



HOME

The Story of Maine

Buried Treasure – Finding the American Revolution in Maine

Teaching Unit for Grades 4 - 6

TIME ALLOTMENT 2 class periods of 1 hour each, plus homework

OVERVIEW This series of lessons examines events relating to the American Revolution in Maine, with a particular emphasis on the Penobscot Expedition. The teaching unit is designed to insert Maine-related events into a broader American history curriculum focusing on the Revolution and requires some background knowledge about the war. The MPBN video *The Penobscot Expedition and the Revolution* incorporates well-known facts about the Revolution as background while offering details on events in Maine. Students will examine the role Maine played in the Revolution by doing a map exercise to locate the sites of major events in the state. They will also write a short story about the capture and escape of General Peleg Wadsworth.

SUBJECT MATTER History, social studies

LEARNING OBJECTIVES By the end of this teaching unit, students will:

- Place events in Maine within the larger context of the American Revolution.
- Learn about the Patriots, colonists who supported the Revolution, and the Loyalists who opposed it.
- Identify Maine sites and events that were significant during the American Revolution and create a map that includes these features.
- Use historic documents to learn about Maine during the Revolution and write a short story.



Maine Public Broadcasting Network



Elsie Viles

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CONNECTIONS TO STANDARDS

Maine State Learning Results

<p>SOCIAL STUDIES</p> <p>History</p> <p>A. Chronology: Students will use the chronology of history and major eras to demonstrate the relationships between events and people. Students will be able to:</p> <p>(Grades 3-4)</p> <p>2. Place in chronological order, significant events, groups, and people in the history of Maine.</p> <p>(Grades 5-8)</p> <p>2. Identify the sequence of major events and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and selected world civilizations.</p> <p>B. Historical Knowledge, Concepts, and Patterns: Students will develop historical knowledge of major events, people, and enduring themes in the United States, in Maine, and throughout world history. Students will be able to:</p> <p>(Grades 3-4)</p> <p>2. Demonstrate an awareness of major events and people in United States and Maine history.</p>	<p>(Grades 5-8)</p> <p>1. Demonstrate an understanding of the causes and effects of major events in United States history and their connections to Maine history, with an emphasis on events up to 1877.</p> <p>C. Historical Inquiry, Analysis, and Interpretation: Students will learn to evaluate resource material such as documents, artifacts, maps, artworks, and literature, and to make judgments about the perspectives of the authors and their credibility when interpreting current historical events. Students will be able to:</p> <p>(Grades 5-8)</p> <p>3. Use information from a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify and support a point of view on a controversial historical topic.</p> <p>5. Formulate historical questions based on an examination of primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts,</p>	<p>graphs, diagrams, and written texts.</p> <p>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS</p> <p>H. Research-Related Writing and Speaking: Students will work, write, and speak effectively when doing research in all content areas. Students will be able to:</p> <p>(Grades 3-4)</p> <p>2. Use print and nonprint resources to gather information on research topics.</p> <p>(Grades 5-8)</p> <p>5. Use magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, journals, and other print sources to gather information for research topics.</p> <p>6. Use search engines and other Internet resources to collect information for research topics.</p> <p>7. Make limited but effective use of primary sources when researching topics.</p>
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MATERIALS NEEDED

