



Lesson: People of the Dawn

(To follow Amplify CKLA K, Knowledge 6: Native Americans,
Lesson 1: Introduction to Native Americans)

At a Glance

In this lesson, students learn about the meaning of the word “Abenaki,” where the Abenaki lived, and how the “people of the dawn” marked the months of the year.

Primary Focus Objectives

- Students will analyze a painting of an Abenaki family and connect what they notice to information about other indigenous groups.
- Students will examine a map of N’dakinna and discuss the meaning of the word “Abenaki” and how it connects to the location of the Abenaki homeland.
- Students will read an Abenaki calendar and look for connections between the names of the months and the times of year.

Formative Assessment

- Group discussion
- Abenaki Calendar activity

Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.3

With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.K.5c

Identify real-life connections between words and their uses (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.8

With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials

- Vocabulary Card: Abenaki
- Image: [An Abenaki Village](#)
- Map: [N’dakinna and New England States](#)
- Abenaki and English Calendar

Time Needed

One 30-40 minute class sessions

Learning Activity

1. **Analyze an image.** Explain to students they will learn about the Abenaki, the earliest known people to live on the land we call New Hampshire. Share the Vocabulary Card. Project the image and guide a discussion about the painting. (*10 minutes*)
2. **Examine a map of N’dakinna.** Project or distribute the map of N’dakinna. Give students time to share what they observe. Help students connect the meaning of Abenaki, “people of the dawn,” to the direction of east. (*10 minutes*)
3. **Read an Abenaki calendar.** Project the calendar and read it aloud with students. Guide students to connect the time of year to the Abenaki name for the month. Distribute copies of the calendar and give students time to color it in. (*20 minutes*)



Educator Rationale and Answer Guide

Connection to Amplify

In this lesson, students extend their introduction to Native American groups in Amplify CKLA K, Knowledge 6: Native Americans, Lesson 1: Introduction to Native Americans, by learning about the Abenaki, the indigenous people of the land we call New Hampshire. If students completed two previous MxA lessons ("Where Gluskabe Camps" and/or "Is Maple Syrup a Need or a Want?"), they have learned some basic things about Abenaki culture. This lesson challenges students to use three different sources to learn more about the Abenaki and their connection to the land they call N'dakinna.

Analyze an image

After reviewing the Vocabulary Card, project the image. Explain to students that the image they are looking at is a painting by Francine Poitras Jones, an Abenaki artist who lives today in Vermont. She made this image to show what she had learned about the way her ancestors lived long ago. Ask students what they notice and what they wonder about the image. Help them connect the features of the image to category words they used in the Amplify lesson: environment, clothing, food, and shelter.

Examine a map of N'dakinna

Tell students they will look at a map that shows the land we know today as New England with information layered on it to show the homelands of the Native American people of this region. The labels show all the groups that were part of the Abenaki and where they generally lived. Also shown are other indigenous groups that live in southern New England. The key uses typefaces to distinguish between the different groups. The Abenaki call the area where they live N'dakinna. Students may recognize names of some of the other indigenous groups that lived further south. Help students use the compass rose to determine that the Abenaki lived farthest east. Their name roughly translates as "people of the dawn." This was a name used by groups that lived further west to describe the Abenaki. Ask students if they know where we see the sun rise in the morning, the time we call dawn. Help students connect that we see dawn to the east.

Read an Abenaki calendar

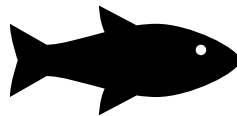
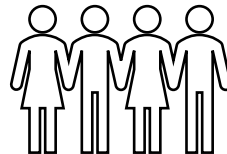
Explain to students that just as the name for the Abenaki people relates to where they lived, the words they used to describe the different months of the year also connected to the land and what was happening in the world around them. Go through each month and connect what students know about that month to how the Abenaki described it. (Educator note: Long ago, the Abenaki people would not have used a paper calendar. They had a strong oral tradition and would have passed along this information by word. This calendar is based on one created by a 20th-century Abenaki teacher. The alignment with the English language names and order for months is not as precise as the diagram illustrates, but should be thought of as a visual support for understanding the Abenaki names and order. A pronunciation guide is provided.) Give students a print-out of the calendar and encourage them to color in the different icons and sections.



ABENAKI

Definition: The first people to live on the land we call New Hampshire

How to use it: Long ago, **Abenaki** people met their needs by using the plants and animals available at different times of the year for food, clothing, and shelter.





