



## **Teaching the Unit**

### **Unit 17: New Hampshire Today, 2001-Present**

#### **Unit Summary**

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New Hampshire in the 21st century is a state characterized by both a greater connection to the global community through technological innovation and a deep commitment to its traditional identity grounded in notions of industriousness, independence, and resilience. Much like other parts of the United States, New Hampshire has seen many of its 19th- and 20th-century industries diminish or disappear as manufacturing has shifted to other parts of the world, but the state has created a thriving technological and knowledge-based employment sector that keeps New Hampshire on the cutting edge. In general, the interconnectivity of the modern internet age has benefitted New Hampshire, helping it to transcend the limitations that come from being a small state. Culturally, New Hampshire continues to celebrate its immigrant cultures of the past while integrating new arrivals from other parts of the world. And New Hampshire's natural beauty continues to be one of its most significant assets, as tourists come from all over the world to experience life in the Granite State.

#### **Full Educator Overview**

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##### **The Big Picture**

As you learn about New Hampshire in the 21st century, keep in mind the following points:

- New Hampshire's economic development in the 21st century has been a combination of innovation and tradition. New businesses and organizations, largely based in technology and education, have taken over the long-shuttered mill buildings. Tourism remains the state's second largest industry, with the majority of visitors coming by car from nearby states. New Hampshire agriculture continues to evolve in tandem with people's growing interest in locally grown and sourced products.
- New Hampshire continues to welcome immigrants from around the world. While immigrants are coming from a different part of the world than they did in the 19th century, new Americans still choose to make New Hampshire their home. The diverse cultures of New Hampshire's past and present are celebrated in the state's extensive offerings of cultural and ethnic festivals each year, as more Granite Staters become interested in embracing their racial and ethnic heritage.
- Organizations across the state are working to uncover and share the stories of New Hampshire's historically marginalized populations, including the Black community and the Abenaki, in order to create a more complete and inclusive narrative of New Hampshire's past.
- New Hampshire's politics, like those of most of the nation, are becoming increasingly polarized. Despite this, the independence of Granite State politicians and voters is visible in the state's tendency to be more progressive with social issues while more conservative when it comes to financial issues and the reach of the government. Local control remains the gold standard of New Hampshire politics, along with a commitment to low taxes.



## Introduction

When the sun rose on May 3, 2003, people passing through Franconia Notch discovered that New Hampshire had suffered a devastating loss. Overnight, the granite formation known as the Old Man of the Mountain had broken apart and tumbled down the cliff to the valley floor below. For decades, engineers had worked hard to keep in place the various rocks that created the illusion of a face with a complex system of rebar and restraints. Gravity would triumph in the end, and the symbol that decorated countless New Hampshire road signs, license plates, and state quarters was no more.

The fall of the Old Man would not be the end of his story nor the end of his role as a New Hampshire symbol. A task force created to commemorate the Old Man designed and built Profile Plaza on the shores of Profile Lake. From there, visitors can recreate the sight of the Old Man by standing behind one of seven steel “profilers,” each made up of several overlapping plates, much as the Old Man himself was made of several different rock outcroppings. The Old Man continues to hold a special place in the hearts of the people of New Hampshire and remains one of the most recognizable representations of the Granite State.

This parallel embrace of tradition and innovation is emblematic of New Hampshire’s path in the 21st century. Granite Staters in the digital age are more connected to the global community than ever before. Nevertheless, people in New Hampshire remain fierce guardians of their identities as citizens of the Granite State, as they adapt their traditions to meet a more mobile and interconnected future.

## Building Global Connections

*How has New Hampshire become more connected to the rest of the world in the 21st century?*

**Revitalization of the Mills.** The majority of New Hampshire’s mill-based industries closed down over the course of the 20th century, leaving large buildings sitting empty in cities and towns situated on the state’s rivers. (For more about the decline of the Industrial Revolution in New Hampshire, see Unit 15: Forging a Modern Identity). The conversion of former mill buildings began across the New England states in the late 1970s, when it became clear that manufacturing would not return to the region in the same style and quantity that it once had. New Hampshire communities, developers, and entrepreneurs began to make plans as to how to best reuse these spaces. By the early 21st century, people in New Hampshire viewed the large, empty mill buildings as an untapped resource rather than a symbol of economic decline. Nashua was the first community to successfully complete a large-scale project, when developers began converting old mills along the Merrimack River into apartments in the 1980s.

Due to the length of time it took to fund, approve, and execute these massive conversion projects, most of the plans made in the 1980s didn’t come to fruition until the early 2000s. As Manchester was once the heart of New Hampshire’s textile industry, it emerged at the forefront of the effort to revitalize the state’s factory buildings. In the 20th century, light industries had occupied the mill buildings, producing things like machinery, electrical circuits, and shoes. The National Park Service (NPS) had even explored using Manchester’s mill buildings to establish a national historic park devoted to the history of the textile industry, but the city of Manchester declined the NPS offer (instead, the national historic park went to Lowell, Massachusetts).

