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**Title:** Black History and the History of Slavery in Maine

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*With thanks to and input from Bob Greene (independent scholar), Tilly Laskey (Curator, Maine Historical Society), and Jamie Rice (Deputy Director, Maine Historical Society).*

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**Content Areas:** Social Studies

**Strands and Standards:** See pages 11-12 for detailed Strand/Standard information

- Social Studies, Grades 6-8: History 1 F1, F2, D2, D4; History 2 F1, F2, F3, D1, D2, D3
- Social Studies, Grades 9-Diploma: History 1 F1, F2, D2, D4; History 2 F1, F2

**Duration:** 1-5 days

**Grade levels:** 6-8; 9-12

**Materials and Resources Required:** computer, projector, access to [Maine Memory Network](#) (recommended to start a free account – students can gather additional sources into folders using an MMN account), [MMN Black History and the History of Slavery in Maine slide show](#), note paper, pens/pencils

**Summary/Overview:** This lesson presents an overview of the history of the Black community in Maine and the U.S., including Black people who were enslaved in Maine, Maine’s connections to slavery and the slave trade, a look into the racism and discrimination many Black people in Maine have experienced, and highlight selected histories of Black people, demonstrating the longevity of their experiences and contributions to the community and culture in Maine.

**Essential questions:**

- How was Maine connected to and how did it benefit from slavery and the slave trade?
- How did Portland’s Black community respond to racism in local churches in the 19<sup>th</sup> century? What role did the Abyssinian Meetinghouse play in the community?
- What are some examples of the racism and discrimination that Black Mainers have faced in Maine’s history? What are some examples of ways the community has succeeded despite that discrimination and ways it responded directly to it?
- In what ways have Black and African American immigrants contributed to community life in Maine?
- How has the Black community thrived in Maine? (discuss how Black communities came to be in Maine—explorers, sailors, enslaved people, Civil War refugees, immigrants, etc.)

**Objectives:**

- Students understand what the slave trade entailed: the buying and selling of people (mainly Black Africans) into servitude for their entire life for the benefit of (mostly White) businesses.
- Students will be able to identify and describe Maine's connections to slavery.
- Students will be able to define racism and discrimination and the impact it had and continues to have on Black people in Maine and the U.S.
- Students will be able to identify and describe ways the Black community in Maine responded to racism and discrimination and worked for equality.
- Students will be able to identify and describe the ways in which Black Mainers have contributed to community life and culture in Maine.
- Students will answer questions about information from secondary and primary sources through close looking and hypothesizing.
- Students will examine and analyze primary source documents, art, and objects, and use the sources provided to draw informed conclusions and ask informed questions about the Black community in Maine and the United States.

**Vocabulary:** stevedores; probate inventories; hack; racism; discrimination; eugenics

This lesson uses the term Black when referring to people of African descent and African Americans. Not all Black people are from Africa, and "African American" does not encompass the Black people from around the world who have come to the United States as recent immigrants.

**Steps:**

Presentation:

1. If your classroom/school has a land acknowledgement, MHS recommends beginning this lesson with a land/water acknowledgement. More information in Teacher Resources at the end of this packet. It is also important to remember that land taken through colonization also supported the industries and people who also profited from slavery.
2. Share and discuss the following overview of Black history in Maine with students, showing them images from the accompanying [slide show](#). Ask students to take notes and encourage them to record and/or share their thoughts and questions. As appropriate, take time to examine the slide show images to discuss each historical item and its connection to the history being explored. Acknowledge that this is a history and community that has roots going back centuries in Maine and one that some students may already be familiar with and may themselves be a part of.
3. Acknowledge that it would be impossible to cover every aspect of Black history in Maine in just one lesson over one to several days and that the stories of Black people in Maine should not and will not be confined to one lesson; it is a topic and a community students will encounter multiple times as they study history. This lesson can serve as an introduction to or review of the topic, as a resource to return to and use throughout a curriculum or unit of study, and as

jumping off point for researching a variety of stories in conjunction with a curriculum that explores the many different stories of the many different people who have called what is now Maine their home for thousands of years.

