

Mayflower Turtle Island

KS2 History Resource



Museum
Gallery
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The Box is Plymouth's new multi-million pound museum, gallery and archive. With brand new exhibition spaces alongside state-of-the-art facilities for research and learning, it's the perfect place to teach, inspire and engage students of all ages.

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About this resource

Where should stories start and finish? What's the connection between place and time? It's difficult to decide. Can we tell a history with differing voices and perspectives?

Most tellings of the history surrounding the voyage of the *Mayflower* in 1620, start with a community of people moving from England to Leiden in 1608, then follows this group as they travel to America, and finishes in 1621, at the end of the passengers' first year in their new home.

But if we start the story 12,000 years earlier, and finish 55 or even 400 years later, then a totally new story is told. The Turtle Island animation does just that.

This Teacher's Pack helps you to use Turtle Island as an in-depth teaching resource to explore the history connected the Atlantic voyage of the ship, the *Mayflower*.

How to use the animation with your class

The Turtle Island animation is divided into seven sections which are separated on the screen by still images of objects from the Mayflower 400: Legend and Legacy exhibition at The Box - we call these 'pause screens'.

On the following pages you will find background information about this period of history, activities and discussion points that you can undertake with your students and object enquiry questions about each object on the pause screens. We've also included links to sources where you can find out more such as websites, podcasts and YouTube films.

There are a few ways to use the Turtle Island animation with your class. You could watch the whole animation and use each pause screen to pick up some of the discussion points we refer to in this pack. Or you could structure a whole scheme of work around the animation – taking one section per lesson and using the extra resources and activities to inspire further activities.

We hope that this animation inspires you to find out more about this fascinating history, the interactions between Europeans and Native Americans in the 1600s, and the rich history of America that predates European settlement.

This animation has been written in collaboration Dr Stephanie Pratt, a Dakota (Sioux) and Anglo-American scholar and former Associate Professor (Reader) of Art History at Plymouth University. She was appointed Cultural Ambassador for her Tribal Council at the Crow

Creek Dakota Indian Reservation in South Dakota in 2015. Stephanie is a noted expert on the visual representation of Native Americans in art and museums; and her book, *American Indians in British Art, 1700-1840* (Oklahoma University Press, 2005), is a widely referenced source.

“The inclusion of Native American groups is really important. We must consider the impact of migration on native groups. Including different perspectives is something we’re always trying to teach our students.”

- History teacher from Notre Dame School

“Wow. That is really impressive! We have seen this story portrayed from the colonial perspective and the indigenous perspective but this is clearly a uniquely UK perspective. It is quite refreshing actually.”

- Paula Peters, Wampanoag Advisory Committee

“Before starting out to research Native American cultures, their beliefs and their histories, it is important to note that many currently available sources are told from an outsider’s viewpoint or taken from the written historical record to which Native American peoples could not contribute easily up until the modern period. This [source from Plimoth Plantation](#) helps to explain an Indigenous North American viewpoint on storytelling and historical accuracy”

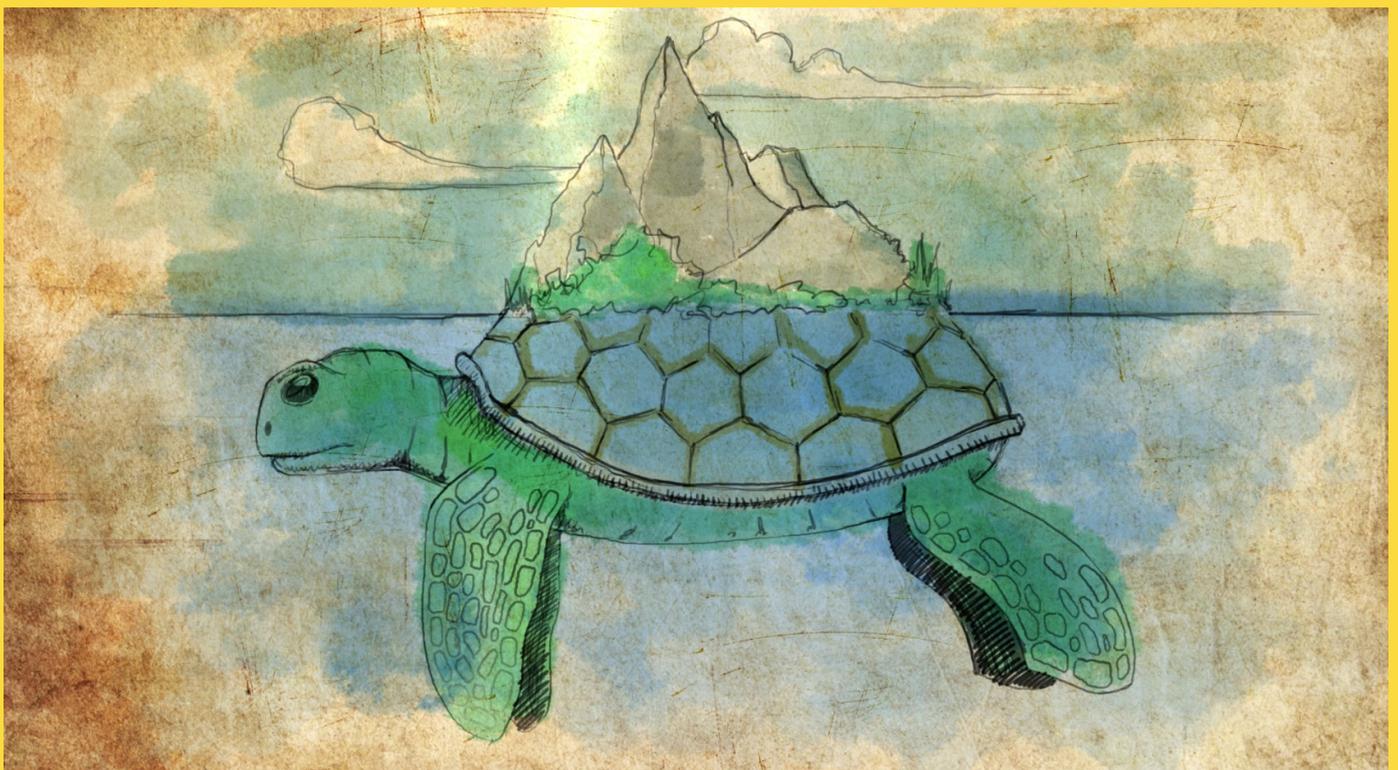
- Stephanie Pratt

Section 1: Turtle Island

Turtle Island comes from the Creation or Origin stories of some Native American Cultures. These include the League of the Hodonoseaunee in the north east of America. It's a favourite of the Mohawk people, who are one of the six Nations of the Hodesosaunee.

