



Vol. 86 No. 8 ISSN 1554-2440

November 20, 2017



SCHOLASTIC

News

with Weekly Reader

Edition 5/6

video
World War II
scholastic.com/sn56

Navajo Marines send a secret message during World War II.

A Secret Language

Seventy-five years ago, young Navajo men created an unbreakable code that helped the United States win World War II. **Page 4**

A Ban on Straws p. 2 • The Search for the Site of the First Thanksgiving p. 6

Discarded plastic straws often end up as litter on beaches.

Strawless in Seattle?

Restaurants in one major city will soon say goodbye to plastic straws and utensils.

Slurrrp! Chances are you've never thought about all the plastic straws you use. But Americans throw away 500 million straws a day, according to a conservation group called Eco-Cycle. Seattle, Washington, is taking a stand against all that plastic waste.

Starting July 1 next year, restaurants and other businesses in the city that serve food and

drinks will no longer be allowed to give customers plastic drinking straws. Instead, the straws will have to be made from paper or other **compostable** materials, such as corn starch. Restaurants that use plastic utensils will also have to switch to forks and knives that can be composted.

Officials in Seattle are concerned about the amount of plastic waste in their city. Plastic takes much longer to break down than paper and other more environmentally friendly materials do. All it takes is a slight breeze to blow plastic

straws from trash cans onto beaches and into waterways. Fish and birds sometimes mistake bits of plastic for food and try to eat them.

Seattle isn't the only city that's getting rid of plastic straws and utensils. Last month, Carmel City, California, passed its own ban. Other cities are considering similar laws.

But some restaurant owners say these bans will be bad for business. Compostable straws, for example, can cost up to five times as much as plastic ones.

Still, officials in Seattle hope the law will make people rethink whether they need any straw—regardless of what it's made of.

Word to Know

compostable *adjective.* able to break down naturally over time and be turned into material that helps plants grow

A New Blue

Make room, Sky Blue and Cerulean—there's a new blue in town! Beginning in January, Crayola packs with 24 or more crayons will include a bright-blue crayon called Bluetiful. It will replace Dandelion, a yellow crayon that is being retired after 27 years.

Crayola took a vote on its website to name the new blue color. About 400,000 votes were cast. Bluetiful beat out names like Dreams Come Blue and Star Spangled Blue. Many people aren't happy with the name, though, because it's not a real word.



Sunken Treasures

Divers uncover new artifacts from an ancient shipwreck.

In 1900, divers discovered an ancient shipwreck near Greece. Since then, archaeologists have explored the wreck many times and uncovered hundreds of artifacts, including jewels and statues. The latest dive to the wreck, in September, showed that there may still be many unusual objects to find.

The wreck was found off the coast of the Greek island Antikythera (ahn-dee-KEE-thir-uh). Archaeologists say the ship likely sank during a violent storm nearly 2,000 years ago.

The **expedition** in September lasted 17 days. Using underwater metal detectors, divers located a bronze arm beneath a giant boulder. Finding bronze statues from that ancient era is rare

Word to Know

expedition *noun*. a journey with a specific purpose, such as exploring

because they were often melted down to make swords and shields.

In the early 1900s, divers had found parts of six other bronze sculptures at the shipwreck. Archaeologists now think the rest of those seven bronze bodies are waiting to be discovered.

During the recent expedition, divers also found a small bronze disc. It looks like it could be a missing piece of the Antikythera Mechanism, the most famous artifact from the shipwreck. Discovered in 1901, the Mechanism is a handheld device that is considered to be the world's oldest computer. However, experts say they'll need to study the new disc more



closely before they can determine if the two are connected.

In the meantime, archaeologist Brendan Foley says the team plans to revisit the wreckage next year.

“We hope to discover all of those bronze sculptures and who knows what else,” he says.

Picture THIS

Pikachu Spider

This spider might confuse Pokémon Go players who just “gotta catch ‘em all!” That’s because it looks a lot like the most famous Pokémon, Pikachu. Only the females of the species have the bright-yellow abdomen. (Males are mostly black.) Scientists think the spider uses its colorful belly to attract prey and its pointy spikes to keep predators away.

The spider shown here was found in Canada, but the species also lives in the eastern U.S. and Central America. Spotting one may be harder than finding Pikachu with your phone, however. These spiders are only about the size of a penny!





Navajo code talkers send secret messages over a radio during World War II.

A Secret Code

Seventy-five years ago, young Navajo men created an unbreakable code that helped the United States win World War II.