As the 20th century drew to a close, the light industry that had filled the mill buildings began to give way to a burgeoning tech industry. Among the first innovators in the Millyard was Dean Kamen, an inventor and entrepreneur who began buying up Manchester’s empty mills in the 1980s.



Kamen's most famous invention, the Segway, launched in 2001, propelling both him and his labs in the Manchester Millyard onto the global stage. Kamen continues to run his company, DEKA Research & Development, from the former Amoskeag Mill buildings, which focuses on developing new technologies, especially in the fields of healthcare and transportation.

Where Kamen led, others quickly followed. Dyn, an internet security company (now part of Oracle), opened in the Millyard in 2002. Other major national corporations, such as Texas Instruments, known for their calculators, and Autodesk, a software company, moved in as well. Smaller start-ups also took advantage of the available space, including the backpacking stove company JetBoil. Cultural and educational organizations moved in alongside these businesses. The University of New Hampshire at Manchester relocated to the Millyard in 2001, and in 2017, Southern New Hampshire University renovated the former Langer Place Mill to house their online degree program and offices. In 2001, the Manchester Historic Association opened the Manchester Millyard Museum in the same former mill that already housed the SEE Science Center. The new museum celebrated the rich history of the mill buildings, highlighted by the SEE Science Center's LEGO model of the Millyard, which was added in 2006. The revitalization of the mills sparked a growth of restaurants, stores, entertainment venues, minor league sports teams, and other businesses in Manchester.

While Manchester might have had the most prominent mill revitalization, other New Hampshire communities were also successful in converting their former mills into useful spaces. For example, Red River Technology became the marquee tenant of the former mills in Claremont in 2008, while several mill buildings in Dover underwent a massive conversion to apartments in 2012 and Newmarket renovated its mill buildings for mixed use in the early 2010s. Most of these projects were collaborations between private companies and local select boards, who developed business-friendly tax policies to inspire this development.

**Immigration and Cultural Heritage.** New Hampshire has experienced three major periods of immigration: Early Settlement, from the 1600s until 1790 (covered in Unit 3: Settling New Hampshire); the Great Wave, from the mid-1840s until 1924 (covered in Unit 12: Immigration in the Industrial Age); and Modern Immigration, from 1965 to the present. In 1965, the United States ended its previous policy of restricting immigration by national quotas, which favored immigration from Europe but limited immigration from the rest of the world. Instead, the U.S. government adopted immigration policies that favored family unification and allowed entry to those with skills needed in U.S. workplaces. These reforms meant that between 1970 and 2017, the number of immigrants coming to the United States increased. The foreign-born U.S. population rose from 4.7% in 1970 to 13.7% in 2017. Immigration to New Hampshire did not follow this national trend, though: its foreign-born population well below the national average, hovering at around 5%. Nevertheless, the Granite State saw the arrival of new immigrant groups during the early 21st century that helped diversify the state more than ever before. As opposed to the Great Wave of immigration, most of the immigrants coming to the United States in the 20th and 21st centuries come not from Europe but from countries in Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. In 2018, most immigrants to New Hampshire came from India (10%), Canada (9%), China (5%), Nepal (5%), and the Dominican Republic (5%), which mirrored national trends. However, New Hampshire continues to have a large percentage of Canadian immigrants due to its long-standing connections to French-speaking Canada.

One of the factors contributing to the growth of the immigrant population in New Hampshire after 1990 has been national refugee resettlement programs, which place refugee families in the cities of Laconia, Manchester, Concord, and Nashua. Between 1997 and 2009, more than 5,000 refugees arrived in the state from countries like Somalia, Sudan, the former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, and Burundi. A subsequent wave of refugee resettlement between 2011 and 2018 brought



another 3,000 refugees to New Hampshire from places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bhutan, Burma, and Iraq.

Like generations before them, new arrivals to the United States in the 21st century face significant challenges acclimating to their new country. Several nonprofit organizations have been formed in New Hampshire to help introduce and integrate global refugees into their new communities. Some, like the International Institute of New England, focus on helping immigrants find jobs and housing, while others, like Welcoming New Hampshire, concentrate on educating immigrants on the English language, American government, and the responsibilities of citizenship. Still others, like the Inti Soccer Academy of Manchester, provided after-school opportunities for immigrant children to play soccer and receive academic tutoring. In time, many former refugees have become citizens, attained advanced degrees, and opened businesses around New Hampshire. In 2018, Safiya Wazir in Concord, originally from Afghanistan, became the first person from a refugee background elected to the New Hampshire legislature when she won a seat in the N.H. House of Representatives.

