

**Date completed:** February 11, 2020

**Title of lesson plan:** Why is Maine the “Pine Tree State?”

**Author:** Brittany Cook

**School:** Maine Historical Society

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**County:** Cumberland

**Email address:** [bcook@mainehistory.org](mailto:bcook@mainehistory.org)

**Phone number:** (207) 774-1822 ext. 205



**Content Areas:**

- Career & Education Development
- English Language Arts
- Health Education & Physical Education
- Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- **Social Studies**
- Visual & Performing Arts
- World Languages

**Strand and Standard:**

- Social Studies, Kindergarten: Geography 1, 2; History 3
- Social Studies, Grade 1: Geography 1, 2; History 2
- Social Studies, Grade 2: Geography 1, 2; History 3

**Duration:** 1 day

**Grade Levels:** K-2

**Materials and Resources Required:** computer, projector, map of Maine, accompanying Maine Memory Network slideshow (available on lesson plan detail page, prompts included in packet) and (optionally) images of Maine State animals and plants (included in packet)

**Summary/Overview:** *What will students learn? What is the purpose? (ie. Objectives/Learning Targets)*

This lesson plan will give students in early elementary grades a foundation for identifying the recognizable animals and natural resources of Maine. In this lesson, students will learn about and identify animals and plants significant to the state, and will identify what types of environments are best suited to different types of plant and animal life. Students will have the opportunity to put their own community wildlife into a large-scale perspective.

- **Big Idea:** The "State" animals, plants, and other symbols of Maine reflect important parts of Maine's history and environment.
- **Essential Questions:**
  - What is an ecosystem?
  - Which of Maine's "state" animals and/or plants can be found in your local ecosystem?
  - Why is the pine tree important to Maine?
- **Objectives:**
  - Students will be able to identify iconic Maine animals and plants.
  - Students will be able to put Maine "state" animals and plants in the contexts of their own environments and in the ecosystem nearest the student's school/community.
  - Students will demonstrate understanding of their community environment by naming local plant and animal life.
- **Vocabulary:** *apiary, ecosystem, environment, habitat, landlocked*

**Steps:**

**I. Introduction**

- a. *(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.)*
- b. **Show** MMN item #66109 to begin lesson.
- c. **Show** MMN item #11777. **Say** that Maine is sometimes called the "Pine Tree State."  
**Ask** if students can identify a pine tree/if they have ever seen a pine tree.

**II. Look at Maine State \_\_\_\_\_ and identify as group**

- a. Where in Maine do these things grow/live?
  - i. **Maine State Tree: White Pine – Show** MMN item #17346
    1. Have you ever seen a White Pine tree before? Where? Do White Pine trees grow near your town? How do you know?
    2. White Pine trees grow throughout the Northeast. The sap can be used for many different purposes, including as an adhesive. White Pines are the largest type of conifer tree.
    3. In the 1600s and 1700s, English businessmen would cut down Maine pine trees to use as masts for their ships. Men who worked for King George would carve a symbol on pine trees to show which trees they intended to cut down and use as masts for English ships. Today, White Pines are often sold for timber and as Christmas trees.
    4. Maine has 17 million acres of forest. It has the highest percentage of woodland area out of any state in the country.
  - ii. **Maine State Flower: White Pine Cone and Tassel – Show** MMN item #11284
    1. Have you ever seen a White Pine cone before? Where? Do White Pine cones grow near your town? How do you know?
    2. Pinecones and pine needles can be made edible! Pine needles can be used in tea.
    3. White Pine cones grow on White Pine trees. Seeds grow in the pine cones – when you see a pinecone that is open, it means it has released the seeds. The *tassel* is the grouping of long needles on the tree's branches. White Pine tassels grow in groups of five.
  - iii. **Maine State Animal: Moose – Show** MMN item #22504
    1. Have you ever seen a moose before? Where? Do moose live near your town? How do you know?
    2. Maine is one of the only Northeastern states with moose populations. Maine's moose are a smaller species than moose species that live in Canada.
    3. Moose live in forested and swampy areas. Moose can swim and even dive.
  - iv. **Maine State Bird: Black-Capped Chickadee – Show** MMN item #33891
    1. Have you ever seen a chickadee before? Where? Do chickadees live near your town? How do you know?

2. Chickadees are songbirds; their song sounds like their name. They live throughout the northern U.S. and Canada.
3. The black-capped chickadee is also the state bird of Massachusetts. Maine used to be part of Massachusetts until 1820. Today, we share a state bird.

**v. Maine State Insect: Honeybee – Show MMN item #33924**

1. Have you ever seen a honeybee before? Where? Do honeybees live near your town? How do you know?
2. Honeybees live throughout North America. A farm or section of a farm that keeps beehives and takes care of honeybees is called an *apiary*.
3. Honeybees harvest pollen from different plants, and this is made into honey in the bees' hive. Honey will be different colors and have different tastes based on the kind of pollen/plant a bee harvested it from. Have you ever had honey from a farm (apiary) in or near your town/community?
4. Honeybees are endangered. Some people are planting local pollenating wildflowers and other plants to encourage a healthy bee population. It's important for the flowers to be local, because plants that are used to a different environment might take over the soil and make it harder for the local plants to grow and for the bees to find the right flowers.