The nation was shocked. On the morning of December 7, 1941, Japanese planes and submarines carried out a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, a U.S. military base in Hawaii. More than 2,400 people were killed. The horrific attack prompted the U.S. to enter World War II the next day.

In the months that followed, millions of Americans enlisted in the armed forces. One of them was Sam Sandoval, a 19-year-old member of the largest American



Sam Sandoval in 1942 (left) and today (right)

Indian group, the Navajo. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps after graduating from high school. When Sandoval arrived at a base in Oceanside, California, he found out he would be trained to become one of the Marines' most important secret weapons: a code talker.

The military uses secret codes to relay messages, like battle

plans and troop movements, so the enemy cannot understand them. Sandoval, now age 94, was one of more than 400 Navajos who served as code talkers during World War II. They used their native language to create a secret code that helped the U.S. and its allies win the war.

A Forbidden Language

The Navajo language was an unlikely choice to aid the U.S. military. When Sandoval was growing up, he and other Navajo children were discouraged from speaking it.

Beginning in the 1860s, the U.S. government had forced Navajo children to attend boarding schools run by the

Words to Know

decipher *verb*. to figure out the meaning of a secret message

declassified *verb, past tense*. officially declared information or documents to no longer be secret



radio. They couldn't risk having their code fall into enemy hands, so they had to memorize the whole thing.

From 1942 to 1945, Navajo code talkers served in every U.S. Marine assault against the Japanese. Sandoval took part in five key battles (*see map*). He and the other code talkers sent thousands of secret messages without error and without a single one being cracked.

Sandoval says the greatest message he ever received from another code talker came on August 15, 1945: "The Imperial forces of Japan have surrendered."

Sworn to Secrecy

The Navajo code—and the heroism of the code talkers—was kept secret long after the war ended, in case the code was needed again. The government finally **declassified** the code in 1968. In 2001, Sandoval and the other code talkers received medals from the U.S. Congress for their brave service. To this day, the Navajo code is the only spoken U.S. military code that has never been cracked.

"Many have tried throughout the world to break that code," Sandoval says. "No one can."

—by Joe Bubar

government or churches. These schools encouraged students to give up their culture—and didn't allow them to speak their native language.

Sandoval went to a boarding school near Farmington, New Mexico, where, he says, he would sneak away with other students to speak Navajo.

An Unbreakable Code

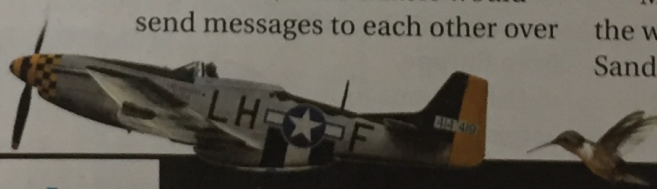
When the U.S. entered World War II, it needed a code that Japan's skilled code breakers couldn't **decipher**. If a code were cracked, the success of a battle, and the lives of troops, would be put at risk.

In 1942, a man named Philip Johnston came up with a solution. Johnston wasn't Navajo, but he knew how complex the language

was. He had grown up on a reservation where his parents were Christian missionaries. At the time, there was no widely used written version of Navajo, and very few non-Navajo people knew how to speak the language. Johnston convinced military leaders to recruit young Navajo men to become "code talkers."

When Sandoval arrived in California for training, the first group of 29 code talkers had developed a dictionary of 211 code words. It would eventually expand to include more than 600 words (*see "Code of Battle"*). The code was so complicated that even Navajos who weren't code talkers couldn't understand it.

In battle, code talkers would send messages to each other over



Code of Battle

The Navajo language didn't have words for many military terms, so the code talkers used other Navajo words to represent them. For example, the names of different birds stood for different kinds of planes. Here are some examples, with the translation of the Navajo code words.

MILITARY TERM	NAVAJO CODE WORD (translated into English)	PRONUNCIATION OF NAVAJO WORD
fighter plane	hummingbird	da-he-tih-hi
battleship	whale	lo-tso
submarine	iron fish	besh-lo
bomb	eggs	a-ye-shi
grenade	potatoes	ni-ma-si

AEROPICS/ALAMY (STOCK PHOTO (FIGHTER PLANE)); ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES (HUMMINGBIRD); JIM MCMANON/MAPMAN (MAP)

Source: Department of the Navy—Naval Historical Center

A Pilgrim Puzzle

Nearly 400 years after the first Thanksgiving, archaeologists find evidence of the original Pilgrim settlement.

At this time of year, we hear a lot about the Pilgrims. In 1620, they set sail from England on the *Mayflower* and landed in what is now Massachusetts. More than half of them died in the first few months. But those who survived founded Plymouth, one of the first European settlements in North America. The following year, the Pilgrims and members of the Wampanoag (WAHM-pah-nawg) tribe celebrated the first Thanksgiving feast.

