ways in which archeologists and Pueblo people themselves understand history and cultural knowledge.

1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The documentary “The Mystery of Chaco Canyon, New Mexico” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peW-PbaG1IQ>) can provide students with an understanding of Pueblo history in the Chaco Canyon. A teaching guide is also available: <http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/guides/mocguide.pdf>.

After viewing, organize students into small groups and ask them to consider:

- How did celestial patterns influence the way in which people of the Chaco Valley designed and built their communities?
- How do Pueblo people of today view and understand Chaco Valley? How does the scientific community understand Chaco Valley? Are these views compatible?
- We usually understand language simply as oral communication. How might the way in which the people of the Chaco Valley designed and organized their buildings be understood as a language, particularly with regard to its relationship with the sky?

Then assign groups to create a chart that compares the way in which people of the Chaco Valley built and organized their towns with how towns and cities are organized in the contemporary United States. After having shared their perceptions in a group discussion, ask students to reflect in a journal on the following prompt: How is your hometown's architecture a language into the values and beliefs of the community? How does this compare and contrast with what you learned about Chaco Valley architecture?

Note to teachers: The Laguna Pueblo are direct descendants of the people of the Chaco Valley. Several of the ideas and themes expressed in the documentary can also be seen in Silko's descriptions of the landscape of the Laguna reservation. As a follow-up activity after reading the book, have students return to their small groups and compare/contrast the themes in the documentary with her descriptions in the novel.

2. THIRTEENTH-CENTURY MIGRATIONS

After viewing “Pueblo Voices: Migrations” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gb_Y4yaLZFw, ask students to break into small groups and discuss:

- What factors contributed to Pueblo people leaving the Mesa Verde area in the thirteenth century?
- How do Pueblo people understand their exodus?
- What do their stories suggest about why they migrated?

3. CONNECTING PAST AND PRESENT

Ask students to watch this brief clip: “Pueblo Voices: Connections to the Land and Ancestors,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AipUm_Y_dzA. Then ask students to write responses to the following questions:

- What is the connection between ancestors, the land, and the present in Pueblo culture?
- Why do Pueblo people dislike the word “abandon”?
- In what ways do Pueblo people acknowledge their ancestors when visiting sacred places?
- How do you and your family members remember and connect with your ancestors?

Additional Resources:

Interactive Timeline of the Pueblo: <http://www.crowcanyon.org/index.php/explore-pueblo-history/timelines>

“Lessons Learned from the Pueblo Indians of the Mesa Verde Region”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kf69cK4CkKs>

4. NINETEEN PUEBLOS

For students to have a better understanding of the Pueblo and Laguna cultures, assign students one of the 19 pueblos to study and then have them prepare a five-slide presentation using <https://projeqt.com/>. The presentation should provide an overview of the specific pueblo and address the following: geography, language, art, history, and demographic profile. Students should also prepare discussion questions about the pueblo they are presenting to promote further inquiry from the class.

Resources:

The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center's website is a good starting point for students to learn about the 19 pueblos: <http://www.indianpueblo.org/19-pueblos/history-culture/>

US Census map shows the location of federally recognized tribes including the nineteen pueblos: <http://www.ucs.louisiana.edu/~ras2777/indianlaw/us2000census.gif>

5. MISSION HISTORY

Silko addresses the impact of Christian missions on Laguna culture in the novel. Ask students to watch the brief documentary entitled “The Spirit and the Earth” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QetsRx40NQ4>.

As they watch, have students consider the following:

- What is syncretism? How does this relate to the mixing of Laguna culture and Catholicism?
- How are the mixed cultures reflected in the architecture of the mission?
- What might be the pros and cons of such cultural mixing?

As students read *Ceremony*, have them keep in mind how themes from this brief documentary play out in Silko's novel. From her writing and her characters, consider Silko's opinion on the role of Catholicism in the Laguna Pueblo community.

6. CULTURAL AWARENESS

Show students *GRAB*, a documentary about a Laguna Pueblo community-wide prayer of abundance, thanks, and renewal which can be rented on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Grab-Billy-Luther/dp/B01G09L652/ref=sr_1_1?s=instant-video&ie=UTF8&qid=1500565431&sr=1-1&keywords=GRAB

Vision Maker Media also has an educator's guide: https://www.visionmakermedia.org/sites/default/files/resources/edu_eg_grab.pdf

After viewing, ask students to respond to the following questions, either in writing or in a class discussion:

- What is the history behind GRAB day? How does this event mix Catholicism and traditional Laguna beliefs?
- In the opening, the directors state that this documentary is the first time that anyone has been allowed to film the event. Why might this be? What issues might filming bring up for the community?
- How many members and villages belong to the Pueblo Laguna?
- What role does food play in the GRAB festival? How have the foods changed over time, and what insight does this give us into the Pueblo Laguna community today?
- What does GRAB teach us about Pueblo Laguna families? How does this compare to other cultural groups' ideas of family?