- MPBN video *The Penobscot Expedition and the Revolution*, from the series *HOME: The Story of Maine* (2004)
- Maine and the American Revolution: <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h557.html>
This site includes a short paragraph about the Revolutionary War in Maine within the context of larger history.
- Peleg Wadsworth's Great Escape:
<http://imaginemaine.com/Features/Archives/Wadsworth.html>
At this site, students can read an account of Peleg Wadsworth's capture and escape during the Penobscot Expedition.
- **Maine Memory Network:**
Letter from John Campbell to Sir Henry Clinton about Peleg Wadsworth's escape
 - A 1781 letter from British troops about the escape of Peleg Wadsworth is found here.Peleg Wadsworth letter to his wife, Betsey, about the Penobscot Expedition, July 31, 1779
 - This site contains a letter describing the action of American troops during the Penobscot Expedition.Peleg Wadsworth's letter to his wife, Betsey, Aug. 14, 1779, about the Penobscot Expedition
 - This site includes a letter describing the retreat of American troops during the Penobscot Expedition.
- Timeline from the Home Web site at MPBN:
<http://www.mpbnet.net/hometsom/timelines/1700s2.html>
The eighteenth-century portion of the Maine history timeline can be found here.
- *Finding Katahdin: An Exploration of Maine's Past*, by Amy Hassinger (Orono, ME: University of Maine Press, 2001). This document can be purchased at <http://shop.store.yahoo.com/mainehistorical/finkatexofma.html>. It comprises only about one page of reading, and there is a useful map of the Penobscot Expedition that will aid students in their understanding of the video.
- Current Maine map OR DeLorme's *The Maine Atlas and Gazetteer*
- Copies of each of the following reproducible handouts:
 - Student Handout 1: Story Preparation Worksheet (1 per student)
 - Student Handout 2: Writing Rubric (1 per student)

PREP FOR TEACHERS

1. Preview the video and note the stop cues.
2. Preview and bookmark each Web site listed above.
3. Make any necessary photocopies
4. Prepare a set of map plotting points for each group of two students. Use small, white adhesive dots that students can place on a map to mark a Revolutionary War site in Maine. Each group will need six dots labeled as follows:

P (for Portland or Falmouth)
Y (for York)
M (for Machias)
C (for Castine)
PB (for Penobscot Bay)
K (for Kennebec River)

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

Step 1 Introduce the topic of the Revolutionary War in Maine by having students visit <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h557.html>. Explain that this site offers a very brief synopsis of events in Maine within the context of well-known events of the American Revolution. Provide the class with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to list all of the Maine places mentioned in the video. (**Note:** If students do not have 1:1 or 2:1 access to computers, write the following list on the board, or distribute it to students as a handout:

Maine places:

Portland	York	Machias
Castine	Penobscot Bay	

Step 2 Next, direct the class to the Maine history timeline at the HOME: The Story of Maine Web site <http://www.mpbnet.net/hometsom/timelines/1700s2.html>. Provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** asking them to look for events between 1774 and 1779 on the timeline, and to add any new places in Maine that are mentioned to their lists. (**Note:** If students do not have 1:1 or 2:1 access to computers, this exercise can be done as a class with one computer and an LCD projector.)

Maine place to add to students' lists:

Kennebec River

Step 3 Divide the class into groups of two. Instruct each pair of students to locate the towns on their list on a current Maine map. (The DeLorme *The Maine Atlas and Gazetteer* is useful for this activity because it contains an index of towns, some of which are difficult to find simply by looking at the map.)

Now distribute a set of map plotting points to each pair of students. Tell them that they must find on their maps each of the Maine locations on their list. Direct students to use the white adhesive dots to mark each map location. Then ask, "Which sites are closest to the school and community where you live?"

Question the class as to whether anyone has visited one or more of the towns mentioned on their lists. Ask, "Did you know that some Revolutionary War events occurred so close to home?"

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Step 1 Explain that while several events of the American Revolution occurred in Maine, this series of lessons will concentrate on the Penobscot Expedition in Castine and the Penobscot River. To prepare students for the video, distribute copies of pages 101-103 in *Finding Katahdin*. Tell them that this brief description of the Penobscot Expedition will help them understand the video they are about to see.

Step 2 After students have finished reading the selection, discuss it as a class to check for comprehension. Ask:

- Why was Fort George important? (*Answer: It helped guard Nova Scotia; it gave the British control of the Penobscot River; it protected Loyalists from the Patriots*)
- Where was Fort George? (*Answer: in Castine*)
- When was the fort attacked by the British? (*Answer: 1779*)
- The Americans had more troops, but they lost this battle. Why did they lose? (*Answer: because they were poorly trained and equipped*)
- What did the British call Castine after they captured it? (*Answer: New Ireland*)
- Who were the Loyalists? (*Answer: They were colonists who did not support the Revolution and remained loyal to Britain.*)

Step 3 Introduce the video by telling the class that just over ten years ago, a Maine man found a relic from the American Revolution in the Penobscot River. This video, titled *The Penobscot Expedition and the Revolution*, looks at that discovery and examines how it relates to the Penobscot Expedition.

