

Everett Public Schools Assessment of Student Learning

Student Packet



Benchmark Reading Assessment Grade 7 Grading Period 2

“Bringing Fire”
“America’s ‘Secret Weapon’ ”
“Second Journey”

Student: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Period: _____

Literary Passage

Directions: Read the following selection and then answer the questions.

Bringing Fire

The following two folktales are about how fire was created; each is told from a different cultural perspective.

Aboriginal Tale

- 1 Long ago, when the birds and animals lived together in the bush, a traveler came to them looking for a place to rest. The traveler told the tribe about all the things he had seen. Most importantly, he told them how the cockatoo bird, Mar, kept the fire, which made the sun, under his crest. Every morning Mar pulled the fire out from under his feathers and used it to light the sky. This was of great interest to the birds and animals in the bush. They were very cold during the winter and had often wondered how they could use some of the sun's fire to keep themselves warm on Earth.
- 2 Tatkanna, a robin, volunteered to go to Mar's mountain home and steal fire—he was little, but fast, so they all agreed that he should try to take fire from the cockatoo. He set out on his long journey and arrived at Mar's home just before sunrise. He watched as Mar took some fire from beneath his crest and used it to ignite a stick that shone light on the world. Tatkanna decided to act boldly. He grabbed a stick, raced toward Mar, and touched his stick to the fire. When the flames took hold, he turned and began to race down the mountain, with a furious Mar swiftly pursuing him.
- 3 Mar could not catch small, swift Tatkanna, who arrived in the bush triumphant with his fire. Now everyone had fire for warmth, light, and cooking. As for Tatkanna, the flames had singed his chest, so it was a bright red. Now, all robins wear bright red feathers to remind everyone of how they brought fire to the rest of the world.



Native American Tale

- 4 When winter came to Earth, the animals were able to keep warm under their fur coats, but Coyote felt sorry for poor Man, who had no such covering. Coyote gathered together the forest creatures, and they made a plan to go to the mountains of the Fire Beings. Together they would bring back some fire for Man; otherwise, he would surely freeze to death.
- 5 The next day, Coyote climbed to the camp of the Fire Beings. When the Fire Beings turned their backs for a brief second, he leapt forward, grabbed a piece of fire and began to race down the mountain. Just as one of the Fire Beings got close to him, Coyote threw the piece of fire away, singeing his tail in the process, which is why all coyotes have a white tip on their tails.

- 6 Meanwhile, as planned, Squirrel caught the fire and continued the trek down the mountain. The fire was so hot that it burned Squirrel's tail, curling it up her back, but still she did not drop it. Now, because of that burn, all squirrels have curled tails. Squirrel, in turn, tossed the fire to Chipmunk, who quickly scampered away from the hot pursuit of the Fire Beings. Still, one of them managed to reach out and claw at Chipmunk's back, leaving the three black stripes we still see on chipmunks today. Fortunately, Chipmunk had already passed the fire to Frog, who broke off his tail as he hopped down the hill carrying the fire, which is why all frogs are without tails. Finally, Wood caught the fire and held it; he wouldn't let go, no matter how the Fire Beings clawed and grabbed. When the Fire Beings gave up and left, Coyote brought Man to Wood and showed him how he could draw fire out by rubbing two pieces of wood together until they sparked. Thanks to Coyote and the forest creatures, Man survived the winter and has been able to use fire ever since.

Selection from -New Mexico 2005 core released items- www.ped.state.nm.us/div/acc.access/assess/dl/released-items/reading/gr7_rI_without



Benchmark Reading Assessment
Grade 7 – Grading Period 2
“Bringing Fire”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

1. How are the robin and coyote in the Aboriginal Tale and the Native American Tale similar? [LA06]
 - ☐ A. Both were cunning and quick in stealing the fire.
 - ☐ B. Both bravely volunteered to steal fire on their own.
 - ☐ C. Both stole fire so that man would no longer be cold.
 - ☐ D. Both were left with the same markings on their bodies from the fire.

