



HOME

The Story of Maine

# A Wicked Fight – The Frontier Wars in Maine

## Teaching Unit for Grades 4 - 6

**TIME ALLOTMENT** 2 class periods of 1 hour each

**OVERVIEW** This series of lessons will help students explore how the French, Native Americans, and English interacted during nearly 100 years of war in Maine during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The MPBN video *The Fight for Maine* along with the activities included in this teaching unit focus on specific events in Maine while placing them within the larger context of the Frontier Wars of the eighteenth century. Students will also explore how the trauma of war can influence major cultural events, like the Salem witch trials.

**SUBJECT MATTER** United States history, Maine history

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

- Learn how negotiation works in a group setting.
- Identify the cultures fighting for a home in Maine during the Frontier Wars.
- Identify points of conflict among the different groups.
- Discuss how fear and misunderstanding can influence actions.
- Discuss how the trauma of war can lead to superstition and hysteria and can affect major cultural events.
- Relate the events of the Salem witch trials to the Frontier wars in Maine.
- Use original source documents to write a short paper.



Maine Public Broadcasting Network



Elsie Viles

Major funding for "HOME: The Story of Maine" on the Maine Public Broadcasting Network was provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency committed to fostering innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning. Additional funding provided by Elsie Viles.

### CONNECTIONS TO STANDARDS

#### Maine State Learning Results

#### SOCIAL STUDIES

##### History

##### 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:

(Grades 3-4)

2. Demonstrate an awareness of major events and people in United States and Maine history.

(Grades 5-8)

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.

##### C. Historical Inquiry, Analysis, and Interpretation:

Students will learn to evaluate resource material such as documents, artifacts, maps, artwork, 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:

(Grades 5-8)

3. Use information from a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify and support a point of view on a controversial historical topic.

4. Identify ethnic and cultural perspectives missing from a historical account and describe these points of view.

5. Formulate historical questions based on the examination of primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams, and written texts.

#### ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

**A. Process of Reading:** Students will use the skills and strategies of the reading process to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate what they have read. Students will be able to:

(Grades 3-4)

1. Determine the meaning of unknown words by using a dictionary, glossary, or other reference sources.
3. Recognize when a text is primarily intended to persuade.

(Grades 5-8)

11. Generate and evaluate the notes they have taken from course-related reading, listening, and viewing.

##### 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:

(Grades 3-4)

4. Distinguish between facts

encountered in documents, narratives, and other sources and the generalizations or interpretations a person draws concerning those facts.

8. Make limited but effective use of primary sources when researching topics.

##### B. Literature and Culture:

Students will use reading, listening, and viewing strategies to experience, understand, and appreciate literature and culture.

Students will be able to:

(Grades 3-4)

6. Make and justify conclusions about the motives of characters and the consequences of their actions.
11. Apply effective strategies to the reading and use of nonfiction (e.g., reference sources, articles, histories, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, and letters) using texts with an appropriate complexity of content and sophistication of style.

(Grades 5-8)

4. Explain how the motives of characters or the causes of complex events in texts are both similar to and distinct from those in their own experience.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- MPBN video *The Fight for Maine* from the series *HOME: The Story of Maine*
- **Internet Resources**
  - Salem Witchcraft Papers: <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/texts/>  
This Web site contains documents pertaining to the 1692 witch trial and information about the participants.
  - Maine Memory Network: [www.mainememory.net](http://www.mainememory.net)  
This statewide database and online museum contains historic source materials about Maine.
- Whiteboard or blackboard for group discussion
- Notebook or computer for each student (for taking notes and writing a short paper)
- Copy of the following reproducible handout:  
**Student Handout 1: Writing Rubric (1 per student)**

## PREP FOR TEACHERS

1. Preview the video and note cues to stop for discussion.
2. Preview and bookmark the Web sites listed above.
3. Print copies of Rachel Clinton's letter from the Maine Memory Network (Web address above).

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

**Step 1** Divide the class into groups of four or five. Give each group a set of classroom chairs, making sure that there is one less chair than the number of people in the group. (For example, if there are five students in the group, then they should have just four chairs.) Instruct each group to figure out how to divide the chairs. Tell them that they can solve this problem however they want. Do not give any suggestions at this point, but wait to see how each group tries to work out the dilemma. Give the class five or six minutes to solve the problem. (**Note:** Students can opt for a number of different solutions: somebody agrees to go without a chair, two people share one chair, the entire group agrees to get rid of the chairs and sit on the floor, etc.)

**Step 2** When the time is up, stop the negotiation and tell student groups to stay where they are. Have each group describe how they addressed the problem and what solution is. Ask each group:

- Was there conflict?
- How were decisions made?
- Who made the decisions?
- Did you discuss alternatives, like sharing or not using chairs?

