**Investigating History Grade 3: Pilot Scope and Sequence**

This scope and sequence reflects the **pilot** yearlong Investigating History curriculum for Grade 3. The curriculum comprises five units:

* [**Unit 1**](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1dDAM9DldH4H5F4WeUzO1qQoj-hhjmesw)**:** Indigenous Peoples and Places in the Northeast
* [**Unit 2**](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1TAxXUKNvpks1SJYCAtsNxwGCzxhKIcFC)**:** Indigenous Communities, European Colonizers, and the Plymouth Colony
* **Unit 3:** Indigenous Peoples, Puritans, and West Africans: The Changing Landscape of Massachusetts
* [**Unit 4**](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1C_aZIQqfw5whGw9RTt8SFG2mkqKZcf6N)**:** Massachusetts and the American Revolution
* [**Unit 5**](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1xWDws3s2bBd-wSvzypwpTiW8C2qKhF5L)**:** The People and Governments of Massachusetts, Past and Present

This pilot curriculum is available for educators’ review and reference in the 2025-26 school year. During this year, DESE will be making significant revisions to the curricular materials based on over 1,000 pieces of feedback from pilot teachers as well as external reviewers. These revisions, which will be incorporated into the final Grade 3 course published in Summer 2026, will include:

* Building in robust supports for multilingual learners
* Updating materials, maps, and sources to maximize grade-level appropriateness and usability
* Strengthening the consistency of routines and instructional strategies across all units and grade levels
* Ensuring that skills and content flow coherently into the Grades 5, 6, and 7 materials

**Given the importance of these revisions, DESE strongly recommends that schools and districts wait to fully adopt Investigating History for Grade 3 until the published course is available in the 2026-27 school year**. We encourage educators to use these pilot materials, which are presented as-is, to start familiarizing themselves with the instructional approach, try out lessons or clusters in their classroom, and begin planning for 2026-27 implementation.

Please contact [InvestigatingHistory@mass.gov](mailto:InvestigatingHistory@mass.gov) with any questions.

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| Grade 3, Unit 1 Pilot Scope and Sequence | Investigating History logo |

# Indigenous Peoples and Places in the Northeast

***How have Indigenous peoples lived in the Northeast, past and present?***

**Grade-Level Content Standards**

* **3.T2.1:** On a physical map of North America, use cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate the Northeast region and identify important physical features.
* **3.T2.2:** On a political map of the current United States, locate the New England states (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine).
* **3.T2.3:** Explain the diversity of Native Peoples, present and past, in Massachusetts and the New England region.
  1. the names of at least three native groups (e.g., Abenaki/Wabanaki, Massachusett, Mohican/Stockbridge, Narragansett, Nipmuc, Wampanoag)
  2. the locations of tribal territories in the state
* **3.T2.3d:** Explain the contributions of a tribal group from the area of the school (e.g., language, literature, arts, trade routes, food such as corn, beans, and squash, useful items such as baskets, canoes, wampum, and useful knowledge of medicinal plants, words such as powwow and moccasin, and many names for waterways, hills, mountains, islands and place names, such as the Connecticut and Merrimack Rivers, Mount Wachusett, the Taconic Range, Nantucket, Natick, Seekonk, Agawam, Chicopee).

**Grade-Specific Practice Standards**

* **PS 2.** Develop supporting questions that lead to the generation of new questions and contribute to the inquiry process.
* **PS 3.** Identify how different historical sources are used to explain events in the past.
* **PS 7.** Engage in academic discussions respectfully with diverse peers.

