

## Native American Artifacts

**Grades:** 3-6

**Time:** 50 minutes

### **Rationale and Context:**

This program 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 in order to draw conclusions about their uses. To wrap-up, students will participate in a traditional game that teaches skills that were critical for survival for the early Abenaki. These skills were taught early and practiced often by Abenaki children.

### **Teacher Background Information:**

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 tribe that flourished on the Vermont 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 on two reservations in Quebec and scattered throughout New England.

### **Vermont Standard(s):**

Grade Clusters	Grade Expectations	Inquiry Skills and Content
3-4	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

### **Next Generation Science Standards:**

<b>Disciplinary Core Idea</b>	3-5	6
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ESS3.A		Humans depend on Earth's land, ocean, atmosphere, and biosphere for different resources, many of which are limited or not renewable. Resources are distributed unevenly around the planet as a result of past geologic processes.
ESS3.C	Societal activities have had major effects on the land, ocean, and atmosphere, and even outer space. Societal activities can also help protect Earth's resources and environments	Human activities have altered the biosphere, sometimes damaging it, although changes in the environment can have different impacts for different living things. Activities and technologies can be engineered to reduce people's impact on earth.
ESS1.C	Certain features on Earth can be used in evidence to organize the relative occurrence of major historical events in Earth's history.	Rock strata and the fossil record can be used as evidence to organize the relative occurrence of major historical events in Earth's history.
<b>Cross Cutting Concepts</b>	Scale, Proportion and Quantity Structure and Function Stability and Change	Patterns Structure and Function Stability and Change.

**Learning/Behavioral Objective(s):**

- Students will be introduced to the history of the Abenaki people in the Lake Champlain Basin including information about the modern day presence of the tribe.
- Students will understand the difference between an artifact and a reproduction.
- Through discussion, observation and handling of native artifacts and reproductions, students will think about origin, innovation and sophistication of design and imagine the intended use of the objects
- Students will participate in a traditional Abenaki game and discuss the relevance of the game to critical skills needed for survival

**Vocabulary:**

Abenaki  
Samuel de Champlain  
Lake Champlain  
artifact

reproduction  
prediction  
observation  
sinew

gourd  
bola

atlatl  
spile

**Focusing Question(s):**

1. Who were the first people to settle on the Vermont shores of Lake Champlain?
2. How do we learn about the cultures of people who lived before us?
3. What is the difference between an artifact and a reproduction?
4. What can the structure of historic objects tell you about their intended function?
5. How can skills learned and practiced in a game help build life skills?