

Viewing Strategy

As you watch, stay focused on your purpose for viewing. Find out about the Native American dance traditions.

Before you get started, think of what you already know about Native American culture. Keep this in mind as you view these video clips.

As you watch, find out why tradition is so important in Native American culture.

After viewing, think about how Yazzie believes we are all connected. Think about whether you agree or disagree with him and why.

Comprehension

- What is regalia?
- Why do many Native American dancers wear eagles in their regalia?
- What is spiritualism?

Critical Thinking

- In what ways does Larry Yazzie relate to people in other parts of the world such as Japan and Australia?
- How and why does Yazzie incorporate more modern dance moves into traditional Native American dance?

Quiz Yourself!

- What are "Fancy Dancers?"
- Why is the eagle so important to Native Americans?

For the Educator

Rainbow-colored headdresses... pulsating drumming... fancy footwork... experience the excitement of a Native American powwow! World Champion Fancy Dancer Larry Yazzie performs music and movement passed down by their ancestors for centuries. Enjoy the beauty, skill, and majesty of the flamboyant Fancy Dance, featuring free-style movement with lots of energy, spectacular costumes, and sacred songs from the Northern Plains. Enhanced by indigenous vocal and flute music, other dances like the Buffalo, Eagle, and Round Dance celebrate various animals, crops, the sun, and the wind. Yazzie has performed everywhere, from the Atlanta Olympics and Goodwill Games in Russia to Macy's Thanksgiving Parade!

Instructional Strategies

- This interactive lends itself to large-group or individual listening as well as to both individual and group research.
- Have students research various Native American tribes and present their findings musically, artistically, or in a performance of some kind. After the presentations, compare and contrast the various tribes and what makes them unique as well as what they have in common.

- Each Native American tribe has its own tradition and beliefs, but there are some similarities among tribes. Native Americans believe that all elements of creation are important and interconnected. For example, they believe that all of the natural world, including mountains, rivers, rocks, trees, animals and humans are alive and filled with spiritual power. Humans are one part of creation connected to everything around them.
- Have students research other cultures that believe in spiritualism and animism such as Japanese culture. Compare and contrast the different views and practices of these cultures.
- The eagle is considered a sacred animal to Native Americans; because the eagle can soar so high, it is believed that it can communicate directly with the Creator. Eagle feathers are an important part of the regalia for both women and men.
- Ask students to explore animals that are sacred to other cultures. What makes them so special and valuable for each culture?