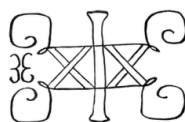


Grade 6-8 Literacy Wabanaki Studies Educator Guide





Donald Soctomah, Peskotomuhkati citizen, elder, author and historian

Background:

The Wabanaki are a people of the present day and are an important part of today's society. Taking a contemporary focus on Wabanaki writers allows students to learn about the Wabanaki through their artistry and impact, rather than through an outdated, historical viewpoint. This guide offers opportunities for students to meet Maine ELA standards while simultaneously developing a deeper understanding of who the Wabanaki are today. There are many ways that Wabanaki Studies can be incorporated into your ELA curriculum. These five lessons are intended to be starting points and/or examples kickstart your individual process as an educator to adapt and develop materials that work best for your students.

Guiding Questions:

- Why does representation matter?
- How is our view of history impacted by who we learn from and how we learn it?
- How can writing be used as a tool to amplify underrepresented voices?

Vocabulary:

Key Term	Definition
Equitable	in a state of fairness that uplifts others to receive equal opportunities without bias (different from equality)
Reciprocal	shared or shown by both sides
Sovereignty	able to self-govern

Grade 6

Lesson #1: [The Activist Art of Wabanaki Poetry](#) (from the MOOSE module, "[The Wabanaki and the Environment: Learning to Use My Voice Through Activism Today](#)")

Essential Question:

- How do Wabanaki poets convey their perspective through their writing?

Within this short lesson, students will get to read the work of two Wabanaki poets, Carol Dana and Shirley Bear, and spend time in nature before writing some poetry of their own.

Standards: R.7, R.8, R.9

Lesson #2: [Reciprocal Listening and Responding](#) from the MOOSE module, "[The Art of Allyship: Partnering With Wabanaki Conservationists for a Better Tomorrow](#)")

This lesson was pulled from a module intended for a high school audience. For the middle school classroom, it may be best to focus on Kasq (Natalie) Dana Lolar's poem, "In this time," as a class instead of offering the choice between this and the other piece.

Part of learning to develop reciprocal relationships with the earth and with people, is to learn how to listen and then how to respond appropriately. Listening is an act that takes time, care, and respect. All of these qualities are also a part of establishing reciprocal relationships. Learning and observing how the Wabanaki interact with the natural world around us allows students to both think about the importance of reciprocity beyond just person-person relationships and consider how they can make efforts to treat the natural world with a deeper sense of respect as well.

Essential Question:

- How can I work towards the healing of our environment, in partnership with Wabanaki conservationists?

Standards: L.5, SL.2, R.5, R.8, R.9, W.3

Grade 7

Lesson #1:

[Intergalactic Diplomacy](#)

Essential Questions:

- How does a treaty support peace and understanding between two parties?
- What are essential understandings both parties must have before creating a treaty?

Additional Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Markers
- Poster boards or large sheets of paper
- [Student handouts](#)

This lesson was originally written as a Social Studies lesson but can easily be adapted for the ELA classroom. The objective of this learning activity is to introduce students to the concept of a treaty and engage in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration as they draft a treaty between the people of Earth and an alien group who have landed. Students will consider access to natural resources, language barriers, and the integration of alien technology while preserving human customs and culture.

Standards: SL.1, SL.2, SL.3, W.2

Lesson #2:

Using Storytelling to Preserve People-Centered History

This activity offers a structured discussion surrounding a video interview conducted with Peskotomuhkati author and historian, Donald Soctomah. It is recommended for grades 7 and 8 but can easily be adapted to suit a 6th grade or high school classroom.

Essential Questions:

- How can we use storytelling (fiction, non-fiction, historical fiction, etc.) to build a more diverse representation within our history?
- Why does representation matter?
- What can we understand from this approach to teaching/learning our history through storytelling that we might not be able to get from our typical history books?
- How is our view of history impacted by who we learn from and how we learn it?

Additional Materials Needed:

- One or more copy of Remember Me: Tomah Joseph's Gift to Franklin Roosevelt by Donald Soctomah

Standards: *Language Arts:*

SL.1.6-8

- a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, student-led, and teacher-led) on grade 6-8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- b. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- d. Pose questions that elicit elaboration, connect the ideas of several speakers, and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- f. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through paraphrasing and reflection. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, modify, qualify, or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

Grade 8

Lesson #1:

[Introduction to Journalism \(in a Wabanaki Studies Space\)](#)

Journalism is a versatile tool that can be incredibly useful for sharing important news, spreading awareness, and relaying relevant present-day information. However, the practice of journalism can take on a harmful nature when its product is presented in a biased manner or with an inclination towards a certain portrayal of the given story. This lesson aims to give students both a general understanding of what it is to be a journalist and a space to reflect on and discuss how this tool can be used effectively as an unbiased and equitable platform to share today's news.

Essential Questions:

- How can journalism be used as a tool to amplify underrepresented voices?
- How can we ensure that journalism remains an unbiased yet equitable source for news?

Standards:

SL.1, SL.2, R.6, R.7, R.9, R.10, R.11, W.1

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