**vi. Maine State Fruit/Berry: Wild Blueberry – Show MMN item #1467**

1. Have you ever seen a wild blueberry bush before? Where? Do wild blueberries grow near your town? How do you know?
2. Wild blueberries grow throughout Maine, even on Maine islands.
3. Wild blueberries have been foraged and harvested in this area for thousands of years as part of peoples' diets, and are used in many well-loved recipes still today.

**vii. Maine State Fish: Landlocked Salmon – Show MMN item #104677**

1. Have you ever seen a landlocked salmon before? Where? Do landlocked salmon live near your town? How do you know?
2. Landlocked salmon live in fresh, rather than salt, water, and can be found throughout Maine in ponds and lakes. They are related to Atlantic salmon, which live in the ocean (salt water).

**viii. Maine State Cat: Maine Coon Cat – Show MMN item #103777**

1. Have you ever seen a Maine Coon Cat before? Where? Do any Maine Coon Cats live in or near your town? How do you know?
2. Maine Coon Cats are large and friendly, and are the oldest breed of domestic cat in New England. They have long, thick fur, which is good for the cats in the winter.
3. Maine Coon Cats were common on Maine farms, especially in the 1800s. They get along well with people and other animals, and have some dog-like qualities.

- b. **Discuss:** Why do you think we call these our "state" animals and plants?

- c. **Discuss:** What are some other animals or plants that we see a lot of in Maine/in our part of Maine?
  - i. *Lobsters* like cold salt water, and can be found along the Maine coast in the Gulf of Maine. **Show** MMN item #99125.
  - ii. *Harbor seals* can be found all along the Maine coast, and were one animal important to the Wabanaki-European fur trade starting in the 1500s. Parts of the seals could be processed as oil for lamps, and their fur provided warm, water-resistant clothing. **Show** MMN item #11235.
  - iii. *Potatoes* have been harvested in Maine for hundreds if not thousands of years. Aroostook County is especially well known for potato harvests. Potatoes are root vegetables, which means they grow underground. **Show** MMN item #11125. **Show** MMN item #7490.

**III. Short Discussion: What is an ecosystem?**

- a. Maine is home to many different kinds of ecosystems. Ecosystems are all the moving parts of a particular environment, from the people, animals, bodies of water, and trees to soil, bugs, and plants. About 15,000 years ago, glaciers receded from the area that we now know as Maine, leaving behind certain soil and mineral deposits, vast lake and river formations, and other ideal conditions for the plants and animals we see today.
  - i. **Show** MMN items #10823, #19108, and #7439.
- b. How do the animals, plants, land, and water near your town interact? Think about what plants, insects, and smaller animals the larger animals might eat, or what parts of the land and water function as homes for certain animals. Do you live near the coast? Near a river? Near a lake? Near lots of big, open fields? Near a forest? What types of animals and plants can you find there? What does the water and land look like? Are there lots of rocks? No rocks? Lots of trees? No trees, or not very many? How many of the "Maine state" animals and plants are part of your local ecosystem?
- c. What do you think you know about your local ecosystem?
- d. What do you still wonder about your local ecosystem?

**IV. Activity Options:** Classroom teachers can reinforce what was discussed in the lesson using any single activity or combination of activities below.

**a. Activity 1: Full-Group Discussion**

- i. Which animals live in your town/community?
  - 1. Why do you think they live here? What type of environment does your town/community provide for those animals that make it a good place for them to live?
- ii. What kind of plants do you see in your town/community?
  - 1. Why do you think they grow here? What time of environment does your town/community provide for these plants that make it a good place for them to grow?

**b. Activity 2: Draw**

- i. Take a look at the pictures of the Maine State animals and plants and think about what their ecosystems are. How many of them live/grow in the same kind of environment? Illustrate a Maine ecosystem that includes at least one of the Maine State animals or plants.

- c. Activity 3: Maine Animal Charades**
  - i. How do you think Maine state animals move and sound? Play a round of Maine animal charades, and see if you can guess what animal your classmate is acting as!
- V. **Wrap-up: Show** MMN item #105596. Why do you think Maine is called the "Pine Tree State?" Where do White Pine trees grow? Would you call Maine the state of something else? If so, what and why?

