

10 Native Americans Who Inspire Us: Their Remarkable Stories of Resilience and Achievement

Native Americans have a rich and diverse history that spans thousands of years. From their deep connection with nature to their remarkable contributions to art, medicine, and activism, Native Americans have inspired generations with their resilience, wisdom, and cultural heritage.

In this article, we will take a closer look at 10 Native Americans who continue to inspire us through their remarkable stories of triumph over adversity, their incredible achievements, and their enduring legacies.

1. Wilma Mankiller



Native Americans Who Inspire Us

by Roald Dahl (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 34004 KB

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 175 pages

Lending : Enabled



Wilma Mankiller was a groundbreaking figure in Native American history and the first female principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. Born in Oklahoma in 1945, she overcame numerous challenges and became a tireless advocate for Native American rights, education, and healthcare. Mankiller's leadership and determination paved the way for future generations of Native Americans, leaving a lasting impact on her community and the world.

2. Jim Thorpe



Jim Thorpe, a member of the Sac and Fox Nation, is widely regarded as one of the greatest athletes of all time. Born in 1887, Thorpe excelled in multiple sports, winning Olympic gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon in 1912. His athletic prowess, coupled with his humble and gentle nature, made him a beloved figure and an inspiration to Native Americans and sports enthusiasts globally.

3. Maria Tallchief



Maria Tallchief, a member of the Osage Nation, was the first Native American prima ballerina. Born in 1925, she rose to prominence as a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet and captured the hearts of audiences worldwide with her grace, talent, and captivating performances. Tallchief's dedication and trailblazing career shattered stereotypes and represented a triumph for Native American representation in the world of ballet.

4. Vine Deloria Jr.



Vine Deloria Jr., a Standing Rock Sioux tribal member, was a prominent writer, philosopher, and activist. His influential book, "Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto," challenged conventional wisdom and paved the way for a reevaluation of Native American history, spirituality, and culture. Deloria's powerful words remain a source of inspiration for Native Americans and those advocating for indigenous rights.

5. Susan La Flesche Picotte



Susan La Flesche Picotte, a member of the Omaha Tribe, was the first Native American woman to earn a medical degree. Born in 1865, she dedicated her life to providing healthcare for her community and advocated for better living conditions and disease prevention on reservations. Picotte's perseverance and selflessness made her a role model for aspiring Native American doctors and healthcare professionals.

6. Billy Mills



Billy Mills, a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe, defied all odds to win the 10,000 meters race at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. His unexpected victory remains one of the greatest moments in Olympic history. Mills used his platform to bring attention to the challenges faced by Native American communities, inspiring others to pursue their dreams despite adversity.

7. Sacagawea



Sacagawea, a member of the Shoshone tribe, played a crucial role as a guide and interpreter during the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the early 19th century. Her knowledge of the land and her resilience in facing countless challenges proved invaluable to the success of the expedition. Sacagawea's bravery and contributions have made her a symbol of Native American female empowerment and perseverance.

8. Sherman Alexie



Sherman Alexie, a Spokane-Coeur d'Alene tribal member, is a critically acclaimed writer and filmmaker. Known for works such as "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" and "Smoke Signals," Alexie's powerful stories and authentic portrayal of Native American experiences have touched the hearts of readers and viewers worldwide. His unwavering commitment to representation and cultural authenticity continues to inspire aspiring Native American artists.

9. Buffy Sainte-Marie



Buffy Sainte-Marie, a Cree singer-songwriter and activist, has used her powerful voice to advocate for indigenous rights, social justice, and environmental causes. Her timeless songs, such as "Universal Soldier" and "Power in the Blood," have become anthems for those fighting for equality and change. Sainte-Marie's resilience and dedication to her beliefs have inspired countless individuals to stand up for what they believe in.

