WABANAKI STUDIES
PLANNING GUIDE
FOR
PORTLAND EDUCATORS

Compiled by Fiona Hopper (hoppef@portlandschools.org)
Please note that this guide is not static or definitive. Resources are added and subtracted regularly. Please contact me if you feel there is something that should be added or omitted.
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Introduction

In 2001, An Act to Require Teaching of Maine Native American History and Culture in Maine Schools (Chapter 403, Title 20-A MRSA 4706) was signed into law, making it the first law of its kind in the nation. Today, this law--often referred to as LD 291--remains unimplemented throughout most school systems in the state despite the work of the Wabanaki Studies Commission in the early 2000’s (read their final report). Dr. Rebecca Sockbeson (Penobscot) published an article about the lack of implementation of LD 219 in The Journal of American Indian Education in fall of 2019 (contact me if you’d like a PDF of this article). In it, she issues a call to action that, while directed at the state, applies to all of us in education.

With the support of Superintendent, Xavier Botana, and Assistant Superintendent, Melea Nalli, PPS has plans underway for system-wide compliance with LD 291. Development and implementation of Wabanaki Studies directly ties district equity work around mindsets and cultural humility into curriculum. Full implementation of a meaningful, robust Wabanaki Studies program in Portland Public Schools (PPS) is a massive, multi-year undertaking. It involves collaboration with tribal advisors, professional development for teachers, Wabanaki Studies curriculum review and development, revisioning of social studies instruction more generally, shifts in pedagogy and instruction, and the widespread adoption of a decolonizing framework (see work of Amy Lonetree in Planning Tools section).

This year, the Social Studies Content Team, which includes teachers, students, parents, and Wabanaki Studies consultant, Bridgid Neptune, is fleshing out an instructional vision for social studies that will support us as we develop a pre-K-12 Wabanaki Studies curriculum sequence. That sequence will be reviewed by tribal advisors and revised based on their feedback. Once the sequence is in place, we will begin curriculum development in earnest in the 2020-2021 school year.

This guide is meant to help educators in the absence of an official state or district Wabanaki Studies curriculum. It is not a curriculum in itself, though there are links to curricular resources in the compendium section. In the absence of appropriate teacher preparation for Wabanaki Studies in teacher education programs, teaching Wabanaki Studies in the classroom presents many challenges. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the resources in this guide before you begin planning a Wabanaki Studies unit. It is the responsibility of all educators to teach Wabanaki Studies, yet it is also our responsibility to do it well, which means taking time to learn and to thoughtfully prepare.

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Before Lesson Planning Begins

Self Reflection
It is important to take some time to think about yourself in relationship to Wabanaki Studies content. This process will likely be quite different for non-Indigenous educators and Indigneous educators and for white educators and educators of color. Consider your level of knowledge in Indigenous Studies generally and in Wabanaki Studies in particular. Consider the learning opportunities that would support you in integrating Wabanaki Studies content and how much time you have to devote to your own learning. Use your reflections on your own experience and learning needs to determine how much to take on in your first attempt at Wabanaki Studies integration.

Also, take some time to notice what feelings or emotions come up for you at the prospect of teaching Wabanaki Studies. Whatever the feelings, name them and try to find someone--inside or outside of your professional world--who you can talk to. Having a thought partner for Wabanaki Studies work is very helpful. Feel free to contact me if you would like my support.

Remember, you do not have to do everything the first time through. In fact, it’s better for everyone if you start small-ish and keep your expectations realistic.

And finally--this is a reminder for non-Native teachers in particular--please remember as you plan and prepare that there will likely be Native students (from Wabanaki tribes or other tribes) in your classroom. You might not know who they are and they may not identify themselves but assume that Native students are present (allow students the time and space to identify themselves if they choose). This practice of remembering and acknowledging contemporary Native presence is part of decolonizing work. It pushes back against the myth of Native extinction and contributes to the safety and wellbeing of Native students and educators.

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**Cultural Appropriation**
Take some time to familiarize yourself with the term cultural appropriation in the context of Indigenous cultures.