Teacher Resources: "Maine State" Images



Maine State Animal – Moose



Maine State Bird – Black-Capped Chickadee





Maine State Tree – White Pine



Maine State Flower – White Pine Cone & Tassel





Maine State Insect – Honeybee



Maine State Berry – Wild Blueberry



Maine State Fish – Landlocked Salmon



Maine State Cat – Maine Coon Cat

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<https://pixabay.com/service/terms/>

## Teacher Resources

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF):

<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/index.shtml>

Maine.gov kids' page with further information about Maine State animals, plants, symbols, and more:

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/kids/about/symbols>

Maine Memory Network online exhibits:

- *Holding Up the Sky: Wabanaki People, Culture, History and Art:*  
[https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2976/page/4665/display?use\\_mmn=1](https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2976/page/4665/display?use_mmn=1)
- *Blueberries to Potatoes: Farming in Maine:*  
[https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/161/page/420/display?use\\_mmn=1](https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/161/page/420/display?use_mmn=1)
- *Maine Eats: The Food Revolution Starts Here:*  
[https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2768/page/4399/display?use\\_mmn=1](https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2768/page/4399/display?use_mmn=1)
- *Big Timber: The Mast Trade:*  
[https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/283/page/546/display?use\\_mmn=1](https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/283/page/546/display?use_mmn=1)

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife: Landlocked Salmon:

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/fisheries/species-information/landlocked-salmon.html>

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife: Moose: <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/species-information/mammals/moose.html>

Cat Fanciers' Association: Maine Coon Cats: <http://cfa.org/Breeds/BreedsKthruR/MaineCoon.aspx>

Tate House Museum: <https://www.tatehouse.org/>

- Home of Senior Mast Agent for the British Navy, Captain George Tate (1700-1794), who oversaw the harvesting of white pine trees for ship masts.

## 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 Wabanaki Homeland. 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.

A great online resource 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). For information about the nations nearest where you live/teach, a good starting point is the map at: <https://native-land.ca>

The peoples who live in what is now Maine and the surrounding regions are collectively the Wabanaki, or, "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 the Wabanaki:** We encourage you and your school to reach out to the tribal 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/>
  - o 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>
  - o Maliseet Tribal Government: <http://www.maliseets.com/government.htm>
- The Penobscot Nation: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/>
  - o Penobscot Tribal Government: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/index.php/8-about/81-tribal-facts>
- The Passamaquoddy Tribe
  - o Indian Township (Motahkomikuk): <https://www.passamaquoddy.com/>
  - o Pleasant Point (Sipayik): <http://www.wabanaki.com/>
  - o Passamaquoddy Tribal Government: [http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki\\_new/chief\\_council.html](http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/chief_council.html)
  - o 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 2019. Not all Tribal Nations that exist in North America today have received federal recognition. 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 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.

All of Maine's federally-recognized tribes own land base 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."

**Strands and Standards:**

- **Social Studies – Geography:** Students draw on concepts and processes from geography to understand issues involving people, places, and environments in the community, Maine, the United States, and the world.
  - **Kindergarten, Geography 1:** *Students understand the nature and basic ideas of geography by identifying questions about their world and explaining that geography is the study of Earth's surface and peoples.*
  - **Kindergarten, Geography 2:** *Students understand the influence of geography on individuals and their immediate surroundings by identifying the impacts of geographic features on individuals and families.*
  - **Grade 1, Geography 1:** *Students understand the nature and basic ideas of geography by gathering information about their immediate neighborhood and community, including maps, photographs, charts and graphs, and then create visual representations of their findings.*
  - **Grade 1, Geography 2:** *Students understand the influence of geography on communities by identifying the impacts of geographic features on communities.*
  - **Grade 2, Geography 1:** *Students understand the nature and basic ideas of geography by using basic maps and globes to identify local and distant places and locations, directions (including N, S, E, and W), and basic physical, environmental, and cultural features.*
  - **Grade 2, Geography 2:** *Students understand the influence of geography on individuals and groups in Maine, including Maine Native Americans, the United States and the world by identifying the impacts of geographic features on individuals and groups in those communities.*
- **Social Studies – 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.
  - **Kindergarten, History 3:** *Students understand historical aspects of uniqueness and commonality of individuals and groups, including Maine Native Americans, by explaining how individuals and families share both common and unique aspects of culture, values, and beliefs through stories, traditions, religion, celebrations, or the arts.*
  - **Grade 1, History 2:** *Students understand historical aspects of the uniqueness and commonality of individuals and groups, including Maine Native Americans by explaining how individuals and families share both common and unique aspects of culture, values, and beliefs through stories, tradition, religion, celebrations, or the arts. Students organize findings at a developmentally appropriate manner and share gathered information using oral and visual examples.*
  - **Grade 2, History 3:** *Students understand historical aspects of the uniqueness and commonality of individuals and groups, including Maine Native Americans, by describing traditions of Maine Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups and traditions common to all.*

**Teacher Resources – Assessment Rubric:**

*Did the student meet the expectations of the lesson?*

Task	1 – Did Not Meet	2 – Partially Met	3 – Met	4 – Exceeded	Notes
Student can describe what an ecosystem is.					
Student can recognize and name some of Maine’s most well-known animals and plants, and express why they are important to the state and environment.					
Student participated respectfully in classroom discussion/activities.					
Student can put Maine “state” animals in plants in context with their own local ecosystem.					

<p><b>Total Score and Notes:</b></p>
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