

# Wampanoag Ways



photo by Bill VanderMolen

### Mini Fact:

A Wampanoag home was called a wetu. Sheets of bark covered a wooden frame.

Last week, The Mini Page met the Pilgrims who arrived aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620. This week, as we celebrate Thanksgiving, we learn about the Wampanoag people who lived in the area where the *Mayflower* landed.

### Native people

The **Wampanoag** (wahm-pah-NO-ag) are one of many **nations**, or separate groups of people, who lived in North America before Europeans arrived. In fact, they have inhabited the area that is now southeastern Massachusetts for more than 15,000 years. Wampanoag means “people of the first light.”

When settlers arrived from Europe, there were about 40,000 native people living in 67 villages along the East Coast. Today, about 5,000 Wampanoag live in the area.

In the 1600s, the Wampanoag would move according to the seasons. During winter, they would live in forests and valleys, but in spring, summer and autumn, they would live near water, planting crops and fishing for food.

### Wampanoag kids

Wampanoag children are treasured by their family. When a baby is born, a ceremony welcomes them and gives thanks for their life.

During the 1600s, children’s parents, aunts, uncles and other relatives would patiently teach them the skills they would need. They would learn by copying adults as they helped with everyday tasks. Children learned to make many things needed for day-to-day living.

Boys and girls grew up with specific duties and chores they were expected to do.

- Boys learned to:**
- hunt small animals
  - fish and make traps;
  - make such things as utensils, weapons, tools, canoes and frames for houses;
  - protect their village and family.

When they were old enough, boys would have to show that they could survive on their own. They would walk into the wilderness with nothing but a bow and arrow, knife and hatchet.

Later, they would rejoin the family. After a special ceremony, they were known not as boys, but as men.



This Wampanoag young man has completed his manhood ceremony.

- Girls’ duties:**
- work in the fields, growing such crops as corn, beans, squash and pumpkins;
  - dig for clams and oysters;
  - preserve foods;
  - make mats, baskets and clay pots.

When girls grew up, they were honored in a ceremony that announced to all that they were ready to marry. After marriage, a young woman and her husband would live with her family.

### Wampanoag life

In the 1600s, the Wampanoag produced food in four ways: hunting, fishing, harvesting wild plants and growing crops.




A woman at the Mashpee Wampanoag Museum in Mashpee, Massachusetts, demonstrates how food was once gathered and prepared.

Many foods were eaten right when they were harvested, but people also preserved foods by drying or smoking them. They used **herring fish** caught in rivers to fertilize the soil.

The native people of the northeast believed that all life is sacred. They worked hard not to waste anything.

When a Wampanoag hunter killed a deer or beaver, for example, it wasn’t just for the meat. The **hide**, or skin, was used for clothing and moccasins. Bones were used to make tools, and **sinews**, or tendons, were used for sewing.

## Resources



**On the Web:**

- [bit.ly/MPWampanoag](https://bit.ly/MPWampanoag)

**At the library:**

- “Tapenum’s Day: A Wampanoag Indian Boy in Pilgrim Times” by Kate Waters

## Try ‘n’ Find

Words that remind us of Wampanoag people are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

BABY, BASKET,  
CANOE, CEREMONY,  
CROPS, FISH, HIDE,  
HOME, HUNT, LIFE,  
MAYFLOWER, NATIVE,  
PEOPLE, PILGRIM,  
PRESERVE, SACRED,  
SINEW, THANKSGIVING,  
TRAP, WAMPANOAG.

A	W	W	B	P	A	R	T	C	R	O	P	S	H	E
T	H	A	N	K	S	G	I	V	I	N	G	M	V	Q
O	B	T	M	I	J	L	O	P	W	C	A	I	H	M
Y	Z	C	N	P	I	Y	R	M	E	Y	T	M	I	R
T	S	E	U	F	A	E	O	R	F	A	T	R	D	E
E	W	A	E	Y	S	N	E	L	N	O	G	N	E	L
K	W	R	C	E	J	M	O	F	U	L	W	V	U	P
S	Z	U	R	R	O	W	I	A	I	T	N	U	H	O
A	S	V	Y	N	E	S	G	P	G	C	A	N	O	E
B	E	W	Y	R	H	D	A	G	E	M	O	H	M	P

## Cook’s Corner

### Yummy Mushrooms

**You’ll need:**

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 8 ounces fresh sliced mushrooms
- 2 teaspoons ranch-style salad dressing seasoning mix (dry)

**What to do:**

1. Heat olive oil in a medium skillet.
2. Add mushrooms; sprinkle with ranch-style seasoning.
3. Continue stirring and cook for 4 to 6 minutes until mushrooms release liquid.
4. Serve warm with rice or alone. Serves 2.



\* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

1. Experiences, people or things you remember (8-letter plural noun)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

3. Helpful and friendly; showing understanding (4-letter adjective)

□ □ □ □

2. Showing or feeling thanks for something nice (8-letter adjective)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

4. Giving careful attention to the needs of others (10-letter adjective)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

1. Connie has happy \_\_\_\_\_ of a great summer vacation.

2. Julie is \_\_\_\_\_ for a good meal of meat and veggies.

3. Dr. Mendez was \_\_\_\_\_ when Bobby needed stitches.

4. Wasn’t it \_\_\_\_\_ of Kendra’s mom to bake cookies?

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Thanks!

Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

Answers: Memories, Grateful, Kind, Thoughtful.

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## Mini Jokes



**Will:** What kind of bug wears a red dress?  
**Wendy:** A ladybug!

## Eco Note




Researchers at the University of Washington have developed a sensor so tiny that it can be deployed on insects or mini drones to reach places too small or dangerous for humans to go. The invention can be released from its tiny airborne transports by a Bluetooth command, then drop up to 72 feet when it has reached its desired location. Once on the ground, it can measure things like temperature, humidity or other factors for almost three years. The sensor weighs about one-tenth the weight of a jelly bean.

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### For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about Thanksgiving celebrations.

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