



HISTORY
OF
PHILIP'S WAR
COMMONLY
THE GREAT INDIAN WAR

Metacom's (King Philip's) War: The Remaking of Colonial Identity

GUIDING QUESTION:

How did colonial expansion during Metacom's (King Philip's) War shift the balance of power?

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► OVERVIEW

Between 1675 and 1676, the Native Americans of southern New England engaged in armed conflict with colonial English settlers. Wampanoag leader Metacom, also known by the English name King Philip, was one of several Indigenous leaders who led revolts against the colonists in reaction to a growing number of settlers on Indigenous territory. In this lesson, students will examine maps and primary sources to analyze how colonial expansion leading to Metacom's (King Philip's) War also shifted the perception of identity and power

► OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to:

- › Evaluate how maps can influence the perception of identity and power; and
- › Analyze primary sources in order to summarize and think critically about perspective.

► STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- › CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- › D2.His.7.9-12. Explain how the perspectives of people in the present shape interpretations of the past.
- › D2.His.8.9-12. Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.

Note: This event is known by various names. During the conflict, it was referred to as the Indian War. In later texts, it was referred to as King Philip's War, despite the fact that he was only one of the Indigenous leaders involved. Today, most scholars use the term Metacom's War.

► DOCUMENTS USED

PRIMARY SOURCES

Letter, Josiah Winslow, “Letter to Weetamoo and Ben, her husband,” June 15, 1675

Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip’s War

Winslow Family Papers II, Massachusetts Historical Society
<https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/winslow-letter-weetamoo-doc-qr3jpg>

“Metacom Relates Indian Complaints about English Settlers,” 1675

Printed in John Easton, “A Relation of the Indian War,” *A Narrative of the Causes Which Led to Philip’s Indian War*, 1858
History Matters, George Mason University
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6226>

SECONDARY SOURCES

Letter, Josiah Winslow, “Letter to Weetamoo and Ben, her husband,” June 15, 1675 (transcription)

Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip’s War

<https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/right-relation>

Lorén Spears, “Narragansett History” (excerpt)

EnCompass, Rhode Island Historical Society
<http://library.providence.edu/encompass/narragansett-history/narragansett-history/>

Map, *Native Homelands of the Northeast*, 2019

Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip’s War

<https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/northern-front-full-view-map-pp6jpg>

Map, *New England Colonies in 1677*, 2007

National Geographic Society
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/massachusetts-1677>

► TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- › Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer

► ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- › Make enough copies of the following for each student:
 - › Source Packet (maps and textual sources)
 - › Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer
- › Organize students into groups of two or three students each.

► PROCEDURE

ACTIVITY ONE (10 MINUTES)

- › Organize students into groups of two or three students each.
- › Ask students to draw a map of a downtown or town center they know well.
- › Compare their maps in small groups.
- › As a whole class, discuss what was similar and what was different about their maps and why. Prompt students to consider how maps reflect priorities and perspectives of the person who created them.
- › Explain that you will now be looking at historical maps.

ACTIVITY TWO (10 MINUTES)

- › Distribute the map, *Native Homelands of the Northeast*, and project it on the board. Give students a moment to look at the map and consider the following questions quietly:
 - › *What does this map show?*
 - › *What do you notice?* If students need more guidance, suggest looking at the names, borders, and landforms.
 - › *What questions does this map raise?*
- › Share answers with the class. Distribute the map, *New England Colonies in 1677*, and project it on the board. Repeat the process above.
- › Ask students to compare and contrast the maps. *What do these maps tell us about how historical events influence our understanding of this region?*
- › Explain that students will use this context to analyze documents from the era of Metacom’s (King Philip’s) War.

ACTIVITY THREE (40 MINUTES)

- › Distribute the Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer to all students.
- › Read the background and discuss the context of Metacom's War. Explain the context and perspective of each author's source and key figures. Write notes on the board that reference the key players and major events. Students can refer to these notes while working in their groups..
 - › John Easton: Deputy Governor of Rhode Island during the war
 - › Metacom (also known as King Philip): Sachem (Chief) of the Wampanoag
 - › Josiah Winslow: Governor of Plymouth Colony and leader of colonial forces during the conflict
 - › Weetamoo: Sachem (Chief) of the Pocasset, sister-in-law, and supporter of Metacom
- › Distribute the Primary Source Packet.
- › Direct students to analyze the first source with their partner(s), using the Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer to record their thoughts.
- › Come back together as a class to discuss the analysis of the first source.
- › Allow students time to analyze the second source with their partner(s). Discuss the second source as a class.
- › Give students time to complete the synthesis questions with their partner(s).
- › Lead a discussion about the connection between the primary sources and the maps students analyzed at the beginning of class. Questions may include:
 - › *How do the maps reveal the outcome of Metacom's (King Philip's) War?*
 - › *How can maps depict power and identity?*
 - › *Based on the documents you read, what was the importance of communication between parties?*
 - › *What is the role of trust in negotiation?*

ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- › Students can complete a 3-2-1 activity (three things each student learned during the lesson, two questions they still have, and one aspect they enjoyed).
- › Ask students to respond to the question, "How did colonial expansion during Metacom's (King Philip's) War shift the balance of power?" through written or spoken responses.

