



# HOME

## The Story of Maine

# A Whole New World – Life in 17th-Century Maine

## Teaching Unit for Grades 4 - 6

**TIME ALLOTMENT** 2 class periods of 40 minutes each

**OVERVIEW** Maine was an exciting place in the seventeenth century, as French and English explorers gave way to entrepreneurs and settlers. Native peoples moved rapidly to adjust to the changes the Europeans brought. Relationships sprang up between these three cultural groups as each struggled to find a place in this new world. Because Maine was an outpost of European settlement, it represented the frontier, the edge of civilization. Communities here, while based on those in France and England, were unique, facing a different set of issues even than settlements in Massachusetts and southern New England. Using the MPBN video *Rolling Back the Frontier*, students and teachers will explore life in seventeenth-century Maine and identify what made it different from life in other colonies.

**SUBJECT MATTER** History, geography, social studies

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

- Gain an understanding of what life was like in colonial Maine.
- Understand who was living in Maine during the seventeenth century and what kinds of relationships these people had with each other.
- Understand the terminology related to the study of history.
- Learn what made Maine different from other colonial territories.



Maine Public Broadcasting Network

The logo for Elsie Viles is an oval shape with a light orange background. The name 'Elsie Viles' is written in a cursive font inside the oval.

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.

1450 Lisbon Street, Lewiston, Maine 04240 · 800-884-1717 · 207-783-9101 · Fax 207-783-5193 · mpbn.net



### CONNECTIONS TO STANDARDS

#### Maine State Learning Results (Grades 3-8)

<p><b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b></p> <p><b>History</b></p> <p><b>A. Chronology:</b> (Grades 3-4):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place in chronological order significant events, groups, and people in the history of Maine.</li> </ol> <p><b>A. Chronology:</b> (Grades 5-8):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the effects of historical changes on daily life.</li> <li>Identify the sequence of major events and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and selected world civilizations.</li> </ol> <p><b>B. Historical Knowledge, Concepts, and Patterns:</b> (Grades 5-8):</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declaration of Independence</li> <li>The Constitution</li> <li>Westward Expansion</li> <li>Industrialization</li> <li>Civil War</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Geography</b></p> <p><b>B. Human Interaction with Environments</b> (Grades 5-8):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of how society changes as a consequence of concentrated settlement.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Economics</b></p> <p><b>A. Personal and Consumer Economics</b> (Grades 3-4):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe barter and money and how each is used in the exchange of resources, goods, and services.</li> </ol> <p><b>B. Economic Systems of the United States</b> (Grades 5-8):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the roles and contributions of the principal contributors to the economy (e.g., laborers, investors, entrepreneurs, managers).</li> </ol>
--	---	---

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- MPBN video *Rolling Back the Frontier*, from the series *HOME: The Story of Maine*
- Journal for each student
- Blackboard or whiteboard for classroom use
- 1 Merriam-Webster Dictionary for every 1-2 students (ISBN: 0-87779-606-8. Note: online, abridged, or pocket dictionaries may not give the complete definitions needed to understand the terms used in this lesson.)
- Large wall map of the world
- Glue sticks and construction paper
- Blank outline maps of Maine (optional)
- Graphing calculators or computers (optional)
- Copies of each of the following reproducible handouts:
  - Student Handout 1: Searching for Video Clues – Rolling Back the Frontier
  - Student Handout 2: Newspaper Writing Exercise
  - Student Handout 3: Rubric for Newspaper Writing

## PREP FOR TEACHERS

1. Preview the video so that you know where the stop and start points are (described below).
2. Preview and bookmark all Web links (described below).

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

**Step 1** Lead a class discussion to make sure that all students understand that after Europeans discovered the existence of North America, they began to explore the idea of living in this New World. Native Americans, of course, already inhabited North America; Europeans had encountered some of them on earlier voyages of exploration. Many towns and cities in Europe were crowded, and life was very expensive. North America, on the other hand, was so vast that there seemed to be room for anyone wanting to live there. Emphasize to the class that although Native Americans were already living in North America, the boundaries of the states were not set, and the towns we know today did not exist.