Some Native American peoples see Turtle Island as part of a Creation or Origin story. Creation or Origin stories are handed down in oral histories over generations. Different tribes have slightly different versions of the story. The Mohawk people believe Sky Woman helped to create Turtle Island.

This animation shows Turtle Island being created when a great sea turtle rose from the ocean floor. In the Mohawk telling of the story, Sky Woman





fell from the Sky World and birds gathered to rescue her, and let her down on the turtle's back.

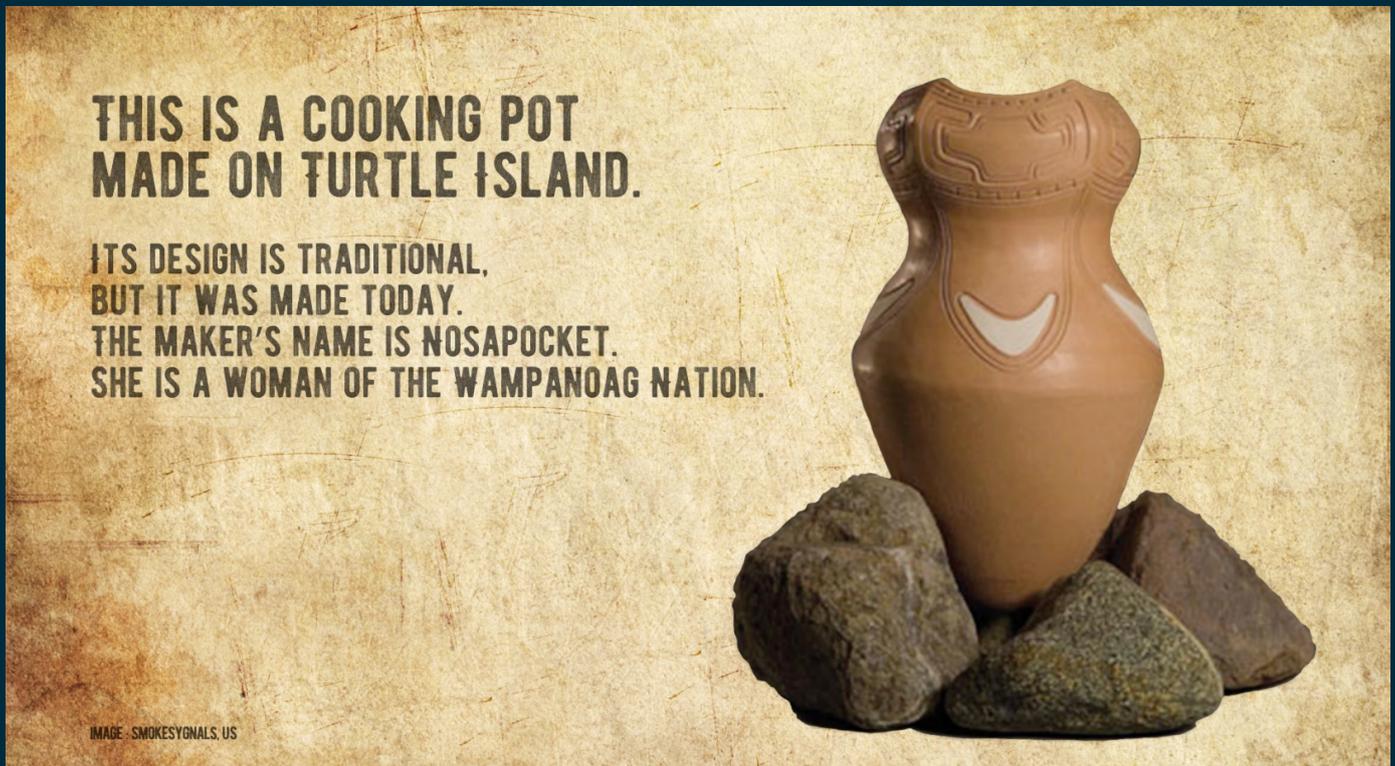
Many Wampanoag people today refer to America as 'Turtle Island', and it was conversations about Turtle Island with Wampanoag representatives which initially inspired the making of this animation.

There are a number of different Creation or Origin stories. To find a more detailed telling of the Sky Woman story which includes reference to the turtle, as well as others, download the [History & Culture e-book](#) produced by the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Connecticut, USA.

You can also watch the following [YouTube TEDx Penticton](#) talk from the Mohawk artist, Lee Claremont.

Watch [another version](#), which is much simpler and uses cut-out animation.

Section 1: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. What are the differences in the origin myth as told by the Turtle Island Animation and the YouTube animations?
2. What are the strengths/weaknesses of each animated version?
3. What aspects of the Turtle Island story have relevance (if at all) today?

