



# LENAPE LESSON PLAN

## Lesson Focus & Goals

Students will examine the history of the Lenape People pre-European contact, and understand how they used their environment to meet their needs of food, clothing, and shelter. NYS Social Studies Framework: 4.2a, c



## Materials

- “Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County” Exhibition Panels
- Natural Resources Sheets (one per group)
- Scissors (per group)
- Optional: Crossword puzzle,

## Vocabulary

Lenape  
Lenapehoking  
Sachem  
Three Sisters  
Dugout Canoe  
Wigwam  
Indigenous

## Activities

### 1. Introduce Culture

Define Culture and ask students to brainstorm things that are a part of American Culture, or their own cultures. Discuss how some of those items came to be. Discuss how some parts of culture are ways that people fulfill their basic needs (clothing, housing, food,).

### 2. Turn Classroom into a Museum

Display the “Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County” Exhibition on the walls of the classroom for your students. You can also project the Indigenous Peoples in Putnam County Virtual Exhibition for your students to see on [www.putnamhistorymuseum.org/virtual-exhibitions/](http://www.putnamhistorymuseum.org/virtual-exhibitions/). As they explore the exhibition, ask guided questions about how Lenape people got food, clothing and shelter. Locate where your school is on the maps of Lenapehoking. Highlight objects on display.

### 3. Natural Resources



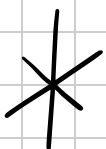
Explain Natural Resources. Ask students to point out natural resources that they might have seen during recess, on their way to school, or out the window. Look at the map of Lenapehoking and ask if the students notice a pattern of where the different tribes are on the map and then brainstorm how being close to waterways would be advantageous.

### 4. Seasonal Living

Brainstorm things that members of the class may do seasonally, like apple picking.

Go over the seasonal activities slides. See script on Appendix 1.

(Scissors, Season labels) Divide into small groups and have each group cut out material icons and season labels. Working as a group, have them divide the icons into the four seasons (four desks works well) Then each group shares one of the icons and why they've put it in a specific season.



# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



## The Lenape People

The lower Hudson River Valley is the ancestral homelands of the Wappinger, an Indigenous group within the larger cultural umbrella of the Lenape peoples. The Wappinger lived from the banks of the Mahicanituck (Hudson River) in Dutchess and Putnam counties, east into Connecticut, and southward into Westchester County.

The Wappinger homeland was within Lenapehoking (Land of the Lenape), the ancestral homelands of all Lenape. Lenape is translated as "the real or original people." Lenapehoking extended westward across the lower Catskills and southeastern New York to eastern Pennsylvania, south through New Jersey and central Long Island, and all the way to the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays.

The Wappinger would have had contact with the other Indigenous groups in the area as well. Using dugout canoes, they traveled to visit more Lenape groups who lived across the Hudson River, like the Esopus and Minisink. The Mohican (Muh-he-con-ne-ok, The People of the Waters that are Never Still) lived in the upper Hudson River Valley and were allies of the Wappinger; they also gave the Hudson River the name Mahicanituck, which means "the river that flows both ways."

Lenape life coexisted with nature, where the changing seasons and natural rhythms dictated the pace and activities of daily life. While there was a division in expected labor, behavior, and customs, it was a complementary partnership. Men often hunted, fished, and built housing. Women often farmed crops, sewed clothing, and raised children. All contributions to the family's food were equally respected.

Traditional Lenape social and political life was centered around a network of clans within interdependent communities. Clans served as a crucial link among relatives living in different places. Every person belonged to the same clan as their mother, and this remained unchanged throughout a person's life.

The majority of Wappinger people lived in small villages with fewer than 100 individuals, with only a few larger villages of 200-300 people. Within a longhouse, everyone related to a line of women and their husbands would live together. In the Hudson Highlands, however, there were often more wigwams than longhouses.

Elders were highly respected for their wisdom and often played a crucial role in passing on the stories and knowledge of Lenape culture, especially during the winter months when there was less work to be done.

