



## Living in Two Worlds: Native American Experiences on the Boston Harbor Islands

Teacher's Guide & DVD

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Developed by staff from the National Park Service,  
Island Alliance, and World Turtle Productions

## Introduction and Acknowledgements

This Teacher's Guide is designed to accompany the DVD *Living in Two Worlds: Native American Experiences on the Boston Harbor Islands*. *Living in Two Worlds* is a collection of interviews with five individuals who share their personal and native community stories about historic and present day connections to the Boston Harbor Islands. The DVD can be viewed as one presentation or can be viewed in individual chapters allowing you to pause for discussion. A narration is also provided to give an introduction, provide context, and offer guiding questions to each segment.

The Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area and all the groups and individuals who collaborated to produce this DVD and guide view this as the first chapter in an ongoing dialogue with Northeast Native communities who maintain or are reestablishing a connection to the harbor and islands. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following people in the making of this video:

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### Produced by:

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## **Living in Two Worlds: Native American Experiences on the Boston Harbor Islands Boston Harbor Islands national park area Curriculum Unit**

Grade Level: Grades: 5-9

### **Description**

The oral history tradition is central to Native American cultures, but is a less familiar concept to non-Native peoples. This unit will introduce teachers and students to this tradition through the presentation of Native American oral narratives about the Boston Harbor Islands. In classroom presentations and video, the oral history tradition is presented and stories of Native Americans in the Boston Harbor Islands are told from the perspectives of several tribes associated with the area. The lectures and video will help the viewers gain a broader and deeper understanding about the past and present experiences of Native peoples and the Boston Harbor Islands.

Historic connections with the Boston Harbor Islands include pre-colonial occupation, encounters with early English settlers, conflict during King Philip's War in 1675, and the continuing presence of modern tribes in the Boston area. Other activities with Native Americans include developing a memorial, a museum and exhibits on Native American associations with the Boston Harbor Islands. These themes align with state frameworks for grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, and could be investigated at several grades to provide a spiraling of the curriculum.

This can be part of a larger study of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park Area or incorporated into studies of the use of oral tradition as an historical method of inquiry. Another option is to include this unit as part of a year-long program offered by the park called Harbor Connections.

Boston Harbor is an "estuary" system where the salt water of Massachusetts Bay mixes with fresh water from three rivers: the Charles, the Mystic, and the Neponset. The harbor shores include six of Boston's neighborhoods (East Boston, Charlestown, North End, Fort Point, South Boston, and Dorchester) and seven other municipalities: Hull, Hingham, Weymouth, Quincy, Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop. Although it has extensive development on its edge, the estuary provides valuable habitat for wildlife, a nursery for marine organisms, water filtration, and flood control.

The Inner Harbor includes the mouths of the Charles and Mystic rivers, Chelsea Creek, and the port of Boston; the Outer Harbor includes the three bays of Dorchester, Quincy, and Hingham and the mouth of the Neponset River. Combined, the Inner and Outer harbors comprise approximately 50 square miles and are bounded by 180 miles of shoreline.

Boston Harbor, a continuously working harbor since the mid 17th century, and the islands have undergone significant physical transformation over the last 300 years. Both human actions and natural forces have caused this change. Many people are aware of the dramatic expansion of the Shawmut Peninsula by filling tidal land over the centuries to create what is now the city of Boston. However, most people are not aware of similar changes to current and former harbor islands. Natural forces significantly eroded Sheep and Hangman islands to mere outcroppings. Causeways and land bridges were constructed to connect Worlds End, Deer, and Nut islands to the mainland, as well as other former islands such as the end of what is now a section of the town of Hull and the Castle Island extension in South Boston. A modern vehicle bridge was constructed for Long Island. Massive landfills connected Wood, Noddles, Apple, and Governors islands for East Boston and Logan Airport. Today's metamorphosis is the dramatic construction of Spectacle Island with material from the central artery highway tunnel through Boston known as the "Big Dig," and the creation of the Boston Harbor Islands national park area in 1996, which brought 34 islands and peninsulas together to be managed and protected. Today's visitor to the

islands may get the sense of permanence. However, people and nature have had a dramatic impact on the geography of this resource over a relatively short period of time.

