



The Original Bronx Natives: *Who Were They?* Activities Packet (Short Version)

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Note: These activities/lessons are appropriate for elementary/middle school students and are somewhat generalized. BPMM educators encourage teachers to adjust the difficulty to fit the standards of the individual classroom or school as they see fit. Complete versions of BPMM activity packets include **Common Core** learning standards and additional activities. These may be found on our website <http://www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org/education/activity-packets.php>.

The Original Bronx Natives: *Who Were They?*

Pre-Visit Activity #1

Title: Wigwam Words

Content: Vocabulary; introduction to some program themes

Objectives:

- Become familiar with vocabulary that will be used during BPMM visit
- Use context clues to hypothesize the meaning of unfamiliar words

Class Level: Grades 2–6

Time Requirement: 20–30 minutes

Materials: Writing utensil; Wigwam Words: Vocabulary Worksheet (p. 3)

Introduction: This vocabulary warm-up will introduce students to some terms they will hear during their visit to BPMM. They should use context clues to figure out which unfamiliar vocabulary word goes in the blank.

Activity:

1. Explain to the students that when they visit BPMM they will enter a place and time that is different from the world they normally experience. These differences will be visible in the surroundings, but there will also be new words and phrases used by the educators.
2. Distribute the Wigwam Words vocabulary sheet. Explain that prior to European settlement, indigenous peoples lived throughout the area. This story describes a day in the life of a young Native American, Big River. While Big River is not a real historical figure, the tribe and the activities described are historically accurate. You will learn more about them on your visit to the site.
3. Have the class independently fill in the blanks from the word bank at the top of the sheet. The class should use context clues to figure out the right positions for the unfamiliar words.
4. Go over the sheet as a class, using the Answer Key (p. 4). Because the sheet introduces new terms, it is not vital that the students answer every blank correctly, just that they try to use context clues.

Extensions/Adjustments:

- Do the exercise as a class or split the students into groups and have them complete the worksheet in teams. The winner is the first one to complete the worksheet and have the most right answers.
- Have the students write a story using some of the terms from the word bank. They can choose any appropriate scenario such as a first meeting between a settler and a Native American or use the information they learned in the worksheet to write a story about a normal day for a Lenape tribe member. If the students do not know much about this period and/or people, it may be best to do this activity after your visit.

Wigwam Words: Vocabulary Worksheet

Big River is living in the Pelham Bay area in 1653. Big River and her brother have to help their parents prepare for a feast. Using the word bank below, help Big River do her part. Each word will be used once.

Word Bank

Wigwams	Thomas Pell	Oysters	Bark	Treaty
Lenape	Native American	Three Sisters	Negotiation	Corn
Smoke hole	Hunting	Wampum	Beads	Tribe

Big River is a _____ living in what is now New York State. Her _____, the _____, have lived in the area for hundreds of years, living off the land by _____ and gathering. But recently, strangers have come to the area. To welcome them, her tribe is hosting a dinner. It is important that everything goes well because the leaders of both groups hope to have a _____ soon. _____, one of the strangers, is very rich and wishes to purchase some land for his people. Big River's people are not sure how you "buy" land, but Mr. Pell wishes them to sign a _____. But Big River's mother is not worried about the treaty, she is worried about tomorrow. The big feast is almost here, and there is still a great deal to be done!

Big River's mother asks her and her brother, Little Eagle, to help their community prepare. As a female member of the tribe, Big River is asked to help gather food, such as _____, from their seasonal _____ garden. It is named after a group of siblings whose story serves as a moral for the Lenape people. While the women gather crops, the men of the tribe hunt animals for meat. Little Eagle is a little too young, however, and so cannot join his father on the hunt. Instead he gathers shellfish, like _____, to add to the feast.

Once the food has been gathered, the siblings help their mother with other important preparations. The Lenape people live in _____, made mainly of _____. Little Eagle goes into the woods to gather a large piece of bark to cover the _____ at the top of their circular wigwam in case it rains. Big River helps her mother make _____. They are special jewelry _____ made from the shiny insides of whelk and clam shells and will be used by her tribe during the ceremony. Finally, their busy day is over! Big River and Little Eagle head to bed, excited to meet the visitors in the morning.