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. CHALLENGING THE HOLLYWOOD INDIAN

To prepare students for a close reading of *Ceremony* and to challenge the stereotypes of Native people, watch the TedTalk by Kevin Gover (Pawnee) of the National Museum of the American Indian, “(Re)Making History: The Real Story is Bigger and Better”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptheAF7OqMw>. This activity can create a space for a richer, more authentic discussion of the book, its legacy, and the Laguna Pueblo community.

Prior to viewing, prompt students to draw an image that they associate with the word “Indian.” Ask students to share their images with a partner. Discuss to what degree students' drawings resemble the “Hollywood Indian.” See Adcock, L. (2014). “The Hollywood Indian goes to school: Detournement as praxis.” In J. Trier (Ed.), *Detournement as pedagogical praxis*. Boston, MA: Sense Publishers.

Have students in small groups brainstorm about where these images come from. Once each group has shared with the class, have students write down potential questions about the relationship of original Native Americans and colonists to consider as they view the video. Following the film, engage students in a class discussion of their own questions as well as the following:

- What role does the Columbus narrative play in understanding Native peoples' history?
- What does Gover mean that Columbus is our “origin story”? What role do origin stories play in constructing collective understandings of indigenous people?
- How do imaginary Indians impact real Indians, according to Gover?
- Why does he argue that the real story is bigger and better?

As a follow-up to this discussion, assign students to take pictures of stereotypes of indigenous people that they come into contact with in their everyday lives over a two-week period. The images can come from any medium that perpetuates the stereotypes. This can include television, the Internet, items found at the grocery store, in clothing stores, advertisements, and other popular cultural items. Students can upload these images to a class website, on a private Facebook page, or use a free interface such as <http://www.pbworks.com/>. This activity will both document the proliferation of negative stereotypes of indigenous peoples in students' everyday lives, and also develop critical media and consumer skills. The collected images can be used as class discussion starters or as personal reflection tools.

2. INDIGENOUS WAYS OF LIVING IN NATURE

Tayo, *Ceremony*'s main character, is constantly debating between different ways of understanding education and knowledge. In searching for his healing through ceremony, Tayo finds himself in between Eurocentric science and Native science. For instance, he remembers how the science teacher preferred science over spirituality (p. 87), and he recalls how uncle Josiah distrusted the “white people books” (p. 69). In order to sensitize students to indigenous epistemologies and storytelling, ask them to watch one of the following videos to compare indigenous ways of living in nature and Eurocentric science:

- “Stellar Connections. Exploration in Cultural Astronomy,” by Michael Wassegijg Price (2012). National Museum of American Indian. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVny6LnTOLg&list=PL__TzU4_15OGj19Dd78e1QUW8PUBI8Xid
- “Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science” by Dr. Leroy Little Bear (2015). The Banff Centre. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJSJ28eEUjI&list=PL__TzU4_15OF9Nck8UrVhLyZYw711cbJo&index=33
- “The Indigenous World View vs. Western World View,” by firstpeoples.org (2014) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsh-NcZyuil>

Ask students to create a graphic organizer comparing and contrasting these approaches to nature. Then discuss with students what they have learned from the film. To guide the discussion, we recommend Dr. Gregory Cajete's *Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence* (2000). Cajete writes: “Nature is reality, and worthy of awe in the perceptions of the person who practices a culturally conditioned ‘tuning in’ of the natural world. He or she sees, hears, smells, and tastes the natural world with greater acuity. The body feels the subtle forces of nature with a heightened sensitivity. The mind perceives the subtle qualities of a creative natural world with great breadth and awareness. In spite of anthropologists’ cultural bias and misinterpretations that continue to influence views of the Indigenous experience, none of this sensual participation with nature is ‘supernatural’ or ‘extra-ordinary.’ Rather, it is the result of an ancient and naturally conditioned response to nature” (p. 20).

3. UNDERSTANDINGS OF CEREMONY

Beginning with individual reflection, ask students to brainstorm all the words that come to mind when they hear the word “ceremony” in a journal before moving into small groups to share and discuss. Then, together as a class, generate a definition for ceremony. Discuss common ceremonies in students’ lives. What are the purposes of these ceremonies? Are these ceremonies important? What values do students associate with ceremony?

4. NATURE AND THE SACRED

Ask students to free-write about what the word “sacred” means to them. Is there a way in which nature is sacred? Then together view a short section of *Baraka*, a Ron Fricke film (1992), a non-voice over documentary exploring the sacred in more than 24 different countries on six continents. Through music and images, Fricke exposes the audience to different environments, peoples, actions, and rituals. We recommend watching the first 16 minutes of the film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Btds6k0XIEQ>.