Give the students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to look for what Brent Phinney found in the Penobscot River in 1992. Ask, “How does this item relate to the American Revolution? How did he find it?”

START the video at the beginning. STOP when the narrator says, “To retaliate, the British burn Falmouth, and while their attempts to punish Machias fail....” The visual cue is Falmouth (Portland) burning.

Answers to the Focus questions above:

- Brent Phinney found a swivel gun (a type of cannon).
- The find was important because it had been used during the American Revolution and thrown overboard as a crew fled during the Penobscot Expedition.

Discuss how Phinney found the gun underwater. Conclude by saying, “He found an artifact over 200 years old in a Maine river. Isn’t this a kind of buried treasure? He found a piece of American history in our state, lying at the bottom of the river.”

Step 4 Tell the class that the next section of the video provides additional examples of how the people of Maine responded to the Revolution.

Provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking, “Who were the Loyalists? What did it mean to be a Loyalist?”

RESUME the video. STOP when the speaker says, "...he is still our king, and it's not for us to separate ourselves from him. We cannot do that."

Answers to the Focus questions above:

- The Loyalists were colonists who remained loyal to, or supported, the British during the Revolution. (The Americans, who favored independence from Britain, were often called Patriots.)
- Loyalists felt that the Americans (Patriots) couldn't win, because they were disorganized and inexperienced. More importantly, the Loyalists had sworn loyalty to the King of England and felt that they could not break that oath.

Ask students, "Would you have been a Loyalist or a Patriot?" Try to deepen their understanding of how important the Loyalists felt it was to uphold their oath. Then ask, "Why did the speaker say that an oath by a person who had broken a previous oath was worthless?"

Step 5 Ask the class to think back to the map exercise. Prompt them to remember where Falmouth (present-day Portland) and Machias were located. Tell students that these were major Revolutionary War sites in Maine.

Before resuming the video, give the class a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking, "Were the Americans prepared for war with the British? Why or why not?"

PLAY the video. STOP when the speaker says, "...I think it gives you a very tangible sense of the desperation that the Americans were enduring at the time."

Answers to the Focus questions above:

- No, the colonists were not prepared for war.
- The recruits were mostly either boys or old men with no skills; they had defective equipment; the British were well trained and well equipped.

(Optional Alternative) Before resuming the tape, adjust the television so that the screen is blank but the sound is still audible. Then provide students with this alternate **Focus for Media Interaction**: "Close your eyes and envision what it would be like to be a member of the Penobscot Expedition during this next scene. With no image on the screen, use your other senses to try to imagine what this experience might have been like."

RESUME the video. Proceed to the discussion, asking students to describe what they heard. Ask, "What did it sound like? Smell like? Feel like?" (See the envisioning exercise below.) Next, ask students to draw or paint their impressions of the scene. Then REPLAY the video with full image and audio and discuss how students' artwork compares with what they see on the screen.

Ask the class why they think the colonists used the defective weapon. (**Try to elicit this answer:** They had little money to fund weapons, so they had to use whatever was at hand. Perhaps they could not afford to throw even a defective gun away.)

Finally, prompt students to envision the scene in 1779. Ask, “What would it sound like? Smell like? Look like? What would someone have felt like in that situation?” (*Try to elicit this answer:* It was probably very loud, with lots of gunfire and yelling; the smell of gunpowder and smoke was probably overwhelming). Say, “Penobscot Bay is beautiful, but would you notice that at a time like this? What would you see instead? British ships? Wounded friends? How would the soldiers feel? Scared?”

(Optional Activity) Instruct students to write about this scene using the prompts above. They can write a short paragraph “snapshot” of the event, or they can illustrate a storyboard of four or five panels. This works especially well if any students have difficulty with written communication.

