

Grade 3, Unit 2

Indigenous Communities, European Colonizers, and the Plymouth Colony



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

Framing the Unit

The unit is organized into three clusters of lessons. The first cluster focuses on the early 1600s in the Northeast. The perspectives and experiences of the Wampanoag and of European colonizers are investigated. Students also learn about the history of European sailors in the Northeast and how the Doctrine of Discovery supported European colonization of the area.

The second cluster focuses on the events of 1621. The actions and responses of both the Wampanoag and English colonists are studied. Students do a deep dive into the 1621 harvest feast and work to differentiate the truths and myths of this event.

The third cluster focuses on the lasting impacts of expanding colonization in the Northeast. Students first learn about how Indigenous peoples and English colonists were affected by expanding colonization. They then turn to the natural world and investigate the impacts on plant and animal populations.

The unit concludes with a two-part Summative Assessment Task. Students are asked to apply their learning from Clusters 1–3 by building a collaborative, chronological resource that reflects the unit. In Part 1, they independently create a card documenting a specific event from 1620–1621 and work with their peers to hang the cards in chronological order to create a class timeline. In Part 2, students engage in various reflections on the timeline and close with an Inquiry Circle discussion that ties the Unit 2 Essential Question to present-day experiences.

Prepare to teach this unit by exploring the [Background Brief: Indigenous Communities, European Colonizers, and the Plymouth Colony](#), which was designed to help you build content knowledge through a variety of resources. The brief also highlights current perspectives and research—along with potential misconceptions and any debates you should know about—so you can present this unit with confidence.

Unit Overview*Enduring Understandings*

1. Different groups of people have different priorities and values, including how they view land and other groups of people. Colonization is one example of how differences in these priorities and values shape history.
2. Events and actions in history impact one another and are reflections of the priorities and values of the people and groups of people involved.
3. Colonization has lasting effects on people and places.

Connections to Current Events and Issues

Connections to today's world and students' lives are built into this unit. Other contemporary connections could be added or developed for various topics of study within this unit, and we encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to connect students' learning to contemporary local, national, and global developments that may arise as you teach this unit. Some ideas for linking this unit to current events and issues include:

- Many current and longstanding ideas and policies regarding Indigenous peoples in the United States are connected to the past. [An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States](#) by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz provides a rich and detailed reframing of US history and the lasting impacts of colonization. The young adult version, [An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People](#), adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese, is also a great resource.
- After hundreds of years of forced displacement and violence, some Indigenous nations and tribes are reclaiming their ancestral lands. For an example from the Northeast in 2023, see "[The Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans is reclaiming 351 acres of sacred homeland in Stockbridge.](#)"

*Vocabulary (in order of appearance)***Tier 3 Vocabulary**

colonizer
sachem

territory
depleted

Priority Tier 2 Vocabulary

natural resource
colony

alliance
endangered

Lesson Clusters

Cluster 1: European Colonizers' Arrival in the Northeast (Lessons 1-7)

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

Focus Standards: 3.T3.1, 3.T3.2, 3.T3.3, 3.T4.1, 3.T4.1a, 3.T4.1b, 3.T4.1c, 3.T5.2, PS 3, PS 4, PS 5, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.6, W.3.2

Cluster 1 focuses on the experiences and perspectives of the Wampanoag and European colonizers. The cluster builds off learnings from Unit 1 about Indigenous peoples of the Northeast, past and present. The cluster introduces third graders to the European ideas and beliefs that supported colonization of the Northeast and how they were different from the Indigenous ideas and beliefs. Students engage with the Doctrine of Discovery (a primary source) along with adapted portions of a key secondary source for the unit, the illustrated nonfiction picture book, *If You Lived During the Plimoth Thanksgiving*, by Chris Newell. Students focus on comparing and contrasting the experiences of the Wampanoag and Europeans throughout the cluster.

Cluster 2: Actions and Reactions to Plymouth Colony (Lessons 8-13)

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

Focus Standards: 3.T4.1, 3.T4.1a, 3.T4.1b, 3.T4.1c, PS 3, PS 4, RI.3.7, RI.3.9, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.6, W.3.2

Cluster 2 focuses on the events of 1621, when the Wampanoag and English colonists first made contact with one another. The cluster introduces the interactions between the two groups, along with the myths and truths around the 1621 feast that occurred in the fall. Students launch the cluster by thinking about the first official action by the colonists: the Mayflower Compact. They also continue to use adapted portions of the key text for the unit, *If You Lived During the Plimoth Thanksgiving* by Chris Newell. Students focus on comparing and contrasting actions and reactions of the Wampanoag and Europeans throughout the cluster's cycle of inquiry.

Cluster 3: Longer-Term Impacts of Colonization (Lessons 14-20)

How has the Northeast changed forever due to colonization?

Focus Standards: 3.T3.1, 3.T3.2, 3.T3.3, 3.T4.1, 3.T4.1a, 3.T4.1b, 3.T4.1c, 3.T5.2, PS 3, PS 4, PS 5, RI.3.7, SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.6, W.3.2

Cluster 3 focuses on how expanding colonization impacted Indigenous peoples and the natural world in a lasting way. The cluster begins by introducing how Wampanoag and other Indigenous tribes of the Northeast resisted colonization, then asks students

Unit Overview

to use evidence to determine how animal and tree populations were affected by colonization during the 1600–1700s. Students engage with information from primary sources, including maps, and continue to use adapted portions of the key secondary source for the unit, *If You Lived During the Plimoth Thanksgiving* by Chris Newell. Students apply their deepened understanding of colonization in order to determine the ways in which the Northeast has forever changed.

Summative Assessment: Indigenous Communities, European Colonizers, and the Plymouth Colony (Lessons 21-22)

Focus Standards: 3.T4.1, 3.T4.1a, 3.T4.1b, 3.T4.1c, 3.T5.2, PS 3, PS 5, SL.3.1, W.3.2

For Unit 2's Summative Assessment, students are asked to apply their learning from Clusters 1–3 to build a collaborative, chronological resource that reflects the unit.

On Day 1, they independently create a card documenting a specific event from the unit.

On Day 2, students work with their peers to hang the cards in chronological order to create a class timeline. They then engage in various reflections on the timeline and close with an Inquiry Circle discussion that ties the Unit 2 Essential Question to present-day experiences.

Unit Focus Standards

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.
 - **3.T4.1a:** the purpose of the Mayflower Compact and the principle of self-government
 - **3.T4.1b:** challenges for Pilgrim men, women, and children in their new home (e.g., building shelter and starting farming, becoming accustomed to a new

Unit Overview

environment, maintaining their faith and keeping a community together through self-government)

- **3.T4.1c:** 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.T5.2:** 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).

Practice Standards

- **PS 3:** Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- **PS 4:** Identify facts, opinions, and the point of view presented in a source.
- **PS 5:** Identify information about a given source, including the maker, date, intended audience, source type, and/or place of origin. Determine a source's relevance to a topic.

Literacy Standards

- **RI.3.7:** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words, numbers, and symbols in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
- **RI.3.9:** Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.
- **SL.3.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SL.3.2:** Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- **SL.3.6:** Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.
- **W.3.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Unit Overview

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Unit Overview

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