



# NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Special edition in celebration of Native American Heritage Month

**BY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**  
**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING COMMITTEE**

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# COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

November 2023

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Land Acknowledgement.....	1
Sam Houston and the Cherokee Nation.....	2
Native American Heritage Month Display and Indigenous Languages.....	3
How to Support Indigenous Students in the Classroom.....	4
Native American Literature.....	5
Native American Traditional Healing Systems.....	7
Native American Dishes.....	10
Reflection/Killers of the Flower Moon.....	11
Native Americans in Music.....	12
Representation of Native Americans in TV Shows.....	13



# Land Acknowledgement

Having a land acknowledgement is important because it formally recognizes and respects the traditional and continual presence of Native Americans as stewards of the land.

The historic Bidai, Alabama Coushatta, Atakapa-Ishak, and Karankawa nations have lived in the region surrounding Huntsville for hundreds of years. It is also important to consider that other tribes interacted with the land here as well.

This website, <https://native-land.ca/>, helps provide a context of movement and land relationship between and among different tribes.



A raven sculpture that is over 21 feet tall and weighs more than 7,000 pounds is a tribute to Houston's nickname given to him by the Cherokee Indians.

# Sam Houston and the Cherokee Nation



Teenaged Sam Houston wearing Cherokee Turban

Throughout his life, Sam Houston had important connections with Indigenous Americans. The Cherokee tribe gave him the special name, "The Raven." Growing up in Tennessee, he learned a lot about their culture, especially from the Cherokee tribe. This experience made him truly respect their customs, traditions, and how they lived.

*The Raven* (n.d.). Sam Houston Organization. <https://sam-houston.org/american-legend/adult-life/raven/>

If you would like to learn more about Sam Houston and his relationship with and advocacy for Indigenous Americans, please read the article written by Binetti (2020) featured in Today@Sam article:

<https://www.shsu.edu/today@sam/T@S/article/2020/houston-cherokee-citizen>



The above statue, known as "The Treaty," is located in Nacogdoches, Texas, on the south side of Main Street just east of the square, and features Sam Houston (1793-1863) with Cherokee Chief Bowl (1756-1839). To find out more about the historical importance of the "The Treaty" please visit the reference below:

Smith, E. (n.d.). *Sam Houston & Chief Bowl (Duwali) (aka "The Treaty")*. East Texas History. <https://easttexashistory.org/items/show/310>

# Native American Heritage Month Display



Please help us celebrate **Native American Heritage Month** by visiting our display located in **TEC 279**.

Check  
this  
out

## Indigenous Languages

There are many different Native languages. In Quechua, *Hersch'e!* means “Hey!” In Mvskoke (Creek), *Estonko!* means “What's up!” and *Mvto!* means “Thank you!”

Duolingo has now developed courses for languages such as Native Hawaiian, Quechua, and Navajo. For more information on Indigenous languages on Duolingo, please visit their site [here](#).

**Hersch'e !**

Quechua

**Nya:wëh  
sgë:nö'**

Seneca

**Estonko !**

Creek

**Hau !**

Dakota and Lakota Sioux

# How to support Indigenous students in the classroom

**Reference:** Godwin, A. J., Abela, J., & Rice, K. (2022). Empowering Indigenous identity through instructional frameworks. *DKG: Bulletin*, 89(1), 13-23.

<https://www.dkg.org/DKGMember/Publications/Bulletin-Journal.aspx>



Dr. Amber Godwin  
Assistant Professor, SOTL



Dr. Katherine Rice  
Professor, CE

Teachers have a unique opportunity to support the development of Indigenous students, their communities, and their cultures through representation in the classroom. When representation of Indigenous perspectives exists, students can be exposed to primary source counter-narratives (Sanchez, 2007) that can help them to engage in authentic learning and act in critical thinking (Tipton, 2019).

Differing perspectives will deteriorate the dominant narrative and remove outdated, inaccurate representations of Indigenous peoples (Miyamoto et al., 2018), normalizing and valuing Indigenous peoples who thrive today. Inclusion will support social change and develop the learning process, offering greater value in education for all students (Nicholls, 2008) as well as supporting identity development in Indigenous students (Quinn, 2020).

