

Understanding Relationships in Pre and Post-Colonial America

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Synopsis:

Using your local area as a focal point, students can gain an understanding of Indigenous cultures regarding land use, trade, shared culture, war, etc. The framework presented below can address a multitude of topics using arts integration combined with primary sources and integrating a Standard Model of Indigenous Learning (SMIL). The SMIL, developed by Sandra Barton, includes five threads: Place, Storytelling, Intergenerational Interaction, Experience, and Interconnectedness. By using a non Euro-centric approach to education to teach about Indigenous Culture, it is my hope that students will better understand history from multiple perspectives. The overall goal is for teachers and learners to find our indigenous mindsets in our quest to create a more balanced social and ecological landscape.

Guiding Questions:

How can finding our indigenous mindsets foster empathy and instill stewardship of the land? How can we use place-based knowledge to engage students in learning?

Goals:

To educate students about traditional practices of Indigenous Peoples' ancestral past; To understand how intertribal relationships developed over thousands of years, including after colonization; To develop a relationship among communities in the Berkshires in shared knowledge and collaborative projects.

Using the Hexagon Project as a platform:

The Hexagon Project provides a template for collaboration in the overarching goal of global interdependence. Each year a broad theme is chosen from which teachers can choose more specific learning objectives. The official theme for 2022 is "environmental justice." The instructions in this framework exemplify how to use the hexagon project platform with the intention to create a collaborative mural centered around a common theme, though participating schools may choose how close or loosely they adhere to the theme. They are also welcome to create their own theme. Visit <https://hexagonproject.org/> for more information.

Berkshire Specific: It's gratifying to know that schools from around Berkshire County have expressed interest in this shared learning. The culminating event for this project is the installation of the mural in Great Barrington on the Friday before Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Project Procedures: This arts integration project is divided between parts that are intended for students to explore culture and history through the five threads of SMIL, while relating it to themselves. Students will use a sketchbook to create visual imagery associated with each activity. These preliminary drawings will inform their final project plan in the hexagon format. Lessons and activities can focus on any aspect of each part of the overall project. Teachers should use their discretion in which topics to focus on, taking consideration of grade level, base knowledge of learners, etc. The use of primary sources is always encouraged, including and beginning with understanding what is shared by the tribal nation(s) who's ancestral homelands encompass your school community.

Part one: “Place.” Getting acquainted with the landscape: land use from pre and post-colonization.

Identify ancestral territories of First Nations People in your local area. Explore what is known about their ‘pre-contact’ relationship to the land regarding settlements, hunting and gathering, agriculture, trade, spirituality, and/or transportation. Make correlation between these cultural practices and environmental sustainability. Identify the factors that actively altered the Indigenous way of life, and understand the repercussions of colonization on indigenous culture and the environment.

Berkshire specific: Provide a series of maps from pre and post colonization New England and identify territories of tribal nations. Overlay contemporary maps and trace out the major highway routes. Explain how modern roads were created following ancient tribal paths.

<https://native-land.ca/>

<http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/maps/index.do>

Part two: ‘Storytelling.’ Understanding how creation stories differ and each tribe had and has unique cultural attributes and traditions.

Listen to creation stories or origin stories either from recorded sources or from a representative of the original stewards of the land. Compare stories of other tribal nations. Consider the natural landscape and ask students to make correlations between ideas in the story and the land.

Berkshire Specific: Listen to or learn about the creation stories of the original neighboring tribal nations. Discuss the origins and oral traditions, and facilitate the sharing of students’ family or cultural origin stories.

Read:

Stockbridge-Munsee Community: [Brief History | Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans](#)

Mohawk: [KANIENKEHÁ:KA CREATION STORY](#)

Lenni Lenape: [Creation Stories | Nanticoke and Lenape Confederation](#)

Mohican: [Stockbridge-Munsee Oral Tradition | Milwaukee Public Museum](#)

Listen:

Wôbanakiak (Abenaki), Wendat (Huron), and Kanienkehaka (Mohawk): [Voices & Songs: Creation Stories](#)

Part three: ‘Intergenerational Interaction.’