Then ask students to go back to their journal to add ideas from what they have viewed. Prompt students to consider who decides if something is sacred or not. When is something sacred? For what purposes? In what situations?

5. COMPARING SACRED STORIES

To introduce the oral stories in the novel, have students read stories from different tribes, including the Pueblo. One strategy for reading a variety of texts is to jig-saw the various stories. Put students into small groups with each group assigned a particular story to read. Then ask each group to respond to the prompt below. Then bring the class together and have each group “report out” their summary of the reading and their responses to the questions.

Assign students to create a chart addressing the following topics:

- What is the community issue?
- What act, person, or event is responsible for the problem?
- What was destroyed/created?
- How does the community respond?
- Is there a place associated with this story?
- How does the community heal?
- What lesson(s) can be learned from the story? Are there implications for today?

To deepen the discussion, ask students to also analyze the ways in which gender and social relations are constructed in these stories.

This activity can be a jumping off point for discussing oral stories transmitted in *Ceremony*. While reading the novel, ask students to return to the chart they created to analyze the stories contained in the novel.

Resources for Stories

Many websites publish “Native American Stories,” but teachers should be critical of the sources they choose to ensure cultural authenticity. We have highlighted a few sources below that we have both used in our classrooms and that are produced by tribes themselves.

- Anthropologist James Mooney’s nineteenth-century collection of Cherokee stories: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/cher/motc/>
- Little Big Horn College: “Apsáalooke Writing Tribal Histories Project”: <http://lib.lbhc.edu/index.php?q=node/17>
- Mohegan Tribe: “Makiawisug, or the Little People”: <https://www.mohegan.nsn.us/explore/heritage/our-stories/makiawisug>
- Stories of the Plains People by the Smithsonian: http://americanhistory.si.edu/buffalo/files/pdf/Stories_of_the_Plains_People.pdf
- From the “Lessons of Our Land” project: Yimanyuwinyai create the neighboring Tribes: <http://www.lessonsofourland.org/sites/default/files/Yimanyuwinyai%20creates%20the%20neighboring%20Tribes.pdf>

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

Place is an important aspect of *Ceremony*. To introduce students to Silko and to build understanding of the impact of place on the novel, ask students to view this clip of Silko describing her writing process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVIS7pWKr74>.

As students listen, have them think about the following questions for discussion:

- What did Silko set out to do when she began the novel?
- Describe how Silko’s health was impacted when she moved from Laguna Pueblo, New Mexico, to Alaska.

- How did the landscape of Ketchikan, Alaska, impact the direction of her writing?
- In what ways was the writing of the novel a ceremony of healing for Silko? How does this transfer to her writing?

To deepen this discussion and provide greater context to the idea of place in *Ceremony*, ask students to use the following questions to guide their reading of Tracey Romero's brief article found at <http://www.isfoundation.com/campaign/native-american-series-laguna-land-part-their-identity>.

- How has connection to land/place shaped Laguna identity? How does this continue in contemporary times?
- How did mining in the 1950s impact the health of the Laguna community?
- What role do traditional stories play in connecting Laguna people to the land?

7. THEMES OF THE NOVEL

Silko explores a complex range of themes in the novel. Themes that may resonate with students include: the impact of colonialism, the influence of family and community, tradition, bi-culturalism, identity and place, storytelling as a way of healing, care for the natural world, and alienation.

Ask students to complete an Anticipation Guide to activate their background knowledge and to generate interest in the ideas/themes they will encounter in the novel. Students should respond to each statement on a scale of 1-5, with 1 representing "Very False" and 5 representing "Very True." Then ask students to select the statement to which they have the strongest reaction, positive or negative, and write about their response. Engage the whole class in discussion about the statements to which they have the strongest reactions.

1. The exploitation of nature is a necessary by-product of progress.
2. Myths and legends are not legitimate forms of knowledge.
3. Traditions should be maintained as they are and not allowed to evolve.
4. America is a land of equality.
5. Settlers brought civilization to the New World.
6. Addiction is the outcome of bad choices.
7. Identity is primarily shaped by genetics rather than culture.

Read more about using the anticipation guide as a pre-reading strategy at <http://www.adlit.org/strategies/19712/>.

CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL

The non-chronological order of *Ceremony* can be challenging for some readers. To help students anticipate the connections between characters in the novel, ask them to review the following list of characters and to draw a visual diagram showing how the characters are related. Students may refer to this diagram as they read the novel.

Tayo — Main character, a mixed-blood Laguna, whose mother abandoned him at age four; suffers from PTSD after his service in World War II

Rocky — Tayo's cousin, son of Auntie, who rejects "traditional" Laguna culture and dies during the Bataan Death March of World War II

Harley — One of Tayo's friends and a veteran of World War II

Auntie — Tayo's aunt who lives on the reservation and raises him

Old Grandma — Lives in Auntie's house with Tayo; encourages him to seek help through

traditional ceremonies; witnessed the testing of an atomic bomb in White Sands.