[Why Cultural Appropriation is Wrong](#) and [Think Before You Appropriate](#)

**Dos and Don’ts and Key Understandings**
Please read through the Wabanaki Studies Dos and Don’ts (still a working draft) and Key Understandings I put together after listening to the concerns and perspectives of tribal leaders and citizens and after many conversations with Portland educators.

[Dos and Don’ts](#)

[Key Understandings](#) (embedded in Decolonization Resource Evaluation Tool)

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Planning Tools and Resources

Decolonizing
The four Key Understandings outlined in the Decolonizing Resource Evaluation Guide can be used as the foundation of a unit at any grade level.

In her book, Decolonizing Museums, Amy Lonetree outlines three principles of meaningful decolonizing work: collaboration, privileging Indigenous perspectives, and truth-telling. These were introduced to Melea, Jesse, and me at the Abbe Museum, a leader in decolonization work in the state and the nation. See this Abbe blog for more.

These principles are guiding the Wabanaki Studies development work at the district level and can help guide teams of teachers as they look to integrate Wabanaki Studies with intention and respect. Keep in mind that decolonizing is not just about Indigenous representation, it is about engaging in a process of undoing and relearning, most critically, learning to respect Indigenous sovereignty and self determination.

Evaluating Resources
Take the time to really consider what resources you’re going to use. Check out resource guidance from Oyate and also search texts and reviews at American Indians in Children’s Literature. Check out this easy-to-use checklist adapted from Oyate by Matthew Bernstein and Alberto Morales (CBHS).

Standards
The Maine State Social Studies Standards were revised last year. Maine Native American content connections are embedded in the standards. Please review the standards for the grade level/s you currently teach.

PPS Social Studies Standards for middle school and high school

Next Gen Science Standards - These provide a myriad of opportunities for integrating Wabanaki Studies at the elementary level.

CCSS Text Complexity Measures - Use the measurement guide from CCSS to determine text complexity of Wabanaki Studies materials, including primary sources.

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Content Resources

Curriculum Compendiums and Ready Made Lesson Plans

**Penobscot Culture** - Fantastic k-12 curriculum resources that are aligned to the Maine Learning Results. Available for free.

**Mi'kmaq Teaching Guide** - A 200+ page teaching guide developed for Mi'kmaq education in Nova Scotia

**Say It First** - A curriculum resource created by the Maliseet tribes of New Brunswick. You can find children's books, a children's show in Maliseet, some high school curriculum materials, and many other resources.

**Dawnland Teacher's Guide** - an extensive resource that accompanies the Dawnland film. This teacher's guide digs deep into the colonial history of New England. Best for grades 7-12.

**The Wabanakis of Maine and the Maritimes: A Resource Book About Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, Micmac, and Abenaki Indians** - prepared for and published by the Wabanaki Program of the American Friends Service Committee

**Maine Historical Society** - Maine Memory Network has many resources and lesson plans.

**A Visit to Our Ancestors' Place and N'tolonapemk Village - an archeological guide**
These are fabulous resources that tie together history, culture, and current environmental concerns through an exploration of an ancient Passamaquoddy village site that is now an EPA superfund site. The text was written by Donald Soctomah, tribal historian of the Passamaquoddy Nation. There is a DVD called N'tolonapemk that accompanies these texts as well. Please contact me if you’d like to borrow the DVD.

**The Wabanaki Collection** - A rich resource that draws on materials created from the tribes of the Wabanaki Confederacy located in both the United States and Canada.

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Maps

The Tribal Nations Maps created by Aaron Carapella are NOT RECOMMENDED. These are typically the maps that pop up when you do a google search for a map of tribal nations. Here is some guidance and suggestions for finding alternatives.

Wabanaki Place Names Map This is the map that was on view at the Holding Up the Sky exhibit at the MHS. For more information about how to use the map, etc check out this site.

The Penobscot Office of Historic and Cultural Preservation has a gorgeous bilingual map (Penobscot and English) of the Penobscot river. You can get it at the Maine Historical Society or by contacting the Penobscot Nation Museum.

