

UNIT 12: YÓTÁÁH NAAZLÉI / Astronomy

GOAL:

The student will understand that Yót'ááh Siléi (that which is placed in the sky) or astronomy has a directly relates to and effects Diné's daily way of life wholistically i.e. physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

CONCEPTS:

Ádá hozdílzin - Nurture your spirituality

Ádił jídlí - Self respect

Ádéé hodzílzin - Self identity

Bee ééhózin - Provides direction

INTRODUCTION:

It is important to know that the universe, the sun moon and stars regulate our lives as Diné. It is said we have five points as does the star. It is a belief that astronomy has special control over our mental capacity, or psychological make-up, our spiritual well being and ultimately, our physical health.

Our songs and prayers reflect this relationship between the heavenly bodies and the five-fingered ones (humans). Our way of life is also reflected by this relationship in that it regulates when seasonal life activities occur. It also prescribes direction at any time of day or night.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Yót'ááh siléi baa hane'

TOPICS:

- I. Ceremonial - Nahaghá k'ehgo
 - II. Secular or Seasonal Activities - Ał'ąą ánáhoo'níł bee ééhózin
 - III. Types of Constellations - Sq'
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OBJECTIVES:

I. Ceremonial - Nahaghá k'ehgo

The student will:

- Learn that through astronomy, predictions can be made of forthcoming weather conditions.
- Learn that diagnosis of illness in either mind, body, spirit or emotion can be made using astronomy.
- Learn that astronomy has the potential to control the mental and psychological capacities.
- Become aware of symbolism contained in constellations.
- Learn of the seasons and particular constellations associated with them and their stories.

II. Secular or Seasonal Activities - Ał'ąą ánáhoo'níł bee ééhózin

The student will

- Become knowledgeable of the cycles which sustain life i.e. planting, harvesting, gathering of herbs for medicinal value.

- Learn about the seasonal restrictions which dictate certain ceremonies.

- Learn that astronomy regulates animal husbandry.

- Identify and study the four seasons.

- Define the four seasons of the year.

- Become aware of how the earth rotates on its axis and how the revolution of the earth around the sun effects seasonal changes.

- Study the four seasons to show how the distance of the earth from the sun affects seasonal changes.

- Describe the planets in the solar system and relationship of these planets to earth and sun.

- Study space travel and identify the planets visited by space satellites.

- Learn the names of the months in Navajo.

Rules and Restrictions:

- Never look at an eclipse, particularly if one is pregnant (female).

- Never look directly at the sun.

- Do not curse at or speak ill of that which is in the sky, i.e. sun, moon, and stars.

- Run and pray before the sun rises to ensure long life.

III. TYPES OF CONSTELLATIONS:

Season/Month/Symbolism

Hai - Winter

December

Níłch'itsoh

White - Gahat'e'ii

- Bee Hahodít'é

November

Níłch'its'ósi

White Corn Boy Units

- Songs (32 in a group)

- Prayers (32 in a group)

October

Ghaąjí'

Náhookos Biką'ii/Bi'áadii

Yíłkái Yizhchí

September

Bini'anit'áátsoh

Aak'ei - Autumn

August

Bini'anit'áátso'ósi

Yellow

Yellow Corn Girl Unit Song (16 in a group)

- Prayer (16 in a group)

July

Ya'iishjaastsoh

Shí - Summer

June

Ya'iishjáashchilí

Blue

1. Azéists'ósi

2. Dilyéhé

May

T'áátsoh

3. Náhookqs

April

T'ááchil

March

Wóózhch'ííd

Daan - Spring

February

Atsá Biyáázh

Sq' Tsoh

- Bee Hahodíté

- Tséghádi'nídínii (12)

January

Yas Níft'ees

1. Azéítsoh

2. Yíłkéí Sidáhí

3. Yíłkéí Ashkii

4. Yíłkéí Hooghan (Sahdii)

ACTIVITIES:

The student will:

- Identify major constellations such as the North Star, Big Dipper, Little Dipper, Sun, Moon and Stars.
- Learn string games that depict constellations.

VOCABULARY:

Johona'éeí - Sun

Tł'éhonaa'éeí - Moon

Sq' - Stars

Sq'tsoh - North Star

Náhookqs - Big Dipper