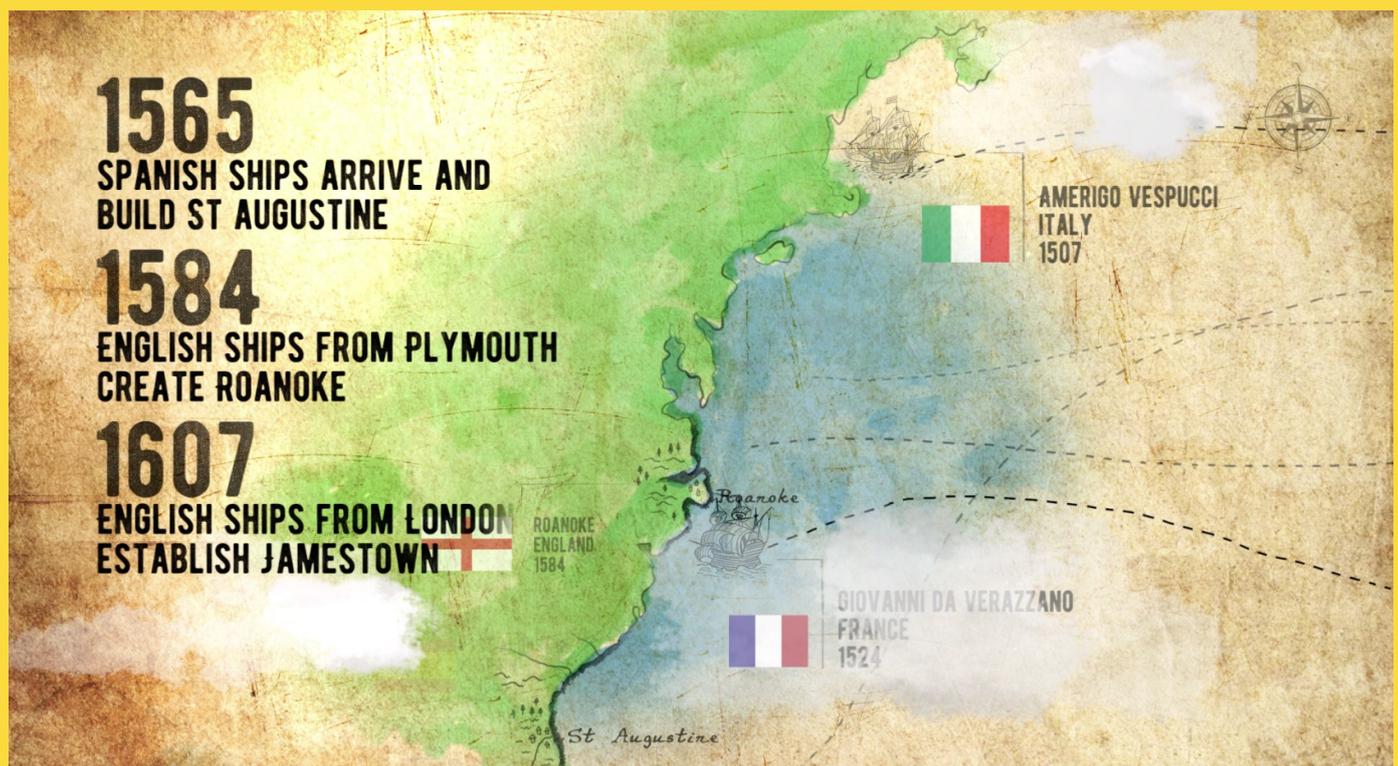
Object Enquiry

1. Think about how a cooking pot is used. What does it tell us about the community that made it?
2. What do they value?
3. What skills are on display?

Section 2: Ships arrive and depart (900 – 1619)

The *Mayflower* was not the first ship to arrive on Turtle Island. Europeans had been crossing the Atlantic for 700 years before the *Mayflower* arrived in 1620.

Indigenous people living on Turtle Island were aware of other peoples living across the ocean. Many ships and sailors had traveled west. Unfortunately these encounters were rarely peaceful. But the histories are usually written from a European perspective. The Vikings noted in their sagas that the peoples they encountered in the Western Atlantic were fierce and fought them on their landings. Leif Erikson's arrival in 900 referred to the Native people as 'skraelings' – 'wretches' or 'savages'. The Vikings killed the Native people they met.



Although from the Viking period Atlantic travel was mainly in search of fishing opportunities and other resources, this feature began to change, and landings of the Europeans on the mainland of North America from the 1500s saw competing claims between the countries over who held the rights to colonise lands and either convert or conquer local peoples.

There was so much activity on the East Coast of America that we couldn't fit all the details into the animation.

Some additional voyages included:

Spain

- 1492 - Christopher Columbus claims the Caribbean for Spain.
- 1513 - Juan Ponce de León, a Spaniard, landed on the east coast of a place he called 'Florida'.
- 1521 - Ponce de León attempted to establish a permanent settlement on the west coast of Florida but was chased away by native groups. He was struck by an arrow and died of his wounds.
- 1524-1525 - Portuguese explorer Estevão Gomes, working for Spain, explored present-day Nova Scotia sailing south along the Maine coast. Gomes entered New York Harbour and saw the Hudson River (which he named the "San Antonio River").
- 1557 - St Augustine, Florida is founded by the Spanish.
- 1565 - Spanish admiral, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded the earliest continuously occupied settlement of European origin at St. Augustine, Florida.

France

1562 + 1564 – Captains Jean Ribaut (1562) and René de Laudonnière (1564) attempted to set up a French colony on the east coast of Florida, near Jacksonville.

1605 + 1606 - Samuel de Champlain sailed as far south as Cape Cod, Massachusetts looking for a site for permanent settlement but the local Nauset peoples fought off his attempts.

Holland

1609 - Henry Hudson sailed under the authority of the Dutch East Indian Company. He passed the New England coast, instead sailing up the Hudson River, named after him.

Italy

1507 - The first map shows America as a separate continent and is named after navigator Amerigo Vespucci.

England

1583 - Humphrey Gilbert claims St John's, Newfoundland

1584 - Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe lead the expedition from Plymouth to Roanoke.

1585 - The first attempt to establish a permanent English settlement in North America at Roanoke, North Carolina. These ships sailed under sponsorship of Sir Walter Raleigh (and secretly by Queen Elizabeth I).

1607 - The first successful attempt to form a colony in the lands the English called 'Virginia' after the Queen, at Jamestown, Virginia.

Section 2: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. Discuss the number of Atlantic voyages from 900-1620, and how they changed over time. What do the voyages tell us about the people making them, and what impact might they have had on local Indigenous people?
2. The Turtle Island animation shows maps that are similar to those used by Europeans for almost 600 years. They show a particular view of the world. Contrast two differing views of North America, one from the European viewpoint and one from the Indigenous:

European - Nicolaes Visscher's map, [Novi Belgii Novæque Angliæ nec no partis Virginiae tabula, or Map of New Netherland and New England, and also parts of Virginia, 1651-1655](#)

A PLAN OF PLYMOUTH, 1612

SHIPS COMING IN AND OUT TRADED GOODS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. PLYMOUTH WELCOMED NEWFOUNDLAND COD, FRENCH WINE, IRISH BEEF, DUTCH BEER, SPANISH WOOL AND ITALIAN GLASS. SEAFARERS EXCHANGED SUPPLIES AND STORIES. IN 1619, PLYMOUTH HAD 604 RESIDENT SAILORS AND 57 SHIPS.