Wigwam Words: Vocabulary Worksheet

Big River is living in the Pelham Bay area in 1653. Big River and her brother have to help their parents prepare for a feast. Using the word bank below, help Big River do her part. Each word will be used once.

Word Bank

Wigwams	Thomas Pell	Oysters	Bark	Treaty
Lenape	Native American	Three Sisters	Negotiation	Corn
Smoke hole	Hunting	Wampum	Beads	Tribe

Big River is a **Native American** living in what is now New York State. Her **tribe**, the **Lenape**, have lived in the area for hundreds of years, living off the land by **hunting** and gathering. But recently, strangers have come to the area. To welcome them, her tribe is hosting a dinner. It is important that everything goes well because the leaders of both groups hope to have a **negotiation** soon. **Thomas Pell**, one of the strangers, is very rich and wishes to purchase some land for his people. Big River's people are not sure how you "buy" land, but Mr. Pell wishes them to sign a **treaty**. But Big River's mother is not worried about the treaty, she is worried about tomorrow. The big feast is almost here, and there is still a great deal to be done!

Big River's mother asks her and her brother, Little Eagle, to help their community prepare. As a female member of the tribe, Big River is asked to help gather food, such as **corn**, from their seasonal **Three Sisters** garden. It is named after a group of siblings whose story serves as a moral for the Lenape people. While the women gather crops, the men of the tribe hunt animals for meat. Little Eagle is a little too young, however, and so cannot join his father on the hunt. Instead he gathers shellfish, like **oysters**, to add to the feast.

Once the food has been gathered, the siblings help their mother with other important preparations. The Lenape people live in **wigwams**, made mainly of **bark**. Little Eagle goes into the woods to gather a large piece of bark to cover the **smoke hole** at the top of their circular wigwam in case it rains. Big River helps her mother make **wampum**. They are special jewelry **beads** made from the shiny insides of whelk and clam shells and will be used by her tribe during the ceremony. Finally, their busy day is over! Big River and Little Eagle head to bed, excited to meet the visitors in the morning.

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Pre-Visit Activity #2

Title: What Am I?

Content: Artifact/photo analysis, Lenape cultural history, natural history

Objectives:

- Work with information presented through cultural remains
- Collaborate with peers to create a summary or narrative
- Produce and present a clearly written opinion piece with evidence citation and a conclusion

Class Level: Grades 1–7

Time Requirement: 45–60 minutes

Materials: Writing utensil, paper, and image of animal skull

Introduction: *The Original Bronx Natives* emphasizes cultural diversity and nature. During your trip, the students will look for animal tracks and at animal remains. The purpose of this warm-up activity is to encourage critical thinking about how evidence from the past can help us learn about history. By using an artifact image, students will attempt to identify the animal and its use to the Lenape people. Then, in groups, they can write a short paragraph about their conclusions.

Activity:

1. Split the class into groups of 4 or 5. Give each group a picture of the animal skull or project the image if you prefer. Explain that most information we know about early Native Peoples was gathered by anthropologists. Anthropologists study humanity. During this activity the class will be archaeologists—anthropologists who study artifacts left behind by humans. The image provided (p. 6) is an example of this type of artifact. The Native Americans who lived in the Bronx area hunted animals and used their remains.
2. Each group should try to figure out what is in the picture and determine: what, why, and how. **What** is the animal? Is it a mammal, reptile, or bird? **Why** would Native American people kill this animal? Was it dangerous? Did they eat it? **How** did they use the remains?
3. Still in their groups, have the students write a paragraph that details their conclusions. They should use information they have learned in class about the Native Americans as evidence. Encourage the inclusion of linking words and a concluding sentence. For example, “Therefore, our group thinks that this animal is...”
4. Nominate a student from each group to read their paragraph to the class.
5. Have the class vote on which paragraph’s hypothesis was right. Which group’s conclusions were the most plausible?
6. Explain to the students that the skull is from a North American deer. The Lenape hunted deer and other animals for meat. Your class will learn more about the skull and Native hunting practices during your visit to BPMM.



Image 1: Animal Skull. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum.

