



LESSON:

CONNECTING FOOD AND CULTURE
OF THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE

DURATION: 40 MIN

Lesson: Connecting Food and Culture of the Wampanoag Tribe

Duration: *One 40-minute session*

Section 1: Framework

Essential Questions

- Where does food come from?
- What does a person need in order to grow their own food?
- How does growing food connect you to where you are from and your culture?
- How do the foods we eat impact our health?
- What can we do to improve our health?

Lesson Objectives

- Students will make connections between food and culture.
- Students will analyze what is needed in order for a community to produce their cultural food.
- Students will be able to identify corn and other healthy foods important to the Wampanoag diet.
- Students will explore that when people have the ability to exert choice over what they eat and how it's produced, health is positively impacted.

Context

Food is a part of our everyday lives; the foods we eat nourish us and give us our energy and health.

- How much choice do we have over what we eat?
- What factors influence the foods we eat and where they come from?

Through the lens of the Mashpee Wampanoag experience, lesson participants will reflect on these questions and on the way that individuals and communities relate to food.

Standards


PRIMARY

Massachusetts Health Standard 3.7: Through the study of Social Influences students will describe how food choices are influenced by availability, individual and family preferences, media, and background, and identify health foods within various social groups.


RELATED

Massachusetts Science Standard 3.LS.4.4: Analyze and interpret given data about changes in a habitat and describe how the changes affect the ability of organisms that live in that habitat to survive and reproduce.

Materials

 Slides: Food and Culture of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

 Writing utensil

 Worksheet: How does food and culture connect?

Section 2: Activities

1. Lesson Preview (5 minutes)

Provide a preview for students. Let them know that today the class will be learning about local Native Americans, the Wampanoag tribe, and their relationship to the land and food. This is a good time to check for prior knowledge and to ask questions that stimulate connection-making.

2. Slides: Food, Culture and the Wampanoag Tribe (20 minutes)

Next, read through the slides. Encourage students to utilize close reading strategies to make meaning of the text. Check for understanding to ensure students understand this text, as it references people, key terms, and concepts that may be unfamiliar to students. Utilize questions for reflection and discussion worksheet, as time allows and as appropriate, to help build a more meaningful connection between students and content.

Use this link to listen to the accompanying story: "[A Mashpee Wampanoag woman reconnects with a traditional corn](#)"

3. Reflect and Discuss (10 minutes)

Review the discussion questions with the group (using the accompanying worksheet). For each of the questions, invite students to reflect and respond individually to these questions in anticipation of sharing out to a small group or to the whole group. Once students have had adequate time to reflect, you may wish to discuss students' reflections aloud, in small groups or as a whole group. Check that students understand the key ideas touched upon by these questions, namely the

relationship between the Wampanoag's land and access to culturally relevant and nutritious foods.

4. **Apply and Close** (5 minutes)

Close by applying the connection between food and culture to students' context. As a group, consider: What foods and recipes are important to my culture? What foods are important for me to eat to be more healthy?

Ask and Assess. Who around us has influence over the foods we eat? Encourage each student to make an individual-specific list of the people or groups of people who shape their food habits. *Influencers might include: parents, guardians, or family members; local grocers or store owners; members of a local homeowners or renters association; members employed by the school district's food service department; local farmers or producers; etc.*

Brainstorm. Post the following questions for the class to brainstorm around:
What foods are important to us? *Answers might include: specific foods, 'foods my family eats', local foods, foods that are nutritious, foods that I like to eat, foods that taste good, etc.*

What can we do to engage with these people so that we have more of a say over the foods we eat? *Examples include: initiate or help out with a home or neighborhood garden; send a letter or email to the district's food service department to request specific changes; contact a local farmer or producer about food buying and/or distribution programs; etc.*

Section 3: Lesson Extensions

- Learn more about the three foods at the center of the Wampanoag diet: corn, squash, and beans. [Watch a video](#) to learn how to plant these utilizing the Three Sisters method. [Read an article](#) to better understand how these crops provide essential nutrients to the human body.
- Want to learn more about the Wampanoag people? [Read more](#) about the Wampanoag tribe. Have time for an in-person or virtual field trip? Consider reaching out to [Plimoth Patuxet](#) in Plymouth, MA and scheduling time to speak with the museum's Indigenous Museum Educators.
- Encourage students to interview parents or other family members. What foods are important to them and/or represent cultural traditions or beliefs? Consider gathering recipes or stories about foods into a form that students can share.