IMAGE: THE BOX, PLYMOUTH REF PWDRO 72_1204_AII

Indigenous - Powhatan Mantle (c.1600) in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford thought to represent the Powhatan communities in Tsenacomacah/ Virginia.

Object Enquiry

1. Look at the 1612 map of Plymouth and the information it contains. What can you say about Plymouth at this time?
2. Examine it in comparison with an earlier map A coloured chart of Plymouth Harbour, and of the country up to Tavistock; drawn possibly by Robert Spry (c. 1591).
3. What has been left out of the later map?
4. For what purposes do you think these maps were used?

Section 3: *Mayflower* Arriving (1620)

The voyage of the *Mayflower* needs to be placed in its historical context. It was one of many colonial Atlantic crossings, but it has come to define England's relationship with America.

The *Mayflower* took 66 days to cross the Atlantic from Plymouth to Turtle Island. The journey was long and dangerous as the ship departed late in the year (6th September 1620), so encountered autumn storms at sea.

There were 102 passengers on board – men, women, children and two



dogs. They were all English, but they were people of different ages, classes, backgrounds, birthplaces and beliefs.

They probably all also had very different, and very personal, motivations for travelling. Money? Religion? Family? Adventure? William Bradford's **Of Plimoth Plantation** has become the primary story of the people and the journey.

Bradford's book was written over 20 years (1630-1651) and was started ten years after the *Mayflower* crossed the Atlantic. He describes the journey including the death of one of the sailors, a man falling over board (John Howland), the mending of the mast during a storm and the birth of a child (Oceanus Hopkins). However his story begins much earlier (in 1607) and ends much later (in 1651), so the journey is just a few pages.

Bradford also writes about his community, the creation of the Plymouth colony and English attitudes to the people of Turtle Island. His fellow passenger Edward Winslow also describes the local people in his books **Mourts Relation** (1622) and **Good News from New England** (1624).

We do not have any texts of this time from a Native American perspective. However their oral histories remember a short period of co-existence, when they helped the English arrivals to farm and to survive, then they recall conflict and colonisation.

Section 3: Press 'Pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. How might the experiences of different age groups differ?
2. What do you think the passengers' priorities would have been on arrival?

Object enquiry

1. The existence of children's toys from the early 1600s tell us that children at this time liked to play, and had spare time to do so.
2. How were these toys made? What type of child might have owned and used them?
3. Play and compare the game on the screen – spinning tops – to Native American games. What is the difference, which is more enjoyable?

Section 4: Early *Mayflower* Settlement (1620-22)

When the *Mayflower* arrived on the East Coast, Indigenous people had already suffered greatly from imported infections and diseases.

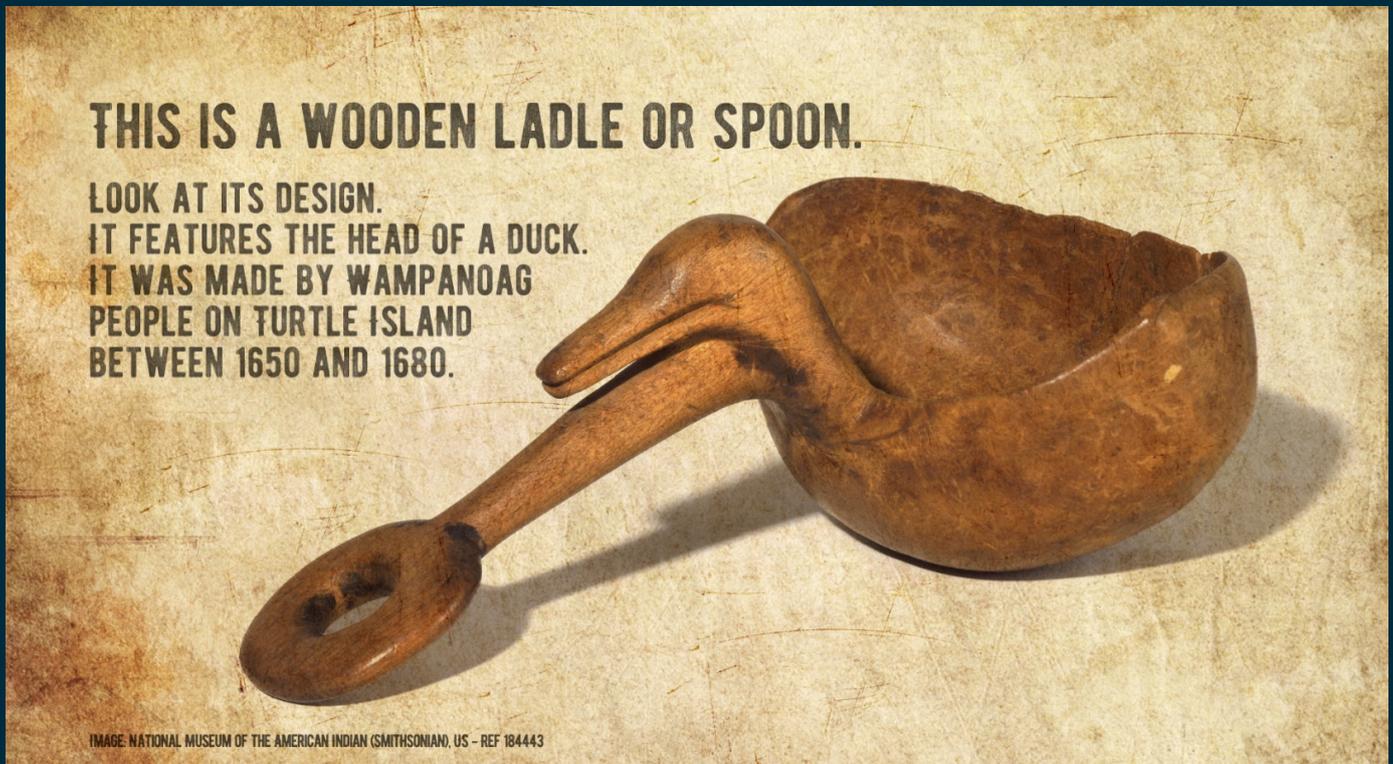
European arrivals had a devastating impact on the local population of Turtle Island. Disease and conflict decimated the indigenous peoples of the north east coast. Between 1616-1919, the Wampanoag people estimate that 90% of their population were lost.