*Lessons in this unit are also aligned to grade-level literacy standards to support reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

**Learning Progression** *(*[*pilot lesson plans and materials available here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1dDAM9DldH4H5F4WeUzO1qQoj-hhjmesw)*)*

**Maps of the Northeast** | 6 Lessons

### *How can maps provide clues about land and people in the Northeast?*

1. Students will observe two maps of tribal lands in the Northeast and ask questions that contribute to the inquiry process.
2. Students will be able to identify the purpose of a map by analyzing map features.
3. Students will be able to identify physical features on a map of the Northeast by analyzing key details.
4. Students will be able to create a map of the New England states using a variety of primary sources.
5. Students will be able to show their knowledge of land and people in Massachusetts by organizing information from multiple sources.
6. Students will be able to determine the purpose of their new map by summarizing information from multiple sources.

**Native Peoples and the Land** | 6 Lessons

### *What is the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land?*

1. Students will be able to connect with the land by making close observations.
2. Students will be able to show gratitude for nature by analyzing a video.
3. Students will be able to describe how the design longhouses served Indigenous Nations by organizing information from a video.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast how Mahicans and Wampanoags met their needs for shelter.
5. Students will be able to describe how Indigenous peoples used their understanding of plants to grow more food.
6. Students will be able to explain how gratitude could help people care for the Earth today.

**Native Culture** | 6 Lessons

### *Where can we see Native culture today and how do Indigenous peoples keep their culture alive?*

1. Students will be able to explore Indigenous culture by analyzing the main idea and purpose of storytelling.
2. Students will be able to understand wampum belts as a cultural artifact by creating their own to use for storytelling.
3. Students will be able to explore the importance of handing down traditions by analyzing the main ideas of a video.
4. Students will be able to explore the importance of language to maintaining culture by identifying the main idea in a text and video.
5. Students will be able to identify Native names of locations in Massachusetts and consider their relation to culture.
6. Students will be able to show what they have learned about the impact of Indigenous culture today by making a claim supported by evidence.

**Summative Assessment** | 1-2 Days

This summative assessment pulls together the content and concepts developed throughout the unit; the geographic location of tribes, their relationship with the land, and the continued importance of Native culture and traditions. Students will use information from throughout the unit and a video in order to demonstrate their understanding of Native people of the Northeast, past and present.

In an optional extension, after a review of a sample land acknowledgment, students show what they have learned about Native peoples and places in the Northeast by answering prompts. Their answers are then used to provide content within a land acknowledgment template. In collaboration with school administration, teachers can use these documents as they wish to create a class or school land acknowledgment.

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| Grade 3, Unit 2 Pilot Scope and Sequence | Investigating History logo |

# Indigenous Communities, European Colonizers, and the Plymouth Colony

***How did colonization of the Northeast affect different groups of people over time?***

**Grade-Level Content Standards**

* **3.T3.1:** Locate North America, the Atlantic Ocean, and Europe on a map, explain how Native Peoples first came into contact with Europeans, and explain why Europeans in the 16th–17th centuries sailed westward across the Atlantic (e.g., to find new trade routes to Asia and new supplies of natural resources such as metals, timber, and fish).
* **3.T3.2:** Trace on a map the voyages of European explorers of the Northeast coast of North America (e.g., Giovanni Caboto [John Cabot], Bartholomew Gosnold, Giovanni de Verrazano, John Smith, Samuel de Champlain).
* **3.T3.3:** Explain how any one of the explorers described the native Peoples and the new lands, and compare an early 17th century map of New England with a current one.
* **3.T4.1:** Explain who the Pilgrim men and women were and why they left Europe to seek a place where they would have the right to practice their religion; describe their journey, the government of their early years in the Plymouth Colony, and analyze their relationships with the Wampanoag and Abenaki/Wabanaki people.
  1. the purpose of the Mayflower Compact and the principle of self-government
  2. challenges for Pilgrim men, women, and children in their new home (e.g., building shelter and starting farming, becoming accustomed to a new environment, maintaining their faith and keeping a community together through self-government)
  3. contacts with the native leaders Samoset and Massasoit, events leading to a celebration to give thanks for the harvest, and subsequent relationships between Europeans and Native Peoples in southeastern Massachusetts.
* **3.T5.1:** Explain why Puritan men and women migrated in great numbers to Massachusetts in the 17th century, how they moved west from the Atlantic coast, and the consequences of their migration for the Native Peoples of the region (e.g., loss of territory, great loss of life due to susceptibility to European diseases, religious conversion, conflicts over different ways of life such as the Pequot War and King Philip’s War).
* **3.T5.2**: Compare and contrast the roles and leadership decisions of early English leaders of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony andthe roles and decisions of the leaders of Native Peoples (e.g., Massasoit, Metacom, also known as King Philip.

