



Lesson 1.6 “New Hampshire’s Borders”

Unit 1: New Hampshire Geography Unit

Lesson Objectives

- Students will discuss and identify how borders or boundaries shape the resources and accessibility of physical space.
- Students will categorize different borders that shape New Hampshire and reasons why those borders have been created or changed.
- Students will analyze and compare historic and current maps of New Hampshire to determine changes in boundaries and borders.

Lesson Competencies

- I can initiate and sustain a focused discussion. (ELA 7)
- I can interpret and use information delivered orally or visually and respond by asking relevant questions, summarizing key points, or elaborating on ideas. (ELA 7)
- I can analyze, use, and construct maps and other geographic representations to explain relationships between people and the environment. (Moose SS)

Essential Questions

How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is?
How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?

Focus Questions

How did New Hampshire's boundaries and regions come to be the way they are today?

Estimated Time

Two 40-minute class sessions

Materials & Equipment

Teacher-created map of classroom on chart paper or projected
Divided Classroom Three Column Chart (enlarge or project)
Access to Unit 1, Learn It! “[NH’s Physical Characteristics](#)”
“[Mason Explains: Where is New Hampshire?](#)” video or “[New Hampshire’s Borders](#)” infographic for projection or group copies
Class set of “Borders and Boundaries” worksheet
Class set of “Analyze It! Map of New Hampshire, 1799” worksheet
Class set of “Map of New Hampshire, 1799”
Class set of “Town Boundaries” map



Educator Introduction & Rationale

People have been exploring the land now called New Hampshire and organizing their understanding of it for thousands of years. At first, knowledge of the land's shape and the locations of its inhabitants were passed down from one generation to another through stories and shared experiences. When this land was colonized by England, maps became a new means for documenting and proving delineations of territory. Not surprisingly, the varying priorities of people and the terrain of the land have complicated the process of shaping New Hampshire. The borders that give New Hampshire its crooked pie-slice shape and crazy quilt of town lines have been centuries in the making. Reference the [Educator Overview](#) for more information.

This is the sixth lesson in Unit 1: New Hampshire Geography. This lesson may be taught independently of the unit; however, achievement of the learning objectives in Lesson 1.1, "Map Vocabulary and Introduction," is recommended before engaging in the activities in this lesson. Please note, lesson vocabulary and definitions are at the end of the document. You may wish to preview these with your students.

Over the course of two sessions, students investigate the purpose of political boundaries and borders, their connections to the surrounding physical space, and their impacts on the land and people. In the first session, students work through a scenario: how would a boundary line dividing their classroom to serve two separate class groups impact the way people learn in and use the room? This guided discussion helps students define how boundaries determine the resources and accessibility in a certain area before discussing an infographic about the topic. The session concludes with students, in pairs or small groups, completing a worksheet that organizes information learned from the infographic or video and the activity. The priority is to connect social studies skills to New Hampshire's history; however, the activation portion of this session is a complete lesson on its own should time constraints prevent the completion of the rest of the learning activity.

The second session uses a three-part Analyze It! maps worksheet to explore how the physical shape of the state impacted how its political shape was depicted with a 1799 map of the state. Information from a 21st-century map is layered over this map to see the change in how borders and boundaries are depicted. The lesson closes with a return to the classroom map and the charts. Students reflect about if and how they would change the location or shape of the boundary line to better serve the needs of the people who will use the room.

Two reinforcement activities are suggested for students who need more time defining types and locations of boundaries. The first extension activity suggests that students read a recorded oral history description of N'dakinna, the Abenaki homeland, and plot it on a map of New England. The second poses four true border-changing scenarios of New Hampshire and asks students to map them and discuss how that change would have impacted their own lives. The final extension activity relates to the town line maintenance tradition of perambulation. Please adapt all the material in this lesson, as necessary, to meet the needs of the students in your classroom.

Learning Activity

Actuation

Divided Classroom. Display the teacher’s simple outline map of the classroom on a large piece of chart paper or project on a screen. As a group, discuss the location of essential classroom features (e.g. windows, doors, bathroom, sink, meeting area, tables, computers) and add labels for these details to the large map.

Explain to the class that they will imagine that their classroom needs to be used by two different classes of students at the same time. The teachers have decided that the class will be divided by an invisible line. Draw a line through the middle of the room on the map. As a group, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of learning in one side or the other of the classroom. Record student responses on a chart; note the provided sample three-column chart for collecting student responses. The students may also have questions or comments about the fairness of the creation of the dividing line: Who decides which class gets which side? Who is impacted by the boundary but did not have a say in where it was located? Add these to the chart in the appropriate column.

Alternatively, after a brief whole group discussion, provide small groups with a copy of the chart to complete as a small-group charting activity.

Direct Instruction

Understanding Borders and Boundaries. Explain to students that their observations and questions are very much like those that have helped shape the borders and boundaries around and within New Hampshire since it was first colonized. If students are unfamiliar with the terms **boundary** or **border**, explain that these are divisions, either invisible or marked by a physical or human-made feature to separate one location from another.

Student Reading

New Hampshire’s Borders. Before beginning Guided Practice, have students read Unit 1: Learn It! “[New Hampshire’s Physical Characteristics](#),” page 1.

Guided Practice

Divide students into pairs or small groups and have them complete the “Borders and Boundaries” worksheet. Decide for your class if you will use the infographic “New Hampshire’s Borders” or “Mason Explains: Where Is New Hampshire?” video as well as their experiences of the classroom dividing line to aid students in completing the worksheet. Either project or hand out copies of the material. If there is time, review their responses as a whole group.