Students interested in this topic might be interested in researching the following for an NHD project:

- › **Great Swamp Fight (Great Swamp Massacre), 1675**
- › **Weetamoo (c. 1635–1676)**
- › **Navajo Wars (c. 1600–1866)**
- › **Pontiac's War (1763–1766)**
- › **Tecumseh's War (1811–1813)**

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to: nhd.org/RevIdeals.

Map, *Native Homelands of the Northeast*



Map, *Native Homelands of the Northeast*, 2019

Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip's War

<https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/northern-front-full-view-map-pp6jpg>

“Metacom Relates Indian Complaints about English Settlers,” 1675

Historical Context: John Sassamon was an Indigenous man who converted to Christianity. He told the colonists that Metacom (Philip) was going to attack and then he was found murdered. Three Indigenous men were blamed, convicted, and hanged in June 1675. This set off attacks by the Wampanoags in late June and escalated into war.

Printed in John Easton, “A Relation of the Indian War,” A Narrative of the Causes Which Led to Philip’s Indian War, 1858
History Matters, George Mason University
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6226>

Introduction: Metacom, or King Philip, leader of the Wampanoags near Plymouth colony, led many other Indigenous people into a widespread revolt against the colonists of southern New England in 1675. The conflict had been brewing for some time over a set of long-standing grievances between Europeans and Indians. In that tense atmosphere, John Easton, Attorney General of the Rhode Island colony, met Metacom (Philip) in June of 1675 in an effort to negotiate a settlement. Easton recorded Metacom’s (Philip’s) complaints, including the steady loss of Wampanoag land to the Europeans; the English colonists’ growing herds of cattle and their destruction of Indian crops; and the unequal justice Indians received in the English courts. This meeting between Easton and Metacom proved futile, however, and the war (which became the bloodiest in U.S. history relative to the size of the population) began late that month.

So Philip kept his Men in Armes. Plimoth Gouverner required him to disband his Men, and informed him his Jealousy¹ was false. Philip answered he would do no Harm, and thanked the Governer for his Information.

1 reaction

The three Indians were hungry, to the last denied the Fact; but one broke the Halter² as it is reported, then desired to be saved, and so was a littell while, then confessed they three had dun the Fact; and then he was hanged. And it was reported Saussomon before his death had informed of the Indian Plot, and that if the Indians knew it they wold kill him, and that the Heathen might destroy the English for their Wickedness, as God had permitted the Heathen to destroy the Israellites of olde. So the English were afraid and Philip was afraid, and both increased in Arms. But for forty Yeares Time, Reports and jealosys of War had bin very frequent, that we did not think that now a War was breaking forth; but about a Week before it did, we had Cause to think it would. Then to endeavor to prevent it, we lent a Man to Philip, that is he would come to the Ferry we would come over to speak with him. About four Miles we had to come; thither our Messenger come to them; they not aware of it behaved themselves as furious, but suddenly appeased when they understood who he was and what he came for, he called his Counsell and agreed to come to us; came himself unarmed, and about 40 of his Men armed. Then 5 of us went over, 3 were Magistrates. We sate very friendly together. We told him our business was to endeavor that they might not receive or do Rong. They said that was well; they had dun no Rong, the English ronged them. We said we knew the English said the Indians ronged them, and the Indians said the English ronged them, but our Desire was the Quarrell might rightly be decided, in the best Way, and not as Dogs decided their Quarrells. The Indians owned that fighting was the worst Way; then they propounded³ how Right might take Place.

2 harness

3 discussed

“Metacom Relates Indian Complaints . . .” (Con’t)

We said, by Arbitration⁴. They said that all English agreed against them, and so by Arbitration they had had much Rong; many Miles square of Land so taken from them, for English would have English Arbitrators; and once they were persuaded to give in their Armes, that thereby Jealousy might be removed, and the English having their Arms wold not deliver them as they had promised, untill they consented to pay a 100po, (100 pounds) and now they had not so much Sum or Muny; that they were as good be Idled as leave all their Livelihood.