They call this period 'The Great Dying'. Many of their 70 villages, including Patuxet, were abandoned. The loss of life meant changing relationships among indigenous peoples too.

The *Mayflower* and its passengers sailed into this context.



Section 4: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. Consider what the Wampanoag people might have thought of the *Mayflower* arriving.

Object enquiry

1. Look carefully at the design of this spoon. How was it made, and what does it look like? What does it tell you about the importance of food to its maker and owner? Is it different to European spoons from the same date?
2. The model of sustenance for many Indigenous North American Nations is the 'one large bowl and one spoon' land use agreements, meaning that the hunting and fishing rights could be shared by all peoples living in that area. Invite your students to think about what this idea means to them. How does it differ from what might be thought of as the European ideas of food and land use?

Section 5: From Peace to War (1622-1675)

In 1621 a peace treaty was signed. In 1676 a war was fought. Both had consequences for the people of Turtle Island.

Many stories about the *Mayflower* finish in 1621. They refer to a feast shared between the Wampanoag and the *Mayflower* settlers, which has come to be known as 'Thanksgiving'. Some stories also refer to the 1621 Treaty of Massasoit. This agreement formalises a political alliance between the *Mayflower* settlers and the Wampanoag people under the leadership of their Massasoit, Oosamequan.

It was not an equal arrangement.

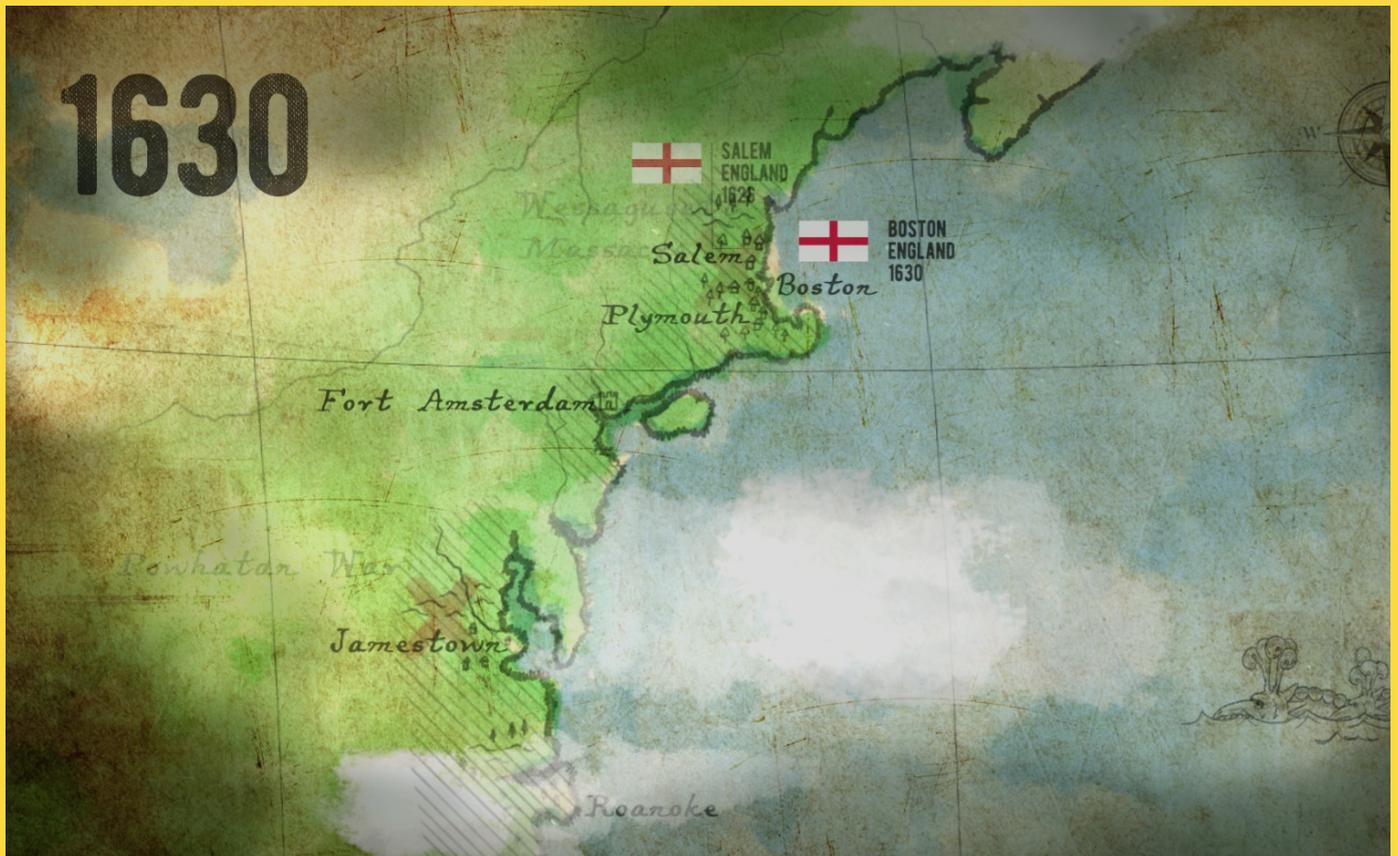


Over several years, and with the arrival of new colonists, the balance of power changed. This was also the case up and down the coast of Turtle Island as English and European settlers arrived and tried to take control.

By 1630, the region had been dramatically changed.

The Wessagusett Massacre of 1623 was brutal and bloody. It destabilised the region, and was the first of several local conflicts. All would have profound consequences for indigenous Americans living in Turtle Island.

It is important to include this period of change into our core understanding of the *Mayflower* voyage, because it set in motion a legacy of power and domination that continues to impact peoples' lives today.



Section 5: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. Look at the text of the Treaty of Massasoit. Who does it favour?
2. Read about the **Wessagusett Massacre** (1623). What does it tell you about English colonial power?
3. Examine this image made in England of the **Pequot War**. What does this image tell us about the ways that 'war' was practiced in North America?