New Hampshire has been known as a state lacking racial and ethnic diversity, but the first two decades of the 21st century have seen both the reality and perception of that change. The number of people reporting their race to be white alone decreased from 96% in 2000 to 88% in 2020. The percentage of people reporting to be Black, alone or in combination with another race, increased from 0.7% to 2.4% in that same period. The most significant growth came in the state's ethnic Hispanic and Latino population, which increased from 1.7% to 4.3%. Ethnic and racial diversity remains less than in the United States as a whole, but New Hampshire's past and present have been built on the contributions of a diverse group of people, and many local communities have moved toward uncovering and celebrating those contributions.

At the same time that new peoples and cultures have come to New Hampshire, Granite Staters have also shown increased interest in the culture of their ethnic heritages. In New Hampshire, as in the United States as a whole, the late 20th and early 21st centuries has been a period when people have discovered, or rediscovered, the culture of their ancestors. Not coincidentally, many Americans have become amateur genealogists in recent years, a hobby that brings thousands of people a year to New Hampshire archives to learn more about their family history. For others, festivals and celebrations around the state offer plenty of opportunities to celebrate their ethnic origins and to share different cultures with others.

Attendance at these festivals is flourishing in the 21st century, as people's curiosity about other ethnic backgrounds grows alongside interest in their own heritage. The New Hampshire Highland Games, held annually in Lincoln to celebrate Scottish heritage, attracts a large number of international visitors and more than doubled its attendance between 1999 and 2018, from around 22,000 to over 50,000 attendees. Glendi Greek Festival in Manchester, founded in 1980, drew its largest crowd ever in 2019, with more than 35,000 visitors. In addition, newer festivals celebrate a more diverse group of ethnicities, such as the We Are One Festival held in Manchester since 2000, celebrating Latino and African Caribbean Heritage, or the Berlin Francophone Festival, established in 2012 to share the French-Canadian heritage of New Hampshire. Multicultural festivals have also become popular in the 21st century, like the ones started in Concord (2005), Berlin (2008), Nashua (2016), and Keene (2017). These festivals allow for people of Irish and Polish descent to present their heritage alongside those of Vietnamese and Somali backgrounds, bringing the diversity of New Hampshire into a single place to be shared.

A renewed interest in ethnic and racial diversity is also reflected in a wide variety of efforts to explore different groups' contributions to New Hampshire history. Performers of music and storytelling from different cultures have become more popular, for example. Storytellers like Robert



Perreault combine personal stories of his French-Canadian heritage with historical context to provide a rich and immersive window to New Hampshire's past. French-Canadians aren't the only ones represented, though; musicians like Jordan Tirrell-Wysocki (Irish), Eastern Sound (Polish), and Jeff Warner (American folk) connect people to their heritage through their performances. Humanities to Go, a program run by New Hampshire Humanities, is one of the key driving forces in bringing presentations such as these to communities across the state. Their presenters cover the scope of New Hampshire history, from the Abenaki to the present, using mediums such as music, plays, lectures, demonstrations, and artwork to share cultural traditions from both the past and the present. Humanities to Go is incredibly popular throughout the state; in 2020, more than 174,000 people attended an event sponsored by New Hampshire Humanities.

Since 1645, Black people, both free and enslaved, have lived and worked in New Hampshire's communities. However, until recent years, their contributions have not always been acknowledged. In 1995, New Hampshire native and scholar Valerie Cunningham founded the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire in order to tell the history of the Black community in the state. Through educational programs, historical markers, community partnerships, and public programs, the Black Heritage Trail works to craft a more inclusive history and to highlight the cultural traditions of Black Granite Staters. Names like Prince Whipple, Harriet Wilson, Ona Judge, and Amos Fortune, among others, are now becoming more widely recognized as key contributors to New Hampshire's past.

New Hampshire's first people, the Abenaki, remain active in practicing their cultural traditions as well. Although Vermont has acknowledged four Abenaki tribes with state recognition, there are no state-recognized tribes in New Hampshire. Instead, independent groups have emerged throughout the state representing different bands of Abenaki, such as the Cowasuck. These Abenaki groups host regular events and organize educational programs emphasizing the Abenaki's enduring connection to N'dakinna, the land we now call New Hampshire. Members of these Abenaki groups and tribes present traditional crafts, engage in storytelling about Abenaki history and beliefs, and discuss issues facing the Abenaki today. Many of these events are open to the public and give residents of New Hampshire the opportunity to learn about the indigenous peoples who have lived here for thousands of years. There are also efforts underway to discover more about Abenaki life during the Woodland Period and earlier. For example, the Abenaki Trails Project seeks to document the indigenous history of New Hampshire by working collaboratively with different communities to highlight the contributions of the Abenaki throughout all periods of the region's history.