### **Key Concepts**

History, Literature, Oral Tradition, Environment, Diversity, Navigation, Survival, Resistance, Strength, Perseverance

### **Theme**

This unit will focus on the enduring legacy of Native American communities to the Boston Harbor Islands. Through the use of video taped interviews, students will investigate the role of oral tradition in Native American cultures and identify how a story can have multiple points of view.

### **Essential Questions to Guide Student Inquiry**

- What role did the Boston Harbor Islands play in Native American life?
- What impact did the colonists have on Native American communities?
- How do different world views contribute to our understanding of how history is recorded?

### **The Learning Objectives**

#### **Habits of Mind Goals:**

- How will this study affect the way students act and think?
- Students will develop an understanding of how one's actions can impact others in positive and negative ways.
- Students will recognize the importance of individual choices, actions and their personal character.
- Students will recognize differences as valuable and develop respect for diversity.

#### **Skill Goals:**

- What will students be able to do as a result of this study?
- Students will recognize relationships between primary and secondary sources and the uses of each.
- Students will be able to explain differences in points of view in historical accounts.
- Students will develop skills in mapping and modeling.

#### **Content Goals:**

- What will students know by the end of this study?
- Students will develop an understanding of orientation within their local and regional area.
- Students will develop an understanding of how the geography of the Boston Harbor and its Islands has changed over time.
- Students will be able to explain how people interact with the environment.
- Related to the Native American culture, students will develop an understanding of the cultural and social history of Peddock's Island and Deer Island.
- Students will develop an understanding of the importance of Oral History in certain cultures.

## Connections to Massachusetts State Standards

The **Living in Two Worlds** curriculum is interdisciplinary and connects to multiple state education standards. Core subjects are as follows: English Language Arts (with a focus on Media), History, Science and Technology Standards, and Social Science.

### *English Language Arts Framework – Analysis of Media:*

#### **Grades 5 and 6**

1. Students identify techniques used in educational reference [videos] and describe how these techniques are the same as or different from the techniques used by authors and illustrators of print materials. Students view Tribal members telling their oral histories as captured on video.

#### **Grades 9-10:**

26.5. Analyze visual or aural techniques used in a media message for a particular audience and evaluate their effectiveness.

### *Arts Framework - Visual Arts*

#### **Grades 5 – 8**

5.5 Using critical response/analysis, students will describe and analyze their own work and the work of others using appropriate visual arts vocabulary. When appropriate, students will connect their analysis to interpretation and evaluation.

5.6 Students demonstrate their ability to describe the kinds of imagery used to represent subject matter and ideas, for example, literal representation, simplification, abstraction, or symbolism, in a public sculpture/memorial. They will interpret the meanings of artistic works by explaining how the subject matter and form reflect the events, ideas, religions, and customs of people living at a particular time in history

### **History Framework – United States History, Geography, Economics, and Government: Early Exploration to Westward Movement**

#### **Grade 5**

##### *History and Geography*

5.1 Identify different ways of dating historical narratives (*17th century, seventeenth century, 1600s, colonial period*). (H)

5.2 Interpret timelines of events studied. (H)

##### *Pre-Columbian Civilizations of the New World and European Exploration, Colonization, and Settlement to 1700.*

5.1 Students will learn to explain the early relationship of the English settlers of the indigenous peoples, or Indians, in North America, including the differing views on ownership or use of land and the conflicts between them (i.e., King Philip's War in New England).

5.2 Students learn to identify early trade routes and explorers/leaders of colonial and Tribal America.

5.9 Explain the reasons that the language, political institutions, and political principles of what became the United States of America were largely shaped by English colonists even though other major European nations also explored the New World. (H, C)

#### **Grades 8-12: *Concepts & Skills History and Geography***

1. Identify multiple ways to express time relationships and dates (*for example, 1066 AD is the same as 1066 CE, and both refer to a date in the eleventh or 11th century, which is the same as the 1000s*).