Map of disputed boundary between Maine and Canada

Osher Map Library - many amazing digitized maps that can we used to contextualize the state’s theft of Indigenous land

Abbe Museum map that shows land dispossession

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Web Based Resources

Passamaquoddy People

Penobscot Culture

Tribal Governments - the best resource for finding classroom presenters.

Wabanaki Alliance - formed in June 2020, find history, contemporary information, and information about current tribal lands

Abbe Museum

The Wabanaki Collection

Holding Up the Sky - the digital version of a recent exhibit at the Maine Historical Society. The exhibit was co-curated by Wabanaki leaders, historians, and scholars.

Wabanaki REACH - sign up for their newsletter to find out about workshops and film screenings throughout the state

Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip’s War
This website was developed to accompany the book, Our Beloved Kin, by Lisa Brooks. Lisa Brooks is Abenaki and an Indigenous scholar who teaches at Amherst College. Click on Prologue: Caskoak, Place of Peace for Indigenous history and perspective on this area. Related sections include Warrabita of Owascoag (Scarborough area) and The Place of Peace, Wabanaki Territory.

The Upstander Project - creators of the film Dawnland. They also run an excellent summer academy for educators.

National Parks Service Passamaquoddy Teaching Kit - this was made in collaboration with the Passamaquoddy

Maine Historical Society Online Store

DOE Resources

Exhibit from the Colby College Art Museum - an amazing exhibit curated by Jennifer Neptune

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Reference Books - useful for many grade levels and contexts, or just for your own learning

*Baskets of Time: Profiles of Maine Indian Basket Makers* - David Shultz
A beautiful book with gorgeous photos of contemporary basket makers and their baskets.

*North by Northeast* - Kathleen Mundell

*Uncommon Threads: Wabanaki Textiles, Clothing, and Costume* – Bruce Bourque and Laureen Labar ---- I would suggest this for pictures more than text (see note below about Bruce Bourque with *Twelve Thousand Years*). The text was mostly by Laureen Labar, so it’s mostly fine, but the photos are probably the most useful part as far as use in the classroom.

*Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England* – edited by Siobhan Senier and there is a website companion to the anthology *Dawnland Voices 2.0*

*A Visit to Our Ancestors’ Place* and *N’tolonapemk Village - an archeological guide*
These are fabulous resources that tie together history, culture, and current environmental concerns through the exploration of an ancient Passamaquoddy village site, now an EPA designated superfund site. The text was written by Donald Soctomah, tribal historian of the Passamaquoddy Nation. There is a *DVD called N’tolonapemk* that accompanies these texts as well. I have a copy you’re welcome to borrow.

*Niniskamikinaqik/Ancestral Images: The Mi’kmag in Art and Photography* - Ruth Holmes Whitehead

*Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip’s War* - Lisa Brooks (Abenaki)
A dense, but phenomenal read with great maps! There’s a website, too. See note in web-based resources section.

NOT RECOMMENDED

*Twelve Thousand Years: American Indians in Maine by Bruce Brouque* ---- Bruce Bourque is notorious for holding uncompromising views about the ancestry of Wabanaki peoples, views that often directly contradict the oral histories and beliefs of Wabanaki peoples. He recently retired from the Maine State Museum. He held a lock on the archeological world of Maine and, therefore, institutional understanding of Wabanaki culture and history. His beliefs and writings have done a lot of harm. This text is often a go to resource when learning about the Wabanaki. Please avoid it and seek out resources written by tribal citizens or endorsed by tribal leaders.

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Picture Books

Many of these books would be best for older students. I’ve put some grade level recommendations, but it’s best to check them out yourselves. If you’re a PPS teacher, you’re welcome to email me and I can help you find copies of books you’re interested in looking at.