**Climate Change and Environmental Forces** Like the rest of the planet in the 21st century, New Hampshire faces a series of challenges brought about by rising temperatures and a changing climate. The average temperature and rainfall in the state have both increased in the past 100 years. Since 1970, that rate of increase has sped up: the average annual temperature has climbed between 0.5 and 2.6 degrees Fahrenheit and annual precipitation has increased 7 to 20%, depending on where someone lives in the state. These climatic changes present real challenges for the people of New Hampshire. Rising temperatures mean less snow, leading to shorter ski seasons for the tourist industry, and longer growing seasons, which disrupts the natural and delicate habitats of New Hampshire's native wildlife. Flooding has increasingly become a problem in states like New Hampshire that have high water tables and thousands of miles of lakes and rivers. More than 65,000 properties in New Hampshire are at risk for flood damage, and that number is expected to grow by 5% over the next 30 years. The perils of flood damage could be seen when in 2012 Hurricane Sandy caused \$80 million in property damage due in part to a tidal surge of 3.2 feet along the seacoast. Invasive species like milkweed, which spread to nearly every major body of water in the state during the Mother's Day floods of 2006, along with changing water temperatures, threaten the fish species living in New Hampshire's lakes and ponds.



Among the impacts of climate change in New Hampshire is white pine disease. This disease, affecting New Hampshire's most iconic species of tree, began to spread across the state in 2009. Annual increases in rainfall and rises in humidity in the months of May and June continue the spread each year. The disease causes needle blight, where the needles on the white pine turn from green to brown and fall off early in the summer instead of in the fall. Losing needles early creates stress on the tree, forcing it to work harder to convert nutrients and making it more vulnerable to other environmental factors. Because white pine disease more often affects younger trees in the lower part of the forest canopy more than older ones, it threatens the survival of the species. In addition, white pine disease poses a threat to the state's economy, as white pines are still New Hampshire's most economically important tree, covering more than 500,000 acres and providing 31% of the timber harvested in the state.

### **Preserving Local Identities**

*How has life in New Hampshire communities changed or remained the same in the 21st century?*

**Tourism in the 21st Century.** A staple of the state's economy since the late 19th century, tourism remains one of the largest industries in New Hampshire today. The state sees approximately 3.5 million visitors per year, who annually bring in more than \$1.8 billion of revenue. The majority of visitors come from neighboring states in New England and the Mid-Atlantic region, especially Massachusetts. Tourists from Massachusetts are so important to New Hampshire's economy that in the summer of 2017, the New Hampshire Department of Travel and Tourism bought out every single piece of advertising in Boston's North Station, calling the project, "North Station Domination." New Hampshire is also seeing more international tourists, with people from Quebec making up about 80% of foreign visitors. Campgrounds, smaller inns, bed and breakfasts, and home rentals provide ample options for tourists to stay across the state.

New Hampshire's small size is an asset when it comes to modern tourism, particularly because the majority of tourists who visit the state now do so by car. Automobile tourism exploded in popularity in the first half of the 20th century—between the two world wars—when cars became more widely available and affordable. In 1913, the United States had just over 1 million registered cars; by 1963, there were 82 million. The spread of the automobile democratized tourism, making it easier and less expensive for the average family to go on vacation. In the 1920s, Route 3 was built as the main motorway up from Massachusetts, making the Lakes Region and White Mountains more accessible to the middle class. Along Route 3 and other new state highways, savvy businesspeople built motels, campgrounds, diners, and convenience stores to cater to the new visitors, who were often more budget-conscious than the tourists who had visited in the previous century. The demand for grand hotels like the Balsams in Dixville Notch or the Shirley Hill House in Goffstown diminished as people began to treat their hotels as just a place to sleep for the night while they went out to explore during the day. Motels, with their outdoor entrances and minimal frills, fit this increasingly mobile model much better. Once boasting dozens of grand resort hotels, New Hampshire today has fewer than 10 of them left now, although they have found a modern niche as high-end, luxury experiences. (For more information on New Hampshire's 19th-century tourist industry, see Unit 13: Tourism in New Hampshire.)

After the interstate highway system was built in the 1950s, it became even easier for people to visit New Hampshire for a vacation, or even for a day. People from nearby states could go leaf-peeping or take the family skiing and be home by bedtime. Or, tourists could visit multiple regions of the state and experience all the different things New Hampshire has to offer in a single stay. This pattern of automobile tourism travel continues to this day, as any New Hampshire resident who has tried to drive north on Highway 93 on a Friday night surely knows! With the exception of



the years during the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of tourists who come to New Hampshire continues to increase on an annual basis.