a. Black people have lived in Maine for at least 400 years. The first recorded Black person in what is now Maine was Mathieu da Costa, an interpreter for French explorers Pierre Du Gua Sieur de Monts and Samuel de Champlain. They were part of an exploring party that set up camp on St. Croix Island and Port Royal, New Brunswick in 1604. Da Costa is believed to have been fluent in Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, Mi'kmaq and pidgin Basque. Dr. Antonius Lamy was a Black man living in Maine in 1672 who may have been Maine's first doctor. (slide image: [Champlain's map of Saco Bay and the Saco River, 1605](#))

b. Many of the Black people in Maine in the 1600s and 1700s were enslaved and Maine was very connected to the slave trade. Profits from enslaving people and the labor of enslaved people helped build many of Maine's businesses and coastal communities. Maine shipbuilders and merchants participated in the slave economy through the trading of lumber, molasses, and rum. Susannah, an African woman who was about 20 years old when she was brought to Maine in 1686 as an enslaved person, is the first recorded African slave in Maine. In the colonial era in what is now southern York County (Kittery, Elliot, Berwick, and South Berwick), as many as 500 enslaved people were brought to the area by 186 white enslavers. In 1753, there were 21 enslaved people living in the greater Portland area, Maine's largest city. Free Blacks also lived in Maine during the colonial period, many arriving as seamen, working on ships that came into Portland and other ports, and as **stevedores**, loading and unloading cargo from ships along the waterfront. By 1764, the number of Blacks in Portland had increased to 44, while there were 322 Blacks living in Maine. Richard Earle of Machias was Maine's first recorded Black patriot who led the capture of the British ship *Margaretta* off Machias in 1775 during the American Revolution. (slide images: [William Pepperrell receipt for purchase of enslaved man, 1718](#); [Bill of lading for slave, 1719](#); [Bill of sale for slave Scippio, 1759](#))

Pause to review an essential question with students - ***How was Maine connected to and how did it benefit from slavery and the slave trade?*** - and to check if they have questions they would like to ask or observations they would like to make.

c. From the 1650s to 1820, Maine was a part of Massachusetts. In 1783 Massachusetts determined that slavery was illegal, although this did not mean immediate freedom for enslaved Blacks in Massachusetts or Maine. While there were no enslaved people in Massachusetts listed on the federal census of 1790, other records such as wills and **probate inventories** (lists of the belongings of a person made after their death) show that a small number of individuals continued to essentially be held in slavery in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The 1790 census lists 96,540 residents in Maine, 538 of whom were non-white "free persons." In 1820 Maine was admitted to the union as a free state, with the entrance of Missouri as a slave state. This arrangement, known

today as the Missouri Compromise, was meant to keep the balance in Congress between the number of states that allowed slavery and states that were free. That same year a federal law was passed that made participation in the slave trade an act of piracy. Importing newly enslaved people from other nations had been outlawed since 1808, but this new law made it a capital offense punishable by execution. However, many Mainers and ships out of Maine continued to engage illegally in the slave trade and domestic slavery itself was still legal in much of the U.S. White Americans also felt that it was acceptable to continue importing enslaved people from Jamaica and other Caribbean countries. Around 1782, an enslaved woman named Sarah Peters was brought to Warren, Maine on a ship owned by Captain James McIntyre. After slavery was outlawed in Massachusetts, Sarah successfully sued for her freedom and married a Revolutionary War veteran, Amos Peters. Amos was from Plymouth, Massachusetts and had Wampanoag and African ancestry. Together, Sarah and Amos settled near South Pond in Warren where they raised a large family. The settlement became known as Peterborough. By the 1820s, more than 50 members of the Peters' extended family were living at the settlement. They had their own schoolhouse and a lot of good, farmable land. Peterborough became the largest Black community in the state, with as many as eighty-two people living in the village between the 1850s and 1860s. (slide images: [Thomas Reed to Thomas Robison regarding the Caribbean economy and slave market, Sint Eustatius, 1791](#); ["The Owners Ship Eagle in Account Current with Henry Skinner," 1791](#); [Thomas Robison from Thomas Hodges regarding illegal slave trade, Les Cayes, April 6, 1791](#))