Josiah — Auntie's brother who raises Tayo as his son; dies while Tayo is serving in World War II

Betonic — Mixed-blood medicine man who lives high above Gallup

Ts'eh — Mystical woman who helps Tayo find and return the Mexican cattle

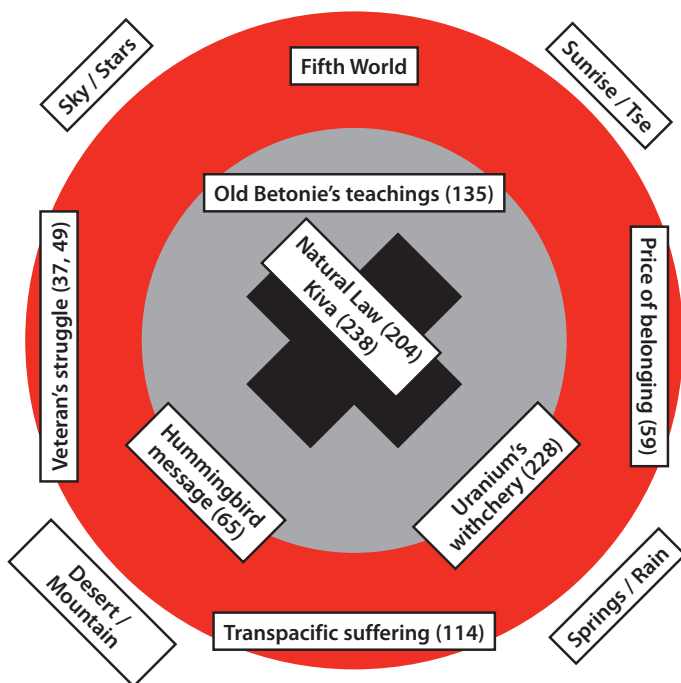
Emo — Antagonist from the Laguna Pueblo community; dislikes Tayo, partly due to Tayo being mixed-blood

DURING READING ACTIVITIES

There are many ways to approach Silko's *Ceremony*. The circular style of storytelling can challenge readers, especially high school students. We suggest the following activities as ways to tackle *Ceremony*'s non-linear storyline.

1. MAPPING THE NARRATIVE

Different stories and times overlap in *Ceremony*. Western literary genres, such as novel and poetry, are blurred. The voices of elders cross the author's narrative. The postwar era mixes with the creation time and simultaneously echoes our time. During and after reading, invite students working individually or in pairs to design their own map of the multiple stories/times that cohabit *Ceremony*, including pages of specific episodes. Remind students that they need to break out of their common reliance on a linear timeline to creatively represent multiple story lines. Below is an example of a narrative map which might help students to conceptualize their own designs. Organize presentations of students' maps so they can compare their understandings of the characters' journey in the novel.



Tayo's journey is framed by the white square, which represents the force of nature and its four elements, all protagonists in *Ceremony*. Tayo's childhood as a "half-breed" and his adulthood as a self-destructive veteran are represented by the blue ring. During this time, Tayo searches for belonging without understanding the intergenerational breakdown, and inherited trauma. Finally, he finds guidance in the yellow ring, when he meets the elders Ku'oosh and Betonie, and the hummingbird songs clarify his path. When the old stories unfold, they remind Tayo that his battle is ancient, and that the power of ceremony can cure his people and their land. In this yellow ring, we understand as readers that in searching for his uncle's cattle, Tayo is walking toward his spiritual center. The black cross in the core represents that Tayo awakens toward the four directions.

2. UNDERSTANDING GENDER

As they read, have students create a visual map of the female characters, their roles, and how they help Tayo complete the ceremony. Some of the female characters in the novel include Auntie, Old Grandma, Ts'eh, the Mexican captive, and the Night Swan. Ask students to analyze each of the characters for:

- Position or point of view
- Specific actions in novel
- Influence on Tayo
- Important quotes/passages

Teachers can pair this activity with a critical reading of one of the following resources. After engaging in small/whole group discussion, have students write a critical essay on the role of the feminine in Silko's *Ceremony* or a reflective response in their journals.

