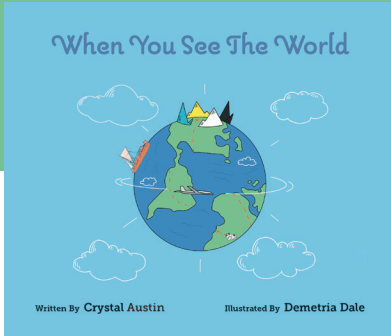


## Teacher's Guide *When You See The World*

Written by Crystal Austin

Illustrated by Demetria Dale



**\$24.95**

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### About the Book

When You See the World is a celebration of Indigenous identity, global connection, and the enduring strength of culture. Told through the loving voice of a grandmother speaking to her grandchild, the book invites young readers to imagine traveling beyond the sacred mountains while remaining grounded in Diné values, language, and worldview. The story moves across lands and waters—from Diné Bikéyah to the territories of the Skwxwú7mesh, Māori, and Arrernte peoples—showing children that wherever they go, they will find relatives, stories, and languages that carry the same sacred connection to land and ancestors.

This Teacher's Guide is designed to help educators use the book meaningfully in Grades 1–3 social studies classrooms, especially with Navajo students. At these grade levels, social studies centers on identity, family, community, geography, and cultural understanding. When You See the World naturally supports these themes by affirming that Diné children belong to a strong homeland while also being part of a wider Indigenous world.

## Supporting Identity and Place (Grades 1–3)

In primary social studies classrooms, students begin by learning about:

- Who they are (family, clan, community)
- Where they live (home, school, land, state, nation)
- How communities are similar and different
- Respect for cultures and traditions

This book offers a powerful framework for those discussions. Early pages reference Diné sacred mountains and Diné Bikéyah, grounding students in homeland geography and cultural knowledge. Teachers can use these moments to:

- Locate Diné Bikéyah on a map
- Discuss the Four Sacred Mountains
- Explore the meaning of Nahasdzaan (Mother Earth)
- Connect the idea of greeting places with “Yá’át’ééh” and cultural protocol

As students travel through the pages, they encounter other Indigenous nations who greet visitors in their own languages and ceremonies. This creates an age-appropriate entry point for understanding that:

- Every people have ancestors.
- Every people have language.
- Every people care for their land.
- Respect travels both ways.

For Navajo students, this reinforces pride without isolation. The message is clear: we are Diné, and we are connected to relatives across the world.

## Geography and Cultural Understanding

Grades 1–3 social studies standards emphasize basic geography skills—maps, landforms, water, regions, and direction. The book provides rich opportunities to explore:

- Mountains, oceans, deserts, forests
- Travel by land, air, and sea
- Climate differences
- Indigenous place names

Teachers can introduce simple map skills by tracking the journey from Diné Bikéyah to:

- British Columbia (Skwxwú7mesh territory)
- Aotearoa (New Zealand)
- Central Australia (Mparntwe/Alice Springs)

Students can compare these places to their own desert homeland. What is the same? What is different? What do all places share?

## Language as Cultural Power

A key strength of *When You See the World* is its inclusion of multiple Indigenous languages, including Diné terms such as:

- Yá'át'ééh
- Shiyázhí
- Shimasání
- Nahasdzaan
- Diné Bikéyah

For Navajo students in Grades 1–3, this supports:

- Vocabulary development
- Pride in Diné language
- Listening and speaking practice
- Cross-cultural language awareness

Students see that their language is not alone—it stands alongside other powerful Indigenous languages. This is a critical message for early learners in bilingual or English-dominant classrooms.

## Civic Responsibility and Reciprocity

Primary social studies also introduces early civic values—helping others, welcoming guests, sharing responsibility. The book emphasizes:

- Greeting lands respectfully
- Helping relatives
- Inviting others to Diné Bikéyah
- Caring for Earth

These themes align strongly with Diné teachings about hózhó, kinship, and collective responsibility. Teachers can build classroom discussions around:

- How do we show respect when we visit somewhere?
- How do we welcome visitors to our school or community?
- What responsibilities do we have to Nahasdzaan?

## Why this Book Matters for Navajo Classrooms

For Navajo students in Grades 1–3, representation matters deeply. Many world-travel books center Western perspectives. When You See the World reverses that lens. The starting point is Diné homeland. The guide is a grandmother. The worldview is Indigenous.

