

Vocabulary – Teacher Guide to accompany Indian Stereotypes activities

1. **stereotype** – an exaggerated and/or over-simplified representation (in images, mental images, words) of the characteristics of a category of people or things, in this case the "first people" of the Americas
2. **native** – " **1a.** One born in or connected with a place by birth: *a native of Scotland now living in the United States.* **b.** One of the original inhabitants or lifelong residents of a place." *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*
teaching idea: You might refer to the articles "I is not for Indian" and "Who is an Indian" for background information. Discuss with students: Why is it important to claim "nativeness" – so important that wars are fought over it? Imagine not knowing your heritage – how would this feel? You may briefly tell students about the Indian Boarding Schools (see background article, "National Wombs").
3. **indigenous** – originating or occurring naturally in a place or environment - in science, this term is widely applied to animals and plants. Have students list some indigenous New England plants that Europeans brought back post-contact (tobacco, potato, maize, cocoa...)
4. **aboriginal** – first or earliest known of its kind in a region, having existed in a region from the beginning - this term is used by the British, Canadians and Australians for the First Peoples of the respective countries
5. **Indian vs. Native American** -
"The terms 'American Indian' and 'Indian' are labels that originated at the time of Columbus. He thought he had discovered the Indies so he labeled the peoples he found Indians. 'Native Americans,' ...grew out of the civil rights protests of the 1960s-70s. Today, anyone born in this country tends to label themselves as native, therefore the term has lost significance in identifying the Indigenous Peoples of this hemisphere." (Carol Cornelius, *Iroquois Corn*, xiii)
Native peoples of Maine have specific tribal/band names: Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Mi'kmaq (Micmac), Maliseet, Abenaki – when talking in the plural, add an "s" (e.g. the Penobscots).
teaching idea: have students locate the ancestral lands and the contemporary reservations of the Maine/Canadian Wabanakis on the outline maps; introduce students to pre-contact tribal groups as named and identified by the French: Abenaki, Etchemin, Souriquois, Armouchiquois and also locate these on a map. Discuss how names were/are **given** by the Europeans. The Wabanakis called themselves "the people."
6. **generic** – applying to any member of a group
teaching idea: the generic description of a "wizard" or a local clique member might help students to understand the term, and to understand the uses as well as the narrowness and danger of generic descriptions!
7. **dehumanize** – " 1. to take away somebody's individuality, the creative and interesting aspects of his or her personality, or his or her compassion and sensitivity toward others." *Microsoft Word/Encarta World English Dictionary*. Also, to portray in a dehumanizing fashion (as in a picture, play, TV ad)
teaching idea: Identify a specific example of dehumanization (non-Native). Examples might be in prisons, in some armies, in some violent movies, in some humorous movies or cartoons. Ask students: How is dehumanizing accomplished? (taking away physical comforts, abuse, fear, nakedness, becoming robotic...) Why is this done? (to control the victim, to use the victim, to laugh at the victim...)

8. **economy** – the production, distribution and use of the goods and services of a community as a whole – a good economy benefits the community members – trade is one aspect of a community's economy
teaching idea: After doing the HW, students should have some understanding of the local community economy. Ask students: How would your lives be different if this economy were to collapse suddenly? Imagine your life in a community with an entirely different economy – one based upon the materials you make in your home and the crops you raise on community land. What else would be different?
9. **naïve** – lacking experience or understanding, unsophisticated, extremely simple or trusting, childlike
teaching idea: – students should be led to understand that this word carries both a negative weight ("You are SO naïve!") and a fuzzy/romantic connotation that is also, eventually, negative ("The naïve natives were easily outfoxed by the clever traders.")
10. **culture** – "1. art, music, literature, and related intellectual activities...3. the beliefs, customs, practices, and social behavior of a particular nation or people. 4. a group of people whose shared beliefs and practices identify the particular place, class, or time to which they belong." *Microsoft Word/Encarta World English Dictionary*.
teaching idea: Distribute the blank Culture Wheel and the Passamaquoddy culture wheel – discuss the application of the wheels to the students' culture – ask "Why does this wheel play an important role in dispelling stereotypes?"
11. **chief** – "the person with the most authority or highest rank in a group or organization, who ultimately controls or commands all the others." *Microsoft Word/Encarta World English Dictionary* – from Middle English, this is a European title not traditionally used by Indians.
teaching idea: Students can brainstorm names of famous media and "Indian Chiefs" and look up the tribal governments of Maine tribes. Ask students: What are some negative connotations of the word Chief? (perhaps they will know about Clark Kent's boss or NCIS's Gibbs) What are some positive connotations of the term? What does a Chief look like? Act like?
12. **squaw** – North American Indian wife, from Narragansett *squaws* (also used as a feminine suffix in other languages)
teaching idea: There is disagreement among Native scholars about the use of the word Squaw. It is important to discuss the non-native pejorative use of the term, as opposed to the Native word. Women played an integral role in the Native culture. Like the terms "Indian Princess," "Chief," and "Indian Brave," the word "Squaw" carries a significant negative connotation as used by many Non-Natives today. It is best to use the words Woman and Girl. You might point out that Indian women used the word "squaw" at times to insult European and American women. Also, the word has been excluded from the Microsoft Word dictionary and **banned in the state of Maine** (in place names, etc.)
13. **brave** – "a Native American Indian warrior" according to Microsoft Word's dictionary. What Nation? Were all non-Chief males warriors? Of course not. The term reinforces the "savage savage" stereotype. Use "boys" and "young men" and "men".
teaching idea: this label is core to understanding the stereotypes in many children's books. Be certain to have students distinguish between the adjective *brave* and this label.
14. **princess** – Indians did not have kings, queens, princesses, etc. This term suggests that young girls and women are seductive. Use "girls" and "women."
teaching idea: See the Wabanaki Studies – Indian Stereotypes – Resources listings for some good online articles about this stereotype.