- Herzog, K. (1985). "Thinking woman and feeling man: Gender in Silko's *Ceremony*." *Native American Literature* 12.1 (25-36). <https://academic.oup.com/melus/article-abstract/12/1/25/949645/Thinking-Woman-and-Feeling-Man-Gender-in-Silko-s?redirectedFrom=PDF>
- Marquez de Costa, A. M. (1994). "The feminine landscape in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*." Web. http://www.ipv.pt/millennium/19_pers4.htm
- Silko, Leslie Marmon (1993). "Yellow woman and a beauty of the spirit." *Los Angeles Times*. http://articles.latimes.com/1993-12-19/magazine/tm-3661_1_laguna-pueblo-people

3. READER RESPONSE

Quotes can be used for written responses or as discussion starters. If students are using a reflective journal, the following quotations could be used as free writing prompts. Students should also be encouraged to identify and share quotes that they select while reading the novel.

- "You don't have anything/if you don't have the stories..." (p. 2).
- "He could get no rest as long as the memories were tangled with the present, tangled up like colored threads from old Grandma's wicker sewing basket..." (p. 6).
- "He made a story for all of them, a story to give them strength" (p. 10).
- "For a long time he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital, because white smoke had no consciousness of itself" (p. 13).
- "Years and months had become weak, and people could push against them and wander back and forth in time" (p. 17).
- "Distances and days existed in themselves then; they all had a story" (p. 17).

- “Josiah said that only humans had to endure anything, because only humans resisted what they saw outside themselves” (p. 24).
- “He spoke softly, using the old dialect full of sentences that were involuted with explanations of their own origins, as if nothing the old man said were his own but all had been said before and he was there only to repeat it” (p. 31).
- “The story behind each word must be told so there could be no mistake in the meaning of what had been said; and this demanded great patience and love” (pp. 32-33).
- “Liquor was medicine for the anger that made them hurt, for the pain of loss, medicine for tight bellies and choked-up throats” (p. 37).
- “They blamed themselves for losing the new feeling...” (p. 39).
- “This is where we come from, see. This sand, this stone, these trees, the vines, all the wildflowers. This earth keeps us going” (p. 42).
- “She could see what white people wanted in an Indian, and she believed this way was his only chance” (p. 47).
- “But he was the best; he was one of them. The best. United States Army” (p. 57).
- “From before they were born and long after they died, the people share the same consciousness” (p. 62).
- “What happened to the girl did not happen to her alone, it happened to all of them” (p. 63).
- “He was becoming what she had always wanted: someone who could not only make sense of the outside world but become part of it” (p. 70).
- “He had studied those books, and he had no reasons to believe the stories any more” (p. 87).
- “Everywhere he looked, he saw a world made of stories...” (p. 88).
- “They think that if their children have the same color of skin, the same color of eyes, that nothing is changing” (p. 92).
- “He didn’t act like a medicine man at all” (p. 108).
- “In many ways, the ceremonies have always been changing” (p. 116).
- “We can because we invented white people; it was Indian witchery that made white people in the first place” (p. 122).
- “Take it back./Call that story back” (p. 128).
- “This night is a single night; and there has never been any other” (p. 179).
- “The mountain could not be lost to them, because it was in their bones...” (p. 204).
- “He could see the story taking form in bone and muscle” (p. 210).
- “He had only seen and heard the world as it always was: no boundaries, only transitions through all distances and time” (p. 229).
- “Sunrise,/accept this offering,/Sunrise” (p. 244).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Discussion questions help students deepen their understanding of the novel and its themes. Students can answer the questions individually, they can work in groups to answer a series of questions, or one student can work exclusively on a single question to become the class expert who then shares his/her expertise with peers. Questions can be adapted for class discussions or written student responses.

Part I: Tayo's Struggle (until Tayo meets Old Betonie, pages 1-107)

1. Why do you think Silko decided to leave the page blank after the first "sunrise"? How is this detail significant for the stories that follow? (p. 4)
2. Tayo sees Uncle Josiah among Japanese soldiers in the Philippines. What did Rocky think about Tayo's vision? (p. 7) What is Tayo's story about Uncle Josiah visiting him in the middle of the war? (p. 18)
3. How do you interpret the "white smoke" that Tayo sees in the hospital? What do you think is the meaning behind the invisible/visible sensation that Tayo experiences? (p. 13)
4. How does Tayo describe Harley's behavior? Why is Harley restless? (pp. 20-21)
5. How is Grandma like the mule? What was the relationship between Rocky and Grandma? (p. 25)
6. What is Tayo's relationship with Auntie? Why is Auntie so concerned about shame in the family history? (p. 27). Why does Auntie resist Grandma's plan of sending Tayo to old Ku'oosh? (p. 30)
7. When old Ku'oosh visits Tayo, he says, "But you know, grandson, this world is fragile." In what way is the word "fragile" connected with "white warfare"? (p. 32) Why is Tayo's and the other veterans' health decisive for the community balance? (p. 35)
8. Tayo criticizes Harley, Leroy, and Emo for spending "all their checks trying to get back the good times" (p. 39). What are these good times during their army service? How do these memories keep them weak and drinking?
9. How does Pa'caya'nyi's story intersect with Tayo's pain and struggle? From your point of view, who or what would be Pa'caya'nyi in Tayo's reality? (p. 42)
10. When Tayo's mother left him, a double shame grew in Auntie's life. Why does she feel this way? According to the narrator of *Ceremony*, how is Christianity involved? (p. 63)
11. Hummingbird brings hope into the novel (p. 65). What do you think Hummingbird would suggest to restore balance?
12. Why are the Mexican cattle so attractive to Josiah? Do you find a symbol behind them? How is the Night Swan related to this attraction? (p. 82)
13. What is the ethnic and racial space distribution of the city of Gallup? What does this painful landscape say to you? (p. 100)

