



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES CELEBRATE MAINE'S BICENTENNIAL

4 THEMES

1. **Living In Maine:** A wide variety of Maine people and communities constantly create anew what it means to be a Mainer.

This landscape has been inhabited for thousands of years. People and land shape one another, and our geography, climate, and natural resources are important factors in determining how we live here.

It has long been said there are “two Maines,” but the cultural identity of Mainers is at once both more complex and closely connected than that. While we are friends and neighbors bound by our common work ethic, integrity and rugged individualism, there are complex local, regional, tribal, cultural, and socioeconomic identities that are important to understand, appreciate, and include in our consideration of what it means to live in Maine.

2. **The Business of Maine**

Mainers know how to work—and not just in the woods and on the water. Economic activity in the state is rooted in the work ethic, ingenuity, and hustle that seem to come naturally to Maine people. Our economy has long been driven by our natural resources, our commitment to quality, and our gracious welcoming of visitors. Maine’s abundant natural resources, combined with the work ethic and craftsmanship of its people, have driven its economy for centuries and brought the world iconic products from paper to wooden boats to Bean boots, Indian baskets, blueberries and beer. And did we mention lobster?

Business and industry continues to be shaped by this place and its proximity to major Northeast and international markets, but tradition is being transformed by technology, changing consumer demand, and innovators. Supported by the state’s rising research and development community, we are finding new ways to add value to the “Made in Maine” brand.

3. **Maine Leads**

Though small, rural, and geographically isolated, Maine has long played an outsized role on the national scene. It has been said that as goes Maine, so goes the nation. Even before statehood, this land and the people who live here have had an oversized influence on the nation and beyond. Our entry into the Union came at a key moment in the national debate about slavery, equality, and American political ideals. Ever since, we have had a strong tradition of electing pragmatic and effective leaders whose service has been marked by Maine’s common-sense commitment to working together, solving problems, and making things better.

4. **The Maine Character**

For all the changes Maine has experienced over 200 years, we can nonetheless see a unique Maine character that persists. Mainers are engaged with our communities; we are diverse in our perspectives and backgrounds. We care about our neighbors, know the value of hard work, and approach our lives here with humor and grit.