2. Distinguish between long-term and short-term cause and effect relationships. (H,C,G,E)

8. Interpret the past within its own historical context rather than in terms of present-day norms and values. (H, E, C)

### **Historical Background: Native Americans and the Boston Harbor Islands**

#### **Island Use**

- Archaeological evidence shows that Native Americans have lived on or used the islands for at least 8000 years.
- Different cultural groups using the islands likely included the Moswetuset, Mashpee, Wampanoags and the Nipmuks.
- Prior to European contact Native Americans lived on the islands from early spring to late autumn.
- During the thousands of years of Indian use, the natural environment was sustained and a deep connection was developed between Native Americans and the islands.
- Native Americans fished in harbor waters and cleared fields and parts of the forest to plant crops of corn, beans, and squash. They also gathered wild berries and other plants for food and medicine, and hunted animals and fowl. According to the remains that have survived to modern times, the most common animals on the islands were deer, cod, and soft-shell clams.
- Archaeological evidence indicates that Native Americans performed social and ceremonial activities while also using the island resources for tool manufacturing.
- In 1626, Thompson Island was a Native American trading post.
- Deer Island was one of several islands used for internment camps for Native Americans during King Philip's War. (See description below.)

#### **Interactions between Native Americans and Euro-American Settlers**

- When English settlers arrived, Native Americans still regarded the islands as their home and remained until Euro-American settlers started encroaching on their land.
- Beginning in 1675 American colonists engaged in a major war with the Native Americans. It came to be known as King Philip's War. (King Philip was the name the English called Metacom, the Wampanoag sachem/ chief of the Tribe.)
- King Philip's War had far-reaching and long-lasting effects on Native American communities in the region and on the relations between Native Americans and Europeans.
- As the Native American resistance intensified, and more colonial villages were attacked and burned, the English fear of the Native Americans grew.
- The significance of the islands during the period of King Philip's War is not due to battles fought there but because of the forced removal of Native Americans to the islands.

- Prior to the start of the war a number of "praying towns" were established within Massachusetts Bay where natives were tolerant of, and living amongst, their European neighbors. As colonial settlements expanded, many Native Americans were displaced to the Indian praying villages and towns.
- During the winter of 1675-76, the Massachusetts Bay Colony decreed that the inhabitants of the "praying towns," such as Natick, be relocated. On October 30, 1675, a large body of Christian Indians was forced in shackles to the Charles River and transported in three vessels to islands in the harbor. The majority of those relocated were taken to Deer Island where they were incarcerated.
- Later some Native Americans were forced to other islands, probably Peddocks Island, Long Island, and one of the Brewster Islands.
- Accounts vary widely as to how many Native Americans were removed to the islands. Historians, using written records, give a range between 500 and 1,100. Some Native Americans now believe that traditional (non-Christian) Native Americans were not counted by the Colonists and so the numbers were much higher. Historical records indicate that as many as one-half of Native Americans died of starvation, exposure, and lack of appropriate medicines in what has been called a concentration camp. The General Court of Massachusetts, referring to Native Americans on the islands, proclaimed "that none of the sayd indians shall presume to goe off the sayd islands voluntarily, uppon payne of death . . . ."
- After the war, those who survived the island internment continued to face dire relations with the colonies.
- Records indicate that the colonial government sold some Native Americans into slavery, or indentured them to English families. Other praying Indians, who were released, moved into and strengthened Christian Native American settlements.
- Praying Indians also dispersed to other Native communities including the Nipmucks, Nipmucs, Wampanoags, and Abenakis (Penobscots) and to communities farther south, west, and north in Canada.
- The scope of King Philip's War extended west, beyond the Berkshire Mountains, south to Long Island Sound, and north into present-day Maine. However, the events referenced above are those most directly associated with Boston Harbor Islands. The island focus stems from the park's enabling legislation which highlights the importance of understanding the history of Native American use and involvement with the islands, and calls for protecting and preserving Native American burial grounds, particularly those connected with King Philip's War.
- This Congressional recognition of the importance of Native American history and of King Philip's War has raised public awareness around these topics. It has also raised park managers' sensitivity to the complex issues surrounding the management and interpretation of island resources associated with Native American use of the islands. This recognition and awareness complements a broad range of federal and state initiatives to protect Native American sacred, cultural, and historic sites in collaboration with Indian tribes. The establishment of the park has also brought a new focus for tribes with cultural

affiliation to the islands and their resources. Paramount among the many concerns expressed by Native American people is that any burial grounds or sacred sites be protected and treated with respect by all.