d. Many Blacks lived in Maine in the 1800s after slavery became illegal in the state but before the Civil War brought an end to slavery everywhere in the U.S. Of those not born in Maine, some were freed Blacks who came from Southern states, while others may have escaped slavery. Many of them worked as seaman, farmers, homemakers, drivers, hotel owners, seamstresses, restaurant keepers, shipbuilders, cooks, laundresses, fishermen, lobsterman, and doctors. Robert Benjamin Lewis was born in Pittston in 1802. He held three United States patents, including one for a machine used to caulk the seams of wooden ships to make them watertight. Lewis also wrote the first world history book from the viewpoint of Black and Indigenous people, *Light and Truth*. Reuben Ruby became the agent in Portland for *Freedom's Journal* in 1827, the first Black-owned newspaper published in New York City. The *Freedom's Journal* editorials attacked slavery and encouraged free Blacks to push for equal treatment in their communities. Ruby became the first **hack** (horse-drawn taxi) driver in Maine in 1829. Ruby was also involved in Maine's anti-slavery organization, the American Association of the Free Persons of Colour, which connected him to the Negro Convention Movement, several conventions held by Blacks that called for abolition and equal rights. He later worked at the Portland Customs House. Narcissus Matheas, a native of Cape Verde, came to Bangor in 1834. He owed a delivery business and at one time had seven wagons delivering baggage and express packages in the city. He also owned and drove a nine-seater coach (the first owned by a private individual in Bangor) and was the first man in Bangor to deliver ice to individual customers. Macon Bolling Allen of Portland became the first Black lawyer in the United States in 1844. He later moved to Boston

where he became the first Black person to become a Justice of the Peace. (slide images: [Reuben Ruby hack ad, Portland, 1834](#))

e. Many Black Mainers found economic and personal success in Maine, but still often faced **racism** (prejudice directed against a person or group of people on the basis of their racial or ethnic group), and **discrimination** (unjust and unfair treatment of people on the grounds of characteristics such as race, age, sex, or sexual orientation). On September 19, 1826, Christopher Christian Manuel, Reuben Ruby, Caleb Jonson, Clement Thomson, Job L. Wentworth, and John Siggs published a letter in the *Eastern Argus* newspaper condemning the Second Congregational Church in Portland for treating non-white members as second-class citizens. At the time, pews in the church were segregated; Black people had to sit in the balcony and were generally discouraged from attending services. Everyone who attended services at the parish was also expected to pay for their pews. Between 1828-1831, Portland's Black community incorporated the Abyssinian Congregational Church and built the Abyssinian Meeting House. The home of an active congregation for 86 years from 1831 to 1917, the Meeting House was both a place for worship, and cultural center for Blacks in Portland, hosting abolition and temperance meetings, speakers and concerts, conventions and meetings, and a school for Black students from the mid-1840s through the mid-1850s. The Meeting House served as a stop on the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. When the passenger steamship *Portland* went down in a storm in 1898 off the coast of Massachusetts, all the passengers and crew were lost, including 19 Black crew members from Portland, who worked as seamen and in food service onboard the vessel, some of whom may have been members of the Abyssinian congregation. The loss was a significant one to the Black community in Portland. The Abyssinian Meeting House is Maine's oldest African-American church building, and the third oldest meeting house in the United States. (slide images: [Abyssinian Church, Portland, ca. 1890](#); [Creation of the Abyssinian Congregational Church, Portland, 1835](#))

Pause again to review essential questions with students - ***How did Portland's Black community respond to racism in local churches in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?*** ***What role did the Abyssinian Meetinghouse play in the community?*** - and to check if they have questions they would like to ask or observations they would like to make.

f. Slavery would ultimately come to an end in all of the United States with the Civil War, 1861-1865. About 80,000 men from Maine, including Black men, served in the military during the Civil War, a higher proportion of citizens than any other state. Three cousins from the Peter's family - Daniel W. Peters, Dexter Peters, James Peters – joined the 14th Rhode Island Heavy Artillery, a Black regiment, together. Several others from the Peterborough community joined the conflict as well, some fighting in Black regiments, others in white. Peterborough lost many young men during the war. It is estimated that about 9,400 men from Maine died in Civil War service. Many formerly-enslaved people came to Maine after the Civil War. Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, General Oliver Otis Howard of Leeds, was responsible for integrating the newly freed Black people into a way of life that was alien and often hostile. General Howard was