Object Enquiry

1. We know from text written by Edward Winslow - one of the *Mayflower* passengers - that they took armour with them.

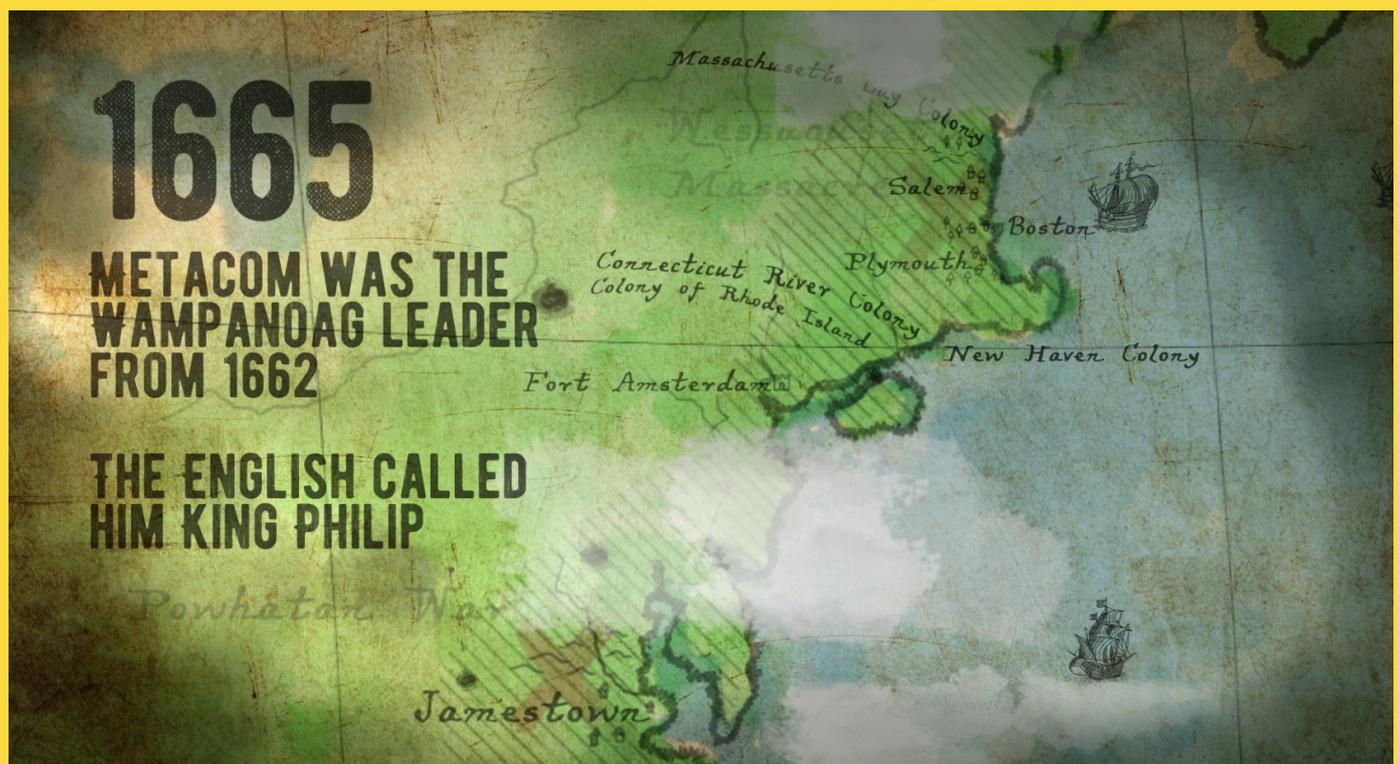
What does this indicate about what they expected to find when they arrived in America?

Section 6: ‘King Philip’s War’ (1675-76)

During this period, English settler colonies dominated the north eastern coast of Turtle Island.

By 1676, England dominated the north east coast and many areas inland. For the colonists, this was New England. Boston and the Massachusetts Bay was established in 1630; 10,000 settlers were living along the Connecticut River by 1635 and the new colony of Rhode Island and Providence began in 1636. For the Indigenous peoples, this meant cultural collision, conflict and challenge.

During this time, some indigenous people were converted to Christianity. They lived in what the colonists called ‘Praying Towns’.



Mashpee, in Wampanoag territory was one of these towns. These towns gave the indigenous people some protection from conflict, but took away their spiritual freedom.

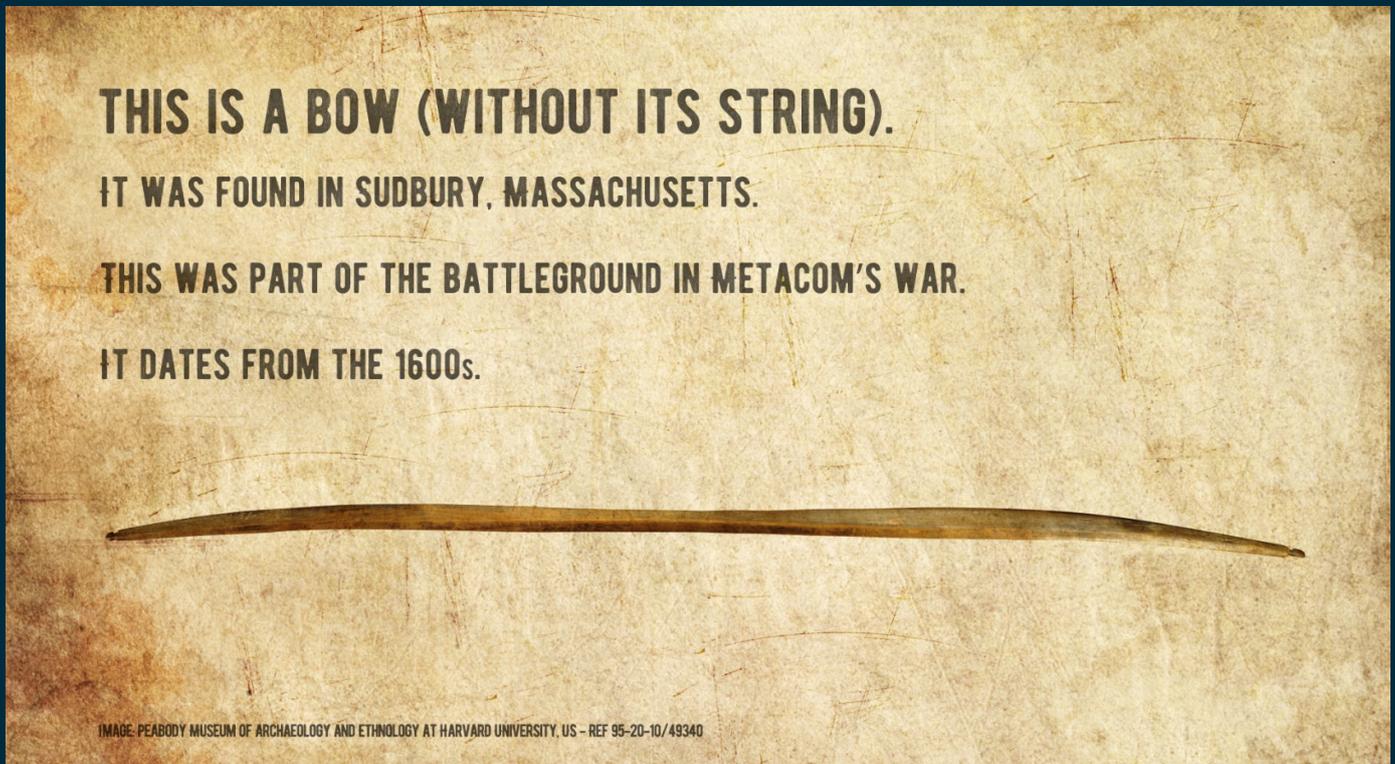
In 1675, the region was at war. It became the bloodiest war to be fought on American soil. But it was more complex than indigenous people versus settlers. Yet it had devastating consequences for all native people in the area.