**Grade-Specific Practice Standards**

* **PS 2:** Summarize historical events based on information gathered from multiple sources.
* **PS 4:** Compare and contrast points of view represented in two or more sources on a related topic and analyze how individuals and groups during the same historical period differed in their perspectives.
* **PS 5:** Discuss the relevance of a source for answering a particular question based upon maker and date.

*Lessons in this unit are also aligned to grade-level literacy standards to support reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

**Learning Progression** *(*[*pilot lesson plans and materials available here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1TAxXUKNvpks1SJYCAtsNxwGCzxhKIcFC)*)*

**European Colonizers’ Arrival in the Northeast** | 7 Lessons

### *What were the differences between how Indigenous peoples and European colonizers related to the land and each other?*

1. Students will be able to describe what Massachusetts was like before Europeans arrived.
2. Students will be able to identify where European explorers came from, traveled to, and what they were looking for in the Northeast.
3. Students will be able to define colonization and identify beliefs that supported it.
4. Students will use evidence to describe how the Wampanoag related to the land and responded to English colonizers.
5. Students will use evidence to describe how European colonizers viewed the land and the Wampanoag people.
6. Students will reflect on new learnings about colonization and identify differences in Wampanoag and European experiences.
7. Students will summarize how the Wampanoag related to land and reacted to colonizers as well as how European colonizers viewed the land and Wampanoag people.

**Actions and Reactions to the Plymouth Colony** | 6 Lessons

***During the year 1621, how did the Wampanoag and the Plymouth colonists react to each other?***

1. Students will identify important points in the Mayflower Compact and predict how it may affect future interactions between colonists and the Wampanoag.
2. Students will identify details from a text that describe the actions and reactions of colonists and the Indigenous peoples at the beginning of Plymouth Colony.
3. Students will differentiate between myths and truths about the 1621 harvest feast in Plymouth and the history of Thanksgiving.
4. Students will identify details from a text that describe the 1621 harvest feast in Plymouth that distinguish it from the mythologized Thanksgiving story.
5. Students will synthesize their understanding of the interactions between Plymouth Colony and the Wampanoag by identifying the most significant effects on the tribe.
6. Students will describe at least three actions or reactions that led up to the 1621 harvest feast for the Wampanoag and Plymouth colonists.

**Longer-Term Impacts of Colonization** | 6 Lessons

### *How has the Northeast changed forever due to colonization?*

1. Students will identify some of the ways land and Indigenous territories in the Northeast have changed due to colonization.
2. Students will identify details from a text that describe how expanding colonization impacted different groups of people.
3. Students will use population evidence to explain how animals in the Northeast were negatively affected by colonization.
4. Students will use population evidence to explain how animals and trees in the Northeast were negatively affected by colonization.
5. Students will process what they have learned about expanding colonization in the Northeast and analyze how it is connected to the way history is told.
6. Students will summarize the longer-term impacts of expanding colonization in the Northeast on Indigenous peoples and natural resources.

**Summative Assessment** | 2 Days

Students will help build a collaborative, chronological resource that reflects the unit. They will independently create a timeline card and then work collaboratively to hang their cards in chronological order to create the class timeline. On the second day of the assessment, they work together on graffiti boards in order to brainstorm major events and takeaways from the timeline. Students finally participate in an Inquiry Circle discussion of prompts connected to the Unit 2 Essential Question and how the information from the unit connects to present-day experiences.

