

Evaluating Resources



Abbe Museum

Tips for Teaching about the Wabanaki

LD291: What is it and how does it affect your classroom?

In January of 2001 the state of Maine passed LD291, an *Act to Require Teaching of Maine Native History and Culture in Maine Schools*, which requires Wabanaki content be taught in at least one grade from 6-8th grades and be integrated into the curriculum from 9th-12th grade starting in September 2003. Further changes have led to the creation of learning results across all grade levels. For more information about LD291 we recommend Donna Loring's paper "The Dark Ages of Education and a New Hope: Teaching Native American History in Maine Schools," published in the *New England Board of Higher Education*, June 1, 2009, 16-17.

http://www.nebhe.org/wp-content/uploads/2009-Summer_Loring.pdf

Where do I start looking for accurate information?

Let's face it, with the advent of the World Wide Web there are literally millions of pages on any given topic. Start your research by looking for information on the tribal websites. The Abbe Museum's website also contains a list of vetted resources broken down by grade level and specific topics. If you are looking to meet or interact with members of the different Wabanaki communities, each tribe offers community days that are open to the public and include dancing, food, and learning opportunities. The Abbe Museum also offers a number of public lectures and demonstrations throughout the year. Some tribes have their own museums which are open to the public and occasionally have public events.

How do I evaluate my sources?

You found a website, book, pamphlet, etcetera, but how do you know if it is a good one? One great resource is the Oyate website, oyate.org. Under the resources tab there are a number of criteria you can use, and their book *Broken Flute* offers constructive critiques of resources such as books and videos.

Textbooks can be a real challenge: not all textbooks contain accurate information on Native people. For example, a textbook used in Maine states that Native people built their birchbark canoes by first creating a wooden frame and then lashing birchbark to the outside. This description is not accurate—Wabanaki canoe builders actually first create a birchbark envelope and then insert the ribs and planking inside the bark before lashing the birchbark to the gunnels of the canoe and sealing it with a combination of tree sap and animal fat.

Take a critical look at the information and use some of the educator resources listed on the Abbe Museum's website to verify the accuracy of the information presented in your textbook.

The Abbe's education staff may also be available to help you review a copy of your textbook or source document.

When reviewing your source information, think critically about the following:

Word choice of concern:

- Does the author use culturally insensitive words such as squaw, buck, brave, savage, papoose, or wild as a wolf, primitive, or unclean?
- Does the language used portray Native Americans as being unintelligent or less intelligent than Europeans?
- Does the author make it sound as though without European intervention, the Native Americans would surely have died?
- Does the language used make it sound as if Native American people no longer exist?
- Are Native Americans portrayed as lacking a good grasp of their own history because they didn't have a written language?
- Do the Native characters speak in complete sentences or in broken English?
- Is their speech natural? Would the same sentence sound natural coming from someone of another race?
- Are the characters given nonsensical sounding names?
- Are there too many generalizations, or does the information give you a concrete picture of the events described?

Instead look for text that:

- Portray Native Americans as being a resilient people and in a positive light.
- Make it clear that Native Americans are still here and are incredibly diverse in their history, culture, and contemporary lives.

Illustrations:

- Are women wearing Plains style headdresses? This is a problem because in Plains cultures, a woman in a headdress can be considered very offensive—the war-bonnet headdresses were traditionally reserved for men. Men were gifted the headdresses for their acts of honor and bravery. In Wabanaki culture, upright feather headdresses were worn only by men and typically reserved for the Chief. In modern times if a woman were to be elected Chief the tribe could decide to allow her to wear the upright headdress as part of her ceremonial regalia.