This allows teachers to:

- Center Diné knowledge first
- Expand outward without losing identity
- Build global awareness from a place of cultural strength

Rather than teaching “the world” as something distant or disconnected, this book teaches that Diné children already belong to it.

Below is a 5-Day Social Studies Lesson Plan aligned to Arizona Grade 3 Social Studies Standards, designed specifically for a classroom of Navajo (Diné) students using When You See the World .

The lessons center Diné identity first and expand outward to global Indigenous connections, geography, culture, and civic responsibility.

## 5-Day Social Studies Unit Grade 3 – Arizona Social Studies

Text: When You See the World by Crystal Austin

Classroom Context: Navajo (Diné) Students

### Unit Overview

Essential Question:

How can we stay grounded in Diné Bikéyah while learning about and respecting the wider world?

Big Ideas:

- Identity begins with homeland.
- Indigenous peoples around the world share connections to land, language, and ancestors.
- Geography shapes culture.
- Respect and reciprocity are important civic values.

Arizona Grade 3 Standards Alignment

Geography (3.G1, 3.G2)

- Use maps and geographic tools to describe places and regions.
- Describe how natural features influence where and how people live.

Civics (3.C1, 3.C2)

- Explain civic virtues (respect, responsibility).
- Describe ways people work together in communities.

History (3.H1)

- Use primary/secondary sources to understand perspectives and traditions.

Economics (3.E1)

- Explain how resources influence goods and cultural practices (food, materials).

## DAY 1 – Our Homeland: Diné Bikéyah

Standard Focus:

3.G1 – Geographic representations

3.H1 – Cultural traditions

Objective:

Students will identify Diné Bikéyah on a map and describe why homeland is important to identity.

Lesson Activities:

- Read Aloud (Pages 4–5)

Discuss:

- Sacred Mountains
- Diné Bikéyah
- Grandmother as knowledge keeper

2. Map Activity

- Locate Diné Bikéyah on a U.S. map.
- Identify Arizona.
- Mark Four Sacred Mountains (teacher-prepared outline map).

3. Discussion Questions

- Why does the story begin at home?
  
- Why is land important to Diné people?

4. Exit Ticket

Draw and label:

“My homeland is important because...”

Assessment:

Student map labeling + drawing explanation.

## DAY 2 – Geography Shapes Culture

Standard Focus:

3.G2 – Natural features influence life

3.E1 – Resources and goods

Objective:

Students will compare Diné Bikéyah to one other Indigenous region in the book.

Lesson Activities:

1. Read Aloud (Pages 6–8, 13)

- Skwxwú7mesh mountains
- Aotearoa waters
- Mparntwe desert

2. Compare & Contrast Chart

Place	Land	Food	Climate
Diné Bikéyah	Desert	Dibé	Dry
British Columbia	Mountains/Ocean	Salmon	Cool
Australia	Desert	Kangaroo	Hot

3. Small Group Discussion

How does land affect:

- Food?
- Housing?
- Ceremonies?

4. Quick Write

“In Diné Bikéyah, we live this way because...”

Assessment:

Completed comparison chart.

## DAY 3 – Language and Identity

Standard Focus:

3.H1 – Cultural perspectives

3.C1 – Civic virtues (respect for cultures)

Objective:

Students will explain why language is important to identity.

Lesson Activities:

1. Read Aloud (Pages 26–27 + Glossary)

Highlight:

- Yá'át'ééh
- Shiyázhí
- Chen kw'achén
- Whanau

2. Language Circle Activity

Students practice greetings:

- Diné greeting
- English greeting
- Discuss how it feels to greet someone respectfully.

3. Anchor Chart:

“Language Shows...”

- Love
- Respect
- Belonging
- History

4. Reflection Journal

“How does speaking Diné make you feel?”

Assessment:

Journal response + participation.

## DAY 4 – Civic Responsibility and Reciprocity

Standard Focus:

- 3.C2 – Community responsibility
- 3.C1 – Civic virtues

Objective:

Students will describe how to show respect when visiting other places.

Lesson Activities:

1. Read Aloud (Pages 9, 16–19)

Focus:

- Greeting ancestors
- Offering help
- Inviting others to Diné Bikéyah

2. Role-Play

Scenario:

“You are visiting another community. What do you do?”

Students practice:

- Greeting
- Listening
- Offering help

3. Create a Class Promise

“When we see the world, we will...”