Part II: Searching for Healing (until Tayo realizes the importance for his ceremony of hunting the cattle, pages 108-163)

1. Why did old Betonie choose to live where he does? In his explanation, how is comfort related to belonging? Why was Tayo surprised with old Betonie's chat, laugh, and family story? (p. 108) Were you surprised with the medicine man? Why or why not?

2. Old Betonie affirms that thirty thousand years ago, the Japanese were not strangers (p. 114). What is he suggesting in this statement?
3. According to old Betonie's teachings about ceremonies, how would you explain the tensions between change and non-change? How did the encounter between worlds shift the way of doing ceremony? (p. 116)
4. In the hogan, Tayo is not sure about the power of "good Indian ceremonies" against wars, bombs, and lies. What does old Betonie mean when he answers to Tayo: "That is the trickery of the witchcraft"? (p. 122) How can stories become the most powerful trick for witchery? (p. 124)
5. Silko uses prayers and songs in the novel to create an atmosphere. How do you read old Betonie's white corn sand painting ceremony? Aloud? Silently? Did you jump paragraphs and then come back? (p. 131) What was the impact on you?
6. What mission does Betonie give Tayo? (p. 141)
7. Why doesn't Tayo confront the station man who was suspicious of him? (p. 143)
8. When Leroy gives Tayo a ride, how does Harley justify Leroy's possession of the truck? (p. 145)
9. What are the obstacles Tayo faces in finding healing at this point of the story? What sense do you make of the gambler story starting on p. 157? How does this story relate to Tayo's struggle?

Part III: Finding Balance (pages 164-244)

1. What do the cattle represent in this portion of the novel? How do they relate to the ceremony?
2. What role does Ts'eh play in helping Tayo find the cattle? What lessons does he learn from her?
3. Tayo realizes that white people have never looked beyond the lie, to see theirs was a nation built on stolen land (pp. 177-178). What is Silko's point here? What stories does the U.S. tell itself about Native people?
4. What effect does the mountain lion have on Tayo? What does the lion signify to him?
5. "...but the mountain was far greater than any or all of these things. The mountain outdistanced their destruction..." (p. 204). What was the destruction that Silko is referring to? What does she mean by "The mountain could not be lost to them, because it was in their bones..."?
6. Before she leaves him, what prophecy does Ts'eh make for Tayo? (p. 215)
7. Why is Tayo tempted to kill Emo, and what is significant about not giving in to this impulse? (p. 234)
8. How do you understand Emo's motivation, particularly when he murders his friends, including Harley?
9. What is the effect of Tayo returning the cattle? On Tayo? His family? The community?
10. Why did the elders want to talk to Tayo when he returned? What was their reaction?
11. How does Silko use the sun and its position in this part of the novel to highlight Tayo's path toward balance?
12. From this portion of the novel, how do we understand the way in which the witchery works? Who are the witches? How can healing be found?
13. What does this section teach us in terms of understanding why Tayo was sick? How he finds healing? What part does White Sands play in this?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND ESSAYS

Now that students have read the novel, they can return to the text for deeper analysis of its themes and characters. The following synthesizing questions can be used for class discussions or as essay topics.

1. How does Silko use the natural world to highlight the evolving and sometimes destructive forces intruding on the community?
2. How does Tayo's journey differ from that of other veterans who have returned from the war?
3. Through her various strategies of non-linear storytelling, Silko challenges western understandings of time and space, literature norms, and knowledge. Do you find this effective? Why or why not? What is she trying to teach us through these strategies? How does this impact your reading?
4. What role do animals play in the novel? How can we understand Tayo's growth through Silko's use of the animal world?
5. How does Silko use color in the novel? What colors does she use throughout the novel, and what might they represent?
6. One of the tensions that comes up in the novel through Tayo and Emo's conflict is that of "full-blood" vs. "half-breed". How does this conflict relate to other parts of the novel? How does this issue inform us of Silko's notion of Indian identity?
7. How does Tayo's identity as a "half-breed" inform his understanding of himself, his community, and how others view him?
8. Describe three of the ways in which Silko illustrates the differences between the white world and the Laguna Pueblo world.
9. Silko creates a tension between traditional Laguna beliefs and the Christian beliefs brought on through the establishment of missions. How do the characters of Tayo and Auntie highlight these tensions?