- Are they always running around naked? Pre-contact Wabanaki clothing consisted of breechcloth, leggings, along with either a robe attached at the shoulders or a tunic style shirt for men. Women wore both long dresses with leggings or skirts with leggings and a similar style “shirt” to that of the men. In the winter, long fur robes were worn over clothing. Wabanaki people were known for their brightly colored and intricately decorated clothing. For example, peaked caps, quilled collars and cuffs, etc. Clothing was made out of deer, moose, otter, and beaver skins. Furs of aquatic mammals were highly desired for winter clothing because they are naturally waterproof.
- Are they living in tepees made from animal hides? Only Plains Indians made tepees from animal hides. Wabanaki wigwams are made with birchbark.
- Are animals and non-Native children dressed up as Indians? Dressing non-Native characters or animals as Indians trivializes the cultural significance of regalia and creates the impression that Native regalia is nothing more than a costume. See sections titled *Have you chosen your words correctly?* and *Activities to steer clear of* for more information.
- Do Native Americans have an unnaturally red skin color? There is a wide variety of skin tones across Native communities, from dark skinned to very fair complexion. Red is not a natural skin color for anyone.

Actions of the characters:

- Are the non-Native characters always saving the day? Wabanaki people, as well as Native communities across the United States, lived and thrived for thousands of generations before the arrival of Europeans. They did not need to be saved by Europeans.
- Do Indian men have to complete some amazingly daring feat to be considered a man?
- Do women have to do all the day-to-day chores and work while men do nothing? Wabanaki society has a very egalitarian social structure with men, women, and children all working together to supply needed resources for their survival.
- Are men portrayed as the decision makers? Before colonization, women in Wabanaki society had a great deal of power and influence, especially compared to the European cultures at that time. Women were important decision-makers. Descent was traced both through the mother’s and father’s lines. It was more common for a newly married couple to reside with the woman’s family than the man’s. Colonization had long-term negative impacts on the role of women in

Wabanaki cultures, as Europeans did their best to impose a highly patriarchal social structure. Even with this imposition, however, Wabanaki women remained important decision makers in their families and communities, and continue to do so today.

For example, in Passamaquoddy communities the women were the decision-makers of the household, while it was the men's job to communicate and enforce any decisions made. The Chief answered to the Clan Mothers (the matriarchs of each clan or family), and was responsible directly to them. Only the Clan Mothers could decide to remove a Chief from office and break the hereditary line. Quite literally, the Clan Mothers were "the power behind the throne." Chiefs were not typically permitted to make decisions on behalf of the entire tribe.

- Are the Native characters portrayed as being subservient to all other characters? Such portrayals reinforce colonial ideologies. No nation or ethnic group should be considered subservient to another.

Perspective: All written text comes with certain author bias, so it is often necessary to know something about the author to judge the resource.

- Does the author have the authority to speak about the community they are writing about? This arguably is a hard thing for most of us to determine and may require using Google to search for the author's name to see what types of articles or reviews have been written from the Native perspective.
- Are Native Americans portrayed as contributing to the success of western civilization? There are many historical examples which show native communities, across the United States, assisting European explorers and settlers with wayfinding and everyday survival. Without Native American assistance many more would have perished.
- Are both sides of a historical account given equal weight or is one side of the issue trivialized? Often historical accounts omit the names of either tribal leaders or tribal members while at the same time including all the names of all others involved. Historical accounts often leave out any mention of assistance given by Native groups during armed conflicts, establishment of new colonies, or overland travel.

- Also consider when the source was written since out-of-date sources will reflect out-of-date perspectives and possibly inaccuracies that have since been corrected.

What should I keep in mind when I create my own activities for the classroom?

The number one question to ask is: Would this activity still be ok if applied to a different ethnic group? Remember that Wabanaki people have thriving communities today, so it is important not to leave them in the past. Present your students with information about how the Wabanaki live today and what issues they face in their communities.

Have you chosen your words correctly?

