

Native American Artifact Inquiry

Grades: 3 - 6

Time: 45 minutes

Rationale and Context:

This topic focuses on the Native American culture in the Lake Champlain Basin prior to Samuel de Champlain's "discovery" of the area. Using inquiry science methods, students will observe and manipulate artifacts and reproductions to draw conclusions about the use of the object. To wrap up, students will participate in a traditional game that teaches important survival skills.

Teacher Background:

The Paleo-Indian culture of Vermont is believed to have established itself some 11,000 years ago when the glaciers of the last ice age had finally receded from the area. These were the early ancestors of the Abenaki tribe that lives on the VT shores of Lake Champlain and across most of the northern and central regions of the state as well as areas in New Hampshire and Maine. The Abenaki probably numbered more than 20,000 people before first contact. After European contact many Abenaki fled to Canada. Today Abenaki live in two reservations in Quebec and scattered throughout New England.

Vermont Standard(s):

Grade Clusters	Grade Expectations	Inquiry Skills and Content
3-4, 5-6	H & SS.1	Students initiate inquiry by asking relevant questions based on what they have seen
	H & SS.2	Students develop a hypothesis, thesis, or research statement by using prior knowledge to predict results or proposing a choice about a possible action
	H & SS.8	Students connect the past with the present
	H & SS.9	Students show understanding of how humans interpret history
	H & SS.13	Students analyze how and why cultures continue and change over time

Learning/Behavioral Objective(s):

1. Students will be introduced to the history of the Abenaki people in the Lake Champlain Basin with an emphasis on the modern day presence of the tribe.
2. Students will understand the difference between an artifact and a reproduction
3. Through discussion, observation and handling of native artifacts and reproductions, students will think about innovation and sophistication of design and imagine the intended uses of historic materials.