As time passed, the original Pilgrim settlement was lost as the modern-day town of Plymouth grew up on top of it. Historians had a rough idea of where the 1620 settlement had stood, but no one could pinpoint its exact location—until last year. Researchers digging in downtown Plymouth discovered what they say is proof that the **elusive** Pilgrim settlement has finally been found.

Digging Up the Past

Most of what we know about the Pilgrims comes from historical documents. Researchers had dug

Word to Know

elusive adjective. difficult to find

in the town of Plymouth before, but they had never uncovered any artifacts.

“For a long time, archaeologists just assumed since a town is on top of it, there can’t be very much left,” says David Landon, who’s leading the dig.

But in June 2016, Landon’s team found the first evidence of the original settlement: an old trash pit. By testing the soil, the researchers determined that the pit dated back to the Pilgrim era.

Inside the pit was part of a cow’s skeleton, which Landon says is proof that Pilgrims had lived in that spot. There were no cows in the region before the colonists brought them from Europe.

Other items found in the pit helped confirm some details about the Pilgrims’ way of life.

The centuries-old trash included pieces of Wampanoag and English pottery mixed together. Historical records show that the two groups traded with each other, but these artifacts are the first physical proof. Landon’s team also found a hole filled with fish bones. Historians say the Wampanoag taught the Pilgrims that buried fish could be used as fertilizer to help corn grow.

“Now we have evidence that shows that,” says Landon.

Next summer, he will return to Plymouth to dig for additional clues of the Pilgrim settlement.

“We hope to find a few more pieces of the puzzle,” says Landon.



Researchers study the remains of a cow in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Is It OK to Miss School for Vacation?



Students in Elmhurst, Illinois, might think twice about starting their Thanksgiving break early. For the past few years, a school district in Elmhurst has cracked down on students missing school because of family vacations. Those absences are marked as “unexcused” unless parents notify the principal at least two weeks in advance. Plus, teachers won’t give those students their missed assignments until after they return to class. The goal of the policy is to discourage families from scheduling vacations while class is in session.

“Family time is really important, but your education is your future,” says Jane Bailey, the principal at Fischer Elementary School in Elmhurst. “We can’t make up the learning experience in a classroom. It’s lost learning.”

School administrators nationwide say kids should miss school only when necessary, like when they’re sick. Research shows that attendance is closely linked to a student’s success. For example, one study from 2013 found that students who were absent three or more times in the month before a standardized test got lower scores than other students.

But others say it’s OK for kids to occasionally miss school to go on vacation. They argue that some families can’t afford to travel during school breaks, when flights and hotels are more expensive. Many parents also have busy work schedules and can take vacation only at certain times of the year.

Here’s what two of our readers think.

Yes! Kids can learn outside the classroom too.

Kids should be allowed to take time off from school for vacation every once in a while. After all, the classroom isn’t the only place where you can learn new things. Traveling to different places and seeing the sights can also be an important learning experience.

For example, I recently took time off from school to visit Washington, D.C., with my family. I got to see historic sites and went to the Smithsonian museums. I learned a lot on that trip.

As long as kids don’t skip school too often, being absent for a few days isn’t a big deal. They can make up the work they missed when they get back.

Peter Coffey-Slatery, Maine



No! Going to school is more important than any trip.

I like taking vacations with my family, but getting an education is more important. It takes kids a long time to get used to classroom routines. If they miss days for vacation, it can be hard for them to readjust to the school schedule when they return.

Plus, some kids might not be able to catch up on the work they missed while they were away. If one kid falls behind, the rest of the class can get disrupted when the teacher has to review material he or she has already taught.

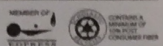
Besides, schools build vacation time into the calendar—most students even get the whole summer off! Families should plan trips during those times.