Some of the state's tourist attractions have stayed consistent over time, like leaf-peeping, natural rock formations like the Flume Gorge, beaches on the ocean and lakes, and Mount Washington and the Cog Railway, the latter of which celebrated its 150th birthday in 2019. Other modern attractions have grown up around the state, including water parks, helicopter foliage tours, outlet shopping, and lift-services mountain biking. The ability of New Hampshire's tourist industry to adapt while still taking advantage of the state's natural assets has allowed tourism in the state to thrive in the 21st century.

While growing tourism has an overall positive financial effect on the state, some communities in tourist areas are faced with challenges as they balance the needs of tourists with the needs of their own residents. While most visitors to New Hampshire still stay in a hotel, motel, or campground, private rentals are growing in popularity. Digital rental platforms like AirBnB and Vrbo have become simple ways to rent private properties, prompting people to purchase second homes and apartment buildings in tourist areas solely to rent to out-of-town guests. These types of rentals, most of which are managed by absentee hosts, affect the standard of living in local communities. In 2021, the town of Conway held a vote to determine if the town would ban short-term vacation rentals in residential areas, citing noise disturbances and a lack of housing for year-round residents as the reason. The vote failed, but similar conversations continue to happen in tourist communities around the state.

**New Hampshire Politics.** The early years of the 21st century saw a number of firsts in New Hampshire politics, as the people elected to state and federal office began to more accurately reflect the state's diversity. In 2006, Carol Shea-Porter became the first woman to represent New Hampshire in Congress when she was elected to the First Congressional District. Jeanne Shaheen was elected New Hampshire's first female U.S. senator in 2008. Shaheen was no stranger to political firsts; she had been the state's first elected female governor in 1996 and the first woman in the United States elected as both a governor and a senator. In 2012, New Hampshire had the first all-female federal delegation to Congress in the United States, with Ann McLane Kuster and Shea-Porter representing New Hampshire in the House, and Kelly Ayotte and Shaheen representing New Hampshire in the Senate. Maggie Hassan was elected governor that same year, making all of New Hampshire's top political leadership female—the first state ever to be so represented. In 2018, after Shea-Porter declined to run for another term, New Hampshire elected its first openly gay member of Congress, Chris Pappas.

New Hampshire's political identity in the 21st century continues to be a moderate, "purple" state that prioritizes local control by select boards and school boards, but not without pressures from larger movements affecting the rest of the country. New Hampshire has experienced the same political polarization as the rest of the country since 2016, with an increase in protests outside public buildings and politicians' homes reflecting national trends. New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation presidential primary has also come under attack from some national groups, suggesting that New Hampshire's small size and lack of diversity doesn't accurately reflect the country. New Hampshire's long-serving Secretary of State Bill Gardner has continued to hold off all challengers to the state's presidential primary, arguing that New Hampshire's constitutional requirement to hold the primary one week before all other states outweighs other political concerns. (For more information on the New Hampshire primary, see Unit 16: New Hampshire Primary.)

In some ways, New Hampshire's commitment to tradition has created practical funding issues affecting local communities. New Hampshire remains steadfastly opposed to a statewide sales or



income tax. Candidates for governor and other top political offices in the state are asked to publicly pledge that they will oppose the creation of these taxes. “The Pledge,” as this has become known, originated in 1972 when gubernatorial candidate Meldrim Thomson pledged to prevent any increase in state taxes. Since then, all candidates for governor—Democrat or Republican—have been asked to take “The Pledge,” and none have been elected without it. New Hampshire and Alaska remain the only two states without either a state income or sales tax.

Without broad-based state taxes, New Hampshire relies predominantly on locally raised property taxes to fund its town governments and schools. However, communities with a smaller tax base struggle to raise funds to provide an adequate education for their students. In the 1990s, the city of Claremont brought a lawsuit against the state of New Hampshire, arguing that the lack of financial support from the state meant that students were not receiving the education guaranteed to them by the N.H. Constitution. Claremont won that case in 1997, as well as a follow-up case in 2006, leading the state to provide some stabilization grants to less affluent school districts. But in most cases, these grants have proven insufficient to equalize education around the state, and funding for education remains a top concern for voters.

Town government remains the cornerstone of New Hampshire politics. Individual select boards and school boards are still responsible for most of the decisions that impact the daily lives of people living in New Hampshire. Most Granite Staters of all political parties will react strongly when they perceive the state and federal governments to be overreaching or interfering with local affairs. However, in practice, New Hampshire’s towns and cities often struggle to engage their citizens in local politics. Whereas New Hampshire had the nation’s sixth-highest voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election, with more than 78% of eligible voters going to the polls, most communities across the state struggle to achieve a 30% turnout in local elections and at town meetings.

