

Distance Learning for High School

Social Studies Day

Instructions: As you read the article underline words or phrases that describe the Bears Ears Monument looks like (What is it?). Circle words or phrases that reflect what the Bears Ears Monument *means* to Native Americans.

1 **What the Bears Ears Monument Means to a Native American** 2 **Interview by Hannah Nordhaus, *National Geographic*, October 18, 2018**

3 *Jim Enote lives in Zuni, New Mexico, where he runs a philanthropy that supports native communities on*
4 *the Colorado Plateau. But his ancestral homeland is Bears Ears, and his connection to his ancestors is*
5 *alive. "I am a farmer; I am a wood hauler; I am a hunter; I fish. I continue a lifestyle that has been*
6 *around careful and prudent use of the land," he told Nordhaus recently. Their conversation has been*
7 *condensed and edited for clarity.*

8 **Could you share some of the history of your tribe?**

9 The Zuni people emerged from within the earth to the surface at a place within the Grand Canyon, and
10 emerged from the canyon and began exploring all the tributaries of the Colorado River, [settling] in what
11 is called the Bear Ears area in what is now southeastern Utah. They lived there for quite a long time and
12 built villages and farms and homes and shrines and altars. Once those structures were built, they were
13 consecrated. Once they're consecrated they become sacred forever. We never consider them abandoned.

14 **Can you speak of the Zuni relationship to the people who lived in the Bears Ears region five hundred** 15 **or more years ago, and to other peoples that also descended from the Ancestral Puebloans?**

16 The Puebloan peoples have a shared and common history that goes back a long time, and we don't
17 necessarily have to put years to it. We would just say a long time ago. We know that to be true when we
18 visit each others' villages. We can see our shared sensibilities: We are all village-dwelling people. We are
19 farming people. [Our] religious and ceremonial structures are similar. We can see it in the art as well. We
20 all share a relationship to the Bears Ears area.

21 **Why did the Ancestral Puebloans leave the Bears Ears area? What do we know about them, both** 22 **from the archeological record and from native oral tradition?**

23 [They] migrated in response to a variety of factors—including climate, and interaction with other peoples.
24 [They] left their calling cards wherever they went. Oftentimes it was with writings etched in stone—
25 petroglyphs. And these became maps. The Zuni maps are [also] contained in songs and prayers; they're
26 painted on ceramics or pottery; they're woven into textiles. The petroglyphs and pictographs tell of the
27 events that people had experienced and things that they had seen on the land and beneath the surface of the
28 earth, things they had seen that lived in water, things they had seen in the sky. They tell of times when
29 there were certain animals that were living there, certain birds that were there, celestial events. These are
30 important monuments for all of humanity.

31 **How is the Zuni tribe tied to the Bears Ears region today?**

32 The Zuni people moved through the Colorado Plateau region, living throughout the area for many
33 thousands of years, and eventually settling where we are today, in western New Mexico. But we still have
34 very strong ties to the Bears Ears area, and when the opportunity comes we make our pilgrimages back to
35 the area to visit and to affirm what our oral history tells us. When we go there we can actually see the same
36 petroglyphs there that we will see at Zuni today; we will see some of the same ceramic style. Bears Ears is
37 a touchstone for the Zuni people.

38 The Zuni people go to the Bear Ears area to pay respect to our ancestors in a way that is not very different
39 from people going to a cemetery and paying respect to their family members. Or in a way that people may
40 go to England to connect with their English ancestry. The people that lived there and built the structures
41 there and carved on the cliffs there, that created the ceramics and the baskets and other things that we see
42 there—the blood of those people is in my veins.

43 **What did creation of Bears Ears National Monument mean for the Zuni tribe? And what did its**
44 **reduction mean?**

45 The creating of the monument was a hallelujah moment. We were seen as not only citizens of this great
46 nation, but indigenous to it and part of its original fabric. The monument said that we are of this place.
47 When the monument was reduced, it made us think, again, we have given so much to this nation and we
48 are receiving so little in return. Even more heartbreaking than that is when Zunis go to the Bears Ears area
49 and we see the continual destruction done by vandals and pot hunters and the potential damage to these
50 places as a result of unchecked development. It is just another slap in the face.

51 **A number of tribes—Zuni, Hopi, Navajo, Ute, and Paiute—came together to form the Bears Ears**
52 **Coalition, which petitioned for the creation of the Bears Ears monument and has continued to fight**
53 **against the reductions. What has this meant for the Native American community?**

54 The Bears Ears struggle has brought not only the Bears Ears coalition tribes together, but others as well.
55 Certainly for the coalition tribes, the historical and literal physical connection to the Bears Ears area is
56 important. To other tribes, there is also the matter of the federal government honoring and respecting
57 agreements. If there is an offense against one or more tribes, it is an offense to all tribes.

58 **Are there specific places that have been cut from the monument that had special significance to the**
59 **Zuni?**

60 I can't say that one pile of rocks as a shrine or one cliff dwelling or one petroglyph should receive more
61 protection than another. They should all be protected equally. These are sacred *places*, not sacred sites. A
62 site to me is a point on a map, and it would be too easy to say, “we'll protect this spring, or we'll protect
63 this rock shrine.” When actually it is the context of place that makes those areas sacred and worthy of
64 protection. The Bears Ears monument is home to some of our nation's earliest antiquities. The Bears Ears
65 monument is a treasury of time-tested Native American experience. People can learn from that place. It is
66 a library. It is an archive. It is a museum.

A. How is the Bears Ears National Monument different than other monuments you have looked at in the previous lessons?

B. How does Jim Enote describe the difference between sacred places and sacred sites?