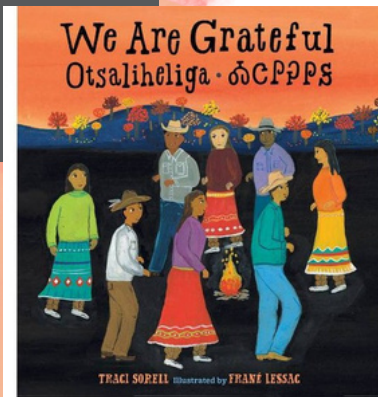
Teachers can support Indigenous students through strong, culturally supportive pedagogical practices by adhering to the framework provided and staying current on trends in Indigenous education. These actions can support the unlocking of Indigenous students' identity through empowerment, support, and acknowledgment. In these ways, teachers can help students associate with and reclaim their Indigenous identities one lesson at a time. (Godwin et al., 2022, p. 19)

## Six areas to frame Indigenous studies in the classroom:

Place, presence, perspectives, political nationhood, power, and partnerships. This framework also provides practices for how to empower and support Indigenous voices and presence in today's classrooms.

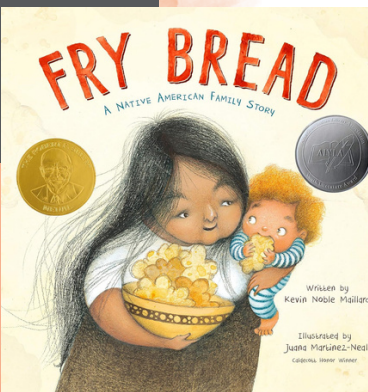
# Native American Literature

## Picture books



### ***We Are Grateful* by Traci Sorell, illustrated by Frane Lessac (2018)**

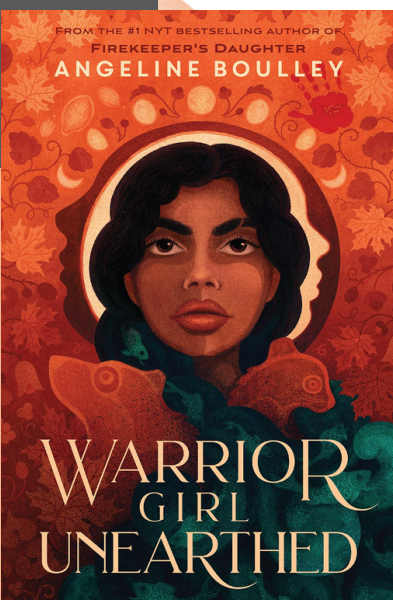
In this multiple award-winning book by storyteller Traci Sorell, the Cherokee people always express gratitude for the little things they are given by saying the phrase, "Otsaliheliga," or "We are grateful." Raised in the Cherokee Nation, Sorell intentionally shows the Cherokee community and way of life as both traditional and contemporary. In all things we say, "Otsaliheliga." It is of interest to note that Sorell is also first in her family to graduate from college.



### ***Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story* by Kevin Noble Maillard, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal (2019)**

Maillard, an enrolled member of the Seminole Nation, Mekukey band, tells the story not only for fry bread but also the ways that families enjoy the time they spend together. Fry bread was born out of necessity when native peoples were removed from their ancestral lands. While common to many Native American homes, Maillard tells how different families might make this dish. Recipe and references are included.

## Young Adult



### ***Warrior Girl Unearthed* by Angeline Boulley (2023)**

Boulley is an enrolled member of the Sault Sainte Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. This book is actually a continuation of an earlier work, *The Firekeeper's Daughter*, also about Native American Women in the Sault Sainte Marie Michigan area. *Warrior Girl Unearthed* tells the story of Perry Firekeeper-Birch, who is an easy-going teen who thought her summer might turn out to be pretty great--until she wrecks her Jeep trying to miss a bear cub (she does). She has to work at a summer internship instead, and this opens her eyes to the issues facing repatriation and returning of Native American remains to their ancestral homes. In addition, in case you also would like a murder mystery, a serial killer, and bullies getting their due, you will not be disappointed.

Reflection and contribution by Dr. Elizabeth Gross, Associate Professor, LST.



