

The Clambake: A Wampanoag Tradition

The Estuary Live segment at Waquoit Bay Reserve will feature a traditional Wampanoag clam bake to illustrate the bounty of the bay. It will be prepared by Joan Avant-Tavares. Joan is a Mashpee Wampanoag who teaches the Indian Education Program in the Mashpee Public Schools and is currently pursuing a PhD in Education at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. There is a book entitled Clambake: A Wampanoag Tradition, written by Russell M. Peters, which would be a wonderful way for teachers to introduce or follow up the E-Live segment from Cape Cod. This book is filled with full color photos and lovely illustrations showing Steven Peters, a twelve year old Wampanoag Indian in Massachusetts as he learns how to prepare a traditional clambake from his grandfather. Unfortunately it is currently out of print so teachers will need to find it in libraries unless they are lucky enough to find a used one.

Clambake: A Wampanoag Tradition. Russel Peters, Lerner Publications, First Avenue Additions, 1992.
ISBN: 0-8225-2651-4 (lib. Binding)
ISBN: 0-8225-9621-0 (pbk.)

Here are some questions to encourage discussion:

Science Questions:

Why did they go clamming on the full moon?

Where do quahogs (hard shell clams) live?

Pick an estuary animal used in clambakes to research: quahog, soft shell clam, lobster. Research its life cycle and habitat. How does your animal depend on estuaries?

Map Questions:

Why do you think the Wampanoags call themselves "People of the First Light"?

Where is the Wampanoag's tribal center or home?

Where is Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve located?

Culture and History Questions:

How is a Wampanoag clambake different from other clambakes that other New Englanders hold these days?

How did the Wampanoags get food from the rivers and bays?

How did the Cape Cod land change after the Europeans arrived?

Do you think people in your area would behave differently if they believed as the Wampanoags do that each generation is responsible for keeping the land clean and safe for the next seven generations? How? Give some examples.

Here is an introduction from Joan Tavares to enjoy a clambake plus some reading comprehension questions she created based on the Clambake book. As you can see from the menu for her clambake, Wampanoag culture has not stood still since the Europeans arrived. They have adopted items from European culture just as the people who later settled this land (many of our ancestors) have adopted foods and other customs from the Native Americans.

Enjoy A Traditional Wampanoag Clambake (Appanaug)

One of the best ways of enjoying life is at the table feasting on a traditional Wampanoag Clambake. The indigenous gifts from Mother Earth and the Atlantic Ocean- corn, potato, clams, lobster, fish, when cooked on a steaming bed of rockweed presents the customs from the inspirations of our ancestors and will be long remembered. My family and I carry on this tradition today, our experience allows us to serve you a clambake that will long be remembered. We are inclined to think that nowhere else in the world is there a feast unique to our traditional bakes

Traditional Wampanoag CLAMBAKE MENU

Homemade Quahog chowder with crackers

1 ¼ lb whole Native Lobster

Steamed Clams/Mussels

Corn-on-the Cob

White & Sweet Potato

New England Brown Bread

Linguisa

Frankfurter/Onion

Chilled Watermelon

Joan Ohwamashqua Avant

Clambake Book by Russell M. Peters
Fast Turtle



Work Sheet by Joan Avant
Study Skills

A. Mark the correct answer.

1. What year was Mashpee "the Land of the Wampanoag" incorporated?
1620
1940
1870
2. Where is Mashpee located?
Spain
New York City
South Eastern Massachusetts Cape Cod

B. On page 46 in Clambake book you will find a Wampanoag word list. Write down the meanings of the following words.

1. Algonquian-
2. appanaug-
3. bakemaster-
4. medicine man-
5. mussel
6. quahog-
7. rockweed-
8. rockweed
9. sachem-
10. sickissuog-
11. Wampanoag-

A Wampanoag Tradition

Imagine you are Steven Peters (he's grown up now- this book was written in 1992) teaching his son or daughter how to prepare a Wampanoag clambake. On a separate piece of paper write a letter and tell them everything that Steven's grandfather taught him about the clambake. Try to include other important points such as Steven's Indian name and the significance of the clambake. Use the correct form for writing a letter.

To help you write the letter, go through the book *Clambake* by Russell Peters and find the steps to make a clambake.



Clambake Worksheet

Comprehension

C. Now that you've learned about the clambake and other Wampanoag traditions and culture, do you have any questions for Mashpee Wampanoag students your age?

You may e-mail your questions to jtavares@mashpee.k12.ma.us
Sometime in Fall 2004, a Wampanoag student from the Mashpee Public Schools Indian Education Program will answer your letter. Include your name, grade, e-mail and or address.

For further info:

<http://www.mashpeewampanoagtribe.com>; This is the official website of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe. There is a history of the tribe here as well as other information.

<http://www.plimoth.org/visit/what/hobbamock.asp>: On the same site as Plimouth Plantation, a recreation of the Pilgrims' village in Plymouth, Massachusetts, there is also Hobbamock's Homesite where modern day native staff dress in deer skins and demonstrate and discuss Wampanoag history and traditional ways. There is a lot of background info on history and culture on this web site.