also responsible for relocating George Washington Kemp and his family in 1865. Kemp had served with Charles Howard and his older brother, General Oliver Howard after escaping his enslavement in Virginia. Kemp told the story of his journey, saying that he and, *"Seventeen other slaves slyly abandoned their master's plantation and enlisted in the army under command of Gen. O.O. Howard. Mr. Kemp, after remaining in service three years, gained the admiration of the General and was persuaded by him to come North to Maine and live, and take care of his farm, on which resided his mother."* General Howard also brought Julia McDermott, a former enslaved person, to Maine with her two children at the end of January 1864. Julia served as cook for Lizzie Howard and her four children in Augusta. At the end of November 1865, Julia married Frederick Brown at the Howard home. Brown, also a former enslaved person, had come to Maine with an officer of the 15th Maine Infantry in 1864. (slide image: [John Nichols, Lewiston, ca. 1873](#); [George Washington Kemp, Leeds, ca. 1890](#))

g. Malaga Island, located at the mouth of the New Meadows River in Phippsburg, was home to a mixed-race fishing community from the 1860s to 1912. The community faced tough times in the early 1900s; the economy was in poor shape and the **eugenics** movement was gaining acceptance. Believers in eugenics thought that only people with certain physical and mental abilities should have children and that people who were poor and struggled in society did so because of their heritage and genes. Eugenics was often used to justify racism and discrimination, and the taking of valuable resources from those who had little power. With many believing that those who lived on Malaga were inferior, that it was wrong for people of different races to have families together, and with hopes of building a summer resort on the island, the state of Maine evicted and forcibly removed 47 residents from their homes, sterilizing and institutionalizing one family at what is now Pineland Farms, and exhumed and relocated the dead who were buried on Malaga to Pineland. (slide images: [Malaga Islanders with missionary, 1909](#))

h. In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in Maine grew under the leadership of F. Eugene Farnsworth. The KKK is a white supremacist terrorist group that was first formed after the Civil War and that used violence and intimidation to take away the rights of African Americans. By the 1920s, the KKK's was also actively working against and spreading hatred for immigrants, Jews, and Catholics. In Maine, the Klan held parades and gatherings, campaigned for politicians who shared their beliefs, and worked for legislation that would limit religious freedom. By 1923, the Klan reportedly had statewide membership of 150,000, or 23 percent of Maine's population. The Klan saw a decline in membership and became less visible by 1930, but never completely left Maine; in 2017 the Ku Klux Klan left neighborhood watch recruiting flyers in Freeport and Augusta. (slide images: [Ku Klux Klan procession, Portland, ca. 1923](#)).

i. The Black community in Maine is one that is steadily growing and one that makes significant contributions to Maine's culture and economy. With an influx of Irish immigrants who took over many of the seafaring and dockworker jobs and a general decline in many of the industries where Blacks worked, Portland's Black population declined until World War II, when two shipyards in South Portland needed workers.

Gerald Talbot was born in Bangor in 1931 and served in the U.S. Army in the 1950s. A civil rights activist, he attended the 1963 March on Washington and helped organize the Portland chapter of the NAACP, of which he would later serve as the president. Talbot moved to Portland after he was discharged from the army and his family often struggled to find housing. He was instrumental in the passage of the Maine Fair Housing Bill in 1965 and also travelled throughout the country to help people register to vote and to connect and work with other civil rights leaders. In 1972 Talbot became the first Black person elected to serve in the state of Maine in the House of Representatives. In February 2020, the Portland School Board voted unanimously to change the name of Riverton Elementary School to the Gerald E. Talbot Community School in his honor. His daughter, Rachel Talbot Ross, also served as president of the Portland branch of the NAACP and in 2016 was the first Black woman elected to the Maine Legislature. Other Black Mainers who have served in elected office include Augusta mayor William Burney, Portland mayor Jill Duson, mayor of Lewiston and mayor Auburn John Jenkins, state Senator Craig Hickman, and city council members Angela Okafor (Bangor), Safiya Khalid (Lewiston), Claude Rwaganje (Westbrook), Pios Ali (Portland), Spencer Thibodeau (Portland), and Deqa Dhalac (South Portland). (slide image: [Black Power banner, Waterville, 1970](#))

Pause again to review essential questions with students - ***What are some examples of the racism and discrimination that Black Mainers have faced in Maine's history? What are some examples of ways the community has succeeded despite that discrimination and responded directly to it?*** - and to check if they have questions they would like to ask or observations they would like to make.