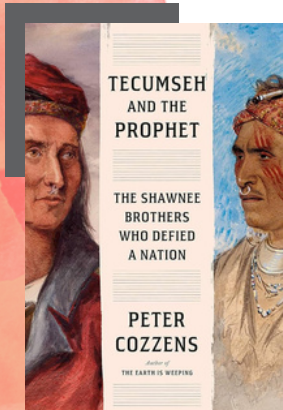
### ***If I Go Missing* by Brianna Jonnie with Nahanni Shingoose, illustrated by Neal Shannacappo (2019)**

This book was created from a set of letters written to the police chief of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Brianna Jonnie is Ojibwe, and Nahanni Shingoose, who helped Jonnie with the book, is Saulteaux, originally from Roseau River First Nation, Manitoba. The illustrator, Neal Shannacappo, is Nakawe (Saulteaux) from Ditibineya-zibiing (Rolling River First Nations). Jonnie asks why missing indigenous people are not immediately searched for and not treated as valuable human beings. She deals directly with the police chief and begs him, that, were she to go missing, to not treat her disappearance in the same cavalier way that others have been treated. This powerful book helps us better understand the threat of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW).

### **Nonfiction**

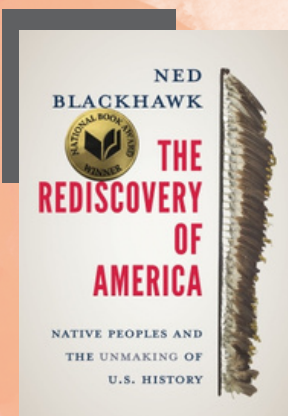
### ***Tecumseh and the Prophet: The Shawnee Brothers Who Defied a Nation* by Peter Cozzens (2020)**

It's hard to imagine that two brothers and 60,000 people might fight back against 2 million settlers--but they did. This biography of Tecumseh also illuminated his brother Tenskwatawa and their relationship as well as Tenskwatawa's creation of a spiritual doctrine meant to build a pan-native resistance.



### ***The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U. S. History* by Ned Blackhawk (2023)**

This book was just announced as the National Book Award winner for nonfiction for 2023. Blackhawk, Western Shoshone, opens the book with the question, "How can a nation founded on the homelands of dispossessed Indigenous peoples be the world's most exemplary democracy?" He argues that American history can be better understood with Native Americans at the center of it. The book is compelling, engaging, and seeks to change the way American history is taught and read.





# Native American Traditional Healing Systems

The direct quotes are from the academic article:

Kothian, M., & Farrell, C. (2010). Indigenous Native American healing traditions. *Journal for Nurse Practitioners*, 6(6), 477–478. doi: 10.1016/j.nurpra.2010.03.016

“For thousands of years, traditional indigenous medicine have been used to promote health and wellbeing for millions of Native people who once inhabited this continent. Native diets, ceremonies that greet the seasons and the harvests, and the use of native plants for healing purposes have been used to live to promote health by living in harmony with the earth.” (Kothian & Farrell, 2010, p. 1)



## Walking in Beauty: Re-visioning Health Promotion

“Traditional indigenous systems of care provide a blueprint to model new healing strategies that have the potential to extend health promotion beyond the individual to the collective. In Native American culture there is a saying that “we are all related,” all things live in relationship to one another.

Living in harmony with the earth and our environs has meaning and purpose, not only for us but the whole --- the earth, its peoples, and all that is. When we engage in health promotion by “walking in beauty,” we all win.” (Kothian & Farrell, 2010, p. 2)



An artistic portrayal of a Native American healing ceremony



Artwork depicting indigenous people preparing a sacred medicine bundle

# Medicinal Plants used by Native Americans

**Reference:** Hambleton, J. (2023, August 13). 10 medicinal plants Native Americans used to treat everything. *The Hearty Soul*.

<https://theheartysoul.com/10-medicinal-plants-native-americans-used/>

## 1. Sumac (*Rhus* spp.):

- Gastrointestinal Aid: Some tribes used sumac for its astringent properties to treat diarrhea and other gastrointestinal issues.
- Topical Applications: Sumac leaves were sometimes applied topically for skin conditions.

## 2. Aloe Vera (*Aloe barbadensis* miller):

- Skin Conditions: While aloe vera is not native to North America, some Native American tribes have incorporated it into their traditional medicine for treating skin conditions, burns, and wounds.
- Digestive Health: Aloe vera was also used by some tribes for digestive issues.

## 3. Mint (*Mentha* spp.):

- Digestive Aid: Various types of mint were used by Native Americans to address digestive problems, including indigestion and nausea.
- Respiratory Support: Mint leaves were also used for respiratory issues and to alleviate headaches.



## Medicinal Plants used by Native Americans

**Reference:** Hambleton, J. (2023, August 13). 10 medicinal plants native Americans used to treat everything. *The Hearty Soul*.  
<https://theheartysoul.com/10-medicinal-plants-native-americans-used/>

### 4. Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*):

- Calming and Sleep Aid: Chamomile, though not native, has been used by some Native American tribes for its calming properties. It was often employed to promote relaxation and improve sleep.
- Digestive Health: It was also used to soothe digestive discomfort.