- “[Mason Explains: Where Is New Hampshire?](#)” can be accessed on Unit 1: Learn It! “[New Hampshire’s Physical Characteristics](#),” page 6.
- “[New Hampshire’s Borders](#)” infographic can be found in Unit 1: Learn It! “[New Hampshire’s Physical Characteristics](#),” page 7.



Teaching tip: This is a good spot to pause if you will divide the lesson between two teaching periods.

Guided Practice **Finding state and town lines.** Explain to students that they will use two maps to investigate how physical features in the landscape impacted how boundaries and borders were shown on maps long ago. Project and/or distribute copies of "Map of New Hampshire, 1799" and provide each student with the "Analyze It! Map of New Hampshire, 1799" worksheet. Ask students to Encounter and Investigate the map using the appropriate sections of the worksheet. When students are ready to do the Build section of the worksheet, provide them with a copy of the "Town Boundaries" map. Students should be able to complete the tasks independently; provide individual support as necessary. Review as is best for your class.

Student Reading **New Hampshire's Counties and Towns.** To supplement Guided Practice, have students read Unit 1: Learn It! "[New Hampshire's Physical Characteristics](#)," pages 8 and 9.

Reflection **Evaluating boundaries.** Return to the chart and map completed during Activation. Would students change the shape or position of the dividing line in the classroom? What could they do to the boundary to enable both class groups to have access to the resources of the room?



Reinforcement

1. **Neighboring towns.** Provide students with the “Town Boundaries” map and ask them to trace borders with other states, countries, and the towns that neighbor their own. If they can, label the neighboring states and country in the appropriate places. Students can use a New England map as a reference.
2. **Town borders.** Focus on borders around and within your town. What are your neighboring towns? What divisions can you see within your town? Are there landmarks that seem to shape these boundaries? How are the boundaries represented on maps?

Extension

1. **Abenaki land.** The land called New Hampshire was home to people for thousands of years before it was colonized by the English. Those people, the Abenaki and their ancestors, had boundaries and borders that shaped where they lived, hunted, and grew food, though their locations were passed along through oral tradition rather than on maps. Explore a description of N’dakinna, the Abenaki homeland, that was recorded by members of the Cowasuck band of the Pennacook. Divide the description into sections and have small groups work together to mark the appropriate section of a map of New England. www.cowasuck.org/homelands.html
2. **Different state boundaries.** How would life be different with different state boundaries? Remind students that the shape of New Hampshire has not always been what it is today, nor have people always agreed upon its boundaries. Mark a current map of New Hampshire to show one of the following border dispute scenarios from our state’s history and explore how it would make life different today. Choose the scenario that is most relevant to where your students live:
 - The towns along the Connecticut River joined Vermont.
 - The northernmost part of New Hampshire became its own country.
 - Massachusetts included all the land between the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers.
3. **Perambulation.** When does your town complete perambulation, the process of walking the town lines every three years to make sure the markers are in good shape? Contact your town office to inquire and get information about the project. Does a section of the town line run near your school? Walk part of the line as a class.



Supporting Materials

New Hampshire Historical Society Resources

Map of New Hampshire, 1799

"New Hampshire's Borders" infographic

"Mason Explains: Where Is New Hampshire?" video

Other Resources

Town Boundaries. NH GRANIT Database, Complex Systems Research Center, University of New Hampshire.

"N'dakinna-Our Homelands & People," Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook Abenaki People, www.cowasuck.org/



Standards

“Moose on the Loose” Content:

- ✓ Students will understand that New Hampshire has a diverse geography, with mountains, seacoast, and farming land. They will understand it has been inhabited for thousands of years and has a variety of resources. (3-5.T1.1)

“Moose on the Loose” Skills:

- ✓ Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence (3-5.S1.1, 3-5.S1.2)
- ✓ Comprehensive Geographic Reasoning (3-5.S4.1)

New Hampshire Social Studies Frameworks:

- ✓ Geography: The World in Spatial Terms (SS:GE:4:1.5)
- ✓ Geography: Places and Regions (SS:GE:4:2.1, SS:GE:4:2.2, SS:GE:4:2.4, SS:GE:4:2.5)
- ✓ Geography: Environment and Society (SS:GE:4:5.2)

NCSS Themes:

- ✓ Theme 1: Culture
- ✓ Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- ✓ Theme 3: People, Places, and Environments

C3 Frameworks:

- ✓ Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World (D2.Geo.2.3-5)
- ✓ Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements (D2.Geo.8.3-5)
- ✓ Change, Continuity, and Context (D2.His.2.3-5)
- ✓ Historical Sources and Evidence (D2.His.10.3-5)

Common Core ELA Grade 3:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.3.1)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.3.2)

Common Core ELA Grade 4:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.4.1)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.4.2)

Common Core ELA Grade 5:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.5.1)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.5.2)

Lesson Vocabulary

border	(noun) A real or imaginary line that divides two places. Usually a human feature; also called a boundary
cardinal direction	(noun) One of the four main directions featured on a compass rose: north, south, east, and west
county	(noun) A section of a state with defined boundaries and its own governmental services. New Hampshire has ten counties
human feature	(noun) An element added to Earth's surface by people, usually to provide shelter, create borders, or support transportation
physical feature	(noun) A naturally occurring feature on Earth's surface such as a landform or body of water