We said they might chuse a Indian King and the English might chuse the Governor of New Yorke, that nether had Case to say either were Parties in the Differance. They said they had not heard of that Way, and said we honestly spoke, so we were perswaded if that Way had been tendered they would have accepted. We did endeavor not to hear their Complaints, said it was not convenient for us now to consider of, but to endeavor to prevent War; said to them when in War against English, Blood was spilt, that engaged all Englishmen, for we were to be all under one King; we knew what their Complaints wold be, and in our Colony had removed some of them in sending for Indian Rulers in what the Crime concerned Indians Lives, which they very lovingly accepted, and agreed with us to their Execution, and said so they were abell to satisfy their Subjects when they knew an Indian sufered duly, but said in what was only between their Indians and not in Townships, that we had purchased, they wold not have us prosecute, and that that they had a great Fear to have any of their Indians should be called or forced to be Christian Indians.

They said that such were in every thing more mischievous; only Disemblers, and then the English made them not subject to their Kings, and by their lying to rong their Kings. We knew it to be true, and we promising them that however in Government to Indians all should be alike, and that we knew it was our King’s will it should be so, that altho we were weaker than other Colonies, they having submitted⁵ to our King to protect them, Others dared, not otherwise to molest them; so they expressed they took that to be well, that we had littell Case to doubt, but that to us under the King they would have yielded to our Determinations in what any should have complained to us against them.

But Philip charged it to be dishonesty in us to put off the Hearing the just Complaints, therefore we consented to hear them. They said thay had bine the first in doing Good to the English, and the English the first in doing Rong; said when the English first came, their King’s Father was as a great Man, and the English as a littell Child; he constrained other Indians from ronging the English, and gave them Corn and shewed them how to plant, and was free to do them any Good, and had let them have a 100 Times more Land than now the King had for his own Peopell. But their King’s Brother, [Massasoit] when he was King, came miserably to die by being forced to Court, as they judge poysoned.

⁴ bringing in a government official to decide

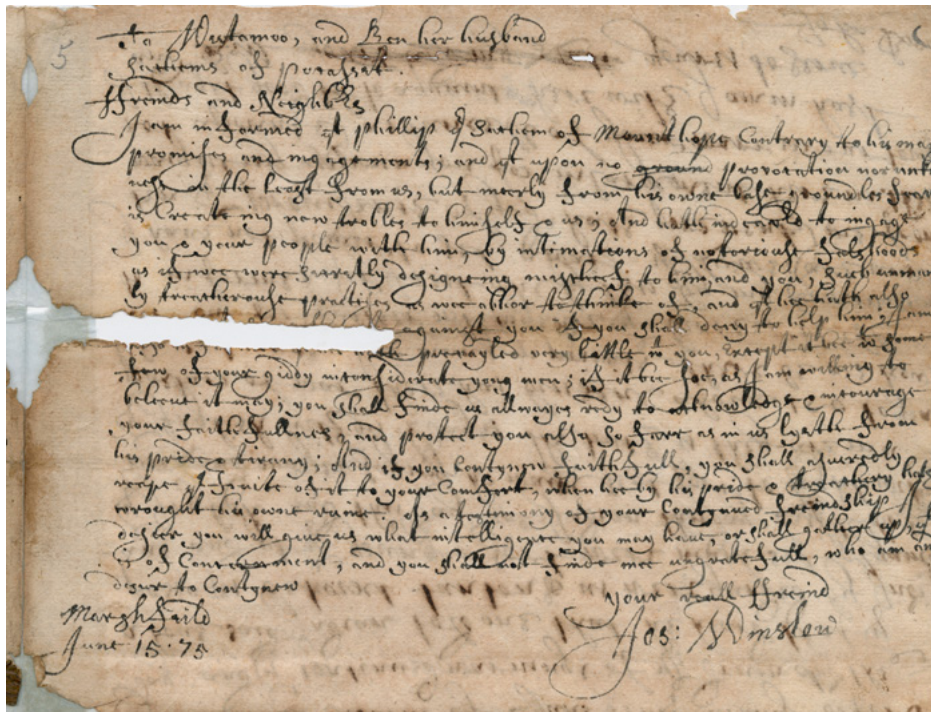
⁵ bother

“Metacom Relates Indian Complaints . . .” (Con’t)