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

1. Importance of Place

In *Ceremony*, nature speaks to and teaches the characters. To deepen students' understanding of Silko's unique approach to nature, ask students to read the following quotes. Invite them to select one that generates the deepest reaction and to reflect in writing about their reactions and their connections to their own land, hometown, and familiar ecosystems.

Canyons, sandstone, and water springs: "When the shadows were gone, and the cliff rock began to get warm, the frogs came out from their sleeping places in small cracks and niches in the cliff above the pool. They were the color of the moss near the spring, and their backs were spotted the color of wet sand. They moved slowly into the sun, blinking their big eyes" (p. 87).

Mount Taylor: "'Look,' Betonie said, pointing east to Mount Taylor towering dark blue with the last twilight. 'They only fool themselves when they think it is theirs. The deeds and papers don't mean anything. It is the people who belong to the mountain'" (p. 118).

Enchanted Mesa: “The cloudy yellow sandstone of Enchanted Mesa was still smoky blue before dawn, and only a faint hint of yellow light touched the highest point of the mesa. All things seemed to converge there: roads and wagon trails, canyons with springs, cliff paintings and shrines, the memory of Josiah with his cattle; but the other was distinct and strong like the violet-flowered weed that killed the mule, and the black markings on the cliffs, deep caves along the valley the Spaniards followed to their attack on Acoma. Yet at that moment in the sunrise, it was all so beautiful, everything, from all directions, evenly, perfectly, balancing day with night, summer months with winter. The valley was enclosing this totality, like the mind holding all thoughts together in a single moment” (p. 220).

Follow up this reflection with a conversation about the importance of place. Ask students:

- How do you understand the difference between “I am from...” and “I am of...” a place?
- What places are sacred to you? Why?

Additional Resources:

Silko, “Language and Literature from a Laguna Pueblo Perspective”: <http://www.unm.edu/~joglesby/Silko%20Essay.pdf>

2. Native American Veterans

Native Americans have the highest per capita enlistment in the U.S. Army. Ask students to read “By the Numbers: A Look at Native Enlistment during the Major Wars,” making a tally chart showing the percentage of Native Americans to other enlisted men and women. <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/veterans/by-the-numbers-a-look-at-native-enlistment-during-the-major-wars/>

Ask students to look back through the novel at how the characters describe their experiences serving in WWII. Why did they decide to enlist? Why do American Indians and other minorities, such as Latinos, decide to join an institution—the U.S. Army—which represents a nation-state with a long history of colonialism?

Review the conversation between the old man Ku’oosh and Tayo: “In the old way of warfare, you couldn’t kill another human being in battle without knowing it, without seeing the result...” (p. 33). Thinking about modern warfare, how does it differ from the warfare described by the healer?

Then watch this powerful recitation from May 2010 for the Welcoming Home Wisconsin’s Vietnam Veterans event (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URastjiT2is>) by the poet and performer, Jim Northrup, an Anishinaabeg/Ojibwe Vietnam War veteran from Fond Du Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota. His voice brings pain and laughter together in a raw testimony full of poetry. Discuss how his postwar experience is different from Tayo’s.

Additional Resource:

“Excerpt: Anishinaabe Syndicated—on Veterans and Environs” by Jim Northrup: <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/excerpt-anishinaabe-syndicatedon-veterans-and-environs/>

3. Coming Full Circle: DAPL and the Standing Rock Sioux

One of the great revelations of the novel is Tayo’s understanding that the creation of the first atomic bomb in the Jemez Mountains and its explosion at the Trinity Site (White Sands) are reasons why sickness and witchery came back to Mother Earth to paint the end of human

beings with uranium and pain (p. 228). Beyond race, ethnicity, and nationality, Silko's image points out the global struggle of protecting water and nature for future generations.

To demonstrate and connect the relevancy of *Ceremony* to pertinent global indigenous struggles, students can explore in small groups the recent fight of the Standing Rock Sioux against efforts of Energy Transfer Partners to build a pipeline for crude oil through traditional Sioux territories. Overarching questions to be discussed include:

- Similar to what happened to the Laguna Pueblo, in what ways can corporate intrusions such as mining or pipelines impact the balance of a community?
- How can youth defend their land through art, literature, ceremony, and community action?

To provide an overview of the Standing Rock protests, particularly from the perspective of the indigenous youth, have students view ABC's coverage: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/video/revealing-documentary-youth-heart-standing-rock-protests-dakota-45674446>

After viewing the documentary, engage the class in a discussion of what they have learned.