Metacom was Oosamquan's son. The English called him King Philip. The war is named after him. He, and many of his people, died in this conflict. It reshaped the region and power within it.

[See here for more details](#) about King Philip's war. You can [also read the text](#) of Metacom's (King Philip) grievances written down by John Easton at the time they were presented to the Colonial administration in 1675.



Section 6: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. As a result of King Philip's War, many of his surviving followers were deported and sold into the slave trade in the English colonies in the Caribbean. Discuss what the impact of this might have been.

Object Enquiry

1. Compare the indigenous mode of warfare shown by this object with the armour you saw on the previous pause screen. What are the differences? How would this have impacted to conflicts between the two groups?
2. What might the impact have been of differences in technology between the two groups on warfare?

Section 7: The legacy of Mayflower (1676-today)

Following Metacom's War, the East Coast saw the rapid expansion of settler colonies. New arrivals changed Turtle Island and led to the creation of America.

After Metacom/ King Philip's War, Turtle Island changed even more. Not everyone stayed, or arrived by free will. This area became an important part of the expanding early English Empire, and people enslaved and transported in the Transatlantic Slave Trade were also transported to and from here, as well as being put to work in these colonies. Many of the conflicts and political changes of the next 400 years, including The American War of Independence, can trace their origin to power dynamics begun before 1676.



The Wampanoag people survive today. There are about 5000 Wampanoag people living on their ancestral land. This compares to 25-30 million people who claim to trace their heritage to the Mayflower passengers.

What has been the long-term impact of colonisation on Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island? Much could be said about the lives and conditions of Indigenous North Americans during the intervening 424 years between 1676 and today.

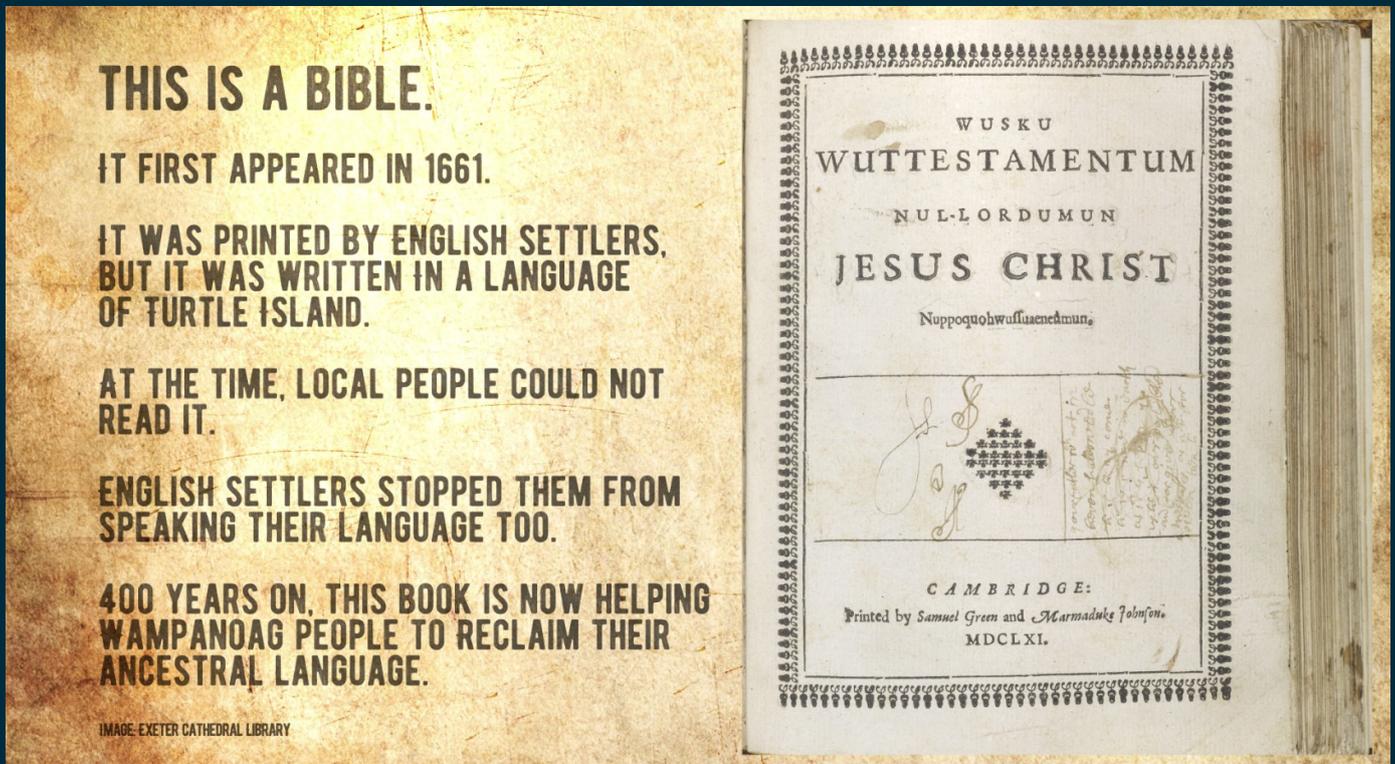
There is a term used in Native American Studies to describe what it means to be a Native American or Indigenous person in today's societies. It is called 'Survivance' and was coined by the Anishinaabe/Ojibwe author Gerald Vizenor from both the words 'survival' and 'resistance' which are intimately combined to signify the strengths and resilience of modern Native Americans.