Discuss the reasons for intertribal relationships—trade, marriage, communications, etc. Look at artifacts such as wampum and explain purposes for gift-giving. Ask students to investigate their own family traditions regarding extended family gatherings. Provide an interview template for students to use in conversation with a parent, grandparent, or community elder.

Part four: ‘Experience.’ Many trails of Indigenous history

Visit landmarks of significance to local, indigenous history, as well as museums and other cultural institutions that offer a glimpse into past culture and practices. Learn about traditions that persist as

well as practices that are shared today. Read the land deeds and treaties associated with relevant First Nations. Investigate the factors that misled people into making unjust agreements. Learn about relevant preservation and excavation efforts to look at culture from an historic and scientific perspective.

Berkshire specific: Discuss the seasonal migration patterns of Mohican People and how European encroachment limited their resources. Explain that after decades of disease, war, and land theft, Mohicans were forced to agree to accepting a Missionary. Have students dissect the written accounts of the Belcher Conference which led to the formation of Stockbridge, a so-called experiment in bi-cultural coexistence. Explore the Stockbridge-Munsee Community's official website <https://www.mohican.com/>. Also visit the Mohican Project website that was created as a local teaching resource to supplement the "Mohican People" curriculum for more background knowledge and links to projects. <https://stephgraham.wixsite.com/mohicancurriculum>

Accounts of the Belcher Conference of 1735
<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N03229.0001.001/1:2?rgn=div1:view=fulltext>
<https://archive.org/details/atconferenceheld00mass/page/10/mode/2up>

Part five: 'Interconnectedness.'

The Hexagon

Ask students to use all of their imagery and written language to create a composition. Discuss and demonstrate use of materials and a variety of composition tools they can use to tell their story. The individual projects can be displayed together as one and provide an opportunity for collaboration and celebration. Depending on the age and ability of the group, more specific parameters and instructions could be implemented. Visit the project website [Berkshire Hexagon Mural](#).

Standards Connections

The framework has the ability to address multiple topics and standards at different grade levels depending on the theme, context, and content of the project.

Social Sciences

Grade 3

Topic 2. The geography and Native Peoples of Massachusetts

1. On a physical map of North America, use cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate the Northeast region and identify important physical features.
2. On a political map of the current United States, locate the New England states.
3. Explain the diversity of Native Peoples, present and past, in Massachusetts and the New England region. a. the names of at least three native groups b. the locations of tribal territories in the state. c. physical features and their influence on the locations of traditional settlements d. contributions of a tribal group from the area of the school.

Topic 5. The Puritans, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Native Peoples, and Africans

1. Compare and contrast the roles and leadership decisions of early English leaders of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Pilgrims of the Plymouth colony and the roles and decisions of the leaders of Native Peoples
2. Explain why Puritan men and women migrated in great numbers to Massachusetts in the 17th century, how they moved west from the Atlantic coast, and the consequences of their migration for the Native Peoples of the region

Grade 4

Topic 2. Ancient civilizations of North America

1. Evaluate competing theories about the origins of people in North America and evidence for dating the existence of early populations in North America to about 15,000 years ago.
2. Using maps of historic Native Peoples' culture regions of North America and photographs, identify archaeological evidence of some of the characteristics of major civilizations of this period
3. Explain how archaeologists conduct research.

Grade 5

Topic 1. Early colonization and growth of colonies

1. Explain the early relationships of English settlers to Native Peoples in the 1600s and 1700s, including the impact of diseases introduced by Europeans in severely reducing Native populations, the differing views on land ownership or use, property rights, and the conflicts between the two groups

Grade 6

Topic 1: Studying complex societies past and present

2. Give examples of ways in which a current historical interpretation might build on, extend, or reject an interpretation of the past.
3. Give examples of how archaeologists, historians, geographers, economists, and political scientists work as teams to analyze evidence, develop hypotheses, and construct interpretations of ancient and classical civilizations.

Topic 2. Human origins, the Neolithic and Paleolithic Eras

1. Describe the great climatic and environmental changes that shaped the earth and eventually permitted the growth of human life.
2. Identify sites where archaeologists have found evidence of the origins of modern human beings and explain current theories of how human groups moved from Africa over time into the continents now known as Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Oceania.
3. Explain that the term Paleolithic Era refers to the period of earliest human history, beginning c. 2.6 million years ago to c. 11,700 years ago, characterized by the first use of stone tools, fire, hunting and gathering weapons, and, about 50,000 years ago, by cave painting, sculpture, tools, and artifacts using diverse materials such as bone, shell, stone, mineral pigments, and wood).