Use	Don't Use
<p>Wabanaki people reside in Maine</p> <p>Native Americans in Maine</p>	<p>Maine's tribes</p> <p>Why: Wabanaki tribal territories extend far beyond what we now consider the state of Maine. Also the “s” denotes possession and Wabanaki people are not something that can be owned by Maine.</p>
<p>When talking about Koluskap or events which are passed down orally from one generation to the next : Oral Histories , Oral Tradition, Traditional Stories</p> <p>Why: Oral traditions include origin stories that tell how the Wabanaki and the world came to be; they also include tales, and songs that define society and tell people how they should live.</p>	<p>Myth</p> <p>Why: The connotation here is that these are events or people who cannot be proven to have taken place, have no factual basis, and are made up.</p>
<p>When showing pictures of people in traditional dress : Regalia</p> <p>Why: Denotes a traditional style of clothing or ornamentation worn at</p>	<p>Costume</p> <p>Why: The word implies that those wearing the clothing are merely</p>

<p>certain times. This clothing or ornamentation may be passed down from generation to generation and evolves over the course of the person’s life.</p>	<p>pretending to be a member of that tribe or group and the clothing is not part of their ongoing life. It also implies that anyone can put on the same outfit and that would make them Indian.</p>
<p>When describing pre-contact movements of Wabanaki people throughout the year: Seasonal Round</p> <p>Why: This is an annual prescribed pattern of movement in the acquisition of food.</p>	<p>Nomadic</p> <p>Why: This generally refers to people who moved from place to place following the movement of animals and did not have a long-term home location.</p>
<p>Intergenerational Trauma</p> <p>Why: Governmental policies and experiences have ongoing and lasting effects. The effects of these experiences resonate across generations.</p> <p>Good Resource: <i>Intergenerational Trauma: Convergence of Multiple Processes among First Nations Peoples in Canada</i>- See references for how to access this article.</p>	<p>Historical Trauma</p> <p>Why: Views on the use of this term vary. Members of the Wabanaki Truth and Reconciliation Commission feel the use of the adjective “historical” creates a perception that it was trauma which happened in the past and it no longer a problem.</p>
<p>There is no acceptable alternative.</p>	<p>Pure Blood, Half-blood, Quarter Blood</p> <p>Why: These are quantifiers given to people, by governmental officials, as a way to determine who was and was not eligible for treaty benefits and governmental benefits. The use of these terms also creates an unjust hierarchy and creates a false impression that a certain blood quantum makes a person more or less Native American.</p>

Activities to Steer Clear of:

- Any discussion where students are asked to debate whether or not Wabanaki or any tribal groups should be considered sovereign nations or what types of sovereignty tribal groups should have.

Why: From the first contact with Europeans, Native people in Maine and across the country were treated as sovereign nations and treaties were created outlining the responsibilities each group had to one another. In an effort to negate these agreements and to further force assimilation policies, the United States government has, with no authority or notice to the tribe themselves, attempted to negate tribe's sovereign status. This created a lengthy legal process to defend their tribal sovereignty which in some cases still continues to this day.

Instead consider discussions about the impact on Wabanaki people and tribes resulting from misunderstanding of what sovereignty is, both at the individual and governmental level.

- Dressing up like Indians.

Why: Native American clothing and regalia are important parts of their cultural identity, and are often important symbols of an individual's role in their society. Using these as a costume, or for role play, stereotypes and trivializes identity.

One particularly offensive appropriation of Native American identity that is still all too common is non-Native people wearing a feathered headdress. This reinforces stereotypes and lumps all native cultures into one overall look. Headdresses carry both a great spiritual significance and are passed onto those, mainly men, who have proven themselves through actions and deeds to be worthy of the honor and responsibility which comes with being given a headdress.

In Plains cultures, a woman in a headdress can be considered very offensive, as the war-bonnet headdresses were traditionally reserved for men.

- Art activities where students copy a motif or decorative style specific to another culture.

Why: The harm caused by cultural appropriation is an ongoing struggle in Native communities. Cultural appropriation is the taking or “adopting” of parts of a culture by another cultural group. This appropriation is sometimes done by force. What an outside culture may see as simply a set of geometric designs colored in a certain way may in fact have a deep cultural significance which is only understood by members of that Native community. Patterns can be specific to family groups and are handed down from generation to generation.

- Roleplaying.

Why: These types of activities can be useful learning tools, however it needs to be made clear to students that the group they are representing and the talking points which they are discussing are real and have lasting repercussions in modern day communities. Roleplaying also has the potential to create cultural appropriation by perpetuating the idea that being an Indian is something you can accomplish, not something you are born into. At no time should students dress up like Native Americans. This same standard should be applied to all cultures.