2. Which sentence in the story explains why the Fire Beings couldn't get the fire back? [LA07]
 - ☐ A. The Fire Beings got tired of chasing and left.
 - ☐ B. Wood held on to the fire and would not let go.
 - ☐ C. Coyote brought Wood to Man and Man made fire.
 - ☐ D. The animals hid the fire so that the Fire Beings could not find it.

3. What is the author's purpose for sharing these folktales? [LT08]
 - ☐ A. To persuade people to respect animals
 - ☐ B. To describe the form and features of animals
 - ☐ C. To entertain using a whimsical tale about fire
 - ☐ D. To explain the origin of fire from two cultures

4. Which statement is the most important conclusion the reader can draw from both of the stories? [LT09]
 - ☐ A. Ancient people believed that fire was guarded on mountains.
 - ☐ B. Animal markings can be explained by events in nature.
 - ☐ C. Animals are very intelligent and clever and often work together to achieve goals.
 - ☐ D. Ancient cultures used folktales to explain events in nature such as the origins of fire.

5. Based on the information in both stories, what generalization can the reader make about bravery? [LT10]
 - ☐ A. Those who risk their lives for glory are brave and courageous.
 - ☐ B. Those who struggle to escape danger are brave and courageous.
 - ☐ C. Those who risk danger for the welfare of others are brave and courageous.
 - ☐ D. Those who depend on others to achieve their goal are brave and courageous.

6. **Extended Response- 4 pts**

What are **two** ways that getting fire in the Aboriginal Tale is like getting fire in the Native American Tale? Include information from the Aboriginal Tale and the Native American Tale in your answer.
[LA06]

What are **two** ways that getting fire in the Aboriginal Tale is different from getting fire in the Native American Tale? Include information from the Aboriginal Tale and the Native American Tale in your answer.

Informational Passage

Directions: Read the following selection and then answer the questions.

America's "Secret Weapon"

The Daily Times

March 2, 1989

Section
B

Around Town

Tribute Honors

America's "Secret Weapon"

1 Phoenix, Arizona—It was one of the most closely guarded secrets during World War II. U.S. military leaders considered it so valuable, they ordered the men who created it to keep it secret long after the war had ended. And keep it they did—even from their own families. Today the Navajo "code talkers" are no longer a secret. Some 400 Navajos who helped change the course of the war will be honored today when artist Doug Hyde's sculpture *Tribute to Navajo Code Talkers* is dedicated. Recruited from the small towns and reservations of the Southwest, these Navajos outwitted Japan's top cryptographers. The Navajo code was the only code the Japanese were never able to understand.

2 In 1942 there were no wireless phones or satellites for communication. Scientists had not yet learned how to scramble voice messages. U.S. commanders had no choice but to send many orders by radio. Unfortunately radio signals were not secure. Anyone with the proper radio equipment could listen to them. This was a big problem at the start of World War II. Many Japanese soldiers had been educated in the United States and spoke English well. Their ability to understand U.S. radio communications gave them an advantage. In some cases they even pretended to be Americans and gave bogus orders to trick U.S. soldiers.

3 The only way to keep information secret was to send it in code. However, the



Bronze Sculpture Dedicated Today

Japanese were able to break U.S. codes almost as fast as the codes were created. The Japanese seemed to know in advance every move the United States made. An unbreakable code was desperately needed.

4 Around this time Philip Johnston, an engineer from Los Angeles, read in the newspaper that the military was testing Native American languages as a way to protect radio communications. He immediately contacted the U.S. government and suggested using the Navajo language. The son of a missionary, Johnston had grown up around the Navajo. He thought their language would be perfect for this purpose. The unwritten language had no alphabet, and its unique structure was very complex. To anyone who hadn't spent years learning it, the language was impossible to understand. In fact, Johnston was one of the few non-Navajos who could speak it.

5 After a series of successful tests under mock battlefield conditions, the project was approved. Several weeks later a group of 29 Navajo men began

creating the Navajo code. The code was not a simple translation of messages into Navajo. The government did not think that a translation would be safe enough. Instead, the Navajos created a special code from their language. Specific Navajo words were assigned to represent letters in the English alphabet. These letters corresponded to the first letter of the word's English translation. For example, the Navajo word for *ant*, *Wol-la-chee*, stood for the letter A. The word *base* translated into Navajo code was *shush* (B), *wol-la-chee* (A), *dibeh* (S), *dzeh* (E).