j. Black people and Africans continue to come to Maine in the 20th and 21st centuries; some as immigrants, others drawn by colleges, the landscape, employment opportunities, and family. Many African refugees and asylum seekers, fleeing war in their home countries, have settled in Maine where they feel secure. For over 20 years, these "New Mainers" have helped to revitalize the state, especially in Lewiston, the second-largest city in Maine, where many Somalians and Bantus have decided to live and flourish. This influx of New Mainers has helped to significantly boost Maine's 21st century economy, with immigrant businesses generating \$48 million in annual revenue in 2017. Black Mainers also continue to work for equality and to fight racism in Maine and the U.S. The Black Lives Matter movement began gaining momentum in 2013 to protest police violence and racially motivated violence against Black people and as a call to criminal justice reform. Statistics show that Black Mainers are disproportionately more likely to be arrested and jailed for drug-related offenses than Whites and that people of color are disproportionately more likely to be stopped by police and to face the use of lethal force. Black Lives Matter protests have been held in cities and towns across the state including Deer Isle, Portland, Augusta, Kittery, Waterville, and Bangor. In 2020 the Lewiston City Council passed a resolution opposing excessive use of force by police and calling for equal treatment under the law. The resolution called for the city to conduct anti-bias and de-escalation training for police and explicitly affirmed and



acknowledged that “Black Lives Matter”. (slide images: [Ismail Ahmed, Lewiston, 2009](#); [George Floyd mural, Portland, 2020](#))

Pause again to review essential questions with students - ***What are some examples of the racism and discrimination that Black Mainers have faced in Maine’s history? What are some examples of ways the community has succeeded despite that discrimination and responded directly to it? In what ways have Black and African America immigrants contributed to community life in Maine? How has the Black community thrived in Maine?*** - and to check if they have questions they would like to ask or observations they would like to make.

4. Check for student understanding with review questions:

Review questions:

1. Approximately how many enslaved people were brought to southern Maine in the colonial era (that we know of)?
2. What was the Missouri Compromise?
3. Why was the Abyssinian Congregational Church created in Portland? In what ways was the meetinghouse the center of Portland’s Black community?
4. What happened to the community of Malaga Island in 1912?
5. How have immigrant businesses helped Maine’s economy?

Suggested research and further exploration activities:

1. Ask students to consider what they have learned/already know and to use primary sources available on Maine Memory Network and the Library of Congress to answer the questions *“How have notable Black Mainers worked for and impacted equality in Maine and in the United States? Can you think of other examples of a person or a group of people who stood up for equality and civil rights?”*
2. Ask students to learn more about the stories of some of the individuals highlighted in this lesson (Ruben Ruby, Sarah Peters, Amos Peters, Gerald Ross, Rachel Talbot Ross, etc.) and create a classroom exhibit on the lives, work, and contributions of Black Mainers. Ask students to consider, *“Why are there so few resources related to Black people in Maine as opposed to White people?”*
3. Juneteenth (June 19), a holiday that marks the end of slavery in the U.S. and celebrates African-American culture has long been observed by Black and African Americans, but only officially became a holiday in Maine and the United States in 2021. Mark the holiday as a class by learning more about the history behind the holiday and traditions involved in the celebration.



## Teacher Resources:

**Tips for Acknowledging Indigenous Land/Water:** Acknowledgement is a relatively recent practice, and is ideally practiced as a respectful way to address the Indigenous inhabitants of what is now North America, acknowledge human and non-human relatives, address the ongoing effects of the structure of settler-colonialism, emphasize the importance of Indigenous sovereignty and self-governance, and help students be aware and conscientious of the fact that we are living on unceded Native Homelands. Land/water acknowledgements are best developed through meaningful connections; acknowledge with respect and use a format that lets you speak from the heart. Making connections with neighbors of a Nation near to where you live is one of the best places to start when creating a land acknowledgement from the heart. Talk with your school administrators and colleagues about creating a land acknowledgement at the institutional level.

Great online resources with more information can be found here:

- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_CAyH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00aig/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_CAyH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00aig/view)
- <https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement/>
- [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/mainewabanakireach/pages/1311/attachments/original/1617062949/Land\\_Acknowledgment\\_Resources\\_2021.pdf?1617062949](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/mainewabanakireach/pages/1311/attachments/original/1617062949/Land_Acknowledgment_Resources_2021.pdf?1617062949).

