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Title of lesson plan: What Remains: Learning about Maine Populations through Burial Customs

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Organization: Maine Historical Society

Content Areas:

- Career & Education Development
- **English Language Arts**
- Health Education & Physical Education
- Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- **Social Studies**
- **Visual & Performing Arts**
- World Languages



ME State Strand and Standard:

- English Language Arts: Reading for Literature – RL 1.6, RL 2.6, RL 4.6, RL 5.6, RL 1.7, RL 2.7, RL 4.7, RL 5.7, RL 1.8, RL 2.8, RL 4.8, RL 5.8; Reading for Literacy in History/Social Studies – RH 1.6-8, RH 5.6-8, RH 7.6-8; Speaking & Listening – SL 1.6, SL 2.6, SL 3.6, SL 4.6, SL 1.7, SL 2.7, SL 3.7, SL 4.7, SL 1.8, SL 2.8, SL 3.8, SL 4.8
- Social Studies, Grades 6-8: History 1 – F1, F2, D1, D2; History 2 – F1, F2, F3, D1, D2, D3
- Visual & Performing Arts: A2, B1 (if extension activity is chosen), B2 (if extension activity is chosen), D1, E1

Duration: 4-5 days

Grade Levels: 6-8, adaptable for 9-diploma

Link to Original In-Depth Lesson Plan Online at Maine Memory Network:

<https://www.mainememory.net/lessons/what-remains-learning-about-maine-populations-through-burial-customs/q5w5h5q4>

For more information about this lesson plan and to access the Maine Memory Network (MMN) objects used in the lesson plan (including ability to zoom in and ability for students and educators to create accounts in order to create their own MMN object slideshows), please visit MMN or contact the Education Department at Maine Historical Society at education@mainehistory.org.

Summary/Overview: *What will students learn? What is the purpose? (ie. Objectives/Learning Targets)*

This lesson plan will give students an overview of how burial sites and gravestone material culture can assist historians and archaeologists in discovering information about people and migration over time. Students will learn how new scholarship can help to dispel harmful archaeological myths, look into the roles of religion and ethnicity in early Maine and New England immigrant and colonial settlements, and discover how to track changes in population and social values from the 1600s to early 1900s based on gravestone iconography and epitaphs.

- **Big Idea:** Inquiry into population trends, migration patterns, and important customs to the people of a given community can begin by examining headstones and burial sites.
- **Essential Questions:**
 - o What can be learned about a period of time, or about a person or people based on funerary rites and burial customs?
 - o How do things like geographic region, religion, and socioeconomic standing affect burials?
 - o What is material culture and how can it be used by historians and other researchers?
- **Objectives:**
 - o Students will identify headstone iconography relative to culture and time period by examining multiple sources
 - o Students will be able to discuss the importance of memorials to diverse communities.
 - o Students will read two poems by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and use the subject matter to contextualize communal funerary practices over time and the perception thereof to a 19th century American audience.
 - o Students will identify objects of material culture by their significance to Maine's peoples and economy.
 - o Students will examine primary and secondary sources while discerning respectful or incorrect scholarship by archaeologists, ethnologists, and historians over time.
- **Vocabulary:** *custom, ephemera, epitaph, graven image, iconography, material culture*

Teacher Resources

Association for Gravestone Studies website: <https://gravestonestudies.org/>

- Association for Gravestone Studies "Markers" publication archive at University of Massachusetts, Amherst:
<https://credo.library.umass.edu/search?q=association%20gravestone%20markers&page=1&facets=>

Cole-Will, Rebecca. "Who Were the Red Paint People?" Abbe Museum, 2002.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56a8c7b05a5668f743c485b2/t/5a6a1fa653450a9b35ee4729/1516904359054/Who+Were+the+Red+Paint+People+2002.pdf>

Deetz, James and Edwin Dethlefsen. "Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries." *American Antiquity*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (1966), pp. 502-510.

Find a Grave online database: <https://www.findagrave.com/>

- *This website is very helpful for looking at iconography and migration patterns over time. You can search the database by years and locations. You may want your students to search the database for stones in your town, surrounding town, and surrounding counties for a sense of settlement and change over time based on oldest and newest stones found in a given burial site. This database is also a good secondary resource if you are unable to arrange a visit to a local burial site for any reason (weather, private property, etc.).*

Giguere, Joy M. "Victorious Women, Useful Men, & Lovely Children: Epitaph Language and the Construction of Gender and Social Status in Cumberland County, Maine, 1720-1820." Association for Gravestone Studies, *Markers*, Vol. XXIV (2007), pp. 1-23. Available at <https://archive.org/details/markers24asso/page/1>.