- Activities which over romanticize one aspect of Native culture.

Why: This reinforces stereotypes and further diminishes the complexity of Native cultures and leads to over-generalizations.

Topics Not to be Discussed in the Classroom

- Discussion of Spirituality.

Why: Native spirituality is protected by its true practitioners and reserved for those who are part of the practicing group. This is different from other world religions who often work to bring more people into their religious communities. The large majority of Native American religious practitioners and groups do not want to bring outsiders in to their spiritual practices, and this should be respected. Additionally Native spirituality is often based on one’s own personal connection to the Creator, so Native spirituality can vary greatly from person to person.

An alternative to talking about spirituality would be to look at the differences between the way the Wabanaki view the world around them versus how Euroamerican cultures generally view natural resources. Wabanaki believe they have a responsibility to use the Earth's resources wisely because everything is interconnected. For example, by advocating for tougher pollution controls on the Penobscot River they are protecting not only the people, but also all other organisms which depend on the river such as the fish, insects, birds, trees, and everything downstream as well.

This sense of stewardship can be traced back to a promise Wabanaki people made to Koluskap when they were created. Koluskap would create the Wabanaki on the condition that they would be the caretakers of the Dawnland; breaking that promise would mean losing the gift of life, as Koluskap would take it back.

This contrasts greatly with the common viewpoint of non-native cultures that natural resources are there to be used to advance society regardless of the long-term potential impacts.

When undertaking this type of discussion with students it is important for this idea to be presented in such a fashion that it does not romanticize the Wabanaki perspective and further reinforce the stereotype of the environmental Indian. It may be good to have older students read Wabanaki articles or letters to the editor surrounding court cases, such as elver fishing and the Penobscot River case, to get a better feel for how this stewardship idea is put into practice. You might also follow Dawnland Environmental Defense on Facebook to see Wabanaki perspectives.

Evaluating popular textbooks and other source materials used in Maine schools

Abbe Museum education staff has reviewed Maine textbooks and other resources and we have identified several specific pieces of incorrect or misleading information. Additional reviews will be added to this document in the future.

Stockwell, Mary. *A Journey through Maine*. Salt Lake City: Utah, 2005.

What the Book Says	Wabanaki perspective/corrected information
On page 32: “No one knows what became of the Red Paint People. Eventually, another group appeared in Maine.”	From the Wabanaki Perspective: The Red Paint people and those people who followed are the ancestors of modern day Wabanaki people and did not disappear.
On page: 36: “Most of the Wabanaki built cone-shaped wigwams”	From the Wabanaki Perspective: Conical wigwams were made more as temporary shelters when out hunting. Wigwams made for longer use were likely dome-shaped (wikuwams). Also, with the increase of tourism in Maine, tourists responded more to the wikuwams that looked like tipis.
On page 37: Life in Winter “There were many days when the families went hungry.”	From the Wabanaki Perspective: There is a misconception that life during the winter months was a constant fight against starvation, but the truth of the matter is Wabanaki spent much of the year gathering foods to be eaten during the winter months. Clams, mussels, fish, and harbor seals were hunted and collected to be smoked or dried during the summer months. Foods such as corn, beans, and squash were traded for by non-farming northern Wabanaki communities, and wild plant foods such as berries were gathered and dried. Berries were made into soup-like jams or jellies, to be eaten by the spoonful or used as a sweetener for meats, teas, etc. Bigger game like moose and deer were more often hunted in the winter months. It was easier to track moose during the winter. The way Wabanaki communities were structured favored the sharing and distributing of resources evenly among community members, ensuring everyone had something to eat. There may have been times where resources may have been scarcer than others, due to climate fluctuations or normal population fluctuations of plants and