15. **sachem / sacham / sachom** – title used for the leader of some Indian nations and tribes – Penobscot *sagama (sagamore)*, Micmac *sakumow*. Maine nations also use the titles Chief and Governor. Be sure to teach students that leaders are elected because of their strengths and that they negotiate and sign treaties and are economic leaders.

Vocabulary Activity for Students - Sample

Name: _____

1. Select **one** frequently stereotyped group from the list. In the center column, brainstorm words and phrases that describe the "mental stereotype" that you see. In the right column, brainstorm **exceptions to the stereotype**.

Circle your selection:	Stereotypical traits (sample)	Exceptions or REAL traits
Ballet dancer, actor/actress, female model, male model, football player, ice hockey player, scholar, librarian, thief, farmer, politician, women over 65, men over 65	Overalls, carries hoe, smokes corn pipe, talks slowly, older man, smells like cow dung, early riser, works all day, poor	Young man or woman, wears jeans, runs machines to work farm, wealthy

2. Complete this statement: I am a **native**... Mainer, of Brunswick

3. List 3 or more plants **indigenous** to Maine:

white pine, cedar, rhododendron, fern, beach grass

4. In order to be called **aboriginal** inhabitants, a tribe, group or culture would have to be...

able to trace their culture back to the "beginning" (note that Indians do not accept the Bering Strait theory – the Wabanakis believe that they (in various tellings) came into being in their ancestral lands.

5. Indians in Maine are called, as a group, the Wabanaki. What are the separate tribal groups, or peoples, that comprise the Wabanaki?

See the attached maps. Students should create maps as part of the unit.

6. What are some traits of the **generic** good student in your school?

Answers will vary: organized, does HW, wears glasses, asks questions, studies for tests, always has pencil or pen, serious, no social life

7. Briefly describe **one** TV commercial that **dehumanizes** an individual or a group.

Answers will vary: Budweiser commercials (dumb young men), fat children selling a food item, senior citizens

8. Upon what is the **economy** of your town or community based? Try to be specific. Think about the jobs held by adults have that might involve trade or commerce (buying/selling) with people outside of your community.

Answers will vary: service industries (housing, food), merchants, arts, farming, building, tourism, etc. Specific names should be used.

9. Briefly describe a character in a cartoon, movie, game or book character that you think is **naïve**. Who? What specific action or event supports this characterization?

Answers will vary: Neville in the early Harry Potter stories is a good example. Harry himself is naïve through book 4. Many of the cartoon animals are naïve, as are many girls and young women.

10. Complete the chart below with specific examples from **your culture**.

This question comes from the Culture Wheel. If possible, lead students into a discussion of how pre-contact Wabanakis would have completed this chart, and how the Penobscot (or other tribe) would complete it today. Use blank wheels, so that students can see all of the categories. This understanding is essential to dispelling stereotypes and is an overall goal of the unit. **Language** is not on the chart – be sure students know that the Penobscot (e.g.) today speak English **and** are reviving their tribal language, a dialect in the Algonquin language family called Abenaki-Penobscot. Each of Maine's tribes has a different language.

Category or Trait	Specific Example	Pre-contact	Today - Penobscot
Music	(band or group)	Ceremonial songs, variety of instruments	Rock bands, traditional flute and ceremonial music. The Penobscot Nation has a cultural preservation and restoration program.
Literature	(Popular book)	Oral – stories, legends storing history and knowledge	Both written and oral, in both English and Abenaki-Penobscot languages. Contemporary writers include Dan Lane and storyteller John Bear Mitchell
Health system	HMO's, personal doctors, specialists, govt. assistance, insurance, hospitals, clinics	Healers, extensive knowledge of medicinal plants	The Penobscot Nation has a Health Center and clinic on Indian Island and a Human Services Department that provides care and assistance to children, elderly, those in need, and Indian Island residents (dental, medical, counseling, nutrition, environmental health)
Government	(will vary depending on local government system)	Sagama elected by tribal council	Indian Island Reservation, elected Sagama (Governor / Chief Jim Sappier), Lieutenant Governor, Tribal Council, non-voting representative to State Legislature

Housing	Apartments, single and multi-family homes, condos, group homes	Wigwams – teepees used at times for seasonal settlements	All varieties of contemporary housing. The Penobscot Nation has a Housing Authority and an Assisted Living Facility
Science	(various subjects & topics)	Plant pharmacology,	Traditional and contemporary science. The Penobscot Nation has a Department of Natural Resources
Games/Sports	(various sports)	Dice games, waltes, ring and pin, snow snake, ball games, running	All contemporary sports as well as traditional games
Education	Free public schools, private schools, home-schooling	Children educated by "doing" under guidance of adults	Indian Island School and also education in traditional culture by adults
Family structure	(will vary by student) – generally, nuclear family with at least one parent	Extended family living communally, movement between maternal-paternal family groups	Varies by family – some families were broken up by adoption or boarding schools – many nuclear families
Technology	(various modern technologies)	Sleds, showshoes, handheld tools made from stone, bone, wood, tools for fishing, trapping	All modern technologies