**Step 3** With the class, talk about negotiation as a concept. Ask:

- Can you see how easily conflicts can arise?
- What are some good negotiation strategies?

## LEARNING ACTIVITY

**Step 1** Introduce the video, *The Fight for Maine*, by asking the class to remember the negotiation activity they just completed. Tell them that as they watch the first segment of the video, they should think about how negotiation and compromise figure in this part of American history.

Give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them two questions:

- Who were the different groups of people living in Maine at the time described in the video?
- Why was there conflict between these groups?"

Encourage students to take brief notes as they view. (**Note:** You may want to talk about proper note-taking if this is a new process for your students.) Assure the class that these notes are simply meant to help them recall important points in the video and that they do not need to write complete sentences.

**Step 2** Cue the video to the start of the program. **PLAY** the video. **STOP** at the point where the narrator is saying, "...suddenly using each other as pawns in chaotic conflicts that spread throughout New England." (The visual cue is three Puritans looking toward the water.)

**Answers to the preceding Focus questions:**

- The groups of people living in Maine in the late 1600's and early 1700's were the English, Native Americans, and French.
- Their major sources of conflict were over land, guns, and supplies.

Discuss and clarify as needed. Then ask:

- Did fear or anger play a role in the wars?
- Who was fearful, and why?
- How did fear affect their actions?

**Answers:**

- Massachusetts Bay Colony officials were afraid that the conflict in Massachusetts would spread to Maine. Therefore, they disarmed the Indians. However, this angered the Indians because it deprived them of their ability to hunt. (Hunting provided Native Americans with both food and furs for trading.) Eventually, the Indians did attack the English, because they needed supplies in order to survive.

**REPLAY** all, or part, of the video segment to reinforce these concepts. Discuss as needed.

**Step 3** Before beginning the next video segment, provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking:

- How many wars made up the Frontier Wars in Maine?

Cue the video to the point where the narrator says, "The leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony are concerned that the conflict will spread to the Maine frontier." (The visual cue is a group of men sitting around a long table.) **PLAY** the video. **STOP** just before the video begins to discuss the Salem witch trials.

*Answer to the preceding Focus question:*

- Six

Discuss and clarify as needed.

**Step 4** Ask students how people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may have gotten their information and news without computers, radio, television, phones, newspapers (in rural areas, at least), or magazines. Elicit the following suggestions from the class:

- Letters
- Travelers bringing news from other places
- Gossip

Divide the class into groups of 6 to 10 students and each, and have each group form a circle. Play the Gossip game by whispering a short message into one student's ear. Instruct this student to whisper the message into the ear of his or her neighbor to the right, then have the group continue this pattern until the last student in the circle has received the message.

When the circuit has been completed, ask the final student to repeat the message. Then ask the first student to repeat the message that you whispered at the beginning of the game. Have the group compare the original statement with the final message.

Reconvene the class. Then ask:

- Is word of mouth an effective means of spreading information?
- What happens when a story is retold several times by different people?

(**Alternate Instructions:** Ask ten students to come to the front of the room and demonstrate the Gossip game for the rest of the class.)

**Step 5** Initiate a discussion about fear. Prompt students by asking the following questions:

- Can meeting new people cause fear?
- What if a new person's actions or customs are strange to you?

Ask the class to imagine meeting a group of people who speak differently, look, travel, eat, dress, and live differently. How would they react?

Instruct the class to keep these issues in mind as they watch the next video segment. Tell them that this part of the film is about the 1692 witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, and how they were connected to the wars in Maine.

Before resuming the video, give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking:

- How were the wars in Maine connected to the Salem witch trials?"
- Encourage them to take notes if they want.

RESUME the video from the last stopping point. STOP at the visual cue of a young boy running from an Indian.

Lead the class in a discussion of how the Maine Frontier Wars were related to the Salem Witch Trials.

**Answer to the preceding Focus question:**

- The trauma and fear caused by war affected people so much that they accused other English people in Salem of being witches.
- Accusers reported dreams of being scalped, an action they had witnessed during the wars.
- Accusers said that they had seen witches meeting with Indians.
- Witches were accused of many of the same actions that English settlers had witnessed during the wars in Maine.

Ask the class to recall the Gossip game. Ask, “Could gossip and misinformation have played a part in an incident like this?” Discuss.

(**Optional Activity:** To explore the history of the witch trials of 1692, have students examine the Salem Witchcraft Papers at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/texts>. This Web site features witch trial documents and information about the participants.)

**Step 6** Now direct students to view a document dating from 1692 at the Maine Memory Network <http://www.mainememory.net/home.shtml>. This is an accusation of witchcraft on the Maine frontier. (**Note:** Use the keyword search function to find the Rachel Clinton document. Open the document and view the transcription. OR, download and print the letter, then copy and distribute it to students.)