Using a large wall map of the world, have a student find North America first, then Maine. Point out some of the European countries that sent explorers to the New World: France, England, Norway, Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands. Explain that while many countries explored this region, France and England played the biggest part in Maine's history. Ask another student to find France on the map, and have a third student find England. While they are at the map, point out Maine again so that students get a sense of the distance from the North American coast to Europe.

**Step 2** Discuss what it would be like to travel to a new place without all of the conveniences we're used to: houses, beds, stores, doctors. Ask students to think about what types of things they would take with them and what things they could live without. Ask, "What would be the first thing you would do upon arrival in the New World?" Discuss students' choices.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

**Step 1 Glossary Term:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the word *unemployment*. Instruct them to write the definition in their journals. Then tell them that they will soon be watching a video and that they will need to see how this term pertains to the settlers' decision to move to the New World.

**Step 2** Inform the class that the video they are going to see is about life in seventeenth-century Maine. Ask them if they know why English and French people came to North America. Tell students that the first segment of the video explains why Europeans felt they could find a better life in this region despite the fact that it held none of the conveniences they were used to.

**Step 3** Distribute copies of Student Handout 1: Searching for Video Clues – *Rolling Back the Frontier*. Review the questions on the handout with the class. Then tell them that they will be looking for the answers to these questions as they watch the video. Encourage students to think of themselves

as newspaper reporters who must look for clues as they view the video. When the film is over, they will each be writing a short article about colonial life in Maine. The class will then publish a newspaper containing their stories.

Before starting the film, refresh students' memories by having them recall the brief map exercise that you have just conducted. Prompt them for the introductory question by asking:

- Who was already living in the area that we call Maine today?
- Who played the biggest part in Maine's history?

**Step 4** Remind the class that they will be looking for clues as they watch the video and that they should answer the questions on Student Handout 1 as they watch. Explain that since they will be taking notes, they do not need write in complete sentences. Also stress that this is a note-taking exercise and that students can record any other points that interest them as they watch.

(**Note:** Since this video is for a general audience, it may be necessary to check periodically for vocabulary comprehension. Glossary terms are identified throughout the lesson; students should look up each of these terms and write the definitions in their journals. You can add other words that seem to be problematic for your specific class.)

Cue the video to the opening sequence. Give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to watch for the answers to both the introductory question and to question 1 on the handout.

PLAY the video. STOP when the speaker says, "...merchants begin to set up seasonal fishing stations." Give the students a few moments to finish writing. Discuss their answers, clarifying as needed to make sure that every student understands. Then discuss the idea of economic opportunity and how it drove settlers to come to Maine. Suggest that this phenomenon can still occur today: when people have no work, they must go elsewhere to look for new opportunities.

**Step 5** Before beginning the next video segment, lead a brief discussion about the people already living in North America: the Native Americans. Ask students what they know about these people. Then ask, "What were their relationships to the English and French people like?"

Give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to watch for the answer to question 2 on Student Handout 1 ("How were the Indians affected by European settlement? Why?")

PLAY the video from where you left off previously. STOP when the speaker says, "...this is his way of opening it up for them to settle."

Discuss this question with a class: "Why did so many Native Americans die when Europeans came here?" To put the statistics in a more real-life setting for students, have them count the number of people in their classroom (including all instructors). On the board, calculate 90% of the classroom total, and subtract that number from the total. For example, 90% of 30 people is 27 people ( $30 \times .9 = 27$ ), then  $30 - 27 = 3$ . Explain that if 90% of the class were to leave, there would be just (*insert your number here*) people left in the class. Ask, "What if one of the people who left was the teacher? How would that impact the people who were left?"

**Step 6** The class has heard something about the English and the Native Americans. Now tell them that they will learn something about the early French colonists.

Before beginning the next segment, give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to watch for the name of the area where the French lived in seventeenth-century Maine (question 3 on the handout).