- 6 Not every word in the code had to be spelled out letter by letter. Many common military words were given special Navajo names. For example, the Navajo word for "hummingbird" meant "fighter plane." As a further safeguard, nothing could ever be kept in written form. Each code talker had to memorize the entire code.
- 7 The project was an instant success. The first group of code talkers was soon expanded. Eventually, more than 400 Navajo code talkers would assist in the war in the Pacific. They were considered so important that each was assigned a personal bodyguard. In addition, care was taken to make sure they were never captured. Some experts believe the Navajo code was the key to the U.S. victory. In fact, even after the war the government felt the code was too valuable to declassify. The Navajo code and the Navajo code talkers remained a strictly guarded secret for more than 20 years.
- 8 It wasn't until 1968 that information about the heroic role of the Navajos became public. At that time U.S. soldiers were fighting again—this time in Vietnam. It was a conflict many

Americans thought was wrong. During this period some people thought it wasn't right to honor war heroes. This may be one reason it took another 20 years for the *Tribute to Navajo Code Talkers* to be built. However, this tribute, a large statue of a Navajo man, does more than recognize the contributions of the code talkers on the battlefield. It also honors the important part these heroes played in restoring peace. The figure in the sculpture holds a flute, an instrument traditionally used by many Native American groups to signal the end of war and the coming of peace. It is one message that the Navajo people hope will someday be understood by everyone.

Part of the Navajo Code

A	Wol-la-chee	Ant
B	Shush	Bear
C	Moasi	Cat
D	Be	Deer
E	Dzeh	Elk
F	Ma-e	Fox
G	Klizzie	Goat
H	Lin	Horse
I	Tkin	Ice
J	Ah-ya-tsinne	Jaw
K	Klizzie-yazzie	Kid
L	Dibeh-yazzie	Lamb
M	Na-as-tso-si	Mouse
N	Tsah	Needle
O	Ne-ahs-jah	Owl
P	Bi-sodih	Pig
Q	Ca-yeilth	Quiver
R	Gah	Rabbit
S	Dibeh	Sheep
T	Than-zie	Turkey
U	No-da-ih	Ute
V	A-keh-di-glioni	Victor
W	Gloe-ih	Weasel
X	Al-na-as-dzoh	Cross
Y	Tasah-as-zih	Yucca
Z	Besh-do-tliz	Zinc

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“America’s ‘Secret Weapon’ ”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

7. What is the main difference between the original World War II codes and the Navajo code? [IA16]
- ☐ A. The original codes were complicated, while the Navajo code was simple.
 - ☐ B. The original codes were based on written languages, while the Navajo code was based on spoken language.
 - ☐ C. The original codes were created by the Japanese, while the Navajo code was created by Native Americans.
 - ☐ D. The original codes were given to the Japanese by spies, while the Navajo code’s written handbook was well-protected.
8. Why does Philip Johnston contact the U.S. government? [IA17]
- ☐ A. He was considered an expert code breaker from previous wars.
 - ☐ B. He could fluently speak both the Japanese and Navajo languages.
 - ☐ C. He was a son of a missionary and was considered to be intelligent.
 - ☐ D. He read an article in the paper and knew he had a possible solution.
9. Which word best describes the author’s attitude about the Navajo code talkers in the selection? [IT18]
- ☐ A. Jealous
 - ☐ B. Generous
 - ☐ C. Respectful
 - ☐ D. Ungrateful
10. Based on the information in the selection, what is the most influential idea found in the article? [IT19]
- ☐ A. War is fought for war’s sake, seldom having any positive outcomes.
 - ☐ B. It is important to honor war heroes with a monument after a war ends.
 - ☐ C. Using the unique skills of diverse people can bring creative solutions to problems.
 - ☐ D. Keeping military secrets out to the hands of the enemy is vital for future national security.
11. Based on the information in the selection, what conclusion can the reader draw about codes in war time? [IT20]
- ☐ A. Codes are delivered over secure radio channels.
 - ☐ B. World languages are the starting point for all codes.
 - ☐ C. It is difficult to create a code that cannot be broken.
 - ☐ D. The Japanese were effective code writers in World War II.