Heinrich, Adam R. "Cherubs or Putti? Gravemarkers Demonstrating Conspicuous Consumption and the Rococo Fashion in the Eighteenth Century." Springer: *International Journal of Historic Archaeology*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (March 2014), pp. 37-64.

Historium Unearthia Podcast: Episode 18, "The Myth of Maine's Red Paint People." July 22, 2018.

<http://historiumunearthia.com/episodes/episode-18-the-myth-of-maines-red-paint-people/>

- *You may be interested in listening to this podcast episode as a class on Day 1, or suggesting students listen to it on their own time or as homework.*

Maine Cemeteries Web App:

<https://maine.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ed04569714a64115aad728688c713e84>

- *Zoom in and click the green "+" icons to find burial sites in your county/town. Click and drag along the map to see the change in density from southern Maine to northern Maine. Note the names of cemeteries along the Canadian border.*

Maine Old Cemetery Association website: <https://www.moca-me.org/>

- MOCA's symbolism page, showcasing various symbols found on grave markers throughout Maine along with interpretations: <https://www.moca-me.org/symbolism>

Maine's Visible Black History: The First Chronicle of Its People. H.H. Price and Gerald E. Talbot, eds. Tilbury House, 2006.

- Information about historically black cemeteries and burial sites, pp. 345-350.

National Park Service: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/index.htm>

- Text of the law itself: <https://www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/laws/nagpra.htm>
- [2018 Government Accountability Office report on findings and recommendations to federal agencies regarding auctions of Native American cultural properties overseas, and reinforcing language regarding what is and is not stipulated in federal law: https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693744.pdf](https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693744.pdf)

Romano, Ron. *Early Gravestones in Southern Maine: The Genius of Bartlett Adams*. History Press, 2016.

Romano, Ron. *Portland's Historic Eastern Cemetery: A Field of Ancient Graves*. History Press, 2017.

- *The appendices beginning on page 139 are helpful for looking at additional forms of tombs and iconography. While examples used are specific to Eastern Cemetery, the symbolism can be found throughout New England.*

Sanger, David. "'Red Paint People' and Other Myths of Maine Archaeology." *Maine History*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Fall 2000), pp. 145-168.

Whelan, Lora. "Lost African-American Community Gaining Area's Renewed Interest." *Fishermen's Voice*, Vol. 21, No. 7 (July 2016).

<http://www.fishermensvoice.com/archives/201607LostAfricanAmericanCommunityGainingAreasRenewedInterest.html>

Teacher Resources

Tips for Acknowledging Indigenous Land/Water: Acknowledgement is a relatively recent practice, and is ideally practiced as a respectful way to address the Indigenous inhabitants of what is now North America, acknowledge human and non-human relatives, address the ongoing effects of the structure of settler-colonialism, emphasize the importance of Indigenous sovereignty and self-governance, and help students be aware and conscientious of the fact that we are living on Wabanaki Homeland. Land/water acknowledgements are best developed through meaningful connections; acknowledge with respect and use a format that lets you speak from the heart. Making connections with neighbors of a Nation near to where you live is one of the best places to start when creating a land acknowledgement from the heart. Talk with your school administrators and colleagues about creating a land acknowledgement at the institutional level.

A great online resource with more information can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00aig/view. For information about the nations nearest where you live/teach, a good starting point is the map at: <https://native-land.ca>

The peoples who live in what is now Maine and the surrounding regions are collectively the Wabanaki, or, “People of the Dawnland,” meaning those who see and greet the first light of the day. They share common oral histories and belong to Algonquian/Algonkian language groups, but have unique languages

About the Wabanaki: We encourage you and your school to reach out to the tribal communities in Maine to expand your learning. More information about the four federally-recognized tribal communities in Maine can be found here:

- The Aroostook Band of Micmacs: <http://www.micmac-nsn.gov/>
 - o Micmac Tribal Government: http://micmac-nsn.gov/html/tribal_government.html
- The Houlton Band of Maliseets: <http://www.maliseets.com/index.htm>
 - o Maliseet Tribal Government: <http://www.maliseets.com/government.htm>
- The Penobscot Nation: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/>
 - o Penobscot Tribal Government: <http://www.penobscotculture.com/index.php/8-about/81-tribal-facts>
- The Passamaquoddy Tribe
 - o Indian Township (Motahkomikuk): <https://www.passamaquoddy.com/>
 - o Pleasant Point (Sipayik): <http://www.wabanaki.com/>
 - o Passamaquoddy Tribal Government: http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/chief_council.html
 - o Passamaquoddy Joint Tribal Council: http://www.wabanaki.com/wabanaki_new/joint_council.html

The Abenaki are the fifth Wabanaki tribe today; however, the Abenaki are not a federally-recognized tribe as of 2019. Not all Tribal Nations that exist in North America today have received federal recognition. There are no tribes in New Hampshire or Vermont that, as of 2019, have received federal recognition, but four tribes in Vermont have received state recognition. Federal recognition provides a federal relationship between Indigenous sovereign nations and the US government. Tribal Nations throughout North America are sovereign nations, and actively work to maintain their self-governance.