New Hampshire’s tradition of communal town meetings dates back to colonial times. But in 1995, a new process (called informally SB2, named after the bill’s Senate identification number) allowed towns to split their town meeting into two parts: a deliberative session where residents discussed issues and then a secret ballot election, held on a different day, to formally vote. Because most people who vote in local secret ballot elections don’t attend the deliberative session, they aren’t exposed to the full range of opinions on an issue as they might be at a traditional town meeting, and there is no opportunity for townspeople to work together to reach a consensus. As of January 2021, 72 of the 221 towns in New Hampshire followed the SB2 system, but it hasn’t produced the increase in voter participation that was the goal of the legislation.

New Hampshire’s political independence has made it an attractive place in the 21st century for national libertarian groups to take root. In 2003, the Free State Project, a nonprofit organization devoted to creating a substantial libertarian community in a single state, picked New Hampshire as its target home. The group aims to get 20,000 people who embrace libertarian principles to move to New Hampshire and exert influence on the state’s political culture, particularly by serving as elected officials in local and state offices. Free Staters do not always openly acknowledge their involvement with the group, and they have been known to run for office in either party, but in recent years, Free Staters have gravitated toward the Republican Party in New Hampshire. The 2020 election sent dozens of Free Staters, or those sympathetic to their libertarian views, to the N.H. House of Representatives where they are known as the Freedom Caucus. Roughly 25% of state representatives currently identify as Free Staters or libertarians. While to date Free Staters have fallen short of their goal to bring 20,000 people to New Hampshire, libertarian groups seeking to limit taxation and government continue to gain influence in the state.





**Evolving Agricultural Practices.** If New Hampshire’s traditions regarding town government seem to be fading, another aspect of its heritage has seen a resurgence in the early 21st century—its long history of farming and agrarian life. While New Hampshire, like many other states, now relies upon food grown and raised in other parts of the country, a vibrant agricultural community still exists in the state. New Hampshire still has about 4,400 working farms covering roughly 470,000 acres, which comprise almost 8% of the state. Dairy products, vegetables, apples, and maple products make up the bulk of the farm goods produced in the Granite State. Alongside plants harvested and livestock tended by the farm staff, many of these farms also include popular “U-Pick” options, which allow people to pick their own fruits and vegetables. While originally focused on apples and pumpkins in the fall, U-Pick operations have expanded to include strawberries, blueberries, peaches, plums, cherries, tomatoes, and even wildflowers. U-Pick is one method farms have developed to meet the challenges of the rising costs and shrinking profit margins that farmers in the state face in the 21st century.

Nationally, Americans in the 21st century have become more interested in the origins of the food they eat at home and in restaurants, fueling the rise of farm-to-table restaurants, community supported agriculture programs (CSAs), and farmers markets. New Hampshire growers have been able to reach their customers in new ways through these mediums. Restaurants like the Foundry in Manchester and Greenleaf in Milford have made a sustained commitment to buy predominantly from local farmers and fishmongers to support New Hampshire food producers. Individual farms and collectives like Fresh Start Farms, which is a group of immigrant farmers hailing mostly from countries in Africa, offer weekly or bi-weekly produce boxes direct to consumers as well as selling their products in weekly farmers markets proliferating across the state. Family farms in New Hampshire that may have stagnated in the 20th century have found new life in the 21st as suppliers of traditional heritage crops, like apples, tomatoes, squash, and other produce, alongside family entertainment experiences like ice cream stands, hay rides, corn mazes, petting zoos, and winter sports, all of which now are considered part of the farm economy. For Granite State adults, there is a thriving system of craft breweries, wineries, and distilleries in every corner of the state. New Hampshire ranks 10th nationally in the number of craft breweries per capita.

Agricultural fairs held in the fall around the state continue to celebrate New Hampshire’s agricultural heritage. Unlike many other states, New Hampshire lacks a centralized state fair; instead, several local fairs have grown over the years to attract visitors from all over New Hampshire. Agricultural fairs are known for their mix of carnival midways, livestock and horticultural competitions, traditional fair foods, and family-friendly merchandise. In the 21st century, other types of festivals have sprung up around the state, including many centered around beer or seafood, but agricultural festivals remain the best place to see New Hampshire’s traditions of the past on display for its residents of today.

Some of the most popular of these agricultural fairs include the Hopkinton State Fair, the Deerfield Fair, the Lancaster Fair, the Sandwich Fair, and the Keene Pumpkin Festival. The Hopkinton State Fair, held over Labor Day, is the most well-attended, with most years seeing about 70,000 people visit over the course of four days. In 2018, the Deerfield Fair had the distinction of showing the largest pumpkin ever grown in the United States—a whopping 2,528 pounds! But it’s the Keene Pumpkin Festival that holds the world record for the number of pumpkins lit at the same time, when in 2013 the organizers lit 30,521 pumpkins all at once. Even as the average person in New Hampshire is less likely to have a direct connection to farming than their ancestors, Granite Staters still have a strong connection to the state’s agricultural past—and future.