*Remember Me: Tomah Joseph’s Gift to Franklin Roosevelt* - by Jean Flahive and Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy), grades 4-7, [Teacher’s Guide](#)

*The Canoe Maker: David Moses Bridges, Passamaquoddy Birch Bark Artisan* - by Jean Flahive and Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy), grades 4-7

*Malian’s Song* – by Marge Bruchac (Abenaki) "best for upper elementary, grades 3-6

*Tihtiyas and Jean* (text in French, Passamaquoddy, and English) - Nathalie Gagnon and Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy), grades 3-6

*Thanks to the Animals* – Allen Sockabasin (Passamaquoddy), grades pre-k-5
you can find a recording of him reading it in Passamaquoddy [here](#)
There is also a [teacher’s guide](#) available through the publisher.

*Muskrat Will Be Swimming* – Cheryl Savageau (Abenaki), grades 2-5, [Teacher’s guide](#)

*Kunu's Basket: A Story from Indian Island* – Lee DeCora Francis (Penobscot), grades k-5, [Teacher’s Guide](#)

*Mi'kmaw Coloring book* - created by the Mi'kmaw First Nation of Nova Scotia, grades pre-k-5

*Mi'kmaw Animals* (text in Mi'kmaq and English) - Alan Syliboy (Mi'kmaq), grades pre-k-2

*Counting in Mi'kmaw* - Loretta Gould (Mi'kmaq), grades pre-k-2

*The Penobscot People* - Level E book from Benchmark/Advance ALL, consulted with James Francis (Penobscot), grades 1-4

*The Gathering* - Theresa Meuse (Mi'kmaq)

*The Sharing Circle* - Theresa Meuse (Mi'kmaq)

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**L'Nu'k: The People, Mi'kmaw History, Culture, and Heritage** - Theresa Meuse (Mi'kmaq)

*I Lost My Talk* - Rita Joe (Mi'kmaq), Illustrations by Pauline Young ****this is meant to be read with the book below

*I am Finding My Talk* - Rebecca Thomas (Mi'kmaq), Illustrations by Pauline Young ***this is meant to be read with the book above

**Juji'jk: Mi'kmaw Insects** - Cultural and Heritage Education Committee

**Long Powwow Nights** - Pamela Aleekuk (Metis) and David Bouchard (Metis), Illustrations by Leonard Paul (Mi'kmaq)

**Bowwow Powwow** - by Brenda Child (Ojibwe), not from a tribal citizen of a tribe in the Wabanaki Confederacy, but a fantastic and highly recommended book about powwows, which are important community gatherings for tribal citizens in the Dawnland.

**NOT RECOMMENDED**

*I am Birch* - Scott Kelly, see this blog post for why

**Many Hands: A Penobscot Indian Story** - Angeli Perrow
This book is all over schools in Maine, which makes things complicated, but it is important for educators to know that the author of this book is not Penobscot. The story is represented as being a traditional Penobscot story, but as far as I know is not. There may be differing opinions among Penobscot Nation citizens about if and how to use this book in schools. For my part, I'd suggest seeking out different options because there are so many excellent stories that have been written by Native authors.

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Traditional Stories

The sharing of Indigenous stories by non-Indigenous teachers can be very problematic. Please look into non-story based ways to approach the topic of Wabanaki Studies before jumping right into stories and storytelling. Stories can seem like an easy fit, especially in elementary school, but there are many variables to consider. If you do teach stories, contextualize them with Wabanaki Studies content rather than teaching them as a stand alone story unit or as part of a broader story unit. Please DO NOT include Gluskabe stories in units about fairy tales!

Please see the section on stories in Dos and Don'ts before going forward. Also, read Proceed with Caution: Using Native American Folktales in the Classroom by Debbie Reese

Stories with Pictures

Gluskabe and the Four Wishes - Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki), grades 1-5

The Mighty Glooscap Transforms Animals and Landscape - (text in Mi’kmaq, French, and English) - Allison Mitcham, grades 1-5

A Little Boy Catches A Whale - (text in Mi’kmaq, French, and English) - Allison Mitcham, grades 1-5

The Thundermaker (text in Mi'kmaq and English) - Alan Syliboy (Mi’kmaq), grades K-5

Wolverine and Little Thunder (text in Mi'kmaq and English) - Alan Syliboy (Mi’kmaq), grades K-5
Check out the short animated video that goes with this story.

Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters (text in Mi’kmaq and English) - by Prune Harris, Lillian Marshall (Mi’kmaq), and Murden Marshall (Mi’kmaq), grades 2-5

Not Recommended
I am Birch - Scott Kelly, see this blog post for why

Stories without Pictures

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Tales of Gluskabe: Secondary Hero Tales – available in print at the Penobscot Nation Museum

Life and Traditions of the Red Man - Joseph Nicolar (Penobscot)
*Please note, that this book was recently put back into print and includes a long introductory section from a professor who analyzes Peoboscot oral tradition. The act of analyzing stories with Western literary analysis is in conflict with Penobscot cultural practices. Please do not use her analysis in lesson plans or activities. Avoid engaging in analysis of all Indigenous oral traditions.

Katahdin: Wigwam Tales – Molly Spotted Elk (Penobscot)

Giants of the Dawnland - Collected by Alice Mead and Arnold Neptune

The Wind Eagle and Other Abenaki Stories - Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki)

Tales from Maliseet Country - Translated and Edited by Philip S. LeSourd

Stories Our Grandmother Told US - edited by Wayne A Newell - NEW RELEASE!

Still They Remember Me: Penobscot Transformer Tales - To be released in June, 2021

YA Novels, Poetry, and Nonfiction- reading levels 4th grade through about 10th grade

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**Joseph Bruchac's site** - Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki) has written extensively about Native Americans, especially his own Abenaki people. The Abenaki do not currently have lands in Maine, however, they remain part of the Wabanaki Confederacy.

**Winter People** – by Joseph Bruchac (historical fiction, Abenaki characters)

**Arrow Over the Door** – by Joseph Bruchac (historical fiction, Mohawk and Abenaki characters)

**Hidden Roots** – by Joseph Bruchac (realistic fiction/historical fiction about Vermont eugenics laws, Abenaki characters)

**Dawnland** - by Joseph Bruchac (this is the first in a trilogy). **WARNING:** contains some sexual violence. Not appropriate for young children.

**Guests** – by Michael Dorris (Southern New England, takes place around the time of the first Thanksgiving, not Wabanaki specific)

**Crossing the Starlight Bridge** - by Alice Mead (non-Indigenous) story about a nine year old Penobscot girl who has to move off the reservation after her father leaves.

**The Mi’kmaq Anthology** - Theresa Meuse, Lesley Choyce, and Julia Swan

**Muinji’j Becomes a Man** - Misel Joe (chief of the only recognized Mi’kmaq band in Newfoundland)

**Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England** – edited by Siobhan Senier and there is a website companion to the anthology **Dawnland Voices 2.0**

This anthology includes historical and contemporary writings

**Out of the Depths** - by Isabelle Knockwood (Mi’kmaq) - this is about her experiences at the residential school in Nova Scotia. Please make sure to pre-read before deciding when and how to share this with your class. This could be a trauma trigger for some students and families.

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Advanced Reading - excerpts from these texts could be used for 8th-12th grade, possibly complete texts in some cases. All would be valuable for personal learning.

Sunrise over Sipayik: A Passamaquoddy Tribal and Personal Oral History - as told by David Francis (Passamaquoddy)

Women of the Dawn - Bunny McBride

Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris - Bunny McBride

An Upriver Passamaquoddy - Allen J. Sockabasin (Passamaquoddy)

The Maine Woods - Henry David Thoreau (It will make you rethink Thoreau—and not for the better!)

Unsettled Post, Unsettled Future - Neil Rolde

Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England – edited by Siobhan Senier. There is a website companion to the anthology Dawnland Voices 2.0

Unsettled - multi-part series in the Press Herald by Colin Woodard, also available as an ebook download

Life and Traditions of the Red Man - Joseph Nicolar (Penobscot)

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Katahdin: Wigwam Tales – Molly Spotted Elk (Penobscot)

20th Century Powwow Playland (poetry) - Mikhu Paul (Maliseet/Wolastoqiyik)

***Mikhu Paul is an artist, writer, and activist in Portland. She may be willing to visit your classroom, but please don’t ask her (or any Indigenous presenter to speak) to your class for free!