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| Grade 3, Unit 3 Pilot Scope and Sequence | Investigating History logo |

**Indigenous Peoples, Puritans, and West Africans: The Changing Landscape of Massachusetts**

***How did colonization of the Northeast affect different groups of people over time?***

**Grade-Level Content Standards**

* **3.T5.1:** Compare and contrast the roles and leadership decisions of early English leaders of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the Pilgrims of the Plymouth colony and the roles and decisions of the leaders of Native Peoples.
* **3.T5.2**: Compare and contrast the roles and leadership decisions of early English leaders of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony andthe roles and decisions of the leaders of Native Peoples (e.g., Massasoit, Metacom, also known as King Philip.
* **3.T5.3**: Using visual primary sources such as paintings, artifacts, historic buildings, or text sources, analyze details of daily life, housing, education, and work of the Puritan men, women, and children of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, including self-employed farmers and artisans, indentured servants, employees, and enslaved people.
* **3.T5.4:** Explain that in the 17th and 18th century slavery was legal in all the French, Dutch, and Spanish, and English colonies, including Massachusetts and that colonial Massachusetts had both free and enslaved Africans in its population.
* **3.T5.5**: Explain the importance of maritime commerce and the practice of bartering – exchanging goods or services without payment in money—in the development of the economy of colonial Massachusetts, using materials from historical societies and history museums as reference materials.
  1. the fishing and shipbuilding industries
  2. trans-Atlantic and Caribbean trade, especially the Triangular Trade that included Africans to be sold as slaves in the colonies and goods such as sugar and cotton produced by slave labor to be sold in the colonies and in Europe
  3. the development of seaport cities of New Bedford, Newburyport, Gloucester, Salem, and Boston.

**Grade-Specific Practice Standards**

* **PS 2:** Develop supporting questions that lead to the generation of new questions and contribute to the inquiry process.
* **PS 4:** Identify the purpose of various primary sources.
* **PS 5:** Identify information about a historical source, including the maker, date, place of origin, and examine its intended audience.

*Lessons in this unit are also aligned to grade-level literacy standards to support reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

***Based on educator feedback, Unit 3 will be revised before the 2025-26 school year, so a lesson-by-lesson scope is not yet available.***

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| Grade 3, Unit 4 Pilot Scope and Sequence | Investigating History logo |

# Massachusetts and the American Revolution

***How was Massachusetts important to the American Revolution?***

**Grade-Level Content Standards**

* **3.T6.2:** Analyze the connection between events, locations, and individuals in Massachusetts in the early 1770s and the beginning of the American Revolution, using sources such as historical maps, paintings, and texts of the period.
  1. the Boston Massacre (1770), including the role of the British Army soldiers, Crispus Attucks, Paul Revere, and John Adams
  2. the Boston Tea Party (1773), a political protest against taxes on tea by patriots who called themselves the Sons of Liberty, dressed as Native Peoples
  3. the Intolerable Acts (1774), laws passed by the British Parliament as a result of the Boston Tea Party, designed to punish colonists.
  4. the First Continental Congress (1774), a meeting of representatives from the 13 colonies in response to the Intolerable Acts
  5. the beginning of the Revolution at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts (April, 1775) and the roles of Revolutionary leaders such as Paul Revere, John Hancock, John and Samuel Adams.
  6. the roles of Native Peoples and African Americans in the American Revolution, some serving as Loyalists, some as Patriots.
  7. the roles of colonial women in keeping households and farms, providing education for children, and, during the Revolution, boycotting English goods.
* **3.T6.3:** Analyze how the colonists’ sense of justice denied led to declaring independence, and what the words of the Declaration of Independence say about what its writers believed.
* **3.T6.4:** Explain how, after the Revolution, the leaders of the new United States had to write a plan for how to govern the nation, and that this plan is called the Constitution.
* **3.T6.5:** Explain that states as well as nations have plans of government; recognize that the Constitution of Massachusetts (1780) is one of the oldest functioning constitutions in the world, that its primary author was John Adams, and that, in addition to outlining government, it gives basic rights to citizens of the Commonwealth.