4. Explain that the term Neolithic Era refers to the period beginning about 10,000 years ago to c. 4500 or c. 2000 BCE in different parts of the world, in which the technologies of agriculture (growing crops and the domestication of animals) and metallurgy (mining and working of metals) were invented and refined, and in which complex societies begin to appear.
5. Explain how complex societies that practice agriculture may differ, some developing into permanently settled communities, some being nomadic and moving livestock from place to place, some cultivating land temporarily and moving to another location when a plot of land is no longer productive.
6. Explain that scholars have attempted to define the characteristics of a complex society (sometimes called “civilization”) since the early 20th century, and although debates are ongoing, many cite these characteristics: a. an economy that produces food surpluses b. dense populations in distinct areas or cities c. stratified social classes d. specialized occupations e. developed systems of government, religion, and learning f. achievements in technology, art, and monumental architecture g. systems of record keeping, either written or oral.
7. Explain the ways in which complex societies interact and spread from one region to another (e.g., by trade, cultural or linguistic exchanges, migration, religious conversion, conquest, or colonization).
8. Construct and interpret a timeline that shows some of the key periods in the development of human societies in the Paleolithic and Neolithic Eras. Use correctly the words or abbreviations for identifying time periods or dates in historical narratives (decade, age, era, century, millennium, CE/AD, BCE/BC, c. and circa). Identify in BCE dates the higher number as indicating the older year (that is, 3000 BCE is earlier than 2000 BCE).

Grade 7: Topic 4. Europe

a. Physical and political geography of Europe

3. Explain how absolute and relative locations, major physical characteristics, climate and natural resources in this region have influenced settlement patterns, population size, and economies of the countries.

c. Ancient and Classical Rome, the Roman Republic, and the Roman Empire, c. 500 BCE–500 CE

8. Describe how scientific, philosophical, and aesthetic ideas diffused throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa as a result of trade, migration, conquest, and colonization.

Grade 8: Topic 1. The philosophical foundations of the United States political system

3. Explain the influence of Enlightenment thinkers on the American Revolution and framework of the American government.

4. Explain how British ideas about and practices of government (e.g., the Magna Carta, the concept of habeas corpus, the Mayflower Compact, self-government, town meetings, the importance of education and literacy, the House of Burgesses, colonial legislatures, the Albany Plan of Union) influenced American colonists and the political institutions that developed in colonial America.

5. Analyze the evidence for arguments that the principles of government of the United States were influenced by the governments of Native Peoples (e.g. the Iroquois Confederacy).

Topic 2. The development of the United States government

1. Apply knowledge of the history of the American Revolutionary period to determine the experiences and events that led the colonists to declare independence; explain the key ideas about equality, representative government, limited government, rule of law, natural rights, common good, and the purpose of government in the Declaration of Independence.

2. Analyze the weaknesses of the national government under the Articles of Confederation; and describe the crucial events (e.g., Shays’ Rebellion) leading to the Constitutional Convention.

3. Identify the various leaders of the Constitutional Convention and analyze the major issues

Topic 6. The structure of Massachusetts state and local government

4. Compare core documents associated with the protection of individual rights, including the Bill of Rights, the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article I of the Massachusetts Constitution.

United States History I Content Standards

Topic 1. Origins of the Revolution and the Constitution

1. Analyze the economic, intellectual, and cultural forces that contributed to the American Revolution. 2. Explain the reasons for the French and Indian War (1754–1763), the North American component of the global Seven Years’ War between Great Britain and France (1756–1763), and analyze how the war affected colonists and Native Peoples.

3. Explain Britain's policies in the North American colonies (e.g., the Proclamation of 1763, the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Townsend Duties, the Tea Act, and the Intolerable Acts) and compare the perspectives of the British Parliament, British colonists, and Native Peoples in North America on these policies.

Topic 2. Democratization and expansion

1. Evaluate the major policies and political developments of the presidencies of George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, and their implications for the expansion of Federal power and foreign policy.