Federal recognition is not related to Tribal Nation sovereignty; it affords certain rights to Indigenous peoples within the laws of the United States.

All of Maine's federally-recognized tribes own land base throughout the state as presented through treaties.

About Maine Historical Society: Maine Historical Society (MHS) is the third-oldest state historical society in the United States, following Massachusetts and New York, respectively. Founded in 1822, only two years after Maine separated from Massachusetts and became a free state as part of the Missouri Compromise, MHS today is headquartered at 489 Congress Street in Portland. The campus contains an office building and museum, the Brown Research Library (est. 1907), and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, the childhood home of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. An enormous online database containing digitized images and objects from MHS's robust collection can be found online at Maine Memory Network: <https://www.mainememory.net/> Teachers can create free accounts on Maine Memory Network to save images to albums for classroom use.

MHS's mission: "The Maine Historical Society preserves the heritage and history of Maine: the stories of Maine people, the traditions of Maine communities, and the record of Maine's place in a changing world. Because an understanding of the past is vital to a healthy and progressive society, we collect, care for, and exhibit historical treasures; facilitate research into family, local, state, and national history; provide education programs that make history meaningful, accessible and enjoyable; and empower others to preserve and interpret the history of their communities and our state."

Student Handout A – Burial Vocabulary

Burial site: Generic term for any plot of land where human bodies are interred after death.

Burying ground/burial ground: Common term for early Colonial burial sites. While religion played a major part in Puritan life and death rituals, there may not be a specific type of religion associated with a town-owned burial ground.

Cemetery: A plot of land used as a burial site with no connection to one specific place of worship. Can be private or town-owned.

Graveyard: A plot of land used as a burial site in connection with a specific place of worship (e.g. the yard of a church).

Stranger's field/potter's field: A portion of a burial ground reserved for unclaimed dead, generally criminals, poor, or otherwise ostracized individuals. Generally looks like a plain field without stones marking names or dates, but reserved as burial ground regardless.

Coffin: An oblong hexagonal (six-sided) box, usually pine, in which the dead body was buried.

Casket: A rectangular box, of varying types of wood, sometimes lined, in which the dead body was buried. Some 19th-century “viewing caskets” included windows to allow living relatives to see the face of their deceased loved one; this was prior to the perfecting of embalming techniques.

Epitaph: The words commemorating a person on their gravestone.

Ephemera: Funerary objects created by and for relatives and friends of the deceased, often created in the home or given as tokens at funerals or wakes.

Student Handout B – Common Gravestone Iconography (16th-19th centuries)

What do you think the following icons found in early Maine and New England Euro-American settlements might mean? Have you ever seen these in a local cemetery before?

Death's Head/Winged Skull

Skull (no wings, or skull with bones)

Cherub (winged human-like face)

Clasped Hands

Coffin

Heart

Hand with index finger pointing upward

Cross

Urn/Urn and Willow

Spoked Wheel/Gaelic Cross

Flowers

Shell

Rosettes

Column(s)

Portrait

Hourglass/Hourglass with wings

Scythe/Sickle

"Memento Mori"

"I.H.S."/"I.H.S" with Cross

Teacher Resources:

Student Handout B – Common Gravestone Iconography (16th-19th centuries) Answer Key

Death's Head/Winged Skull: symbol of mortality, or representation of the departing soul

Skull (no wings, or skull with bones): symbol of mortality

Cherub (winged human-like face): symbol of the soul in flight; alternately, an image of popular culture, first adopted by prominent members of society to differentiate them from common citizens

Clasped Hands: greeting a loved one in the afterlife

Coffin: symbol of mortality

Heart: symbol of love after death, sometimes specifically Christ's/God's love

Hand with index finger pointing upward: symbol of the deceased's journey into heaven

Cross: symbol of Christianity/Christ, usually specifically Catholic

Urn/Urn and Willow: remembering the deceased; in memoriam

Spoked Wheel/Gaelic Cross: often a specifically Scots-Irish Presbyterian icon; variation of the cross as representation of faith

Flowers: popular culture image; in memoriam; symbol for a child or unmarried person who died young

Shell: symbol of eternity or a journey (into afterlife); popular culture image based in classical motifs