### 5. Thistle (*Cirsium spp.*):

- Liver Support: Some tribes used thistle plants for liver support and to address liver-related ailments.

### 6. Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*):

- Nervous System Support: Lemon balm was traditionally used for its calming effects on the nervous system and to alleviate stress and anxiety.

### 7. Cranberry (*Vaccinium spp.*):

- Urinary Health: Native Americans used cranberries and other related plants for urinary tract health. The berries were consumed or used in preparations for their potential benefits.



**It's important to recognize that traditional uses of herbs can vary among Native American tribes.**

# Native American Dishes



**Reference:** Nelson, K. (2023, August 23). For many Native Americans, fry bread is tasty, nostalgic—and complicated. *Conde Nast Traveler*.

<https://www.cntraveler.com/story/for-many-native-americans-fry-bread-is-complicated>

## Fry Bread



In the U.S., fry bread is widely considered the most common Native American food. For Native communities, this crispy, deep-fried dough symbolizes various conflicting ideas like love, comfort, celebration, community, survival, colonialism, oppression, and tragedy. It can be seen as a complex symbol of Indigenous resilience, passed down through generations.

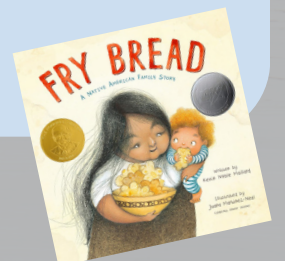
## Corn Bread Recipe

- 2 cups self rising corn meal mix
- 1 egg
- Milk until moist
- Mix until blended and place in small, greased iron skillet and put in the oven for 15 minutes at 375-400 or until brown



## Fry Bread Recipe

- Sift flour, salt, and baking powder together and add hot water
- Mix ingredients with your hands until dough forms
- Add oil to a large saucepan and heat on MED-HIGH heat (it should be about 350°F when ready to fry)
- Break off the pieces of dough into golf-ball-sized balls. Using a pastry roller make sure the dough is thin
- Fry each piece in hot oil until the dough is golden brown and poofs up (about 20 seconds)



# Reflection

## Reflection on *Killers of the Flower Moon*

Written by Dr. Ricardo Montelongo

Associate Professor, EDL

November 13, 2023

Hollywood's history of portraying Native Americans is complicated, at best. Since the early days of TV Westerns, tribal nations have often been portrayed as the "bad guys." Recent modern cinema, while moving away from stereotypes, have often told the stories of indigenous communities through the eyes of non-indigenous characters. Popular culture, such as that found in television and film, offers us a reflection on how we address and understand the history of diverse populations in the U.S. Since the announcement of the release of *Killers of the Flower Moon*, I have been interested to see how this movie would continue to tell the history of Native Americans.



Director Martin Scorsese promised a truthful re-telling of this tragic history through collaborations and consultations with current Osage Nation leaders. He wanted his film to accurately portray their stories, language, and culture. After recently viewing the film, I applaud Scorsese's ambitious goals in using cinema to make us aware of the social injustice placed on Native Americans in the United States. *Killers of the Flower Moon* recounts the horrific history behind what is known as the "reign of terror" placed on the Osage Nation in 1920s Oklahoma. As someone who is not a member of the Osage Nation, I found the telling of this part of their history to be painful to watch, yet important to learn. *Killers of the Flower Moon* focuses on the relationship between Ernest Burkhart, a soldier returning from World War I to live with his uncle, William "King" Hale, and Mollie Kyle, an Osage member whose family owns oil-rich land. The performance of Lily Gladstone, who portrays Mollie, is the moral heart of the story. Gladstone's Mollie captures the full range of emotions carried by the Osage during this time.





From the joyful expressions of cultural pride, concern knowing your community is in danger, to the anger of facing injustice literally in the face, Gladstone is the reason you should devote the 3.5 hours needed to view this film. History often carries stories that can be hard to imagine or hear. In the case of this movie, history can also be difficult to watch. Scorsese does a masterful job in directing this complex, yet thought-provoking, film. From my viewing, I can see the director's respect shown to the Osage Nation, from the opening ceremonial scene into the last frame reminding us of the strong cultural pride held by the current Osage Nation, which left me both in tears and with optimism. I intentionally did not provide details of the story in that it is important to go in ready to learn what is possibly a part of U.S. history that, unfortunately, is one that many of us are unaware. Through film, *Killers of the Flower Moon* provides lessons, heartache, knowledge, and most importantly, cultural empowerment.