For information about the Nations nearest where you live/teach, a good starting point is the map at: <https://native-land.ca>

What we know of as “Maine” today is part of the unceded Homelands of the Wabanaki peoples. “Wabanaki” translates into English as the “Dawnland,” with the Wabanaki peoples being the People of the Dawnland, meaning those who see and greet the first light of the day. They share common oral histories and belong to Algonquian/Algonkian language groups, but have unique languages.

**About Wabanaki Nations:** We encourage you and your school to reach out to the Native communities in Maine to expand your learning. More information about the four federally-recognized tribal communities in Maine can be found here:

- The Aroostook Band of Micmacs: <http://www.micmac-nsn.gov/>
  - Micmac Tribal Government: [http://micmac-nsn.gov/html/tribal\\_government.html](http://micmac-nsn.gov/html/tribal_government.html)
- The Houlton Band of Maliseets: <http://www.maliseets.com/index.htm>
  - Maliseet Tribal Government: <http://www.maliseets.com/government.htm>
- The Penobscot Nation: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/>
  - Penobscot Tribal Government: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/index.php/8-%20about/81-tribal-facts>

- The Passamaquoddy Tribe

- Indian Township (Motahkomikuk): <https://www.passamaquoddy.com/>
- Pleasant Point (Sipayik): <http://www.wabanaki.com/>
- Passamaquoddy Tribal Government:  
[http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki\\_new/chief\\_council.html](http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/chief_council.html)
- Passamaquoddy Joint Tribal Council:  
[http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki\\_new/joint\\_council.html](http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/joint_council.html)

The Abenaki are the fifth Wabanaki tribe today; however, the Abenaki are not a federally-recognized tribe as of 2021. Not all Tribal Nations that exist in North America today have received federal recognition, and not all Native Nations seek federal recognition but this does not diminish their sovereignty. There are no tribes in New Hampshire or Vermont that, as of 2019, have received federal recognition, but four tribes in Vermont have received state recognition. Federal recognition provides a federal relationship between Indigenous sovereign nations and the US government. Tribal Nations throughout North America are sovereign nations, and actively MHS: Healthcare History Page 17 of 19 work to maintain their self-governance. Federal recognition is not related to Tribal Nation sovereignty; it affords certain rights to Indigenous peoples within the laws of the United States. It is important to recognize that not all Wabanaki people live in what is now Maine, and not all Indigenous peoples living in what is now Maine today are Wabanaki. Native and non-Native people alike live throughout Maine, the United States, Canada, and countries around the world. Maine as we know it today exists within unceded Wabanaki Homelands; the federally-recognized tribal communities in Maine own trust land throughout the state as presented through treaties.

**About Maine Historical Society:** Maine Historical Society (MHS) is the third-oldest state historical society in the United States, following Massachusetts and New York, respectively. Founded in 1822, only two years after Maine separated from Massachusetts and became a free state as part of the Missouri Compromise, MHS today is headquartered at 489 Congress Street in Portland. The campus contains an office building and museum, the Brown Research Library (est. 1907), and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the childhood home of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. An enormous online database containing digitized images and objects from MHS's robust collection can be found online at Maine Memory Network: <https://www.mainememory.net/> Teachers can create free accounts on Maine Memory Network to save images to albums for classroom use. MHS's mission: "The Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine: the stories of Maine people, the traditions of Maine communities, and the record of Maine's place in a changing world. Because an understanding of the past is vital to a healthy and progressive society, we collect, care for, and exhibit historical treasures; facilitate research into family, local, state, and national history; provide education programs that make history meaningful, accessible and enjoyable; and empower others to preserve and interpret the history of their communities and our state."