2. Evaluate the presidency of Andrew Jackson, including the spoils system, the National Bank veto, and the policy of Indian removal, and the Nullification Crisis.

3. Analyze the causes and long and short term consequences of America's westward expansion from 1800 to 1854.

Topic 4. Social, political, and religious change

1. Describe important religious and social trends that shaped America in the 18th and 19th centuries (e.g., the First and Second Great Awakenings; the increase in the number of Protestant denominations; the concept of "Republican Motherhood;" hostility to Catholic immigration and the rise of the Native American Party, also known as the "Know-Nothing" Party).

High School United States History II

Topic 4: Defending democracy: the Cold War and civil rights at home

f. the movement to protect the rights, self-determination, and sovereignty of Native Peoples (e.g., the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, the American Indian Movement, the Wounded Knee Incident at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1973, the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, and the efforts of Native Peoples' groups to preserve Native cultures.

World History I Content Standards

Topic 1. Dynamic interactions among regions of the world

1. Explain different ways in which societies interact across regions (e.g., trade; cultural, religious, linguistic, and technological exchange and diffusion; migration; exploration; diplomatic alliances; colonization and conquests).

2. Give examples of exchanges of ideas and goods among ancient complex societies to c. 500 CE. Clarification Statement: As a reminder of concepts studied in grades 6 and 7, teachers may choose to highlight topics such as the spread of agricultural practices, the adoption of religions, imperial conquests, or the first phase of trade along the Silk Roads among societies in Asia, Africa, and Europe.

3. Explain how interactions among societies are affected by geographical factors such as the location of bodies of water, mountains, and deserts, climate, the presence or scarcity of natural resources, and human factors such as population size and density, mortality rates, or migration patterns.

4. Demonstrate the ability to analyze primary sources, including texts, maps, diagrams, works of art and architecture.

5. Demonstrate the ability to construct graphic displays that convey information about interactions among and comparisons between societies. a. different kinds of maps to show physical features, political boundaries and forms of interaction (e.g., trade routes, invasions, cultural diffusion) b. timelines that show simultaneous relationships (e.g., the development of technologies or artistic styles in different parts of the world or the rise, interaction, and collapse of multiple kingdoms or empires) c. charts or graphs to convey comparative information (e.g., size of population in different periods and places, value of goods traded between different locations)

Topic 5. Global exploration, conquest, colonization, c. 1492– 1800

2. Explain the motivations for European nations to find a sea route to Asia.

3. Identify the major economic, political, demographic, and social effects of the European colonial period in the Americas and the Caribbean Islands, the so-called "Columbian Exchange" (the transmission of foodstuffs, plants, bacteria, animal species, etc., across the Atlantic for the first time and its environmental and agricultural implications); the impact of Christian missionaries on existing religious and social structures in the Americas, and the expansion of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

4. Map the extent of the Ottoman, Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, and British Empires in the 17th century and research and report on an account of travel, trade or diplomacy of the 17th century.

Science and Technology

Grade 4

ESS3. Earth and Human Activity

1. Obtain and combine information about ways communities reduce human impact on the Earth's resources and environment by changing an agricultural, industrial, or community practice or process.

Grade 7

ESS3. Earth and Human Activity

8.MS-ESS3-1 Analyze and interpret data to explain that the Earth's mineral and fossil fuel resources are unevenly distributed as a result of geologic processes. Clarification Statement: • Examples of uneven distributions of resources can include where petroleum is generally found (locations of the burial of organic marine sediments and subsequent geologic traps), and where metal ores are generally found (locations of past volcanic and hydrothermal activity).

8.MS-ESS3-5. Examine and interpret data to describe the role that human activities have played in causing the rise in global temperatures over the past century.

Clarification Statements: • Examples of human activities include fossil fuel combustion, deforestation, and agricultural activity. • Examples of evidence can include tables, graphs, and maps of global and regional temperatures; atmospheric

High School

ESS3. Earth and Human Activity

HS-ESS3-1. Construct an explanation based on evidence for how the availability of key natural resources and changes due to variations in climate have influenced human activity.

HS-ESS3-3. Illustrate relationships among management of natural resources, the sustainability of human populations, and biodiversity.