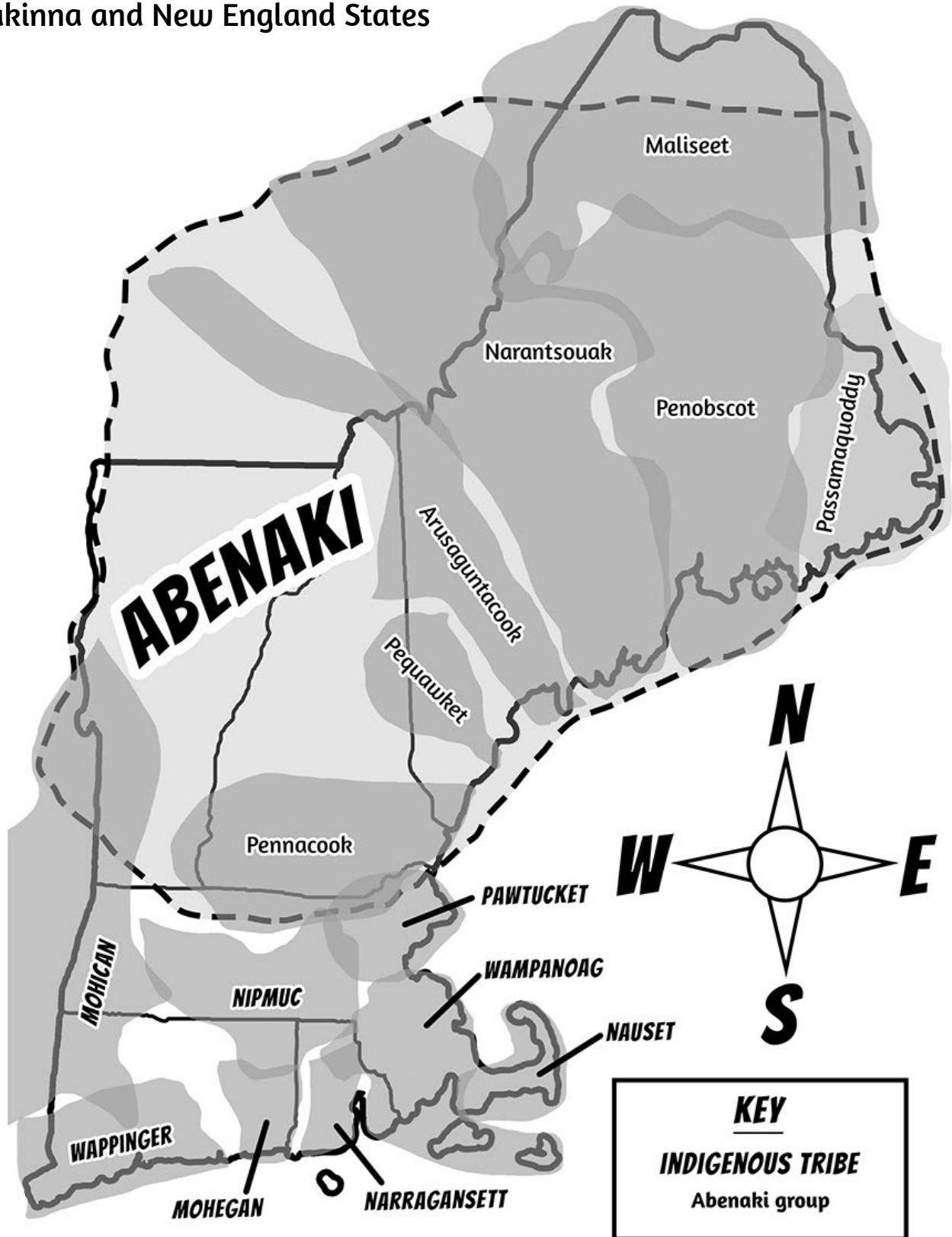
An Abenaki Village



Source: Francine Poitras-Jones for the New Hampshire Historical Society

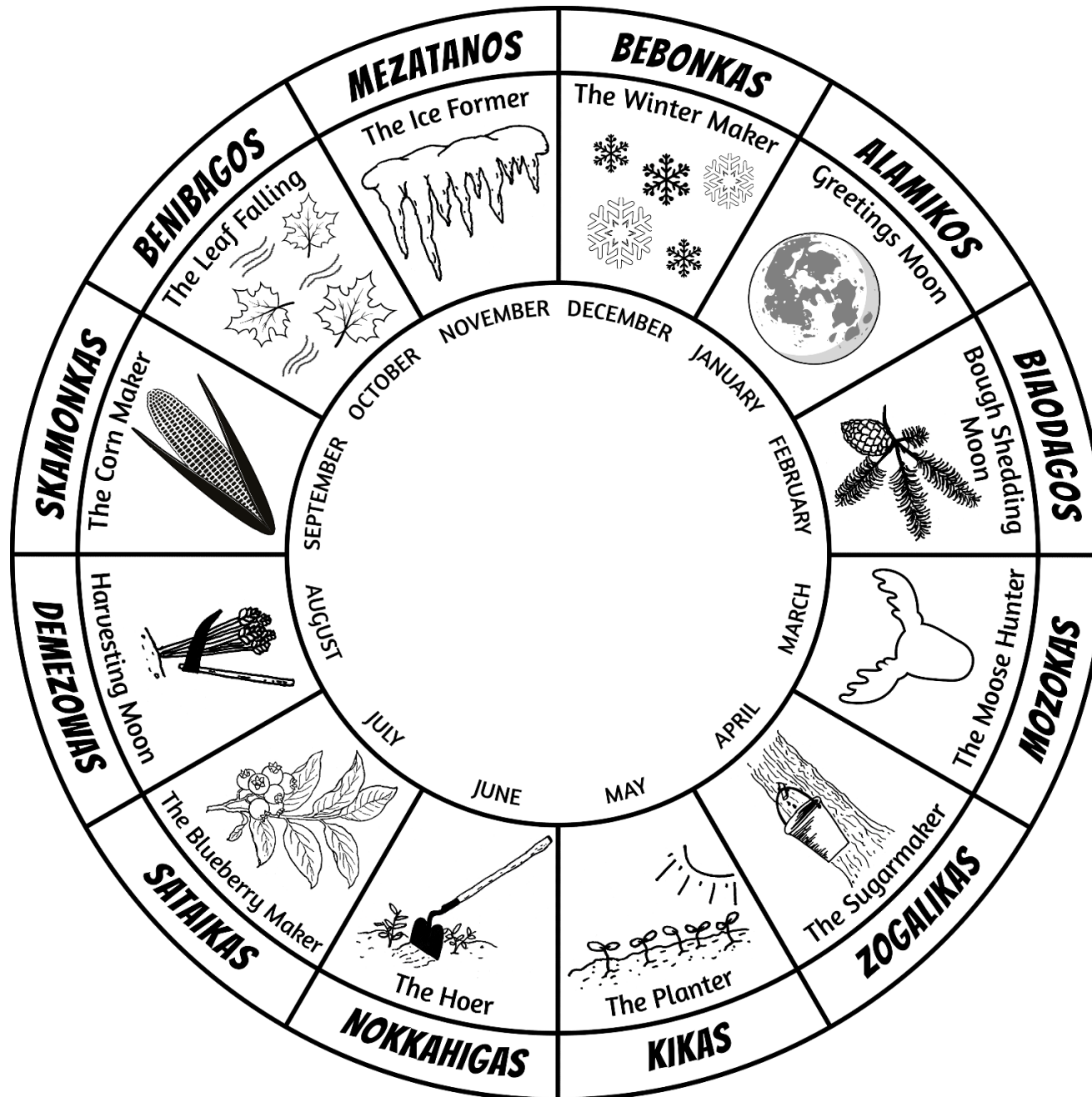


N'akinna and New England States



Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

An Abenaki Calendar



An Abenaki Calendar Pronunciation Guide

English Name	English Translation of Abenaki Name	Abenaki Name	Abenaki Pronunciation
January	Greetings Moon	Alamikos	ä-läm'-ē-kōs
February	Bough Shedding Moon	Biaôdagos	pē-ä-ohn'dä-gōs'
March	The Moose Hunter	Mozokas	mō-zō-käs'
April	The Sugarmaker	Zogalikas	sō-gäl'e-käs
May	The Planter	Ki Kas	kē-käs
June	The Hoer	Nokkahigas	nōkkä'ē-käs
July	The Blueberry Maker	Sataikas	sä-tī-ē-käs
August	Harvesting Moon	Demezôwas	tim'ē-sohn-wäs
September	The Corn Maker	Skamon Kas	skä'mōn-käs
October	The Leaf Falling Person or Moon	Benibagos	pen-ē'bä-goes
November	The Ice Former, The Freezer	Mezatanos	mä-zä'ton-ōs'
December	The Winter Maker	Bebonkas	pē-bone'käs

Abenaki month names and pronunciations written by Jeanne Brink and Stephen Laurent. Transliterations are approximate.