12. Short Answer- 2 pts

Explain why the Navajo code was never broken. Include **two** details from the selection in your answer. [IA17]

Literary Passage: Poem

Directions: Read the following selection and answer the questions.

Second Journey

- 1 Tonight we sing the old songs, remembering.
The flute is like the wind,
The drums like distant thunder,
Like buffalo on the prairie.
- 5 Voices blend together in song,
A blanket woven from eons of existence.
Smoke rises from the campfire into the sky.
This gathering is good,
Seeing old friends from distant homes,
- 10 Dancing to the chant and the drum.
But the ride here was long and I am tired.
I close my eyes and listen to the breeze
Whispering about the Old Ones.
The spring wind blows across the hill
- 15 Warming my spirit.
I think back to my childhood
When we made the long trek to this place
Where the grass is green and the water cool.
Father Sun now watches the corn tassel.
- 20 An eagle circles overhead.
It is a good sign.
My husband and son will return soon
From their journey to trade for flaking stone,
For shell and an eagle pipe.
- 25 I continue working on the leather pouch
My son will wear at the dance.
The white buffalo looks almost real,
Like the one I saw in my youth.
A cloud covers the face of Father Sun,
- 30 The shadow passing over me.
As the sky darkens, I close my eyes,
Remembering the gathering last year,
Old friends returning with new stories
To pass on to our children.
- 35 The wind as it moves through the trees
Is like the voices of the People singing as one.
The end of the chant sounds.
I open my eyes and rise.
Tomorrow I will dance again



- 40 Wearing the white buffalo pouch
Inherited from my great-grandfather,
Made by his great-grandmother.
As I walk toward our tent,
The night owl calls.
- 45 Time to dream.

Selection from- Reprinted with permission from the author Les Tate from *Time Walker from Trilogies*-
<http://www.nativetech.org/tate/time.html>



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“Second Journey”

Fill in the bubble next to the letter of the best answer.

13. Why does the woman in the poem decide to close her eyes and listen to the breeze whispering about the Old Ones? [LA07]
- ☐ A. To rest and reflect on similar gatherings
 - ☐ B. To rest and imagine the face of Father Sun
 - ☐ C. To rest and think about her husband and son returning
 - ☐ D. To rest and visualize the white buffalos from her youth
14. Which opinion can best be supported with information from the poem? [LT08]
- ☐ A. Connecting the present to the past is meaningful.
 - ☐ B. Remembering old songs and dances can be important.
 - ☐ C. People should sing when they see the eagle circling in the sky.
 - ☐ D. Closing your eyes and listening to the breeze helps you enjoy a gathering.
15. Which statement is the most important conclusion the reader can draw from the poem? [LT09]
- ☐ A. Cultural gatherings are more meaningful when seeing old friends.
 - ☐ B. Animals and what they symbolize spark memories connected to cultural ancestry.
 - ☐ C. Dance, with its rhythm and beat, is important for continuing the culture of a people.
 - ☐ D. Surrounding oneself with traditions helps to make strong connections with one’s culture.
16. Based on the information in the poem, which generalization can the reader make about the title “Second Journey”? [LT10]
- ☐ A. Ceremonies depend on music, dance, and singing in order to be effective.
 - ☐ B. Ceremonies are more important the second time you go through them.
 - ☐ C. Traditions help recall past experiences as if going through them again.
 - ☐ D. Traditions are important to hand down so people remember their grandparents.
17. Which sentence tells how the mother and son in the poem are similar? [LA06]
- ☐ A. Both close their eyes and listen to the breeze.
 - ☐ B. Both will wear a buffalo pouch and dance at the gathering.
 - ☐ C. Both will wear a pouch inherited by their great-grandfather.
 - ☐ D. Both have gone to trade for flaking stone, shell and an eagle pipe.

18. Short Answer- 2 pts

What is the author's purpose for writing the poem? Provide **one** detail from the poem to support your answer. [LT08]