PLAY the video from where the speaker says, "...In order to take advantage of the resources..." STOP when the speaker says, "You're not going to wait for the English vessel to show up two months later."

Discuss students' answers to question 3, and write *Acadia* on the board so that students can see the correct spelling.

**Step 7** Ask the class to recall the first question on Student Handout 1 (the reasons why European settlers came to Maine in the seventeenth century). Emphasize that one of the things attracting people from other countries was the area's natural resources. Write the term *natural resources* on the board, and discuss what it means (things that grow in nature and that can be the basis for an economy). Make sure that all students understand how something that grows or exists naturally can be made into something that people want to purchase. Also point out that Maine still relies on trees as a natural resource for timber as well as paper production.

Tell the class that the next video segment is about a very important natural resource that drew people to Maine in the seventeenth century.

**Glossary Term:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the word *pelt*. Instruct them to write the term and its definition in their journals.

**Step 8** Cue the video to the next segment, which begins with "The Swedish Cavalier's slouch hat..." Provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to answer question 4 on Student Handout 1 ("Why are beavers important in Maine's history?").

PLAY the video. STOP when the speaker says, "...that had long been part of the situation in southern New England."

Discuss the Focus question. Emphasize that beaver pelts were important because of European fashion, and that clothing styles overseas meant economic opportunity for people living here. Stress the multicultural nature of the fur trade by telling students that French and English settlers made money by selling pelts to Europe, and that Native Americans acquired new things by trading pelts with the French and English.

**Step 9** Ask the class how they think the Europeans lived when they got to the New World. Ask, "How did they get the resources that they needed to live? What were the essential things they needed?" Remind students of the introductory discussion about what they themselves would bring, and how they would live, if they were to travel somewhere completely new. Ask them to keep those ideas in mind as they watch the video.

Cue the video to the audio cue, “In 1639, Sir Ferdinando Gorges...” Give students a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to answer questions 5a, 5b, and 5c on Student Handout 1. **PLAY** the video. **STOP** when you hear, “...produce enough food during the short growing season to last through the winter.”

Discuss the ribbonlike settlements along the waterways. Ask the class why they think people settled that way. Try to elicit the following concepts:

- People traveled most easily by water in those days.
- People needed water for growing food for themselves and their livestock.
- People needed water for hygiene.
- Water was very important for controlling fire.

Also discuss how the settlers were impacted by cold weather. Help students articulate that these people had very few resources:

- No houses were here for them when they arrived.
- There were no stores in which to buy heaters, warm clothes, or bedding.
- They had to find, create, grow, or bring whatever they needed to survive.

**Glossary Term:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the word *cord*. Instruct them to write the term and its definition in their journals.

**Step 10 Glossary Terms:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the words *barter* and *trade*. Instruct them to write these terms and their definitions in their journals.

Before resuming the video, provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to listen for the words *barter* and *trade*. Then direct them to answer question 6 on Student Handout 1 as they view the film.

**PLAY** the video beginning at the point where the speaker says, “Everybody in Maine, regardless of whether you were a fur trader...” **STOP** when the speaker says, “...and share their talents with others.” Give everyone time to finish writing.

Ask, “How do people obtain things without money?” Discuss that in a barter/trade economy, people exchange goods and services for other things. Money may occasionally be used, but in the case of seventeenth-century Maine, there were, in fact, very few places to spend money. Stress to students that the things people most needed, like food, wood, or medicine, could be obtained by trading work or other things. Ask the class if they ever obtain things by trading. (Possible answers might include swapping books, doing a chore at home in exchange for a privilege, trading a toy or a piece of clothing for one that someone else has.) Ask students how they assign value in those situations, and discuss.

**Step 11** Ask, “What was life like for families on the Maine frontier? Who did all the work?” Discuss how students think that women and children might have participated in the work necessary to create a home in the wilderness. Try to elicit the following ideas:

- Gathering food
- Preparing/preserving food
- Caring for animals
- Female adults caring for children
- Fishing/hunting

**Glossary Term:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the word *midwife*. Instruct them to write the term and its definition in their journals.