**Grade-Specific Practice Standards**

* **PS 4:** Compare and contrast points of view represented in two or more sources on a related topic and analyze how individuals and groups during the same historical period differed in their perspectives.
* **PS 6:** Identify evidence from multiple sources in response to compelling questions; use evidence to develop a claim about the past.

*Lessons in this unit are also aligned to grade-level literacy standards to support reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

**Learning Progression** *(*[*pilot lesson plans and materials available here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1C_aZIQqfw5whGw9RTt8SFG2mkqKZcf6N)*)*

**Massachusetts in the 1760s** | 7 Lessons

### *How did British rule affect the people of Massachusetts in the 1760s?*

1. Students will be able to explain what the American Revolution was by discussing key information and creating a Know and Wonder chart.
2. Students will be able to describe the levels of government in colonial Massachusetts by labeling a visual notes organizer.
3. Students will be able to explain what the Proclamation of 1763 was and why it was created.
4. Students will be able to describe connections between events, locations, and people in Revolutionary Massachusetts by analyzing an engraving by Paul Revere.
5. Students will be able to describe connections between events by analyzing an informational text about how the colonists protested unfair laws.
6. Students will be able to synthesize new learning about Massachusetts in the 1760s by citing evidence from multiple sources in response to compelling questions.
7. Students will be able to describe how British rule affected the people of Massachusetts by writing an explanatory paragraph.

**Conflict in Massachusetts** | 9 Lessons

***How did the people of Massachusetts respond to conflict with Britain?***

1. Students will be able to explain the significance of the Boston Massacre and the actions of Patriot colonists and British soldiers in the event.
2. Students will be able to describe a Revolutionary leader (Crispus Attucks, Phillis Wheatley, or Mercy Otis Warren) and their influence and motivations.
3. Students will be able to analyze connections between Revolutionary leaders Crispus Attucks, Phillis Wheatley, and Mercy Otis Warren.
4. Students will be able to analyze secondary sources to identify connections between British taxes and the Boston Tea Party.
5. Students will be able to explain the effects of the Boston Tea Party by identifying actions of the Patriots and the British government.
6. Students will be able to identify connections between British laws and the First Continental Congress by analyzing a secondary source.
7. Students will be able to analyze secondary sources for connections between the Intolerable Acts and the Battles of Lexington and Concord.
8. Students will be able to summarize new learning about conflict in Massachusetts during Revolutionary times by citing evidence from multiple sources in response to compelling questions.
9. Students will be able to demonstrate connections between events that happened in Revolutionary Massachusetts by telling a story using tableau vivant.

**Massachusetts During the Revolutionary War** | 7 Lessons

### *How did different groups of people respond to the Revolutionary War?*

1. Students will be able to identify key locations, people, and events in order to explain what happened in the Battle of Bunker Hill, the first large battle of the Revolutionary War.
2. Students will be able to determine the historical significance and meaning of the Declaration of Independence by analyzing primary and secondary sources.
3. Students will be able to identify Indigenous and African American soldiers’ experiences and perspectives during the Revolutionary War.
4. Students will be able to identify women’s experiences and perspectives during the Revolutionary War.
5. Students will be able to summarize how and why the Massachusetts and U.S. Constitutions were written.
6. Students will be able to summarize learning about Massachusetts during the Revolutionary War by citing evidence from multiple sources in response to compelling questions.
7. Students will be able to demonstrate their learning about Massachusetts during the American Revolution by comparing and contrasting points of view to answer questions.

**Summative Assessment** | 2 Days

Students create a poster that answers the Unit 4 Essential Question, How was Massachusetts important to the American Revolution? Students prepare for the summative task by completing the poster organizer. They work in pairs or small groups to form an answer statement, gather supporting evidence from each Cluster, and record explanations about how the evidence supports their answer to the Unit 4 Essential Question.