- Presently, Native Americans return to Deer Island every year in October to solemnly commemorate their ancestors' suffering.

### **Suggested Student Activities**

#### **Activity #1: In Classroom Introduction to the Boston Harbor Islands**

Suggested Time: 45 min. – 1 hour

Materials: An Interdisciplinary Guide for Teachers is available on the park website at:

[http://www.bostonislands.com/learn/learn\\_teach\\_guide.html](http://www.bostonislands.com/learn/learn_teach_guide.html). Activities include:

- Create a KWL chart to explore what students already know and what they want to know about the Boston Harbor Islands and Northeast Native American groups.
- Examine maps and nautical charts of Boston Harbor from different time periods to understand the topographical changes in Boston and the harbor.
- Create a scale model of an island in Boston Harbor to learn about the formation and geology of the islands.
- Research the natural and cultural history of individual islands in Boston Harbor and create a class timeline based on student findings.

#### **Activity #2: In Classroom View DVD “Living in Two Worlds” and use key words and questions to guide group discussion**

Suggested Time: 30 minutes viewing, 30 minutes discussion

Materials: DVD player/computer and projector

#### **Interview #1 Millie McCowan – Natick Nipmuc**

##### Guiding Questions

1. List one cause of the King Phillip’s War
2. Imagine yourself as a prisoner on Deer Island in the winter of 1675. What would you do to survive the winter?
3. List three uses of Deer Island over time.
4. What kind of memorial would you design for Deer Island?
5. List other events in history that have been described as a Holocaust.

##### Key Words

- **King Phillip’s War** = this war occurred in 1675. New England tribes fought against the expanding white population of English colonists.
- **King Phillip** = He was known to the English as “King Philip,” while his tribal name was Metacomet. He is the son of Massasoit, the Wampanoag Tribal leaders. Metacomet led his tribe in the war.
- **Christian Indians** = Also known as *Praying Indians*, are Native Americans who converted to Christianity. Most Natives who converted to Christianity fought with the English or remained neutral. The English, however, did not always trust these converts and interned many of them in camps on Deer Island.

- **John Elliot** = John Eliot was a [Puritan](#) missionary who devoted his energies to Christianize the Tribes of Massachusetts. Natives who accepted the new faith were often referred to as the “Praying Indians.”
- **Memorial** = something that keeps a remembrance (significant person or historic event) alive, i.e. monument.
- **Piggery** = A place where pigs (swine) are kept.
- **MWRA** = Massachusetts Water Resource Authority, supports and protects the drinking water supply and sewer service for the State.

**Holocaust** = the deliberate and systematic isolation, incarceration, and destruction of a racial, political, or cultural group.

### Interview #2 Jim Peters – Mashpee Wampanoag

#### Guiding Questions

1. Who lived around Boston Harbor at the time the Europeans arrived in the 1600’s?
2. Using a Boston area map, track the routes Native People used to access Boston Harbor and Thompson Island.
3. Mr. Peters describes feeling a tie to the land. Describe a place that is special to you. What is it about that place that makes it special to you?

#### Key Words

- **Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs** = The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) was created by the legislature in 1974. The fundamental role of MCIA is to assist Native American individuals, tribes and organizations in their relationship with state and local government agencies and to advise the Commonwealth in matters pertaining to Native Americans. According to the 1990 Federal census, there are more than 12,000 Native Americans living in Massachusetts.
- **Shell Midden** = usually a trash pit of shells that remain and tell the story of meals and foods used by an earlier people.
- **Wampum Beads** = Small cylindrical beads made from polished shells and fashioned into strings or belts, formerly used by certain Native American peoples as currency and jewelry or for ceremonial exchanges between groups.
- **Oral History** = history that is not written down but passed on from one generation to another through personal stories.
- **Archaeology** = Study of the tools and artifacts made by humans; for example, wampum beads.
- **Sustainability** = the practice of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting, or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

### Interview #3 Gill Solomon – Massachusetts

#### Guiding Questions

1. What does it mean to “live with the land”
2. How does Mr. Solomon describe being a “native person”.
3. Name two ancestors in your family. From where did they come?