Before resuming the video, provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by asking them to answer questions 7a and 7b on Student Handout 1.

PLAY the video. STOP when you hear, "...it was an extremely serious thing to deal with."

Discuss students' answers to questions 7a and 7b. Ask, "Why would women dispense the medication?" Discuss women's roles as gardeners, as nurses to the sick and the elderly, as caregivers for children, and as midwives for pregnant women. Explain that in a frontier community, people often had several "jobs." If there was no butcher, people did their own butchering of meat. If there was no minister, someone in the community would take that religious role on.

**Step 12 Glossary Term:** Ask students to use their dictionaries to look up the word *export*. Instruct them to write this term and its definition in their journals.

Cue to the final video segments beginning, "Most people who come to Maine end up staying..." Before starting the film, provide students with a **Focus for Media Interaction** by instructing them to answer questions 8a, 8b, and 8c on Student Handout 1. Remind them that many people came to Maine to take advantage of the natural resources, and that, just as wood is a major source of money and jobs now, it was also important to the seventeenth-century economy.

PLAY the video. STOP when the speaker says, "...the drive of Maine's economy throughout the colonial period."

Ask, "How was wood an important export good in Maine? What types of workers were important to the timber business?" Ask students to describe a sawmill. Ask, "What does a blacksmith do?" Discuss.

## Answers to Student Handout 1

**Introductory question:** Native Americans, English settlers, French settlers

1. Land, unemployment, own home, timber, beaver pelts, fish
2. The Great Dying occurred as a result of disease from the Europeans. About 90% of the Native Americans died.
3. Acadia
4. The Swedish slouch hat (made of beaver) was fashionable. Pelts were valuable, so this was an economic opportunity
5. (a) They put their homes along the water.  
(b) The major hardships were cold weather and the Little Ice Age.  
(c) They needed 20-30 cords of wood.

6. *Barter* = A form of exchange that does not involve money. Instead of money, goods or services could be exchanged for other things.
7. (a) Women  
(b) Childbirth
8. (a) Timber, or wood  
(b) The wood was used for barrels, house frames, and ships' masts.  
(c) Sawmill operator and blacksmith

## CULMINATING ACTIVITY

**Step 1** Review the video and students' responses to the questions on Student Handout 1. Answer any questions that may come up in discussion, and, if necessary, review specific segments of the video as a class for clarification.

Explain to the class that journalists answer several key questions when they write a news article: *who, what, where, when, why, and how*. Instruct students to go through their questions and answers on the handout and to label each one with one of these five key questions. (They can just jot the key word in the left margin next to the question number.) Point out that occasionally, an answer ("clue") may answer more than one question.

**Step 2** Distribute copies of Student Handout 2: Newspaper Writing Exercise. Review the handout with the class. Then direct students individually to write three or four sentences about what they thought the most interesting part of the video was and why. Next, have them each come up with an exciting title for this piece of writing, based on the part of the video that personally seemed most intriguing.

**Step 3** Using their work on Student Handout 2 as the basis for individual newspaper articles, instruct students now to write fully developed articles about life in seventeenth-century Maine. Tell them that each article should be one full handwritten page in length and should give one answer to each question:

- Who?
- What?
- Where?
- When?
- Why?
- How?

To provide students with a writing guide, particularly if their written work is to be assessed, distribute copies of Student Handout 3: Rubric for Newspaper Writing. Review the rubric with the class, giving examples or clarifying as needed.

**Step 4** When students' articles are finished, they can be photocopied and bound together to create a class newspaper. Encourage students to create visual material to supplement their news stories. As a class, decide on a name, cover, and headline for the newspaper. Then photocopy and distribute the final product throughout the class.