	<p>animals, which may periodically cause times of starvation, but this was far from the norm in the winter. Plus, Wabanaki people also often stored food in birchbark containers and buried them underground in the fall, to be retrieved in the spring when food was running out.</p>
<p>On page 38: “They made a frame from young trees and then covered the frame with birchbark.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: Canoes are made by first harvesting a single piece of birchbark 16 to 25 feet in length. The Wabanaki then formed gunnels and thwarts and use this shape to form the birchbark envelope. Once the envelope and gunnels/thwarts have been lashed together with spruce roots, the decking boards are shaped and placed one at a time overlapping in the middle. When the decking is in place, the ribs are added. The ribs and decking boards are designed for one or two ribs along with a few decking boards to be removable and replaced in order to repair damage, which happens during use. Once the hole had been repaired the decking and ribs were replaced. Any seams are then sealed with a combination of animal fat and tree sap. In modern time bees wax is also added to the animal fat and tree sap mixture.</p>
<p>On page 38: “They also made heavier dugout canoes for fishing on lakes and the ocean.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: Birchbark canoes were used on river, lakes, and the ocean to travel out to the islands off the coast of Maine. The ocean—going canoes were often 20 feet in length and capable of carrying 600 to 700 pounds.</p> <p>In 2003, remnants of a dugout canoe were found on a New Brunswick beach. Scientists using various dendrochronology tests determined it to be made from white pine cut down on 1557. There is also evidence of dugout canoes being made and used by Wabanaki people along both eastern Canada and the eastern United States in some of the</p>

	<p>early explorer’s writings.</p> <p>While there is evidence of this type of canoe being used in the past, during the last 3,000 years birchbark canoes were widely used on all bodies of water.</p>
<p>On page 39: “They wove birchbark strips into beautiful baskets. “</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: One of the great properties of birchbark is that it is waterproof. Containers made from birchbark were done from a single piece of bark which was folded in such a way that it created water tight seams.</p> <p>Woven baskets were made from strips of brown ash, cedar bark, and basswood bark.</p>
<p>On page 39: “Once he became the sakom, he usually served for the rest of his life.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: Back before colonization and the change in the structure of tribal governments, a tribal chief’s position was dependent on his upholding the values of the tribe and protecting and providing for his community. Chiefs were still expected to serve for life, but the tribe still had the right to remove him from office before his death. If he was removed from his position, the next Chief would typically be a brother, nephew, or someone similar, in order to keep the position within the same hereditary line.</p>
<p>On page 39: “When the Tribe was about to go to war, this chief stood in the center of the village. He held a red club in his hand and asked other men to come to war with him.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: To declare war, a wampum belt was cast to the ground by a tribal official during a council meeting.</p> <p>Allied war chiefs and their followers would feast together before going to war against a common enemy. During this time they would form a war council to discuss options and if they agreed to fight war Chiefs were chosen and strategies were agreed upon.</p>

	<p>There is no evidence for ten men being lead into battle by a war leader.</p>
<p>On page 40: “The Wabanaki believed in a Great Spirit. Many tribes called him <i>Manitou</i>”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: Wabanaki people still believe in the Great Spirit. While <i>Manitou</i> is a term used among many Algonquian cultures it is not a term used by the Wabanaki. Wabanaki people refer to the Great Spirit as "kci-niwesq," and "kelowosit," depending on the tribe.</p>
<p>On page 41: History Told in Colorful Shells</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: Wampum was made from chipping out portions of quahog clam shells, both white and purple. The shell beads were not dyed colors—they were left in their natural state. Woven wampum belts were created to be used as a mnemonic or memory device and were sent with a messenger to another tribe along with a verbal message.</p> <p>Wampum was one of the many things Wabanaki people traded for, but it was never used as money. The idea of wampum being used as money is strictly a European construct .</p> <p>Wampum was an important trade item, so much so that Europeans actively traded with Native American groups near Cape Cod for premade Wampum beads to trade with the Wabanaki. Wampum beads were sought after by the Wabanaki because they symbolized a pledge of honor, and it was often used to communicate messages among tribes. The</p>