#### Key Words

- **Massachusetts** = land in the view of the Big Hill or Blue Hills
- **Duality** = Two worlds:
  1. Reality is our everyday world.
  2. Spiritual is the world that includes nature (to commune with the land)
- **Culture** = the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group.
- **Ancestors** = one from whom a person is descended and who is usually more remote in the line of descent than a grandparent

### Interview #4 Annawon Weedon – Mashpee Wampanoag

#### Guiding Questions

1. Why is spring the best season to construct a wetu?
2. What is the purpose of a wetu? Where were they located?
3. Name three materials used to construct a wetu. From where did the materials come?

#### Key Words

- **Wetu** = A wetu is the dome- shaped traditional home of the Wampanoag. It is made of cedar saplings set in the ground, bent together, fastened with vines and inner bark rope, and then covered with bark or mats made of reeds. The roof of the wetu has an opening to release smoke from cooking fires below.
- **Indian Hemp** = Natural fibers (created from milkweed/dogweed/false nettles) to use like rope to bind together the frame and walls of the wetu.
- **Traditional** = in this case, a Native American who retains their Tribal history and customs. For example, the Native American hands down information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction. (Customs - a usage or practice common to many or to a particular place or class or habitual with an individual.)
- **Native Plants** = Plants that grow naturally to a specific region, i.e. milkweed, dogweed, and false nettles grow in the New England environment.

### Interview #5 Larry “Spotted Crow” Mann & Sons – Nipmuc Nation

#### Guiding Questions

1. What traditions do you hold important?
2. What traditions have your elders passed onto your family?
3. Name three things that you are proud of in your life.

### Key Words

- **Pow Wow** = Originally used to refer to a meeting of a tribal council, today it is used to describe a gathering of native peoples to share singing, dancing, crafts and stories.
- **Webster Lake** = Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg. Lake Chargoggagoggmanchoggagogg is a 17-mile-around lake in Webster. The Nipmuc gave the body of water this name because it was neutral territory and a favored site for powwows among their tribe and the Narragansett, Pequot and Mohegan tribes. Today, residents of Webster have shortened the name to Lake Manchaug.
- **Traditions** = The passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation, especially by oral communication.
- **Drum** = The instrument used by the Quabbin Lake Singers is made from elk skin and black ash wood. The circle shape is important in that it represents life.
- **Nipmuc** = An aboriginal North American people, belonging to the family of Algonquian peoples, currently living in and around the Chaubunagungamaug Reservation of Webster, Massachusetts. There are over 600 members officially recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, but federal status by the Bureau of Indian Affairs is still pending.

### **Activity #3: In Classroom Chart Making**

Students will familiarize themselves with a chart of the Boston Harbor Islands but marking and coloring landmasses and navigational channel markers. There is a [Making Your Own Chart PowerPoint](#) available explaining the need for channels, what they do, and how they are designated.

Suggested Time: one 90 minute class

#### Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint projector and [Making Your Own Chart PowerPoint](#)
- Black and white [Boston Harbor Navigational Charts](#) photocopies
- Green and Red markers; Yellow highlighters (for coloring landmasses)
- Demonstration materials could include pictures of marker buoys and a toy boat floating in water to explain why channels are important.

### **Activity #4: Field Visit**

Suggested Time: One school day (including travel time and time on the island)

#### Materials Needed:

- Class-made charts
- [Island Expedition Worksheet](#)
- [Boston Light Worksheet](#)
- Binoculars
- Compass

### **Activity #5: Classroom Suggested Culminating Activities**

- Invite a Native speaker into your classroom – have each student come up with three questions they would like to ask. Then bring the questions together and decide on five questions you would like to ask the guest speaker.
- Interview a member of you own family to record your family or cultural history.
- Further explore one New England Native American group. Create a report or exhibit on your findings.