

Lesson Plan

Abenakis Before Contact: Different Worlds Meet

This is an adaptation of a lesson plan prepared by Linda Erlich while participating in the New Hampshire Historical Society's New Hampshire History Summer Institute.

What Students Learn

Students learn how Native Americans—specifically, Abenaki—lived before contact with Europeans. Also, they learn how Europeans changed Native American life. During the course of the lesson, students learn the meanings of the words *artifact* and *treaty*.

Procedures

The lesson consists of six parts:

1. Teach students what an artifact is. The sheet “Activity: What Is an Artifact?” (in *A Teacher’s Resource Guide* at the Concord Museum) details a useful exercise in which students are led to understand the nature of artifacts after examining a penny as if they were archeologists coming upon an artifact from an “unknown” culture.
2. Have students examine pictures or facsimiles of dugout canoes, birchbark canoes, wigwams, mortars and pestles, arrowheads, and clamshells, for example, to conclude how the artifacts were used and how they were important to Abenaki life. (Many reproductions are available from the New Hampshire Historical Society’s Tuck Library.)
3. Play audiocassettes or read aloud some Abenaki legends, and let students retell the story as a writing activity. Discuss legends as an important element of Abenaki life. (A number of books and audiocassettes are available from the New Hampshire Historical Society’s Museum Store; the story “How Gluscabi Created Companions” is also available in *New Hampshire through Many Eyes: An Activity Book* (4–5), available through the Museum Store.)
4. Using knowledge of Abenaki daily life acquired from previous activities, discuss how the people lived and what their children probably did on a daily basis. Have students work in groups to write and draw about day-to-day life. Suggested activities include reading “Hunters and Gatherers” and following up with the activity “Circle of Life” (*New Hampshire through Many Eyes*, 2–3) and reading Joseph Bruchac’s *Thirteen Moons on a Turtle’s Back: A Native American Year of Moons*.
5. Read the “The Wheelwright Deed” (Charles H. Bell’s *The Wheelwright Deed of 1629: Was It Spurious?*, 143–148) to students and discuss its implications. Show students the marks made by Passaconaway and other sagamores. Have students locate the land described in the deed on a current map of New Hampshire. Discuss how the deed refers to a large, rather vaguely defined area. Also, read “Words and Deeds” and involve students in the activity “Make Your Mark” (*New Hampshire Through Many Eyes*, 7).

6. Discuss how Europeans changed the lives of the native people. Native Americans wanted European tools after seeing them. Why? How did such tools change the Indians' lives? How else did contact with Europeans change the lives of the Indians? Have students read "Necessary and Then Some" and work on the activity "Let's Go to New England" in *New Hampshire through Many Eyes* (8–9).

Bibliography

Most entries, as well as other teacher resources, are available through the New Hampshire Historical Society's Tuck Library and its Museum Store. See also the pertinent reading list available on the New Hampshire Historical Society's Web site (<http://www.nhhistory.org>) and on its CD-ROM.

Bell, Charles H. *The Wheelwright Deed of 1629: Was It Spurious?* Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, 1876.

Bruchac, Joseph. *Thirteen Moons on a Turtle's Back: A Native American Year of Moons*. New York: Philomel Books, 1992.

Calloway, Colin G. *The Abenaki*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989.

Fradin, Dennis B. *The New Hampshire Colony*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1988.

Russell, Howard S. *Indian New England Before the Mayflower*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1980.

New Hampshire Historical Society. *New Hampshire through Many Eyes*. Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1995.

Teacher's Resource Guide, A. Concord: Concord Museum, 1988.

Weinstein-Farson, Laurie. *The Wampanoag (Indians of North America)*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989.

Wilbur, C. Keith. *The New England Indians*. Chester: Globe Pequot Press, 1978.

Assessment Tools and Techniques

Use observation and standard rubrics for evaluating discussion and written work.

Curriculum Information

Information relating to the *New Hampshire History Curriculum* refers to the K-12 resource in two volumes developed by the New Hampshire Historical Society in partnership with Public Service of New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies. The K-6 volume is available on-line through the school programs section of the Society's Web site (<http://www.nhhistory.org>).

Grade Level

Elementary School

New Hampshire Social Studies Standards

Economics 2, 5; Geography 2, 3, 4, 5; US/NH History 1, 2, 4, 5; World History 4

New Hampshire History Curriculum Focus Topics

Boundaries, Natural Environment and People; Cultures, Races, and Ethnic Groups; Politics; Technology and Science; Material Wants and Needs

New Hampshire History Curriculum Eras

To 1623: Different Worlds Meet

1623–1763: Colonization and Settlement