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| Grade 3, Unit 5 Pilot Scope and Sequence | Investigating History logo |

**The People and Governments of Massachusetts, Past and Present**

***How have the people and governments in Massachusetts influenced their communities over time?***

**Grade-Level Content Standards**

* **3.T1.1:** On a current map of Massachusetts, use cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate and describe the city or town where the school students attend is located, its local geographic features and historic landmarks, and their significance.
* **3.T1.2:** Research the demographic origins of the town or city, (e.g., the Native People who originally lived there or still live there, the people who established it as a colonial town, its founding date, and the free, indentured, and enslaved women and men who contributed to the wellbeing of the town). Describe the current population and immigrant groups of the 20th and 21st centuries.
* **3.T1.3:** Explain why classrooms, schools, towns, and cities have governments, what governments do, how local governments are organized in Massachusetts, and how people participate in and contribute to their communities.
  1. classroom and school governments provide a way for students to participate in making decisions about school activities and rules
  2. city and town governments provide a way for people to participate in making decisions about providing services, spending funds, protecting rights, and providing community safety
  3. Massachusetts communities have either a city or a town form of government (e.g., cities are governed by elected mayors and city council members; towns are governed by an elected group of people, in many towns called a “select board,” appointed town manager, and elected town meeting members or an open town meeting in which all citizens can participate; public schools are governed by elected or appointed school committees or boards of trustees)
  4. people can participate in and influence their local government by reading and responding to news about local issues, voting, running for office, serving on boards or committees, attending hearings, or committee meetings.

**Grade-Specific Practice Standards**

* **PS 1:** Explain how a democracy relies on people’s responsible participation and the implications for how individuals should participate..
* **PS 5:** Use distinctions among fact and opinion to determine the credibility of sources.
* **PS 7:** Explain different strategies and approaches students and others could take in working alone and together to address local, regional, and global problems, and predict possible results of these actions.

*Lessons in this unit are also aligned to grade-level literacy standards to support reading, writing, speaking, and listening.*

**Learning Progression** *(*[*pilot lesson plans and materials available here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1xWDws3s2bBd-wSvzypwpTiW8C2qKhF5L)*)*

**Massachusetts Governments and Populations** | 7 Lessons

### *What forms of government are there in Massachusetts, who do they represent, and what do they do?*

1. Students will be able to identify some reasons the government exists, recall information about the government from previous units, and brainstorm how people can get involved in their communities.
2. Students will be able to compare and contrast different visual representations of government and people.
3. Students will be able to identify key elements in the government of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah).
4. Students will be able to identify key elements of town government in Massachusetts.
5. Students will be able to identify key elements of city government in Massachusetts.
6. Students will reflect on three different forms of government in Massachusetts and identify similarities and differences between them.
7. Students will identify three forms of government in Massachusetts and match them to key features of that government.

**Our Town or City** | 6 Lessons

***What is the history of our town or city? How is our government run today?***

1. Students will be able to locate their town or city on a map, along with some geographic features and landmarks.
2. Students will be able to identify key information about the history of their town or city.
3. Students will be able to identify the current populations in their town or city.
4. Students will be able to identify key information about how their local government is organized and what it does.
5. Students will reflect on new learnings about the history of their town or city, as well as its current populations and government.
6. Students will write about key information about the history of their town or city, as well as current populations and government structures.

**How Communities Take Action** | 6 Lessons

### *How can we participate in and contribute to our communities?*

1. Students will be able to identify the rights and responsibilities people have in their communities.
2. Students will be able to identify how specific individuals contribute to their community.
3. Students will be able to identify how specific individuals contribute to their community.
4. Students will be able to identify how specific individuals contribute to their community.
5. Students will reflect on new learnings about how and why local community members contribute to and work to improve their communities.
6. Students will summarize specific ways in which people can contribute to and be involved in their community.

**Summative Assessment** | 1 Day

Students work to write and illustrate a proposal for a local community action, initiative, or event in order to display their understanding from the unit.