### (Optional)

- Download and print an article from the Early Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Articles Web site at <http://www.infopt.demon.co.uk/grub/grub.htm>. Instruct students to read the article and to pick

out as many of the “five w’s” (who, what, when, where, why, and how) as possible. Then review students’ answers as a class, and discuss how these words can help readers understand a story better. (**Note:** Not all of these news articles are appropriate for children. Preview the site and pick an issue and an article that seem appropriate for your class.)

- Another option could be to expand the activity by having students do research at the *HOME: The Story of Maine* Web site. Either as an assignment or for extra credit, students could:
  - Incorporate specific dates from the timeline (see <http://www.mpbn/hometsom/timelines/timeline1.html>).
  - Write a longer article after reading the show transcript and Web marker information (see <http://www.mpbn/hometsom/hometsom.html>).

## CROSS-CURRICULAR EXTENSIONS

**Science** Explore the measurements mentioned in the video: *55 degrees, 20-30 cords, 50 acres, 5 feet in diameter*. Help students measure some common items, then compare their measurements so that students get a sense of size and proportion. For a sense of temperature, bring a bowl or pot of water to 55 degrees, and have students test it with their hands to understand how cold it could be *inside* a colonial house during the winter.

**Technology** Have students use the computer to create a masthead and insert illustrations for their class newspaper.

**Language Arts** Use the information that the class gathered for Student Handout 1 to create either a class play or short sketches about colonial life in Maine.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Visit the Maine State Museum in Augusta, Maine, as a field trip. The exhibits at the museum offer great background information to accompany the entire *HOME: The Story of Maine* series. In particular, a visit to the museum may help students understand the video episodes *The Struggle for Identity*, which explores Maine life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries leading up to statehood, and *Maine Bounty: Woods, Sea, and Granite*, which is devoted to the historical origins of Maine’s resource-based industries and agriculture. Information is also available online at <http://www.state.me.us/museum/exhibits/index.html>. (Contact: 207-287-2301)
- 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. Students can explore Maine’s Native American life and culture from the past to the present. In particular, they can 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

## Searching for Video Clues – Rolling Back the Frontier

### Introductory question:

Who was living in Maine during the 1600's?

\_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_

1. List some reasons **why** Europeans came to the region that is now Maine:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. How were the **Indians** affected by European settlement? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the **name** of the French settlement in Maine?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why are beavers **important** in Maine's history?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5.

a. Where do the Europeans put their houses?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What was one of the major **hardships** for these early settlers?

\_\_\_\_\_

c. How much wood did they need to heat their homes?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Listen for the words “**barter**” and “**trade.**” What do they mean in this video?

---

---

---

7.

a. **Who** often gave out medicines?

---

b. What event was very **dangerous for women**?

---

8.

a. What was a major **export** for Maine in the 17th century?

---

b. **What was made** with this export?

---

c. What type of **skilled work** was necessary in every community?

---

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_



## Rubric for Newspaper Writing

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	Exemplary: 4	Accomplished: 3	Developing: 2	Beginning: 1	SCORE
<b>Task Completion</b>	Completes and exceeds all assigned tasks.	Completes all assigned tasks.	Completes very few of the assigned tasks.	Does not complete any of the assigned tasks.	
<b>Content</b>	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.	
<b>Sharing of Information</b>	Shares a great deal of information – all relating to the topic.	Shares some basic information – most relating to the topic.	Shares very little information – some relating to the topic .	Does not share any information with audience.	
<b>Writing Conventions</b>	No misspellings or grammatical errors.	Three or fewer misspellings and/or grammatical errors that DO NOT detract from the information.	Three or fewer misspellings and/or grammatical errors that DO detract from the information.	More than four spelling and/or grammatical errors.	
<b>Interest</b>	The article or news report contains facts, figures, and/or word choices that make it very interesting to readers or viewers.	The article or news report contains facts, figures, and/or word choices that make it interesting to readers or viewers.	The article or news report contains some facts or figures but is only a little interesting to readers or viewers.	The article or news report does not contain facts or figures that might make it interesting to readers or viewers.	