Assessment:

Student participation in role-play.

## DAY 5 – We Are Connected to the World

Standard Focus:

3.G1, 3.C1, 3.H1

Objective:

Students will create a project showing how Diné people are connected to the world.

Culminating Project Options

Option A: World Connections Poster

Include:

- Diné Bikéyah map
- One global Indigenous region
- Language word
- Food
- Civic value

Option B: “When I See the World” Writing Page

Students complete:

“When I see the world, I will remember...”

Option C: Class Mural

Left side: Diné homeland

Right side: Other Indigenous lands

Center: “Relatives Across the World”

Why This Unit Matters

For Navajo students, this unit:

- Centers Diné identity first.
- Builds global awareness without erasing homeland.
- Reinforces pride in language.
- Connects geography to lived experience.
- Teaches civic respect grounded in hózhó.

**Below are Scenario Cards based on the Indigenous communities described in When You See the World.**

### **DINÉ (NAVAJO) – Diné Bikéyah**

Scenario Card 1: Welcoming a Visitor to Diné Bikéyah

You are at home near your chapter house when a visitor from another Indigenous community arrives. They have never seen our red mesas or heard someone say “Yá’át’ée’h.”

What should you do?

- How do you greet them?
- What would you show them first?
- How would you explain Nahasdzaan (Mother Earth)?

Think About It:

How does showing respect make our homeland stronger?

Scenario Card 2: Teaching About the Four Sacred Mountains

Your new friend asks, “Why are those mountains so important to you?”

You are standing outside and can see one of the Sacred Mountains in the distance.

- What would you tell them?
- Why are mountains part of our identity?
- How would you show pride without bragging?

Think About It:

How does knowing your homeland give you confidence?

## SKWXWÚ7MESH (British Columbia, Canada)

### Scenario Card 1: Visiting the Two Sisters Mountains

You are visiting the snow-capped mountains called Ch'ich'iyúy Elxwíkn (The Two Sisters). A Skwxwú7mesh elder is sharing a story about them.

- How should you listen?
- Should you interrupt?
- How do you show respect for someone else's sacred place?

Think About It:

How is this similar to how we treat our Sacred Mountains?

### Scenario Card 2: Eating Salmon Together

You are invited to share ch'a7elhp (salmon) near the ocean. It tastes different from dibé bistj' (sheep meat), but it is important to their people.

- What should you say before eating?
- How do you show gratitude?
- What could you share about Navajo food?

Think About It:

Why is food connected to land and culture?

## TE REO MĀORI – AOTEAROA (New Zealand)

### Scenario Card 1: Attending a Pōwhiri (Ceremonial Welcome)

You are welcomed with a pōwhiri. There are songs and speeches just for you.

- How should you stand or sit?
- When should you speak?
- How do you show respect in a ceremony?

Think About It:

What ceremonies do we have that welcome or honor people?

### Scenario Card 2: Learning About Whetū (Stars)

A Māori child shows you how their whetū (stars) help guide them home.

- What Navajo star knowledge could you share?
- Why are stars important for direction?
- How are the night skies the same for both of you?

Think About It:

How do the stars connect Indigenous people across the world?

## **ARREN RTE – MPARNTWE (Central Australia)**

### Scenario Card 1: Akeyulerre Smoke Ceremony

You are invited to stand quietly while healing plants are placed in a fire for Akeyulerre (smoke ceremony).

- Should you laugh or run around?
- Why is silence important?
- How does smoke remind you of Navajo ceremonies?

Think About It:

Why do many Indigenous peoples use plants for healing?

### Scenario Card 2: Playing Near Apere (Gum Trees)

You see children swinging from apere gum trees and dancing like tyerraye butterflies.

- How can you join respectfully?
- What games from Diné Bikéyah could you teach them?
- How do children build friendship through play?

Think About It:

Why is play important in every culture?

## GLOBAL INDIGENOUS CONNECTION

### Scenario Card 1: Greeting a New Relative

A child from another Indigenous community calls you “Chen kw’achén” (My friend).

- How do you respond?
- What Diné word could you use?
- Why is language powerful?

Think About It:

How does hearing your language make you feel?

### Scenario Card 2: Inviting Them to Diné Bikéyah

Your new friend says, “Can I visit your homeland one day?”

- What would you show them first?
- How would you explain hózhó?
- How would you teach them to greet the land?