We Were Not the Savages - Daniel N. Paul (Mi’kmaq)

In the Shadow of the Eagle - Donna Loring (former Penobscot representative to the State of Maine, currently Senior Advisor on Tribal Affairs

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**Articles**


**When Indians Ruled Maine’s Seas** - article by Colin Woodard, author of Unsettled series

**Official Pardon of Don Gellers** - January 7, 2020

**735 Acres of Penobscot Land Returned** - October 2020

**Land Grab Universities** - Amazing research on the Morrill Act and the way land that was “granted” to universities was stolen from Indigneous communities. UMaine has a related story of being built on stolen land.

**Pine Island is returned to the Passamaquoddy** after 150 years

See video [here](#)
Films, Videos, and Talks

**Invisible** - a documentary film by James Francis (Penobscot), tribal historian of the Penobscot Nation (DVD only as far as I know. Contact me if you’d like to borrow a copy). A teaching guide for the film can be found in the downloadable curriculum available at penobscotculture.com

**A New Dawn** – short documentary available on the Wabanaki Reach TRC website

**First Light** and **Dawnland** - Upstander Project see Dawnland Teacher’s Guide -- Portland has purchased access to this film. Contact Fiona Hopper (hoppef@portlandschools.org) for the link

**Dear Georgiana** - Upstander Project

**Voices from the Barrens: Native People, Blueberries, and Sovereignty** - film released in 2020

**Indigenous Existence is Political Resistance** - Ted X Dirigo talk with basket maker and activist Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy).

**What Does Two Spirit Mean?** - Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy)

**In Our Veins** - A 6 minute documentary narrated by contemporary Penobscots about the centrality of the Penobscot River

**Penobscot: A Fight for Ancestral Waters** - A short film about the water rights struggle between the Penobscot Nation and the state of Maine.

**This Issue** - interview with Sherri Mitchell (Penobscot) in which she discusses racism, water rights, and other contemporary struggles facing her tribe.

**Mi’kmaq Beatles Songs**

**Jeremy Dutcher** - contemporary Wolastoqiyik (called Maliseet in Maine) musician and interview

**Decontie and Brown** - This is the haute couture fashion show featuring Decontie and Brown (Penobscot)

**Addressing Wicked Problems with Wabanaki Diplomacy** - a Ted X Dirigo with Dr. Darren Ranco (Penobscot), head of the Native Studies department at UMO.

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Restoration of Land Stewardship - a 4 minute film about the restoration of 750 acres to the Penobscot Nation

Indigenous People in Maine are Not Mascots - a Ted X Dirigo talk with Maulian Dana (Penobscot), Ambassador of the Penobscot Nation to the Maine State government.

N’tolonapemk - a film created by Donald Soctomah, tribal historian of the Passamaquoddy Nations.

Penobscot Sense of Place - a lecture with James Francis, Penobscot Nation

WERU 89.9 - Listen to recent installments of Dawnland Signals, a weekly radio podcast that discusses contemporary Indigenous issues and features the work and voices of local Indigenous leaders.

This Day in Maine - Maulian Dana talks about Louis Sockalexis (Penobscot), known as the first Indigenous baseball player. He played for the team that was then called the Cleavland Spiders.

Representations of Native Americans in Art - a talk with Darren Ranco (Director of Native Studies at UMO, Penobscot) and James Francis (Director of Historic and Cultural Preservation at the Penobscot Nation) about the artwork of Winslow Homer and Fredrick Remmington. They discuss how even as they depict Indigenous peoples, Homer and Remmington engage in erasure. James also talks about his film, Invisible.


An excellent talk about Passamaquoddy music - Wayne Newell and Blanch Sockabasin

Listen to a recording of Passamaquoddy music from 1890!

