

ABENAKI FISHING TOOLS

Fishing was a very important source of food for the Abenaki. New Hampshire's many streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds meant there was always plenty to catch! The Abenaki made all the tools that they used when they went fishing.

Abenaki used **spears** to catch fish. The spears had one, two, or even three points. Some people got very good at throwing the spears to catch very big fish. The Abenaki also used **fish hooks** made of bone to catch fish that lived deeper down.

Bone Fishhook



Stone Plummets

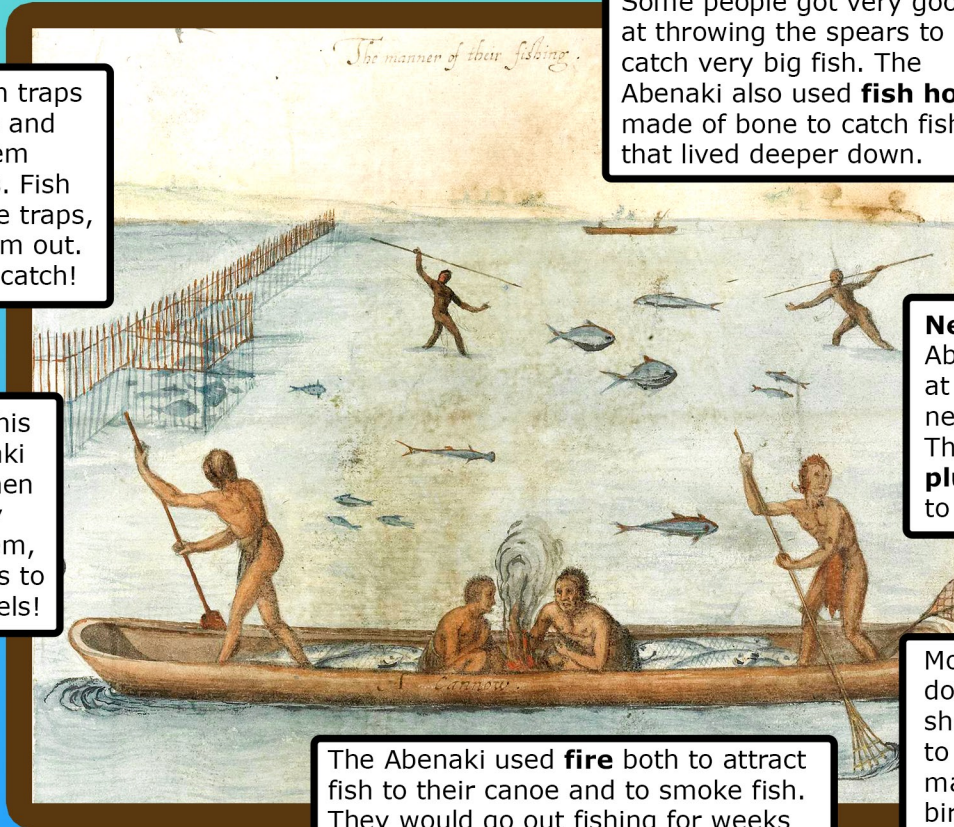
The Abenaki built fish traps called **weirs** in lakes and ponds. They built them using sticks and nets. Fish could swim into these traps, but they couldn't swim out. It made fish easy to catch!

You don't see any in this picture, but the Abenaki also used **baskets** when they caught fish. They would store fish in them, and even used baskets to catch small fish and eels!

Woven Basket



Remember that all the artwork we have showing indigenous people was made AFTER the Europeans came! But, this watercolor, which was made in about 1585, does a good job showing fishing the Abenaki way.



Nets were used by the Abenaki to catch lots of fish at once. They wove most nets out of grass or plants. They would attach stone **plummets** to sink nets to the bottom of the water.

The Abenaki used **fire** both to attract fish to their canoe and to smoke fish. They would go out fishing for weeks at a time, so they had to make sure the fish they caught would not go bad.

Most Abenaki fishing was done from **canoes**, not the shore. There were two ways to make a canoe. You could make a light one out of birch bark. Or, you could make a dugout canoe by carving one out of a tree trunk.



Moose
on the
Loose

1. How did the Abenaki use the natural world to meet their needs while fishing?
2. Which way of catching fish do you think was the easiest? The hardest? The most effective?
3. What evidence supports the claim that fishing was an important source of food for the Abenaki? Explain your reasoning?
4. Have you ever been fishing? What kind of Abenaki tool is most similar to what you used?