Sophia Bebawi, Texas



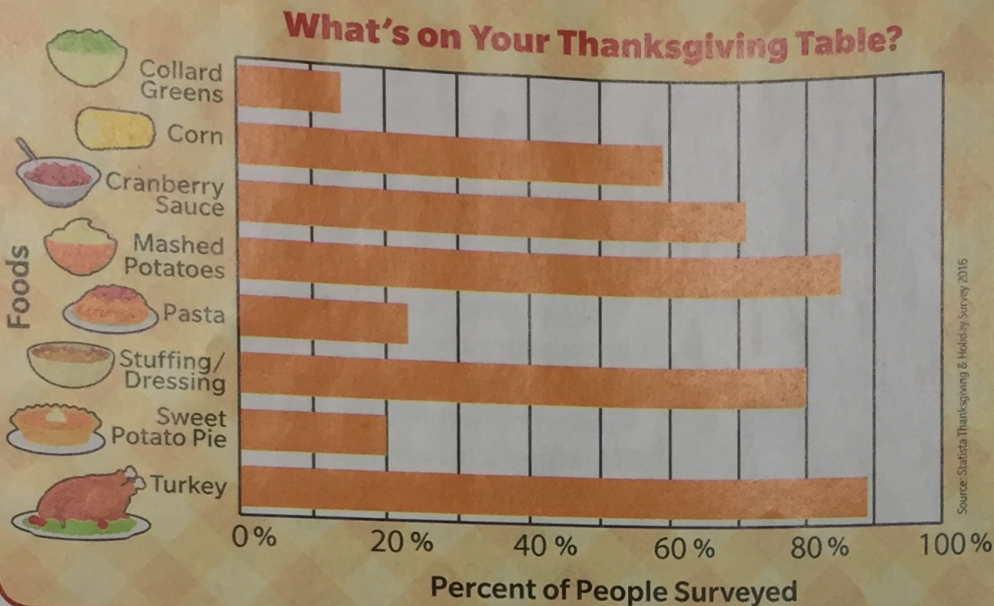
What’s Your OPINION? Go online to cast your vote and download an opinion-writing skills sheet: www.scholastic.com/sn56

POSTAL INFORMATION: SCHOLASTIC NEWS Edition 5/6 (ISSN 1554-2440) is published weekly during the school year except holidays and mid-term, 22 issues, by Scholastic Inc. 2931 East McCarty St., P.O. Box 3710, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710. Periodical postage paid at Jefferson City, MO 65102 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTERS: Send notice of address changes to SCHOLASTIC NEWS Edition 5/6, 2931 East McCarty St., P.O. Box 3710, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3710. Copyright ©2017 by Scholastic Inc. Scholastic News and associated designs are trademarks/registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc. All Rights Reserved. Materials in this issue may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form or format without special permission from the publisher. Printed in the USA



News Graph

Thanksgiving meals have changed a lot since the first feast in 1621. This graph shows the percent of Americans who had certain dishes on their Thanksgiving table last year. Read the graph, and then answer the questions.



1. About what percent of Americans served turkey on Thanksgiving?

2. Corn was about three times as popular as ____.

- (A) sweet potato pie
- (B) turkey
- (C) stuffing
- (D) collard greens

3. True or false? Most Americans served both mashed potatoes and sweet potato pie last year. Explain.

News Review

A Secret Code pages 4-5

4. Which of the following is a cause of the others?
- (A) Millions of Americans joined the armed forces.
 - (B) The U.S. entered World War II.
 - (C) The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.
 - (D) Navajos were recruited to serve as code talkers.
5. Which detail best explains why the U.S. military needed an unbreakable code during World War II?
- (A) "More than 2,400 people were killed."
 - (B) "If a code were cracked, the success of a battle, and the lives of troops, would be put at risk."
 - (C) "Johnston wasn't Navajo, but he knew how complex the language was."
 - (D) "[The Navajo code] would eventually expand to include more than 600 words."
6. Which pair of words have similar meanings?
- (A) decipher; translate
 - (B) decipher; declare
 - (C) declassify; discover
 - (D) decipher; document
7. Why was the Navajo language an unlikely choice to be used for a U.S. military code?
- (A) The U.S. government discouraged Navajo children from speaking it.
 - (B) It was too complicated to understand.
 - (C) It was too hard to memorize.
 - (D) Few non-Navajos spoke it.

A Pilgrim Puzzle page 6

8. The recent dig was the first time researchers ____.
- (A) looked for the original Plymouth settlement
 - (B) uncovered artifacts from the original Plymouth settlement
 - (C) dug in the town of Plymouth
 - (D) found out Pilgrims and Wampanoag traded with each other
9. Which detail best supports the idea that the site of the Pilgrim settlement was elusive?
- (A) "More than half of [the Pilgrims] died in the first few months."
 - (B) "Those who survived founded Plymouth..."
 - (C) "As time passed, the original Pilgrim settlement was lost..."
 - (D) "Inside the pit was part of a cow's skeleton..."
10. The discovery of a cow's skeleton inside the trash pit is proof that the Pilgrims ____.
- (A) celebrated Thanksgiving with the Wampanoag
 - (B) traded with the Wampanoag
 - (C) had lived in that spot
 - (D) learned how to fertilize soil to grow corn