Way of the Wabanaki - 6 minute film by James Francis, Tribal Historian of the Penobscot Nation

Pine Island is Returned to the Passamaquoddy - 2021

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General Resources for Indigneous Studies

These first, very few resources offer a tiny entry point into an expansive topic.

We Shall Remain - PBS American Experience, 5 part series about Native American history (the first part focuses on New England)

Native America - PBS four part series from 2018. This provides a very helpful overview for understanding continuous Indigenous presence in the Americas.

Native Knowledge 360 - A great resource for Indigenous history and culture put together by the Smithsonian. Here’s a link to their webinar recordings.

Rumble: The Islands Who Rocked the World - recent feature film about Indigenous rock musicians

Gather - a 2020 film about Indigenous food sovereignty movements across Turtle Island

Teaching Tolerance - Great framing lesson. There are other resources in Teaching Tolerance, too.

Zinn Project - great resources for general teaching about Indigneous history and contemporary struggles. Use the search function to find specific grade level lessons.

The Forgotten Slavery of Our Ancestors - a 12 minute film from Teaching Hard History/Teaching Tolerance

400 Years Project - A photography collective looking at the evolution of Native identity, rights, and representation

Indigenous Peoples Day Resources

Rethinking Columbus - Rethinking Schools

Teaching Resources That Tell the Truth About Columbus - Indian Country Magazine

We Are One - Music video released on Indigenous Peoples Day 2019 by Taboo, Shoshonee musician from the Black Eyed Peas

Decolonizing Thanksgiving Resources

Deconstructing the Myths of “The First Thanksgiving” - by Judy Dow (Abenaki)

Compiled by Fiona Hopper (hoppef@portlandschools.org)

Please note that this guide is not static or definitive. Resources are added and subtracted regularly. Please contact me if you feel there is something that should be added or omitted.
1621: A New Look At Thanksgiving - by Catherine O’neill Grace and Margaret M. Bruchac (Abenaki)

National Day of Mourning - United American Indian Tribes of New England

Suppressed Speech of Wamsutta James (Wampanoag) - Text of the speech that Wamsutta was not allowed to deliver at the three-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the colonists’ landing on Plymouth Rock.

Decolonizing Thanksgiving: A Toolkit for Combating Racism in Schools - Medium

Thanksgiving’s Troubled Past - The Torch

Thanksgiving - podcast from Toasted Sister (a podcast about Indigneous foods)

Thanksgiving for Native Americans: Four Voices on a Complicated Holiday - NY Times

How to Observe Thanksgiving While Acknowledging the Holiday’s Messed Up History - Bustle

Everything You Learned About Thanksgiving is Wrong - NY Times

Giving Thanks Lesson Plan - from the Abbe Museum, Bar Harbor

Why I’m Not Thankful for Thanksgiving - by Michael Doris (Modoc descent) from Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years

One Word Clips, Native Americans on Thanksgiving - 5 minute video


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Land Acknowledgements

Land acknowledgements have become an increasingly common practice in the US. There are many reasons why they are an important practice and also many things to consider before writing or delivering one. For example, the Abbe Museum’s tribal advisory team took two years to write the land acknowledgement used by that organization. The length of their process reflects the kind of time and effort needed to craft a statement that is accurate, meaningful, and reflective of an intentional process.

Land acknowledgements should not be copied and pasted, dashed off casually, or seen as a culturally responsive teacher checklist item. As Anishinabe writer, Hayden King, puts it, land acknowledgements should be seen as commitments. Acknowledge stolen land and broken treaties and state what that compels you and/or the organization you represent to do. Please take time to read through the resources below before writing or delivering a land acknowledgment.

A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement FAQs

Interview with Indigenous Writer, Hayden King

Land Acknowledgement Guidance from the Upstander Project (and link to You Are On Indigenous Land poster)

Sample Land acknowledgement for Casco Bay/Presumpscot Watershed - please do not copy and paste. This is for learning purposes only.

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