Stress that the Rachel Clinton document is a court *deposition*; you may want to define that term on the board and discuss its meaning.

Provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking:

- What is Thomas Burnham accusing Rachel Clinton of doing?

Then have groups of students read and decipher the text, or read the document as a whole-class activity. (Since the document contains misspellings and archaic words, it may create too much difficulty for individual students or groups to decipher.) Direct students to use a dictionary to find the definitions of unfamiliar words.

**Answer to the preceding Focus question:**

- Milking his cow without permission
- Vanishing
- Turning into a gray cat

Discuss whether students think that Rachel Clinton really did these things, and encourage them to defend their answers. Point out, “We only have one side of the story; we don’t have Rachel’s point of view of this event. How does that affect our information and conclusion about what happened?”

**Step 7** Tell students that the next segment of the video is about negotiation and conflict on the frontier. (**Note:** Some children may find this segment of the video disturbing or frightening. Be sure to preview the segment before showing it to your class.)

Explain that this final portion of the video looks at the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans in Maine. Remind the class of the introductory lesson; ask them to think about all of the solutions they created for just that one problem (not having enough chairs).

Give the class a **Focus for Media Interaction** by saying, “Look for people, or groups of people, who tried to negotiate or work together to make life better.”

RESUME the video from where you left off. PLAY through to the end.

Discuss the final portion of the program. Ask, “Were there English, Native American, or French people who tried to negotiate or cooperate with other people?”

*Answer to the preceding Focus question:*

- John Giles tried to settle contracts and disagreements between the English and Indians.
- Father Rale and the Norridgewock Indians did the following:
- They established a permanent settlement at Norridgewock with homes, schools, and churches.
- They created a French-Wabanaki dictionary so that the French and Native Americans could better communicate.
- (Molly Mathilda was mentioned in an earlier segment.)

## CULMINATING ACTIVITY

**Step 1** Divide the class into groups of five or six students each. Ask each group to discuss how the wars in Maine influenced the Salem witch trials. Pose the following questions for all groups to consider:

- Did fear, superstition, and trauma affect the accusations of witchcraft?
- Were these people really witches?

Write these questions on the board so that students can refer back to them. Encourage student groups to think about and discuss each point independently of the other groups. Be available to answer questions, but guide the groups to form their own opinions. To ensure that all team members get a chance to speak, appoint a team leader for each group. Then allow about five minutes for discussion.

**Step 2** Dissolve the groups. Tell the class that now each student should independently write a story about Rachel Clinton. Specifically, each student should write a short story about what they think happened between Rachel Clinton and Thomas Burnham. Students should use all that they have learned from the documents, video, and discussion in the preceding activities to create their stories. They can refer back to their printed copies of the deposition as necessary. Inform them that they can choose to write about the events as stated in the deposition, or they can write from Rachel’s point of view. As they write, students should address the following questions about Rachel:

- What was Rachel actually doing?
- How would she explain the circumstances?
- Think back to our class discussion about witchcraft and the Gossip game. How do these issues affect Rachel’s story?

**Step 3** Assign a due date for students to complete and submit their short stories for your review. To help them organize and structure their stories as effectively as possible, distribute copies of Student Handout 1: Writing Rubric. Review the handout with the class, clarifying as needed. Remind students to refer to this rubric as they outline, execute, and proofread their work.

## CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

**Art** Have students create drawings or maps to accompany their short stories.

## 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 and eighteenth centuries. The exhibit emphasizes that beginning with King Philip's War in 1675, Maine's English, French, and Native American inhabitants engaged in a long military struggle for control of the region. Disease, supply shortages, and the ravages of warfare finally eliminated Indians from the contest. By 1760, New France fell to British forces, and English settlements expanded inland and eastward. This information can also be obtained online at <http://www.state.me.us/museum/exhibits/identity.html>.

(Contact: 207-287-2301)

- Take a self-guided tour of the Norridgewock Indian village and the Father Sebastian Rale monument in Madison, Maine. This site is on the National Register of Historic Places. (The site is south of Madison off Alt. U.S. Route 201.)

- Visit the Old York Historical Society in York, Maine. The Young Travelers program introduces students to life in the eighteenth century through a series of hands-on activities. Students can try their hand at spinning and weaving, colonial games and crafts, and hearth cooking. The visit also includes a lesson in Old York's eighteenth-century schoolhouse.

(Contact: 207-363-4974 or [oyhs@oldyork.org](mailto:oyhs@oldyork.org))

- Visit the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor, Maine. Visitors can explore Maine's Native American life and culture from the past to the present. They can also learn about the Wabanaki peoples – members of the Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Micmac, and Maliseet tribes – who live in Maine today.

(Contact: 207-288-3519 or [abbe@midmaine.com](mailto:abbe@midmaine.com))

## Student Handout 1

### Writing Rubric

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