	<p>geometric patterns woven into some wampum belts were meant to recall important events such as oral histories, treaties, and agreements. These belts were brought back and forth from important events and passed down from generation to generation.</p> <p>The Wampum Reader or Carrier was also considered to be a spiritual position in the tribe, as only a certain <i>motewolon</i> would be gifted with the ability to read wampum. It was believed that whatever was spoken over the wampum belt would be remembered by the belt itself—with these memories only accessible to the Wampum Reader who received messages from each individual bead.</p>
<p>On page 121: Keeping Customs Alive</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective:</p> <p>The first paragraph implies Wabanaki people chose to leave rather than deal with the implications of Maine breaking away from Massachusetts. Wabanaki people did not "retreat" to reservations. Reservations are a European construct which was imposed on the Wabanaki people who chose to stay in their homelands and preserve their traditions at whatever cost.</p> <p>The second Paragraph implies that only the Micmac preserved their traditions, when in reality all Wabanaki Nations have worked very hard in the face of adversity to be able to keep their traditions alive. All Wabanaki people wore bright clothing and did quillwork—it is often attributed to the Micmacs specifically, but that downplays the presence of these traditions among the other Wabanaki Nations. Also, historians and art collectors often did not bother to research</p>

	<p>where quillwork came from—it was just labeled as Micmac, because that was what they knew, much in the same way that any birchbark art made before 1920 is automatically attributed to Tomah Joseph, even though his son, grandson, and other artists were making birchbark pieces during the same time period.</p> <p>The third paragraph perpetuates the idea that Indians are poor, dirty, and unable to care for themselves—but, oddly, still good at art. Furthermore, being presentable was an important part of Wabanaki culture—they would not have dressed in rags, regardless of how "poor" the rest of society deemed them to be.</p>
<p>On page 226: “Many of Maine’s Indians lived with a sense of hopelessness that drove them to drink.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: While there are problems of substance abuse among the Wabanaki tribes, the causes are complex and stem from generation after generation of oppression and forced assimilation by the dominant society.</p>
<p>On page 227: “At first, most of Maine’s Native Americans were happy with the settlement.”</p> <p>“...they had been able to retain their culture. Now they were becoming just like every other American.”</p>	<p>From the Wabanaki Perspective: This is a rather complex case and statements such as “most of Maine’s Native Americans were happy with the settlement” negates the rather vocal opposition by many tribal members to the acceptance of a settlement. There were Wabanaki who felt the settlement was fair, those who felt the tribes should continue to negotiate the terms of the settlement, and those who strongly and vocally opposed the terms outlined in the settlement.</p> <p>Even post settlement all Wabanaki tribes continue to keep their traditions and distinctive cultures alive and well. Tribes are reviving traditions and more tribal members are learning their traditional languages.</p>

Hassinger, Amy. *Finding Katahdin: An Exploration of Maine's Past*. Orono, Maine 2001.

What the Book Says	Wabanaki perspective/corrected information
On page 80: The description of the Wabanaki Confederacy.	From the Wabanaki Perspective: The exact origins and age of the Wabanaki Confederacy are unknown. There is evidence that it was created prior to European contact to protect the western Abenaki from Mohawk raids. Other theories suggest it was formed after European contact to secure control of inland trade routes. Regardless of its origins, the confederacy was a strong military and diplomatic force in the region. The Wabanaki Confederacy still holds annual meetings, with a different tribal community responsible for hosting the gathering each year.

Glossary

Algonquian Cultures: Native groups in central and eastern North America whose current languages share a common ancestral language, known as Proto-Algonquian.

Assimilation Policies: As series of governmental and institutional strategies designed to strip Native people of their languages, cultural beliefs, customs, and dress in an attempt to create a homogeneous society.

Breechcloth: Cloth used to cover the loins.

Clan Mothers: Among the Passamaquoddy, before the imposition of European political and leadership systems, the Clan Mothers were a sort of tribal council. They made tribal decisions, which a male Chief would then enact and enforce. The Clan Mothers were not elected—they were the matriarchs of each of the families, with the title being passed on to the descendant who was deemed most worthy. The next matriarch would most often be the daughter of the former, but not always. The Clan Mothers were meant to serve as a system of checks and balances for the Chief, preventing him from exercising too much power, and generally only the Clan Mothers could remove a Chief from office and appoint a new chief

outside of the former's hereditary line. This preferred system of leadership is reflected in Wabanaki oral traditions, but was not recorded by non-Native observers who would generally only see the male leader, without understanding the role of women. In modern times, the Clan Mothers have been replaced in official government systems by the Tribal Council, which is elected by popular vote of the tribe.

