

Where I Live: Connecticut

Title	Native American Place: The Tantaquidgeon Museum
Introduction	In this lesson students explore the roles of museums in our society and the features of the Tantaquidgeon Museum in Uncasville, Connecticut operated by the Mohegan Tribe. Students then build a dome to further deduce conclusions about the lifeways of some of Connecticut's indigenous peoples.
Lesson Objective	Through the construction of a wigwam dome, students will deduce/infer the reasons for and strengths of that type of residence to the traditional Native American lifestyle and community in Connecticut. They will also understand the role of museums in preserving history.
Grade Level	3 - 6
Introductory Discussion Questions	<p>Begin with an in-class discussion about how we learn history: from books, letters, oral stories, movies, on-line articles, archeology, historic places, photographs, and artifacts. What things can we do to share our history with the next generation?</p> <p>Here are some questions to help guide the discussion:</p> <p>Q. What places reflect our history and who we are? A. Our homes, our neighborhoods, our town, our houses of worship</p> <p>Q. How do we learn our history? A. We talk to our family members about their lives and what they remember, we look at photographs, and we learn family traditions like holiday celebrations. We can also go to a museum to see a collection of objects and images that share history.</p> <p>Q. What does a museum do to save our history? A. A museum is a place that cares for a collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance. Many museums make these items available for public viewing.</p> <p>Q. What museums have you gone to? A. There are many types of museums. For example, art museums, history museums, and science museums. What types of things did they have on display? What objects do you remember from your museum visit?</p> <p>Q. How did the Native Americans share their history before there were written records? A. Oral history, family traditions, learning from older members of their tribe, and sharing stories about tribal objects.</p>

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	<p>Q. What is oral tradition?</p> <p>A. Oral tradition is a where knowledge, art, ideas, and cultural practices is received, preserved, and transmitted by word of mouth from one generation to another. It can be through speech or song and may include folktales, ballads, chants, prose, or verses. It can also be through instruction in traditional methods of doing things.</p> <p>Q. What types of objects would you collect if you were making your own museum to tell your family's story?</p> <p>A. Pictures, holiday ornaments, heirlooms.</p>
Lesson Activity/ Procedure	<p>1. After discussing the role that museums play in our society using the opening discussion questions, invite the students to explore the story about the Tantaquidgeon Museum.</p> <p>https://whereilivect.org/learning-through-places-native-american-place-the-tantaquidgeon-museum/</p> <p>2. Students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe 3 things you think you know after viewing the story about the Tantaquidgeon Museum.• Answer the question: What did you notice about the long houses and wigwams from the story? <p>3. Next students will investigate one type of Native American homesite further. We are going to construct a dome to deepen our understanding of how Native people in Connecticut lived in the past. Follow these instructions.</p> <p>https://whereilivect.org/construct-a-dome/</p> <p>When the kids are building the wigwam they should be thinking/imagining how living in a wigwam impacted/showed Native American lifeways.</p> <p>4. During and after the students have completed their dome, write down four of the following questions on easel paper in the four corners of the classroom. Students should answer the questions using a claim/evidence format to justify their answer. Possible questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What qualities of materials would the Native American person be looking for and why?○ Why was a dome a good choice for building a home?○ Why did families share housing in the winter?○ Fires were built in the center. What other way did a winter wigwam or long house differ from a summer wigwam to make it warm in the winter?

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name two reasons you think people of modern times would enjoy living in a wigwam. ○ Name two reasons you think people of modern times would not enjoy living in a wigwam. ○ Can you think of a modern structure that is like a wigwam?
Lesson Resources	<p><i>Where I Live: Connecticut, Connecticut</i>, chapter 2, pages 15 – 20. You may also like to have students read all or parts of these stories on the website under the For Students tab, chapter 2:</p> <p><u>"Uncas, the Mohegan Tribe, and the Founding of Norwich"</u></p> <p><u>"The Mohegan Tribe and the New Nation"</u></p> <p><u>"Medicine Woman Gladys Tantaquidgeon"</u></p>
On Your Own Enrichment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Become a history hero! Interview your mom, dad, or other older family members about where your family came from, family traditions, and favorite family recipes. After you do the oral interview, write this important story down so it can be saved for the future. Add a photograph or drawing that illustrates your family history. Or, write a song, story, or poem about your history and perform it for your family or your class. Record it or make a video to save it for the future. 2. Make your own museum! Look for five things around your house that would fit in a shoebox that could tell your story. Include things about your family, your school, your friends, and about you. Write a museum label for each item that says why it is important to you. What story do they tell about you? Put the shoebox, items, and the labels on exhibit at your house or in your classroom. 3. Visit a museum about Connecticut's First Peoples. Connecticut has three museums where you can learn about Connecticut's Native American tribes. Two are in eastern Connecticut and one is in western Connecticut. These museums offer field trips, or visit their websites to explore Native American life. Choose a topic to research and make a poster or Powerpoint about it. Did this museum help you to understand more about Connecticut's First Peoples?
Word Wall	Mohegan Tribe, Tantaquidgeon, wigwam, dome, indigenous, culture
State Standards Alignment	<p>GEO 3.1-3 What are the histories of towns, landmarks, and geographical features that are named after indigenous peoples in Connecticut? Human-Environment Interaction: Places, Regions, and Culture</p> <p>GEO 3.4 Explain how culture influences the way people modify and adapt to their environments.</p> <p>GEO 3.5 Explain how cultural and environmental characteristics influence population distribution in specific places or regions.</p>