The Original Bronx Natives: *Who Were They?*

Post-Visit Activity #1

Title: What Am I? Follow Up

Content: Artifact/photo analysis, reinforcement of themes

Objectives:

- Discuss the significance of different primary sources
- Understand the difference between an inference or reasoned guess vs. a fact

Class Level: Grades 1–7

Time Requirement: 30–45 minutes

Materials: Image of animal skull, winning paragraph from pre-visit activity #2

Introduction: Before your visit to BPMM, your class looked at a photograph of an animal skull. Initially, the students might not have known that the skull was from a deer. During your visit they saw the physical skull and learned that deer were hunted by the Lenape people for their meat, skin, and bones. Use this image and the paragraphs the children wrote prior to their visit to discuss what they learned, the difference between inferred and concrete knowledge, and the benefits of different types of primary sources.

Activity:

1. Project a copy of the photograph and the winning essay/paragraph from pre-visit activity #2, the initial artifact analysis activity, and go over it with the class. During that activity, the class made an inference about what animal was in the photograph without knowing any other information. Remind them of their initial hypothesis regarding the identity of the animal. How close were they to guessing the truth? Explain to the students that their initial guesses were inferred and informed by reason. Discuss the difference between a fact and an educated guess. Talk about why guessing, or inferring, is sometimes important to the scientific method or historical research.
2. Explain that the skull is a type of primary source—a source used by archaeologists and historians to explain and interpret the past. Have the class list different types of primary sources. Most of them will probably be written sources like diaries, journals, or maps. Remind the class that most Native American peoples had oral languages that were not written down. Because of this, historians have to rely on other primary sources, like artifacts. Most secondary sources describing Native Peoples were written by Europeans.
3. Have the class discuss how Native American artifacts would add to the historic record. Or, in other words, ask the students if they think information learned from artifacts like the deer head are as important as information learned from books.

Extensions/Adjustments:

- Have the students write down one interesting fact (other than that the Lenape used animal skin and bones) that they learned during their trip to BPMM. In small groups, have the class share with each other what they found most interesting and why. This is a collaborative listening and speaking activity meant to encourage group discussion and listening skills.
- Ask the class to list other artifacts or objects that historians may use to interpret the past of Native Americans. Examples are arrowheads, flint rocks, canoes, trash middens, rock/cave art, etc.
- During their trip to BPMM, the students sat by the wigwam. Have them draw a picture of what it and the surrounding area might have looked like when occupied. Read the story from Pre-Visit Activity #1 for ideas about what activities may have been going on around or in the wigwam.

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Post-Visit Activity #2

Title: Essay Prompts

Content: Vocabulary, writing and grammar skills, reinforcement of information

Objectives:

- Reinforce concepts introduced during visit to BPMM
- Develop writing and grammar skills
- Encourage independent thinking based on content-specific knowledge

Class Level: Grades 3–7

Time Requirement: Will vary depending on essay choice and class writing level

Materials: Writing utensil, paper

Introduction: This activity offers several essay prompts that will reinforce the vocabulary and information the students learned during their trip to BPMM. Pick and choose prompts that are useful and relevant for your class's development.

Prompt Options:

1. During your visit to BPMM, you learned about the Lenape people and culture. In 1 or 2 paragraphs, describe what you found most interesting or surprising and why. Make sure to have both an introductory and concluding sentence.
2. You learned about the Three Sisters Garden while at BPMM. This was the traditional Lenape garden whose main crops (corn, beans, and squash) were an important food source for the Lenape people. If you had to pick 3 fruits or vegetables to plant every year, what would they be? Pick at least 1 fruit and 1 vegetable and write a 3-paragraph essay describing your choices and explaining why you picked them.
3. Write a short story (1 page) describing a day in the life of a Lenape girl or boy. Take ideas from your trip to BPMM.
4. During your visit to BPMM, you learned about wigwams, the circular bark homes of early Lenape people. These homes were very different from modern homes and apartments today. Write 2 to 3 paragraphs comparing and contrasting the wigwam with your own home. You should include at least 1 pro and 1 con for each type of house.
5. Hunting and gathering is a theme you learned about during your visit to BPMM. Do you think that hunting and gathering is better than going to the grocery or corner store? Write a 3-paragraph essay (with introduction, body, and conclusion) convincing the reader of your opinion.