Cultural Appropriation: Taking intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone else's culture without permission.

Dawnland Environmental Defense: An alliance of Native and non-Native peoples united in the protection of the "Dawnland" with particular focus on the sacredness of water.

Dugout Canoes: A canoe made from hollowing out a large tree through the process of burning and chipping.

Elver: Young baby eel.

Kci-niwesq: A Passamaquoddy word referring to the Great Spirit.

Koluskap: Koluskap was the first man to come to the Dawnland—there were many creatures here, but humans had not been created yet. Travelling with Grandmother Woodchuck, who taught him how to live in the Dawnland, Koluskap was charged with the task of creating a race of people. First, he made the stone people, who were hard, cold, and cruel. Then, he shot one of his arrows into a brown ash tree, splitting it in half. From the split in the tree came Koluskap's children—the Wabanaki People.

Now, Koluskap is called a “culture hero” by most scholars. He is not the Great Spirit or the Creator, but someone who was sent by the Creator to carry out instructions: a demi-god, of sorts. Through many stories, Koluskap teaches the Wabanaki how to behave, how to treat their elders, how to treat their children, and how to protect their people—everything that they needed to know in order to survive in their home. Koluskap was known for making many mistakes in his adventures, so you could also say Koluskap teaches people how *not* to live.

Other spellings include Gluskap, Keloskape, Glooskap and Gluskabe.

Kelowosit: Passamaquoddy/Maliseet word roughly translated as “Creator”.

Leggings: Covering made of cloth or buckskin covering from the ankle to the hip and attaches to a cord worn around the waist.

Manitou: A term used among many Algonquian cultures to refer to the Great Spirit, however it is not used by the Wabanaki people.

Mnemonic: A device used to assist in remembering things.

Micmac: One of the four federally recognized tribes whose traditional territory covered areas of what we presently consider Maine and parts of Eastern Canada.

Mohawk: A Native American tribe from New York who are part of the larger Iroquois Confederacy.

Motewolon: A Passamaquoddy word meaning a person with extraordinary spiritual powers.

Passamaquoddy: One of the four federally recognized tribes whose traditional territory covered areas of what we presently consider Maine and parts of Eastern Canada.

Plains Cultures: Any Native American people inhabiting the Great Plains.

Pre-Contact: Time before the arrival of Europeans to North America.

Quilled Collars: A ceremonial piece worn by Chiefs over the shoulder and decorated with porcupine quills.

Quillwork: Textile embellishment traditionally practiced by Native Americans that employs the quills of porcupines as an aesthetic element.

Regalia: A type of ceremonial dress often passed down from generation to generation.

Reservations: Parcels of land to which many Native Americans were forced to relocate to as their traditional homelands were taken away from them by governmental agents.

Sakom: The leader of a tribe.

Sovereign Nation: Generally defined as a group of people which govern themselves independent of any foreign nation.

Tomah Joseph: A famous Passamaquoddy man known for his birchbark artistry, wilderness skills, and personal friendship with the Roosevelt family.

Treaties: A formal agreement made between nations.

Tunic style shirt: Loose fitting garment extending from the neck to the waist or knee and tied at the waist with a cord.

Wabanaki: The four federally recognized tribes whose homelands include Maine. The four tribes are Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Penobscot, and Passamaquoddy.

Wabanaki Confederacy: A political alliance among the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot people.

Wampum: A bead made out of the purple and white sections of a quahog clam shell. The primary function of wampum was to symbolize a pledge of honor, and it was often used to communicate messages among tribes.

Wikuwam: also frequently spelled **wigwam**; a traditional Wabanaki home, most often a dome shaped structure constructed with a series of poles bent over and lashed together with spruce root. This base was then covered with birchbark strips sewn together using spruce root.

References:

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