## Native Americans in Music

There are many Native Americans in the music industry. Some of the most recognizable names are Red Bone, which is heavily featured in *Guardians of the Galaxy*; Anthony Kiedis; Kid Cudi; Jimi Hendrix; Buffy Sainte-Marie; and Jesse Ed Davis.

In 1983, Cree singer Buffy Sainte-Marie won an Academy Award for best original song. The song titled, *Up Where We Belong*, was featured in the movie, *An Officer to a Gentleman*. Sainte-Marie is an advocate for Indigenous people's rights. Some of her protest songs are *Now That the Buffalo's Gone* and *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*.



## Representation of Native Americans in TV Shows

**Reference:** Oliver, D. (2021, April 22). 'Rutherford Falls' ushers in era of Native American representation on TV: 'We've been ready'. *USA Today*. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/04/22/native-american-representation-tv-celebrated-rutherford-falls-peacock/7210034002/>

### Rutherford Falls

“Native Americans don't typically see themselves represented on TV.”

*Rutherford Falls* increases Native American representation in media both on- and off-screen. *Rutherford Falls*, from executive producer Michael Schur (*Parks and Recreation* and *The Office*), tells stories that go beyond antiquated stereotypes by showing how present-day Native Americans live. It also shows that, as in other underrepresented communities, each member is unique.

"A depiction of Native people as just people feels revolutionary to me," co-creator and executive producer Sierra Teller Ornelas says. "The idea that we get to be in a workplace comedy, or be parents and have kids and have problems with our teenage daughters--that type of storytelling has never really been afforded to us in a way that I am so excited to be able to show it now."



## Representation of Native Americans in TV Shows

**Reference:** Deggans, E. (2023, August 3). Haven't caught on to 'Reservation Dogs'? Now's your chance. *NPR*.  
<https://www.npr.org/2023/08/02/1191671833/the-unassumingly-brilliant-reservation-dogs-is-back-for-its-third-and-final-seas>

### *Reservation Dogs*: A Comedy with a Powerful Message

*Reservation Dogs* focuses on a group of Native American teenagers searching for their place in the world.

*Reservation Dogs* operates in a grounded, authentic world where Native American mysticism and folktales have a reality and power. The combination yields offhandedly funny stories that can be unexpectedly touching.

*Reservation Dogs* tells stories rooted in the reality of indigenous life, its brutal history and its boundless culture--which reaches far beyond the reservation into the world in surprising ways. Critically acclaimed as the show is, it may still be one of the most overlooked comedies on TV today.

FX  
RESERVATION  
DOGS





## Representation of Native Americans in TV Shows

In Season 2, Episode 4 (*The Tree*) of the TV show *Ghosts*, the importance of land acknowledgment is highlighted. The episode focuses on the characters acknowledging and respecting the Indigenous people, specifically the Lenape, who lived on the land before them. The key message is that land acknowledgment is a way of recognizing and showing respect for the history and heritage of the land, emphasizing the need to honor and preserve it for future generations. It underscores the significance of understanding and appreciating the cultural and historical context of the land on which people live and work.



## Representation of Native Americans in TV Shows

**Reference:** Darwish, M. (2022, October 20). 'Ghosts' star Román Zaragoza on Sasappis' tree & modern native representation. *TV Insider*.  
<https://www.tvinsider.com/1066261/ghosts-season-2-episode-4-roman-zaragoza-sasappis-tree-modern-native-representation/>

In an interview with one of the stars of *Ghosts*, Román Zaragoza mentioned the importance of modern Native representation and talked about Joe Baker who played the character Bob in this episode.

“[The character Bob is based on one of our] consultants, Joe Baker. He is the executive director of the Lenape Center; he co-founded it. And so that was really an exciting piece that I learned after I saw the script. It’s really cool that the whole writers’ room was able to bring a real Native character [to TV] and made him just this normal guy. You know, he’s not a stereotype; he’s not some archetype of what Native people are. He’s just Bob, and I loved that. And I think the more we see Native representation like that, like on *Reservation Dogs* and *Rutherford Falls*--it’s just so exciting. Television has the power of telling stories that haven’t been told and really showing people what life really is. I think to have this modern representation of Native people on our show was just a missing puzzle piece that I’m happy we have.” (Darwish, 2022, para.9)