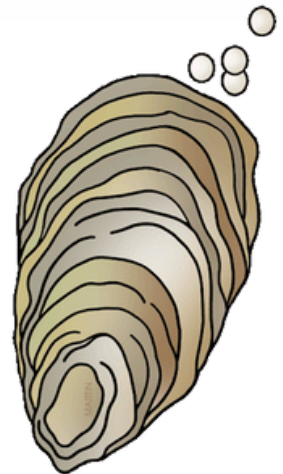
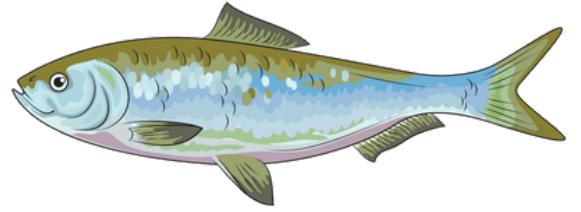
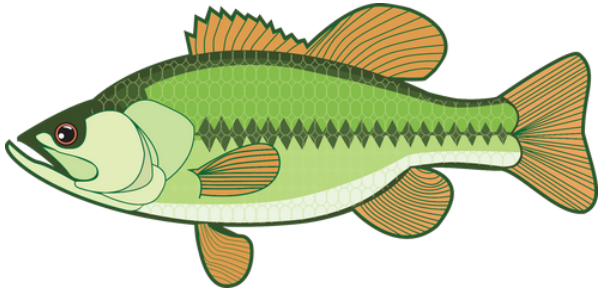
Lenape society was egalitarian, allowing for flexibility in response to changing conditions. However, this did not imply total equality. Sachems, medicine people, skilled craftspeople, and warriors were respected for their abilities. They were encouraged to use these skills to benefit the entire community.

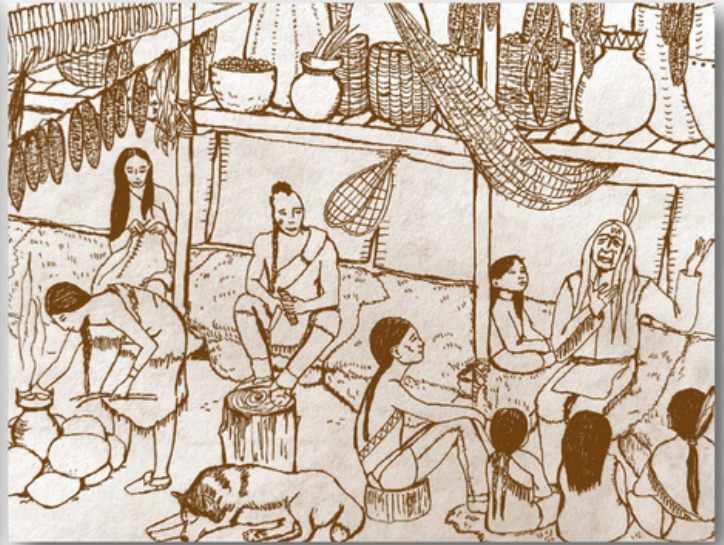
## Credits

This lesson plan was produced by the Putnam History Museum, with funding provided by Humanities New York

