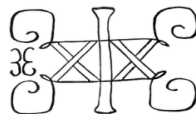


Grade 1 Wabanaki Studies

Educator Guide



Background:

The Panawahpskek (Penobscot) Nation, Peskotomuhkati (Passamaquoddy) Tribe, Mi'kmaq Nation, (Wolastoqiyik) Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, and Abenaki (collectively known as the Wabanaki Nations) have lived for thousands of years in the land we now call Maine and Canada. Despite colonization and attempted genocide—including the forced removal of their children—the Wabanaki nations have endured as sovereign and self-determining peoples, with distinct and diverse languages, cultures, governments, and economic structures.

Introduction:

First grade is a time of wonder and connecting with the world around you. As adults, it is our job to learn more from children who are more connected with Indigenous Ways of Knowing than most adults. Both Western science and traditional knowledges are valid ways of knowing and understanding the world around us. They were both developed by vastly different cultures for different purposes. Both help us make sense of the many mysteries about life, the planet we live on, and our place in the universe. Indigenous worldviews (epistemologies) include a belief that all things are connected and related. Therefore, every tree, every bird, every insect, every human is part of an interconnected web.

This guide is about connection and starting to build the bridge to becoming contributing members to society. They will study the relationship between seasonal migration, hunting, gathering, and local Indigenous agricultural practices while also learning about particular plants and animals and their roles in the local ecosystem.


Preparation:


This interdisciplinary educator's guide is designed to introduce learners to the rich Wabanaki culture. This is the foundation that will be built upon for years to come. It is meant to be differentiated for your learners and their lived experiences. As you become more and more comfortable with this curriculum, it is meant for you to expand on the lessons and integrate seamlessly into your existing curriculum. You can use it in its entirety or in sections.

[Wabanaki Studies Framework](#)

Spend time with all of the online modules: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/moose/lp/wabanaki>

Spend time with the DOE Wabanaki Studies website:
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/innovation/wabanakistudies>

 Cultural Appropriation Resources

 Frequently asked questions

Guiding Questions:

Who are the Wabanaki?








How do the Wabanaki take care of each other and the environment?

What can we learn from the Wabanaki?


Vocabulary (see background above)

Wabanaki	Panawahpskek (Penobscot)	Peskotomuhkati (Passamaquoddy)
Mi'kmaq (Micmac)	Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet)	Abenaki


Lessons (to be taught in order):


-  Wabanaki Identity: Worldviews, Languages, Cultures and Traditions (1st Grade)
-  Notable Wabanaki Citizens - 1st Grade
-  Relationships- 1st Grade
-  My Community - 1st Grade
-  Our Environment - 1st Grade
-  Wabanaki and the Universe Lesson - 1st Grade
-  Animals - 1st Grade

Extension Ideas:

- PK-2 language module:
<https://learnwithmoose.maine.gov/module/7223/wabanaki-language/overview>
- Invite a Traditional Knowledge Keeper in to visit:
 -  Considerations for Inviting Indigenous Presenters
- Directory: [Traditional Knowledge Keeper Directory](#)

Collaborate with specialist teachers:

 K-8 Visual Art Educator Guide

 Wabanaki Studies: Getting Outdoors! Educator's Guide

Updated: January 2026