**Social Justice and Protest Movements.** In the 21st century, conservative New Hampshire took some significant—and surprising—steps to protect rights related to gender identity and sexual orientation. New Hampshire was the site of a major leap forward in the recognition of gay rights when, in 2003, Gene Robinson was elected the first openly gay bishop of the Episcopal Church anywhere in the world. Elected by other priests in New Hampshire, his elevation in the church hierarchy was so controversial at the time as to cause a split in the global Episcopal Church between those supporting and opposing his election. At his consecration, Robinson wore a bulletproof vest. Despite persistent opposition from some, Robinson served as the Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire until his retirement in 2013, and other openly gay people have followed him into church leadership since then.

Civil unions became legal in New Hampshire on January 1, 2008, making it the first state to do so legislatively without being forced to by a judge or the threat of a court case. New Hampshire became the sixth state to legalize same-sex marriage only two years later, on January 1, 2010. The legislature banned conversion therapy on January 1, 2019. Today, communities around the state host parades and events to celebrate Pride each June, recognizing the contributions of the LGBTQ+ community in the Granite State.

The 21st century has also been a time when Granite Staters have sought to illuminate the contributions of groups that fall outside of the traditional Yankee stereotype, in step with the racial and ethnic reckonings going on elsewhere in the country. In 2003, while a municipal crew was doing sewer work in Portsmouth, city workers unexpectedly uncovered 13 coffins buried under the pavement on Chestnut Street. Historical research revealed that the area had been designated as a “Negro Burying Ground” on a 1705 map. Further investigation led to the discovery of approximately 200 more coffins. Community leaders, led by the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire, worked with the city of Portsmouth to develop a memorial park on the site and commemorate the city’s multi-racial history. When the site was consecrated in 2014, the people of Portsmouth joined together to honor those who had been buried there. Work continues to identify the individuals buried at the site. In 2020, Portsmouth approved funds to conduct DNA sequencing that would help connect current descendants to the people buried there.

Several other projects are underway across the state that aim to tell the stories of New Hampshire’s Black history, a subject that received scant attention in the past. Residents in Exeter are working to dedicate a park to the Black soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War and later settled in Exeter. In Manchester, researchers are erecting signs commemorating important locations in the city’s Black history. In the wake of George Floyd’s murder at the hands of the Minneapolis police in 2020, groups such as Black Lives Matter held protests, rallies, and vigils across New Hampshire, bringing to public attention the need to tell the stories of all the different groups in New Hampshire’s history.

At the same time, communities and organizations are examining the way New Hampshire commemorates historical interactions between the Abenaki and European colonists. In Boscawen, a statue dedicated to Hannah Duston has long been subject to vandalism and controversy. The statue was erected in 1874 and funded by the contributions of over 450 people seeking to honor, oddly enough, New Hampshire mothers, at a time when few Americans acknowledged the validity of indigenous viewpoints. Duston, who became famous for killing 10 Abenaki after being taken captive in 1697, has a complicated history, though, one that had not been recognized until recent years. In 2020, a group of Abenaki approached the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation to ask that the park surrounding the statue be remodeled to reflect the perspective of the Abenaki and to commemorate Duston’s victims. The state agreed, and plans are underway to



create a memorial that offers a greater diversity of perspectives that more accurately reflect the historical record.

## **Conclusion**

The 21st century is still young, and New Hampshire's place in the digital age is still being written. However, the key ideas that characterize the state of New Hampshire continue to guide its transition as part of a more interconnected and globalized world. Granite Staters prize their traditions but are both adaptable enough to realize that traditional ways may require adjustment and savvy enough to remain at the forefront of change and innovation. New Hampshire continues to be profoundly influenced by immigrants, whose cultures add vibrancy to communities around the state, even as people in the Granite State strive to bring to light underrepresented stories from the state's past. Tourism and agriculture remain mainstays of the New Hampshire way of life—but with modern twists designed to appeal to residents and visitors of all ages and walks of life. And people in New Hampshire prefer to lead rather than follow; whether in technology, business, or politics, New Hampshire is more likely to be near the front of a movement than at the back of it. If the past and present are any indication of the future, it's likely to remain this way for generations to come.

## **Course Essential Questions**

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Essential questions are designed to be answered repeatedly throughout the entire curriculum. This unit particularly addresses the following essential questions:

- How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is?
- How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?
- How have New Hampshire's people shaped its government?