## Crossword Puzzle Answer Key:

1. Woodland
2. Longhouse
3. Mastodon
4. Mohican
5. Turtle
6. Sachem
7. Stone
8. Revolutionary
9. Sisters
10. Replica



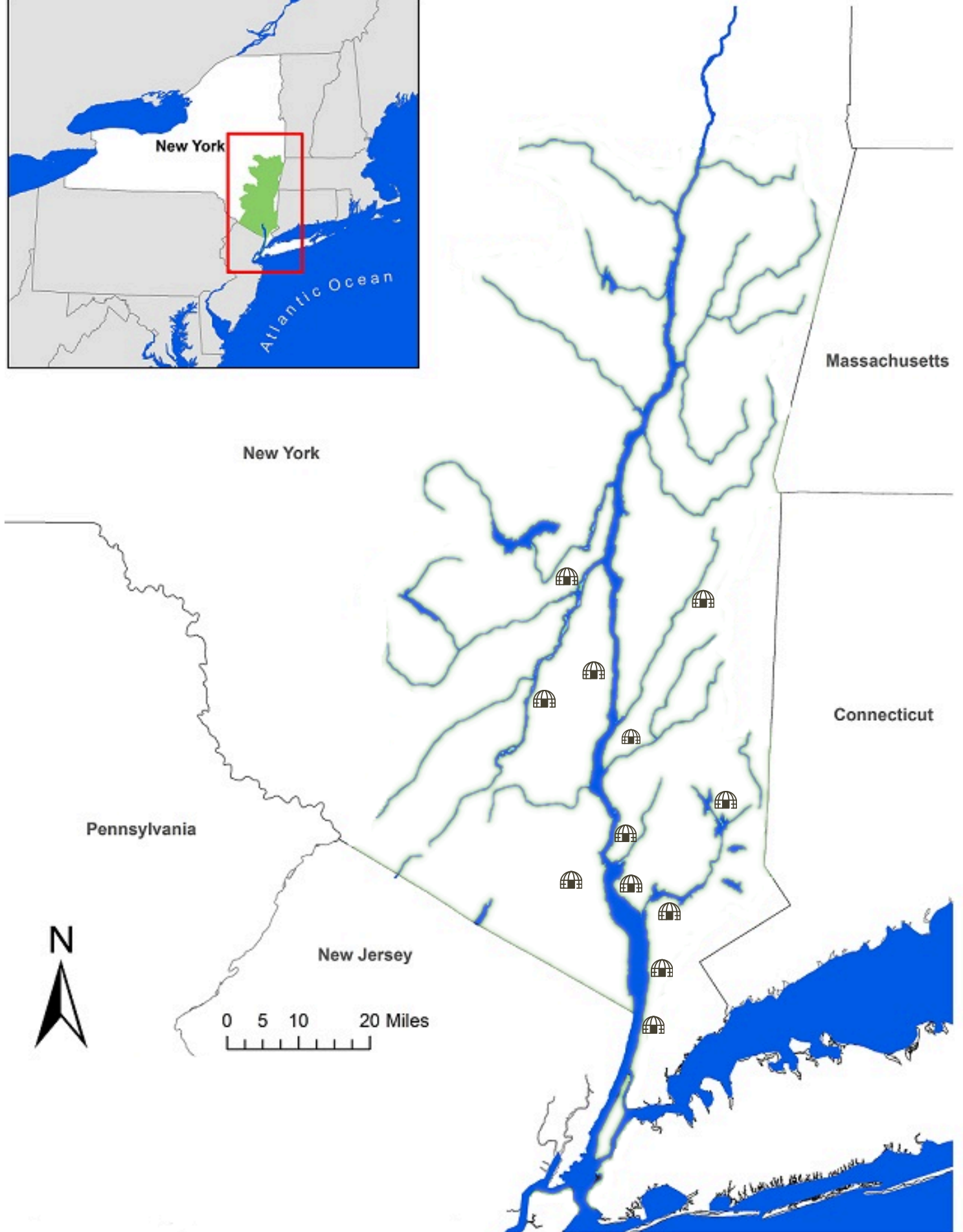


Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

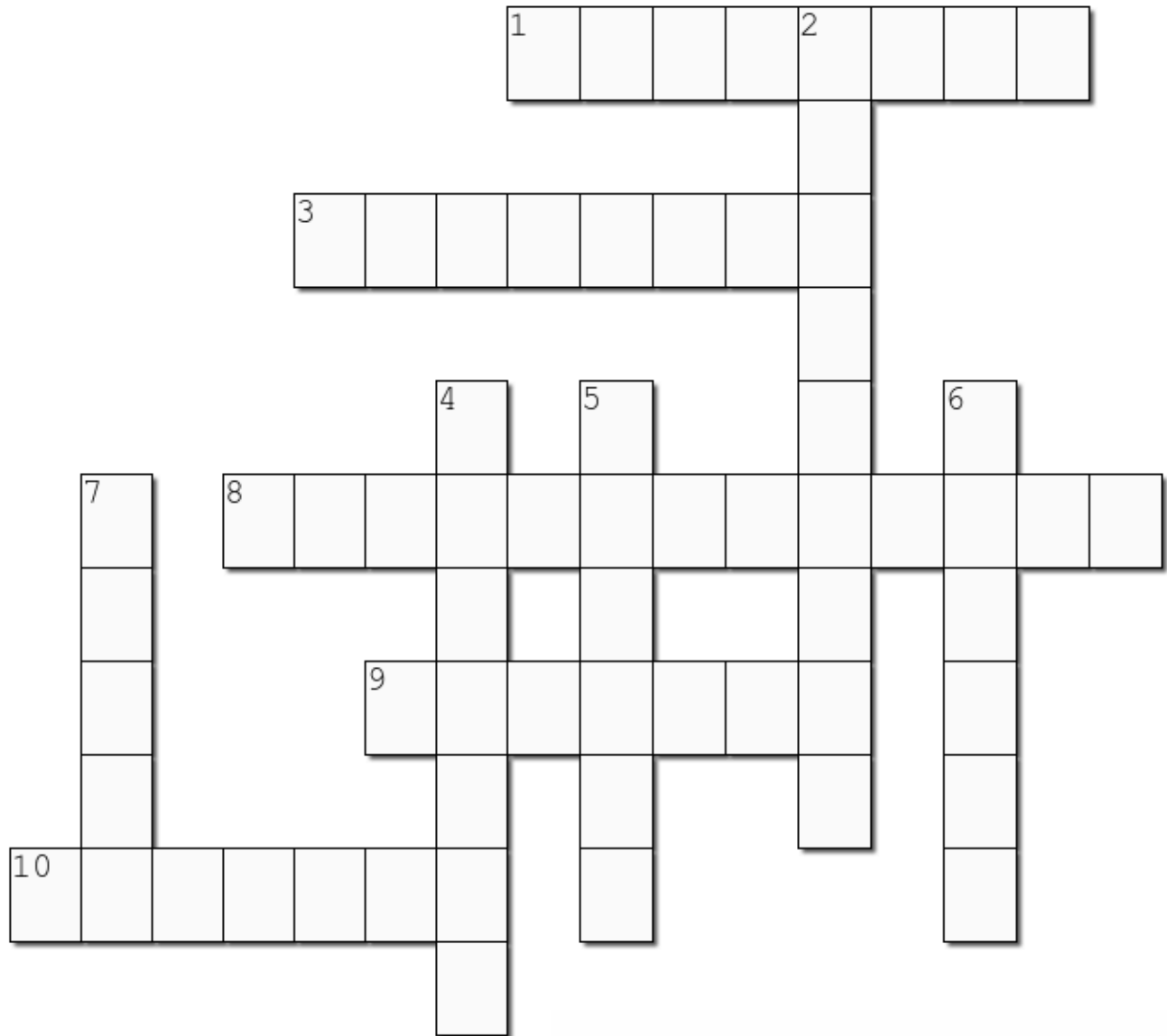


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Lenape Crossword Puzzle

Complete the crossword puzzle below



## Across

1. Period during which the Lenape begin using pottery.
3. An elephant like animal which lived here thousands of years ago.
8. The war which Daniel Nimham fought in.
9. The three \_\_\_\_\_ refers to three plants which were grown together.
10. A copy made when something is too fragile or precious to be displayed.

## Down

2. A larger structure than a wigwam where people lived.
4. People who lived north of the Lenape.
5. An animal who is believed to carry the world on its back.
6. A leader of Lenape people.
7. Most commonly used material for projectile points.