

# The Ballad of Ira Hayes

See a lesson plan related to this material on the [Wisconsin Historical Society website](#).



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## Student Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. After reading the history of Ira Hayes from several different sources, list the main ideas conveyed in these accounts.
2. The histories you have read are “unofficial.” Discuss some observations you made about similarities and differences in these accounts. How does an “unofficial source” raise questions about historical accuracy? Why do you suppose it is difficult to obtain a well-documented history of Ira Hayes?
3. Check the history book currently in use in your school. Is Ira Hayes mentioned? If so, how does the official record compare or contrast with those from the web pages? How does your textbook explain the story of the Battle of Iwo Jima? Does it include the famous Rosenthal photograph or a picture of the Memorial in Washington, D.C.? Discuss your findings.
4. In the first video in the *World War II Stories: The Struggle*, a Native American veteran spoke of not wanting to be considered a hero. (Mr. Lincoln said, “The hero’s welcome they gave me, I didn’t deserve.”) Accounts of Ira Hayes echo those same sentiments: he did not want to be called a “hero.” If you did not already do so, respond to the question raised in that earlier lesson, “What is the traditional meaning of the word “hero” as it applies in wartime?” Create a webbing or other visual representation for the word “hero” to demonstrate what other kinds of heroes there were during World War II, or in more recent wars.

### Ballad and Lyrics

According to Norm Cohen in “Folk Song America: A 20th Century Revival” (Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1991), the “Ballad of Ira Hayes” was written by a Pima Indian named Peter LaFarge and recorded on Creek Indian Patrick Sky’s “first Vanguard album, issued in 1965.” After listening to the Bob Dylan rendition of this song, write your reactions on the back of this sheet. Your ideas will be shared in class discussion.

See more classroom materials and lesson plans on the [Wisconsin Historical Society website](#).