## **Unit Focus Questions**

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Lessons in this unit are geared towards students answering the unit focus questions comprehensively through a variety of methods. This unit's focus questions are:

1. What ideas have defined New Hampshire history and shaped the Granite State's character?
2. How can we celebrate culture and adapt to diversity in New Hampshire today?

## **Lesson Plans**

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In Unit 17: New Hampshire Today, two lessons give students the opportunity to create presentations around the Granite State's culture, traditions, and innovations of the modern day.

### Lesson Plan 17.1: A Small State of Many Cultures

After mapping the cultures present in New Hampshire today, students explore an aspect of one culture and make a heritage festival in the classroom.

### Lesson Plan 2: Mason's Five Ideas in New Hampshire Today

Students develop compelling and supporting questions about "Five Ideas Every NH Kid Should Know" and research to create a project about how they are seen in New Hampshire today.

## **Unit Vocabulary**

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To come.



## Using the Student Content Readings

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The student content for this curriculum is designed to be used in many ways. Here are suggestions for reading activities and strategies that support independent and guided reading at different stages of each unit. Please note that some lessons in this unit use the student content in their learning activities.

- **Introducing Units:** Preview the student content before diving into lesson plans and activities. Ask students to skim the text by looking for key design elements. What are the headings? What do they tell us about the big ideas of the unit? Look for words in bold. What are the important vocabulary words used in this unit? Which are familiar? Which are not? What kinds of graphics or images are used in this content? Which important ideas do they illustrate?
- **Developing Understanding:** Some lesson plans direct you to specific sections of the student content, but the student content should be revisited throughout completion of a unit. Students can create visual representations of specific sections, summarize paragraphs, or complete jigsaw chunking and present their section summaries to other students.
- **Reviewing Concepts:** After lessons, return to the student content to look for evidence of the concept explored in the lesson. Students can create timelines, cause and effect charts, mind maps, and Venn diagrams using the information provided in each section.
- **Extending Comprehension:** Students can develop a review quiz for fellow students by writing their own questions about the information in each section. Translating the content into data that can be displayed on a map or graph is another way to extend comprehension of the text.

## Additional Resources

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Format: Book

Title: *Code Name Ginger: The Story Behind Segway and Dean Kamen Quest to Invent a New World*

Author/Creator: Steve Kemper

Audience: For Educators.

Description: Tells the story of Dean Kamen's invention of the Segway and the growth of DEKA in the Manchester Millyard

Format: Book

Title: *Different Roots, Common Dreams: New Hampshire's Cultural Diversity*

Author/Creator: Becky Field

Audience: For Educators.

Description: A photographic book showing images of over 100 new Americans along with information about some of their journeys to and resettlement in New Hampshire

Format: Book

Title: *Finding Home: Portraits and Memories of Immigrants*

Author/Creator: Becky Field

Audience: For Educators.

Description: A book highlighting 40 different immigrants to New Hampshire, with personal accounts of their journeys and photographs of their lives



Format: Article

Title: "Following in Hannah Dustin's Footsteps: Reexamining the Evidence"

Author/Creator: Denise Ortakales

Audience: For Educators.

Description: The article explores the attack on Haverhill, Massachusetts which occurred on the morning of March 15, 1697, and resulted in the capture of Hannah Duston and other settlers.

Published in *Historical New Hampshire* 69 (Summer 2015).

Website: [www.nhhistory.org/Object?id=422926](http://www.nhhistory.org/Object?id=422926)

Note: This article is available online only to members of the New Hampshire Historical Society

Format: Book

Title: *Imogene's Last Stand*

Author/Creator: Candace Fleming

Audience: For Students.

Description: A history-loving elementary school girl fights to save the local historical society in a fictional New Hampshire town by speaking to famous figures in history

Format: Book

Title: *A Libertarian Walks Into a Bear: The Utopian Plot to Liberate an American Town*

Author/Creator: Matthew Hongoltz-Hetling

Audience: For Educators.

Description: Describes the trials and tribulations of libertarian commune formed in Grafton in 2004

Format: Book

Title: *New Hampshire Now: A Photographic Diary of Life in the Granite State*

Author/Creator: New Hampshire Society of Photographic Artists and New Hampshire Historical Society

Audience: For Students and Educators.

Description: Inspired by the Farm Security Administration photography documenting life in America during the Great Depression, a three-year project to photographically record daily life in all seven regions of the state

Format: Movie

Title: *Shadows Fall North*

Author/Creator: UNH Center for the Humanities and Atlantic Media Productions

Audience: For Educators.

Description: A documentary film following the efforts of two New Hampshire Black historic preservationists and activists to reintroduce the state's Black history to its population

Website: [www.blackhistorynh.com/](http://www.blackhistorynh.com/)