**Exhibits:** [Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine](#); [State of Mind: Becoming Maine](#); [400 Years of New Mainers](#); [Blacks in Maine](#); [Reuben Ruby: Hackman, Activist](#); [Slavery's Defenders and Foes](#); [A Convenient Soldier: The Black Guards of Maine](#)

**Primary Sources:** [Maine Memory Network](#); [Library of Congress](#)

**Publications:** *Lives of Consequence: Blacks in Early Kittery & Berwick in the Massachusetts Province of Maine* by Patricia Q. Wall (Portsmouth Marine Society, 2017); *Maine's Visible Black History: The First Chronicle of Its People* by H H. Price and Gerald E. Talbot (Tilbury House Publishers, 2006); *Black Bangor: African Americans in a Maine Community, 1880-1950* by Maureen Lee (University of New Hampshire Press, 2005)

**Videos and Podcasts:** [Life of a Klansman](#); [The Coming of the Invisible People](#); [Fighting Time](#); [Lives of Consequence with Patricia Wall](#); [African Americans & the U.S. Government During and After the Civil War](#); [Begin Again Curator Panel](#); [Doing One's First Works Over: Imagining a New America](#); [Dividing the Faith: The Rise of Segregated Churches in the Early American North](#); [Becoming Maine](#); [The Maine and Missouri Crisis: Maine Statehood and the Politics of Slavery](#); [It's A Family Affair: A Personal Conversation about Black History in Maine](#); [A Convenient Soldier: The Black Guards of Maine](#); [Freedom's Woods: The African American Community of Peterborough in Warren, Maine](#)

**My Maine Stories:** [My Family and Malaga Island](#); [Dancing through barriers](#); [Black Lives Matter Protest, Portland Maine](#); [Black Is Beautiful](#); ["My Africa Book" and living in Portland](#); [Shax and laxoox: tea with milk and Somali bread.](#); [Somali Bantu farmers put down roots in Maine](#); [Portland cuisine supports health in West Africa](#); [How to prepare Paquet de poisson a la vapeur](#); [Cape Verde and the Doctrines of Discovery](#); [Maine and the Atlantic World Slave Economy](#);

**Organizations:** [Abyssinian Meeting House](#)

## Strands and Standards:

**Social Studies – History, 6-8:** Students draw on concepts and processes using primary and secondary sources from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and the world.

- **History 1:** Students understand major eras, major enduring themes, and historic influences in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world by: **(F1)** Explaining that history includes the study of past human experience based on available evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources, and explaining how history can help one better understand and make informed decisions about the present and future. **(F2)** Identifying major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States and various regions of the world. **(D2)** Analyzing major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States and various regions of the world. **(D4)** Making decisions related to the classroom, school, community, civic organization, Maine, or beyond; applying appropriate and relevant social studies knowledge and skills, including research skills, and other relevant information.
- **History 2:** Students understand historical aspects of unity and diversity in the community, the state, including Maine Native American communities, and the United States by: **(F1)**

Explaining how both unity and diversity have played and continue to play important roles in the history of Maine and the United States. **(F2)** Identifying a variety of cultures through time, including comparisons of native and immigrant groups in the United States, and eastern and western societies in the world. **(F3)** Identifying major turning points and events in the history of Maine Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in Maine, the United States, and other cultures in the world. **(D1)** Explaining how both unity and diversity have played and continue to play important roles in the history of the World. **(D2)** Comparing a variety of cultures through time, including comparisons of native and immigrant groups in the United States, and eastern and western societies in the world. **(D3)** Describing major turning points and events in the history of Maine Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in Maine, the United States, and other cultures in the world.

**Social Studies 9-Diploma – History:** Students draw on concepts and processes using primary and secondary sources from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and the world.

- **History 1:** Students understand major eras, major enduring themes, and historic influences in United States and world history, including the roots of democratic philosophy, ideals, and institutions in the world by: **(F1)** Explaining that history includes the study of the past based on the examination of a variety of primary and secondary sources and how history can help one better understand and make informed decisions about the present and future. **(F2)** Analyzing and critiquing major historical eras: major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of the United States and the implications for the present and future. **(D2)** Analyzing and critiquing major historical eras: major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of the world and the implications for the present and future. **(D4)** Making a decision related to the classroom, school, community, civic organization, Maine, United States, or international entity by applying appropriate and relevant social studies knowledge and skills, including research skills, ethical reasoning skills, and other relevant information.
- **History 2:** Students understand historical aspects of unity and diversity in the United States, the world, and Native American communities by: **(F1)** Identifying and critiquing issues characterized by unity and diversity in the history of the United States, and describing their effects, using primary and secondary sources. **(F2)** Identifying and analyzing major turning points and events in the history of Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in the United States, making use of primary and secondary sources.