Today, the Wampanoag people live in two federally recognised tribal nations – Mashpee and Aquinnah.

On 31st March, 2020, it was announced that the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is facing the possibility of losing their federal Reservation status and allocated lands.

History can and does often repeat itself.

Section 7: Press 'pause' when you see this image



Discussion Points

1. Compare map of original tribal lands with Indian reservations
2. Find British and Wampanoag names in New England place-names
3. Discuss the recent Guardian article about the Wampanoag and the dispute over their land.

Object Enquiry

1. You can find out more about the Eliot Bible by listening to a podcast all about it here.
2. The Eliot Bible is a complex object, whose meaning has changed over time. What does it tell us about power at the time that it was written? Today it is being used in a different way – how is it being used to empower communities that were previously disempowered by it?

Resources for further reading

To find out more about the fascinating, complex and sensitive history explored by the Turtle Island animation, you can use the resources listed below.

General resources:

- Routledge Companion to Native American Literature, Ed. Deborah Madsen. (Routledge, 2016)
- For both Separatists and Indigenous perspectives, see:
<https://www.newenglandbeginnings.org/>
- A digital version of Mourt's Relation can be accessed here:
<http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/mourt1.html>
- A new edition of William Bradford's Of Plimoth Plantation can be accessed here, with an special introduction by Paula Peters of the Wampanoag Advisory Committee:
<https://shop.americanancestors.org/products/of-plimoth-plantation?pass-through=true>

Section 2

- Find out more about maps and map making in this era, and select 'Related Classroom Resources' for more activity ideas:
<https://dcc.newberry.org/collections/maps-and-the-beginnings-of-colonial-north-america>

Section 3

Dive deeper into the topic of this section with the book:

- J. H. Elliott, Empires of the Atlantic World, Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830, Yale University Press, 2006
- Especially chapter 3 'Confronting American Peoples', pp. 57-87.
- The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World: 1450-1850, Edited by Nicholas Canny and Philip Morgan. (OUP, 2011)

Section 4 additions:

- Native American perspective: Also see, Betty Booth Donohue, Bradford's Indian Book: Being the True Roote and Rise of American Letters as revealed by the Native Text

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- Embedded in *Of Plymouth Plantation* (Florida University Press, 2011)
 - Colonial representations and print culture: Kathryn Gray, 'Native American Voices in colonial North America' *Routledge Companion to Native American Literature*, Ed. Deborah Madsen. (Routledge, 2016)
 - Separatists and Indigenous perspectives: <https://www.newenglandbeginnings.org/>

Section 4

- Find out more about 'One Dish One Spoon' on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dish_With_One_Spoon

Further reading:

For the Plymouth Colony perspectives:

- Mourt's Relation, 1622, Part 1, was written by Edward Winslow between November 1620 and November 1621. <http://www.histarch.illinois.edu/plymouth/mourt1.html>

For Native American perspectives:

- Nancy Shoemaker, *A Strange Likeness. Becoming Red and White in Eighteenth Century North America*, Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 86-90
- Victor P. Lytwyn, "A Dish with One Spoon: The Shared Hunting Ground Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley Region, *Papers of the 28th Algonquian Conference*, 1997, 28: pp. 210- 227.

Section 5

- There is no written version of the 1621 Treaty between the Separatists and the Wampanoag under their leader or Massasoit, named Ousamequin. Mourt's Relation (1622) contains the six points of the 'Peace Treaty' (Bradford's section). Part 1 is written by William Bradford; part 2 is written by Edward Winslow.
- You can find out more about the importance of treaties between Indian Nations and the United States, from the colonial period through to the present, by viewing information about an exhibition on this subject: *Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations*' <https://americanindian.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/item?id=934>

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- You can also watch: <https://youtu.be/if-BOZgWZPE>
 - And read more here: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/plains-treaties/values>

For information about the conflicts in New England between settlers and Native Americans, see:

- Pulsipher, Jenny Hale. "Subjects... Unto the Same King: New England Indians and the Use of Royal Political Power." *Massachusetts Historical Review* 5 (2003): 29-57. (Accessed March 29, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/25081179)
- Pulsipher, Jenny Hale. "Dark Cloud Rising from the East: Indian Sovereignty and the Coming of King William's War in New England." *The New England Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (2007): 588-613. 30 31 (Accessed March 29, 2020 www.jstor.org/stable/20474581)
- Alfred A Cave, *The Pequot War*, University of Massachusetts Press, 1996, especially chapter 3.
- Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois*, Book Publishing Company, Summertown, Tennessee, 1999.
- See also, <http://archaeologymuseum.ca/wampum/>

For information about how the British viewed their treaties at this time:

- Jones, Dorothy V. *License for Empire* (1982)

Section 6

- Lisa Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War* (Yale UP, 2019)
- For a summary of King Philip's War, see: <https://www.britannica.com/event/King-Philips-War>

You can also read:

- Lepore, Jill, *The Name of War*, 1998
- To find out more about 'Praying Indians' who do become involved in King Philips War, visit: <https://web.archive.org/web/20060613231358/http://www.bio.umass.edu/biology/conn.river/praying.html>
- <https://rdc.reed.edu/c/colhist/home/browse> (Browse "King Philips War")

You can also read:

- Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare, 1675-1815*, UCL Press, 1998.
- Van Lonkhuizen, Harold W. "A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730." *The New England Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (1990): 396-428. (Accessed March 29, 2020. doi:10.2307/366370)

Section 7

- Native American Cultures have continued to flourish. For just one example, see the recent exhibition at the Renwick Gallery in North America 'Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists': <https://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/native-women-artists>

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theboxplymouth.com



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