Step 6 Give the class their next **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking, “Why is the Penobscot Expedition significant for both Maine and Massachusetts? Watch this final section of the video to find out.”

RESUME the video. STOP at the end.

Answer to the Focus question above:

- The expedition was significant because Massachusetts had paid a lot of money to supply the expedition and was left with a big debt afterward. This debt knocked Massachusetts (and Maine) out of the Revolution, so that most of the final battles were fought in the south. Also, Massachusetts could not protect Maine despite the fact that it was a part of Massachusetts. This led the residents of Maine to see themselves as a separate people and set the stage for Maine statehood over forty years later.

Encourage students to think about how all they have learned from these activities fits in with what they already knew about the Revolution. Then ask, “What was life like for these people fighting for freedom against the British?” Discuss.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Step 1 Explain that Peleg Wadsworth, who was the grandfather of the Maine poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, was captured during the Penobscot Expedition. However, he made a daring escape. Tell students that they will be using some Web resources and original historic documents (also available online) to learn about Peleg Wadsworth. They will gather information about him in order to create their own short stories.

(Note: You should already have bookmarked the following Web sites in preparation for this teaching unit. Students can access these sites through individual classroom computers or in groups of two or more. Alternatively, the pages can be printed and distributed as handouts.)

Distribute Student Handout 1: Story Preparation Worksheet. Review the handout with the class. Tell students that they should take notes while reading about Peleg’s escape. (Assist students as they read, and help them to identify pertinent information.)

Source 1 Have students start with <http://imaginemaine.com/Features/Archives/Wadsworth.html>. This site offers an overview of Peleg’s story.

Source 2 Students can read letters from Peleg to his wife, Elizabeth. Then they can read a report by a British officer about Peleg's escape. Have students view the original documents at <http://www.mainememory.net/home.html>. They should read the following letters (transcriptions are available at the site):

- Letter from John Campbell to Sir Henry Clinton about Peleg Wadsworth's escape
- Peleg Wadsworth letter to his wife, Betsey, about the Penobscot Expedition, July 31, 1779
- Peleg Wadsworth's letter to his wife, Betsey, Aug. 14, 1779, about the Penobscot Expedition

Step 2 Reconvene the class to discuss the letters. Students can update and correct their notes during the discussion as needed.

Step 3 (**Note:** You may choose to assign the following activity either as homework or as a final in-class assignment.) Tell students that they will each be writing a short story about the Penobscot Expedition, focusing on Peleg's capture and escape. Distribute copies of Student Handout 1: Story Preparation Worksheet, and review the handout with the class. Explain that this chart will help them organize their information as they research and take notes on Peleg.

Encourage students to incorporate as much historical information as they want in their stories. However, remind them that, first and foremost, their stories must be well written and well organized, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. To help students organize and structure their work as effectively as possible, distribute copies of Student Handout 2: Writing Rubric. Review the handout with the class, clarifying as needed. Tell them to refer to this rubric regularly as they prepare and proofread their written work.

CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

English Language Arts

- Peleg Wadsworth was grandfather of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. This would be a good opportunity to conduct a poetry lesson that includes Longfellow's celebrated poem "Paul Revere's Ride," which describes the first day of the Revolutionary War. After reading the poem, have students write their own poems about the escape of Peleg, echoing Longfellow's style.
- While students are conducting the research for their short stories, teach a mini-lesson on how to cite sources properly. Talk about the importance of giving credit to people who have done the initial research, or noting where you got the information for a project so that readers can go to the original source. This lesson would relate to the Maine State Learning Results on research-related writing (English Language Arts, section H).

