



**NEW MEXICO  
SPIRIT**  
1776 + 2026

# ACTIVITY CHECKLIST



## **Q3 • Common Ground & Historical Identity • Elementary Lower**

### **Show & Share: Discovering Cultural Uniqueness**

#### **Before the Activity**

- Review the Activity Overview for this activity.
- Review the below Teaching the Five Historical Eras of New Mexico
- Gather materials:
  - Stories from Exploring New Mexico: A Student's Guide to the Land of Enchantment (pp. 17–20)
  - Coloring sheets (optional)
- Select one story from each era to read over a week or month.
- Prepare 5 short discussion questions to use consistently after each story.
- Ensure students understand the meaning of era, history, and culture.

#### **Teaching the Five Historical Eras of New Mexico**

##### **1. First Peoples (Time Immemorial – CE 1540)**

- Explain that all people in NM were Indigenous during this era.
- Optional: Introduce evidence from White Sands (20,000+ years).
- Ask students to name Indigenous groups they know.
- Read the book: Ancient Dwellings of the Southwest
- Discuss after reading.

##### **2. Spanish Colonial (1540–1821)**

- Explain who the Spaniards were and how they arrived.
- Introduce the Pueblo Revolt in simple terms (Indigenous resistance + regained rights).
- Read the book: The Eyes of the Weaver
- Discuss after reading.



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## 3. Mexican Era (1821–1848)

- Explain that New Mexico became part of Mexico after independence from Spain.
- Read one Elementary-appropriate story or show a simple map.
- Discuss key ideas (families, home, change).

## 4. U.S. Territorial Era (1848–1912)

- Explain that after the Mexican–American War, NM became a U.S. Territory.
- Introduce diverse groups who arrived (Black, Chinese, Italian, Jewish, German).
- Introduce: Buffalo Soldiers & Blackdom (simple age-appropriate terms).
- Read the books: Elan, Son of Two Peoples and Cathy Williams, Buffalo Soldier
- Discuss after reading.

## 5. Statehood to Present (1912–Now)

- Explain that NM became a state 124 years ago (adjust year as needed).
- Introduce new groups who arrived (Vietnamese, Korean, Filipino, Kuwaiti families).
- Read: Where Butterflies Fill the Sky
- Discuss after reading.

## During Each Read-Aloud

- Remind students which historical era the story belongs to.
- Allow optional coloring while listening.
- Guide a short discussion:
  - What was the most exciting part?
  - How did the story make you feel?
  - Why is this story important for NM today?



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## Traditions Sharing Activity

- Explain what a tradition is, using simple examples (holiday foods, family routines, roasting chiles, “Christmas” chile).
- Brainstorm traditions with the class; check if each fits the definition.
- Send home a prompt asking students to identify a family or cultural tradition.
- Students bring:
  - The object, OR a photo OR a drawing of the tradition
- Students share in circle time or small groups:
  - What the object is
  - What the tradition is
  - What culture/family it comes from
- Optional: Ask how traditions connect to NM or how old they might be.