- What are the basic facts of DAPL?
- What roles are youth playing in the resistance?
- What are some of the factors that led to settler encroachment on Sioux lands?
- What role have treaties played in the history of the Standing Rock Sioux?
- What do the protectors mean by "water is life"?
- What is the role of prayer in the Standing Rock protests?
- What is non-violent protest? Can it be an effective strategy? In what ways?

Resources:

"Standing Rock Timeline: 1889 to the Present": http://www.ndstudies.org/resources/IndianStudies/standingrock/timeline_1889.html

Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2016). "The Great Sioux Nation and the Resistance to Colonial Land Grabbing": <http://www.beaconbroadside.com/broadside/2016/09/the-great-sioux-nation-and-the-resistance-to-colonial-land-grabbing.html>

Images of the pipeline construction: <http://www.startribune.com/we-belong-to-the-river/394687181/#2>

Aisch, G. & Lai, K.K.R. (2017). "The Conflicts along 1,172 Miles of the Dakota Access Pipeline": <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/11/23/us/dakota-access-pipeline-protest-map.html>

NYC Stands with Standing Rock Collective. 2016. "#StandingRockSyllabus": <https://nyc-standswithstandingrock.wordpress.com/standingrocksyllabus/>

4. Global Awareness

The following are short documentaries about indigenous communities being impacted by mining endeavors. Assign students in pairs or small groups to research these topics on the web and create a series of images that best reflect their interpretation of the issue(s). They can then join together and combine their images to make a 30-second video slide-show with music and text. Have students go to <http://animoto.com/>, click on the "Get Started" link, and then follow the prompts. Encourage students to select music that highlights pertinent points of view.

- Aljazeera America (2015). "Elsipogtog: The Fire over Water – Fault Lines." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fleh95UWGo>

Between May and October 2013, the Mi'kmaq nation resisted the aggressive advance of

the gas shell extraction projects (fracking) in Elsipogtog (New Brunswick). Civil disobedience, the songs of women, and the beat of drums called the attention of activists and independent journalists and made the front pages of national newspapers. This is a journalistic documentary by Aljazeera on Mi'kmaq resistance, the Idle No More movement, indigenous sovereignty, and the inconsistencies of the extractivism.

- Dougherty, John (2015). “Flin Flon Flim Flam.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7aacPtEI8s>

At the convergence of damage and hope, *Flin Flon Flim Flam* weaves together interviews and facts about four different mining projects orchestrated by the Canadian-based Transnational Company Hudbay Minerals, Mine 777, and Reed Mine in the Grass River Provincial Park (Flin Flon, Manitoba, Canada), El Estor, Lote 8, and Vigil's Mine in Maya Q'ech'i territory (Guatemala), Constancia Mine in Uchucarco (Chumbivilcus Province, Perú), and the Rosemont Project in the sacred Santa Rita Mountains (Arizona, U.S.).

- Gualinga, Eriberto (2012). “Children of Jaguar.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJdQinKAyqA>

In 2002, the Ecuadorian government violated the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization when it did not consult the Sarayaku nation in its plans of oil exploration in their territory. “Children of Jaguar” is a brave testimony of resistance by the Sarayaku nation (2002-2012) against the Ecuadorian State's project of oil extraction in the Amazon. It shows the courage of indigenous filmmakers as they use video and creativity as a weapon to protect their territories.

Juan Sanchez Martinez is the editor/author of the blog, “Indigenous World Forum on Water and Peace” at waterandpeace.wordpress.com. These video descriptions first appeared on this site.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Websites

Laguna Pueblo: <http://www.lagunapueblo-nsn.gov/>

National Park Service: https://www.nps.gov/nR/travel/route66/pueblo_laguna.html

Mining Watch: <https://miningwatch.ca/>

Pueblo Indian Museum: <http://www.indianpueblo.org/museum/>

Bureau of Indian Affairs: <https://www.bia.gov/>

Map of Federally Recognized Tribes: https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/special/AIAN-Wall2010/AIAN_US_2010.pdf

Indian Country Media Network: <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com>

Related Articles/Books/Films/Documentaries

Alexie, S. (1996). *Reservation Blues*. Warner Books.

Bartleman, J. (2011). *As Long as the Rivers Flow*. Toronto: A.A. Knopf Canada.

Erdrich, L. (2015). *The Round House*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Ferrero, P. (2015). *Hopi: Songs of the Fourth World*. <http://umass.kanopystreaming.com/node/15754>

Gansworth, E. L. (2013). *If I Ever Get Out of Here: A Novel with Paintings*. New York, Arthur A. Levine Books.

King, T. (2011). *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*. New York: House of Anansi Press.

Northrup, J. (2012). *Rez Salute: The Real Healer Dealer*. Golden, Colo: Fulcrum.

Welch, J. (2008). *Winter in the Blood*. New York, N.Y: Penguin.

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