And another Greavance was, if 20 of their honest Indians testified that a Englishman had dun them Rong, it was as nothing; and if but one of their worst Indians testified against any Indian or their King, when it pleased the English it was sufficient. Another Grievance was, when their King sold Land, the English would say, it was more than they agreed to, and a Writing must be prove against all them, and some of their Kings had dun Rong to sell so much. He left his Peopell none, and some being given to Drunknes the English made them drunk and then cheated them in Bargains, but now their Kings were forewarned not for to part with Land, for nothing in Comparison to the Value thereof. Now home the English had owned for King or Queen, they would disinherit, and make another King that would give or sell them these Lands; that now, they had no Hopes left to keep any Land. Another Grievance, the English Catell and Horses still increased; that when they removed 30 Miles from where English had any thing to do, they could not keep their Corn from being spoiled, they never being used to fence, and thought when the English bought Land of them they would have kept their Catell upon their owne Land. Another Grievance, the English were so eager to sell the Indians Lickers, that most of the Indians spent all in Drunkness, and then ravened upon the sober Indians, and they did believe often did hurt the English Cattel, and their King could not prevent it. We knew before, these were their grand Complaints, but then we only endeavored to persuaid that all Complaints might be righted without War, but could have no other Answer but that they had not heard of that Way for the Governor of Yorke and an Indian King to have the Hearing of it. We had Cause to think in that had bine tendered it would have bine accepted. We endeavored that however they Should lay down the War, for the English were to strong for them; they said, then the English should do to them as they did when they were too strong for the English.

“Letter to Weetamoo and Ben, her husband,” June 15, 1675

Letter, Josiah Winslow, “Letter to Weetamoo and Ben, her husband,” June 15, 1675
 Our Beloved Kin: Remapping a New History of King Philip’s War
 Winslow Family Papers II, Massachusetts Historical Society
<https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/winslow-letter-weetamoo-doc-gr3jpp>



Transcription:¹

Letter to Weetamoo, and Ben her husband, Sachems of Pocasset. June 15, 1675. Marshfield.

Friends and Neighbors

I am informed that Phillip the Sachem of Mount Hope Contrary to his many promises and engagements; and that upon no ground [crossed out] provocation nor unt__ness in the least from us, but mostly from his owne base groundless feare is Creating new troubles to himselfe and us; And hath endeavored to ingage you and your people with him, by intimations of notorious² falsehoods as if we were secretly designing mischief to him, and you, such unmanly treacherous practices as we abhor³ to think of, and yet he hath also [?] . . . [torn] against you if you shall deny to help him; I am [torn] . . . prevayled very little [unto?] you, except where some few of your giddy inconsiderate young men; if it be fact, as I am willing to believe it may; you shall find us always ready to acknowledge and encourage your faithfulness, and protect you also so farr as in us lyeth from his pride and tyranny; And if you continue faithfull, you shall assuredly reape that fruit of it to your Comfort, when he by his pride and treachery have wrought his owne ruine. As a testimony of your continued friendship I desire you will give us what intelligence you may have, or shall gather up, that is of con__ment, and you shall not find me ungrateful, who am and desire to continue

Your reall friend,
 Josiah Winslow

¹ leader

² hinting at very bad and well-known

³ hate

¹The transcription of this letter can be accessed at <https://ourbelovedkin.com/awikhigan/right-relation>.

Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer

Historical Context:

“As a result of the increased conflict with the colonists, King Philip, a Wampanoag leader whose Indigenous name is Metacomet, went into war against the English colonists in 1675. Initially, the Narragansett remained neutral. However, on December 19, 1675, a military force raised by the United Colonies of New England raided the fort at Great Swamp in what is now known as South Kingstown, Rhode Island. The United Colonies feared that the Narragansett would soon join King Philip in the war against the colonists and massacred women, children, and elders who were there seeking protection from ensuing battles. In the traditional philosophy of combat, fighting men did not reside in the fortified locations. Typically, just civilians sought refuge in these areas, and they were therefore usually off limits during conflicts. This massacre, along with other massacres, such as the massacre of the Pequot people in 1637, was the beginning of the mass genocide of Indigenous peoples across the Americas.”¹

<p>“Metacom Relates Indian Complaints about English Settlers” (as told to John Easton)</p>	<p>Letter, Josiah Winslow, “Letter to Weetamoo and Ben, her husband”</p>
<p>What type of source is this?: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Point of view: _____</p>	<p>What type of source is this?: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Point of view: _____</p>
<p>Summarize the main idea:</p>	<p>Summarize the main idea:</p>
<p>What is the list of complaints that Metacom has against the British?</p>	<p>How is Winslow portraying Metacom?</p>

¹Lorén Spears, “Narragansett History,” EnCompass, Rhode Island Historical Society, accessed July 14, 2022, <http://library.providence.edu/encompass/narragansett-history/narragansett-history/>.

Synthesis Questions

Why would it be important to Josiah Winslow for Weetamoo to remain neutral?

What do these documents say about power dynamics between the different parties? Who held more power? Less power?

List at least three questions you would have for any of the involved parties.