Rosettes: popular culture image based in classical motifs, often found on borders or shoulders

Column(s): popular culture image based in classical motifs, often found on borders

Portrait: representation of the interred individual; often available for upper class or prominent figures such as doctors, clergymen, or society leaders; if a portrait of a woman, also likely a symbol of sorrow/grief

Hourglass/Hourglass with wings: symbol of mortality; "tempus fugit"/"time flies"

Scythe/Sickle: symbol of mortality; metaphor of death as a harvest

"Memento Mori": Latin for "remember death" or "remember you will die;" found on Protestant and Catholic epitaphs

"I.H.S."/"I.H.S." with Cross: "IHS" can be read as the first three letters of the Greek translation of "Jesus," or the initials for the Latin phrase "Iesus Hominum Salvator" ("Jesus, savior of men") or English "In His Service" (with "his" referring to Christ); almost exclusively Catholic

Strand and Standard Information:**- English Language Arts – Reading:**

- **RL 1.6:** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL 2.6:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- **RL 4.6:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
- **RL 5.6:** Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
- **RL 1.7:** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL 2.7:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RL 4.7:** Determine the meaning of words or phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- **RL 5.7:** Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
- **RL 1.8:** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RL 2.8:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RL 4.8:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **RL 5.8:** Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
- **RH 1.6-8:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **RH 5.6-8:** Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, casually).
- **RH 7.6-8:** Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print or digital texts.
- **RH 8.6-8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

- **English Language Arts – Speaking & Listening:**
 - **SL 1.6:** *Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.*
 - **SL 2.6:** *Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.*
 - **SL 3.6:** *Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.*
 - **SL 4.6:** *Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.*
 - **SL 1.7:** *Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.*
 - **SL 2.7:** *Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.*
 - **SL 3.7:** *Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.*
 - **SL 4.7:** *Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.*
 - **SL 1.8:** *Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.*
 - **SL 2.8:** *Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.*
 - **SL 3.8:** *Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.*
 - **SL 4.8:** *Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.*
- **Social Studies, Grades 6-8 - History:** Students draw on concepts and processes using primary and secondary sources from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and the world.
 - **History 1:** *Students understand major eras, major enduring themes, and historic influences in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world by: (F1) Explaining that history includes the study of past human experience based on available evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources, and explaining how history can help one better understand and make informed decisions about the present and future. (F2) Identifying major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points,*

events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world. **(D1)** Analyzing interpretations of historical events that are based on different perspectives and evidence from primary and secondary sources. **(D2)** Analyzing major historical eras, major enduring themes, turning points, events, consequences, and people in the history of Maine, the United States, and various regions of the world.

- **History 2:** Students understand historical aspects of unity and diversity in the community, the state, including Native American communities, and the United States by: **(F1)** Explaining how both unity and diversity have played and continue to play important roles in the history of Maine and the United States. **(F2)** Identifying a variety of cultures through time, including comparisons of native and immigrant groups in the United States, and eastern and western societies in the world. **(F3)** Identifying major turning points and events in the history of Maine Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in Maine, the United States, and other cultures in the world. **(D1)** Explaining how both unity and diversity have played and continue to play important roles in the history of the world. **(D2)** Comparing a variety of cultures through time, including comparisons of native and immigrant groups in the United States, and eastern and western societies in the world. **(D3)** Describing major turning points and events in the history of Maine Native Americans and various historical and recent immigrant groups in Maine, the United States, and other cultures in the world.

- **Visual & Performing Arts, Grades 6-8:**

- **Disciplinary Literacy – Visual Arts:** Students show literacy in the art discipline by understanding and demonstrating concepts, skills, terminology, and processes.
 - **A2 (Elements of Art and Principles of Design):** Students compare features of composition both within an art work and among art works.
- **Creation, Performance, and Expression – Visual Arts (if extension activity is chosen):** Students create, express, and communicate through the art discipline.
 - **B1 (Media Skills):** Students choose suitable media, tools, techniques, and processes to create original art works.
 - **B2 (Composition Skills):** Students use Elements of Art and Principles of Design to create original art works that demonstrate different styles in paintings, three-dimensional objects, drawings from imagination and real life, and a variety of other media and visual art forms.
- **Aesthetics and Criticism – Visual Arts:** Students describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate art.
 - **D1:** Students compare and analyze art forms.
- **Visual and Performing Arts Connections:** Students understand the relationship among the arts, history and world culture, and they make connections among the arts and to other disciplines, to goal-setting, and to interpersonal interaction.
 - **E1 (The Arts and History and World Cultures):** Students compare products of the visual/performing arts to understand history and/or world cultures.