Art

Have students illustrate their stories about Peleg in art class. Encourage them to imagine what Peleg looked like. Tell them to draw pictures of Peleg's capture and subsequent escape.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Visit the Maine State Museum in Augusta with your students. The permanent exhibit titled “The Struggle for Identity” explores Maine life in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, beginning with King Philip's War in 1675 and continuing through Maine statehood in 1820. (Contact: 207-287-2301)
- Take students on a field trip to Tate House in Portland, Maine. This is the only pre-Revolutionary home in Greater Portland that is open to the public. With its unique architecture, impressive period furnishings, and beautiful grounds and herb gardens, Tate House offers an insightful glimpse at the eighteenth century and life in colonial Maine. (Contact: info@tatehouse.org)
- Students will also enjoy a visit to the Wadsworth-Longfellow House in Portland, Maine, built by General Peleg Wadsworth in 1785-1786. Peleg and Elizabeth Wadsworth raised ten children in the house before retiring to their family farm in Hiram, Maine, in 1807. The last person to live there was his granddaughter, Anne Longfellow Pierce. Mrs. Pierce, widowed at an early age, lived in the house until her death in 1901. Virtually all of the household items and artifacts are original to the Wadsworth and Longfellow families. Furnishings from the three generations illustrate changes in style, technology, and attitude over the course of the nineteenth century. (Contact: 207-774-1822)
- Consider a field trip to the Burnham Tavern Museum in Machias, Maine. Built in 1770, Burnham is the oldest building in eastern Maine and the only one with a Revolutionary War history. It is owned and maintained (since 1910) by the Hannah Weston Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (since 1977). (Contact: 207-255-4432 or Web site: www.burnhamtavern.com)

Student Handout 1

Story Preparation Worksheet **Directions:** Use this sheet to take notes while reading about Peleg Wadsworth's capture and escape during the Penobscot Expedition. You will be using this information to write your story.

Document or resource for story background	Main characters	Dates	Main events in story	Places	Important details
http://imaginemaine.com/Features/Archives/Wadsworth.html					
Letter from John Campbell to Sir Henry Clinton about Peleg Wadsworth's escape.					

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Document or resource for story background	Main characters	Dates	Main events in story	Places	Important details
<p>Peleg Wadsworth letter to his wife, Betsey, about the Penobscot Expedition, July 31, 1779</p>					
<p>Peleg Wadsworth's letter to his wife, Betsey, Aug. 14, 1779 about the Penobscot Expedition</p>					

Writing Rubric

SCORE	What do I have to do to earn this score?
6 Wow!	<p>A written story earning a 6 should have a beginning, a middle and an end in multiple paragraphs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The story talks to its readers and paints a clear picture of the story in the reader's mind. ● It is well thought out and interesting. ● It has many describing words and details. ● It uses complete sentences that don't always begin the same way. ● It has very few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical mistakes. ● It has no capital letter mistakes. ● It uses information from each of the historical documents about Peleg Wadsworth and his capture and escape. ● This information is well organized and written in your own words.
5 Well Done!	<p>A written story earning a 5 should have a beginning, a middle and an end in multiple paragraphs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The story has good ideas and is clear to the reader. ● It has describing words and details. ● It has complete, meaningful sentences. ● It has very few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical mistakes. ● It has very few capital letter mistakes. ● It uses information from two of the historical documents about Peleg Wadsworth. ● This information is written in your own words.
4 You Made It!	<p>A written story earning a 4 has good ideas with a beginning, a middle and an end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It has some describing words and details. ● It has complete, well-formed sentences. ● It has some spelling, punctuation, capital letter, and grammatical mistakes. ● Uses some information from one of the documents. ● Information from the documents is in your own words.
3 Almost There!	<p>A written story earning a 3 has some good ideas, but they may not be in order from beginning to middle to end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It has a few describing words or details. ● It has generally correct, complete sentences. ● It may have many spelling, punctuation, capital letter, and grammatical mistakes. ● It uses some information from one of the documents, but it's just copied from the documents and not in your own words.
2 Needs Work!	<p>A written story earning a 2 has some ideas, but they are not in any order.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It does not have complete sentences. ● It has many spelling, punctuation, capital letter, and grammatical mistakes. ● It does not make use of the historic documents.
1 Try Again!	<p>A written story earning a 1 is mixed up; the reader cannot understand it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It does not make use of the historic documents