10. Chief Joseph



Chief Joseph, a leader of the Nez Perce Tribe, is widely admired for his determination and leadership during the Nez Perce War of 1877. Despite facing overwhelming odds, Chief Joseph's tactical brilliance and impassioned speeches showcased his unwavering commitment to freedom and justice for his people. His courageous resistance and eloquence have left an indelible mark on Native American history.

These remarkable Native Americans remind us of the strength, resilience, and enduring spirit of a people who have overcome countless obstacles throughout history. Their stories inspire us to pursue our dreams, fight for justice, and honor the rich heritage of the Native American culture.

So, let us celebrate and learn from these incredible individuals who continue to inspire us and serve as role models for generations to come.



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This is the second book in the series, Americans Who Inspire Us, following Asian Americans Who Inspire Us, which was named to the Gold House Book List 2021.

Brave. Bold. Fierce. First. Native Americans come from many tribes and nations. There are 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States, each with their own unique customs, beliefs, and traditions. Whether Olympians, chiefs, Academy Award winners, or astronauts, they have shaped our history, our culture, and our world. These 16 impressive Native Americans will inspire you to dream big and make the world a better place.

This beautifully illustrated book includes Wilma Mankiller, Jim Thorpe, Sitting Bull, Wes Studi, Maria Tallchief, Zitkala-Sa, Hattie Kauffman, Cochise, John

Herrington, Susan La Flesche Picotte, Allan Houser, Elizabeth Peratrovich, Chester Nez, Mary Golda Ross, Ryneldi Becenti, and Jason Baldes.

Native Americans Who Inspire Us is full of moving and powerful stories appropriate for kids and adults alike. I was able to meet with the authors and was impressed by their commitment to share stories from the Native American community in a respectful and uplifting way. The authors share a balanced view of each person's humanness - not only their contributions but struggles as well. It pays tribute to people like my great grandfather Chester Nez who did not receive recognition until late in life. I am glad that his legacy as well as the legacy of other Native Americans will live on with this book. Highly recommend for Native Americans and anyone interested in our culture.

Emery Nez-Whitfield

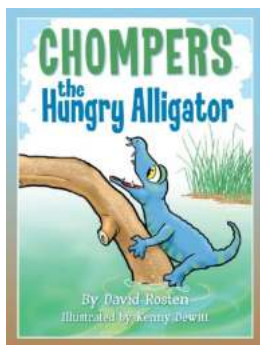
Great Grandson of Chester Nez

Navajo Nation



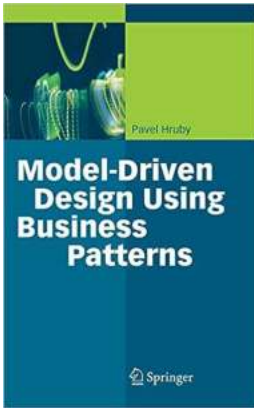
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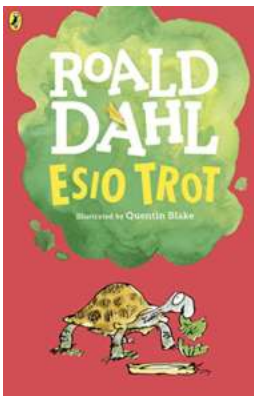
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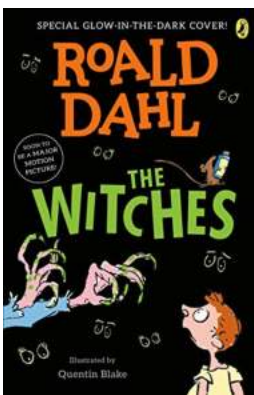
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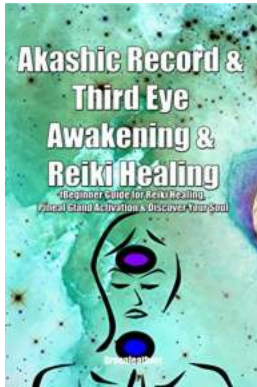
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