



Lesson: Abenaki Farming

(To follow Amplify CKLA 1, Knowledge 5: Early American Civilizations,
Lesson 1: The Maya: A Harvest and a Hurricane)

At a Glance

In this lesson, students extend their understanding of Mayan farming by making comparisons to how Abenaki people farmed during the same time period.

Primary Focus Objectives

- Students will review who the Abenaki are and their role in New Hampshire history.
- Students will examine an infographic that depicts a typical Abenaki village.
- Students will complete a comparison chart with details about Mayan and Abenaki farming.

Formative Assessment

- Comparison chart

Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.2

Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.2

Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

Materials

- Map: [N'dakinna](#)
- Vocabulary Card: Abenaki
- Focus Text: [Abenaki Develop Agriculture](#) timeline entry (forward to page 5 and click on the blue timeline icon)
- Infographic: [An Abenaki Village](#)
- Maya and Abenaki: Comparing Farming worksheet

Time Needed

One 30-40 minute class session

Learning Activity

- 1. Discuss the Vocabulary Card.** Project the map of N'dakinna and display the Vocabulary Card. Briefly remind students about who the Abenaki are, where they used to live long ago, and that their descendants still live in New England today. (5 minutes)
- 2. Read the Focus Text.** Project the Focus Text selection and read as a whole group or in reading groups. (10 minutes)
- 3. Examine the infographic.** Project or distribute copies of the infographic and read its contents. (10 minutes)
- 4. Complete the chart.** Distribute the worksheet and support students as they select from the statements and place them on the chart. (15 minutes)



Educator Rationale and Answer Guide

Connection to Amplify

In this lesson, students connect knowledge about Mayan civilization to knowledge about an indigenous civilization that existed at the same time in the land we call New Hampshire. Students previously learned about the Abenaki through multiple Kindergarten Moose x Amplify units. This lesson connects to the Amplify Early American Civilizations unit by focusing on the practice of farming. Students listen to or read a non-fiction text, explore an infographic, and complete a comparison activity to reinforce this connection.

Discuss the Vocabulary Card

This lesson provides an opportunity to help students understand that while the Mayan civilization was thriving at the southern end of North America, Native American civilizations were also thriving in the north, including on the land we call New Hampshire. Explain this while showing the map of N'dakinna (available below or by following the link) and reading the Vocabulary Card. Both of these resources were included in Moose x Amplify Kindergarten lessons and may be familiar to students who completed those lessons.

Read the Focus Text

This illustrated Timeline entry is appropriate for independent, whole group, or small reading group use. A printer-friendly version is included below. Or, follow the link to the first page of "Learn It! The Abenaki Before 1600," and then click on the "View Timeline" button. Select the third entry: "Abenaki Develop Agriculture." Point out to students that both the Maya and the Abenaki started growing crops around the same time, but they had different ways of doing so because they lived in very different environments.

Examine the infographic

This infographic may also be used for a whole group or small group reading session. The guiding questions at the bottom are not necessary to use for the purposes of this lesson but may be used to encourage discussion and connections if time allows. Ensure that students observe the illustration of how the Abenaki grew their three main crops. Talk about how that differed from the example of Mayan farming described in the story, "A Harvest and a Hurricane." Students may make other connections: like the Maya did 3,000 year ago, the Abenaki lived in family groups and everyone worked together; they lived near bodies of water; they built villages of shelters close to each other.

Complete the chart

Explain to students that they should read the statements and then cut and paste them into the correct boxes on the chart. The completed chart will reinforce both the similarities and differences between Mayan and Abenaki farming.



N'dakinna, the Abenaki Homeland

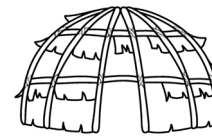
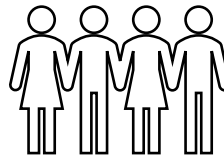


Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

ABENAKI

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

How to use it: Long ago, **Abenaki** people used animals and plants to make their food, clothing, and shelter.





Abenaki Develop Agriculture, circa 1,000 BCE



The Abenaki were originally hunters and gatherers. They got their food by hunting and fishing and by gathering nuts and berries that grew in the forests. Then around 3,000 years ago, they began to grow crops to provide more food. Native tribes grew three kinds of crops—squash, corn, and beans. This trio became known as the “three sisters” because they were all grown together. The corn grew straight and tall, and the beans grew up around the corn stalks. The squash was planted at the base of the corn stalks, and its big leaves protected the base of the corn and beans, preventing weeds from growing or animals from eating them.

AN ABENAKI VILLAGE

The Abenaki built their wigwams and longhouses in a circle around the outside of the village. The middle of the village was a shared community space. There was usually a large fire pit and plenty of space for chores. This was where people tanned hides, made pottery, and prepared food for winter storage. It was also a safe place for people to keep an eye on small children and to protect the tribe's elders.

The Abenaki sometimes built a fence out of tall tree trunks around their camp. This is called a **palisade**. It helped protect the Abenaki from animals and attacks from unwelcome visitors.

The Abenaki grew crops right outside their village walls. They didn't clear large fields. Instead, they planted their food together in small areas and changed where they planted things each year. This let the soil rest and build up nutrients. Some of the most important crops were corn, beans, and squash. They planted them all together - not in rows - so each plant could help the others to grow.

The best place to build a village was next to water, like a lake or a river. The Abenaki needed a steady supply of fresh drinking water. They also used the water for travel and as a place to fish.

1. How did the Abenaki use natural resources to build their villages? Give three ways.
2. Many Abenaki moved to different locations for summer and winter. How do you think the village organization would change from summer to winter? How would it stay the same?
3. What do you think were some of the advantages of building a palisade? What are some of the disadvantages?
4. Think about your town or your neighborhood. How is it similar to an Abenaki village? How is it different?





Maya and Abenaki: Comparing Farming

	Maya	Abenaki
crops		
field size		
planting style		

They grew corn, beans, and squash.	Their fields were small and close to the village.
Their fields were large and needed many workers.	They grew maize.
They planted all three crops together.	They planted in rows.