Think About It:

Why is hospitality a strength in our culture?

### Teacher Use Suggestions

These cards can be used for:

- Small group role-play
- Circle discussion
- Journal responses
- Social studies centers
- Civic virtue lessons
- Oral language practice (Diné + English)

## Resources for read alouds

### Picture Books Featuring Diné/Navajo Children & Culture

Flood, Nancy B. (2025). *The hogan that great-grandfather built*. Salina Bookshelf.  
This picture book follows a young Diné child as family members work together to build a traditional hogan. Through rhythmic text and warm illustrations, the story highlights kinship, cooperation, and the cultural significance of the hogan in Navajo life. It introduces young readers to Diné values of family responsibility, respect for elders, and connection to homeland.

Roessel, M. (1995). *Songs from the loom: A Navajo girl learns to weave*. Lerner Publications.

This book follows a young Diné girl as she learns the art of traditional weaving from her grandmother. Through vivid photographs and gentle storytelling, the book highlights cultural teachings, patience, creativity, and the deep connection between weaving, family, and Navajo identity. Picture Books Featuring Skwxwú7mesh British Columbia First Nations

Joseph, L. (2023). *The land knows me: A nature walk exploring Indigenous wisdom*. Orca Book Publishers.

This book invites young readers on a guided walk through nature, introducing Indigenous plant knowledge and respectful relationships with the land. Through gentle storytelling and vibrant illustrations, the book teaches stewardship, observation skills, and the importance of learning from Elders and traditional ecological knowledge.

Campbell, N. I. (2017). *A day with Yayah*. Illustrated by J. Flett. Tradewind Books

This book invites young readers to spend a summer day gathering berries with siblings and their grandmother. Through lyrical text and Indigenous language words, the story highlights land-based learning, respect for plants, intergenerational knowledge, and the deep connection between family, culture, and place in British Columbia First Nations.

Egawa, C. T. Y. (2023). *The whale child*. Orca Book Publishers

This book tells the story of a young child who feels a deep spiritual connection to whales and the ocean. Rooted in Coast Salish worldview, the book explores belonging, identity, ancestral ties, and respect for marine life through lyrical storytelling and expressive, culturally grounded illustrations.

Picture Books Featuring Māori Aotearoa / New Zealand

These books reflect Māori language, culture, and narratives that broaden students' understanding of Oceania Indigenous perspectives:

Kahukiwa, R. (2008). *Are you a Māori?* Huia Publishers.

*Are You a Māori?* introduces young readers to Māori identity through clear questions and vibrant illustrations. Robyn Kahukiwa explains whakapapa (genealogy), ancestors, land, and culture in accessible language, helping children understand belonging, heritage, and pride in being Māori while celebrating intergenerational connections and community.

Elder, H. (2019). *Dear Moko: Māori wisdom for our young ones.* Penguin Random House New Zealand.

*Dear Moko* shares traditional Māori values, proverbs, and teachings written as loving letters to young people. Dr. Hinemoa Elder offers guidance about identity, resilience, kindness, and cultural pride, encouraging children to stay grounded in their heritage while growing confidently in today's world.

Picture Books Featuring Arrernte / Aboriginal Australia

Books that relate to Aboriginal cultures in Australia provide a respectful window into Dreamtime, connection to land, and storytelling traditions:

Kwaymullina, A., & Tobin, L. (2014). *The lost girl.* Little Hare.

*The Lost Girl* tells the story of a young girl who feels disconnected from the natural world until she rediscovers her deep relationship with land and Country. Through lyrical language and expressive illustrations, the book highlights belonging, Indigenous identity, environmental responsibility, and spiritual connection to place.

Boundry, J., & Waigana, T. (2020). *Noongar boodja waangkan: Noongar first words.* Fremantle Press

This book introduces young readers to Noongar language through everyday words connected to land, animals, family, and place. With bold illustrations and simple vocabulary, the book supports early language learning while celebrating cultural identity, community knowledge, and connection to Noongar boodja (Country).

#### Tips for Classroom Integration of Indigenous Picture Books

- Pair books with map activities: After reading, locate each community's homeland and discuss land features and cultural practices.
- Use cultural protocols: Begin read-alouds with greetings and goals (e.g., "Today we will learn about our relatives' stories and land").
- Connect language and land: Highlight key words (e.g., greetings, nature terms) from each culture mentioned in the books.