

Indians Who Met the Pilgrims

(Intermediate Grades)



In *Indians Who Met the Pilgrims*, children meet Wampanoag people of today and, through them, learn about the history and traditions of Wampanoag culture, simultaneously maintaining continuity from a time hundreds of years before the Pilgrims came, up to the present. Wampanoag people participated in the design of this kit and have contributed their sense of traditional culture, their family experiences, and their concerns about historical and contemporary events.

The unit is divided into sections based upon the way life was lived in Eastern Massachusetts in response to the seasonal changes in the land. The children use materials in a Wampanoag way, create crafts based on Wampanoag designs, cook seasonal recipes, evaluate historical situations from an Indian viewpoint, and role-play through several decision-making sessions.

Overview:

Each set of seasonal activities begins with a narration by a Wampanoag who describes life in traditional times. The narrator offers the children a selection of activities, both traditional and modern, which are appropriate to that season.

The first activity introduces, via a filmstrip, the people, the land, and the concepts that will be used

throughout the unit. Children then play the Environment Game, which describes the natural resources of Eastern Massachusetts around 1620. The seasonal activities follow.

Spring is the time when fish swim upstream and fresh greens are available. Children haft a fish hook; gather fresh greens using the Environment Game; cook fish; set up a fish trap; plant beans, corn, and squash in the Wampanoag way; weave Wampanoag style baskets; and compare an accurate fish trap model with an early settler's drawing.

Summer is the time to collect shellfish, catch salt water fish, and tend gardens. The children collect fish and set up a clambake using the Environment Game. They can make clam chowder or clam fritters, identify Wampanoag foods served in a restaurant, evaluate a historical situation in which lobsters are traded for beads, and make a Gay Head type pot.

Fall is the time to harvest foods and to hunt and trap. Children set up models of animal traps and read about early settler experiences with the traps, make deerskin leather, try on Indian clothing, dry foods, collect nuts and berries in the Environment Game, cook berry dishes, and discuss the Indian contributions to the First Thanksgiving and the meaning of the Thanksgiving holiday today.

Winter is a quiet season. Children haft an arrow, drill shells and string a necklace, listen to a Wampanoag storyteller, prepare sassafras tea, play the bowl game, and evaluate a historical situation in which Pilgrims take corn from an Indian storage pit.

Social and political life are important during All Seasons. Children learn about the role of the sachem and his councilors and act out a council meeting, listen to a description of contemporary political organizations, and hold a meeting to make a decision about a current problem affecting Indian people. Religious life is introduced in All Seasons. Children learn about the traditional role of the Pow Wow and how the meaning of this word has changed.

In a final evaluation children compare what they now know and feel about Wampanoag people, their culture, and their history with what they knew and felt about Indians before they began.

There are 65 activities which will provide from two to six weeks of class activity.