

**Native Americans and the American Revolution**  
**January 26, 2011**  
*Biographies of the Nation Winter Colloquium*  
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**Lesson Topics:** Wampum, the Covenant Chain, and Great Chain

**Essential Question(s):** What is Wampum? How did the first treaties between the U.S. government and the Six Nations establish precedents for future relations?

**Context and Content Background:** After the French and Indian War, King George III issued a Royal Proclamation in which lands west of the Appalachian Mountains were declared Indian Territory. Since Great Britain now had control over their North American Empire, the Proclamation did more than just create a line between the colonies and the Native Americans. Britain needed time to regulate commerce and settlement in this newly ceded territory. The colonists did not support the proclamation. Many settlements existed in the frontier prior to the proclamation line and land was promised to British soldiers west of that line as part of the proclamation itself. To the colonists, it appeared that the crown would be regulating how lands were awarded and many resented that local control (through colonial governors) seemed not to apply to the new territory.

During the American Revolution, Britain supported Indian nations in this territory by providing weapons and encouraging frontier warfare with the colonists. For this lesson, we are focusing on the relationship between the Iroquois Confederacy (League) and the U.S. At this time, the Iroquois split in their support between the United States and Great Britain. This split fractured the Six Nations. After the American Revolution, the U.S. named this new territory the Northwest Territory. In order for the United States to organize and settle the territory, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 standardized western land settlement and organization.

**Lesson Focus:** In order for students to understand the complicated relationship between the United States government and the many Indian nations in North America that continues to today, this lesson strives to help students understand the different ways in which the U.S. Government and Indian Nations approached and understood treaty-making and land use/ownership. This lesson is designed to help students analyze Native American treaties and treaties between the U.S. and Native Americans. Students should be able to see that both types of treaties define specific things and responsibilities and carry out their purposes, but that the conceptual understanding of the treaties is very different.

**Lesson Sequence and Understandings:**

- 1) Wampum Power Point Presentation and a look at symbolic meaning. Student activity instructions are included at the end of the power point.
- 2) Students should be able to answer the “Who Benefits” slide with the understanding that the U.S. gained “formal peace” with the Six Nations as a whole. They should also understand that the U.S. formally gained lands in the Ohio Valley. For the Six Nations, the treaty affirms their relationship as a separate nation with the U.S. Government (Article VII) and it returns to the

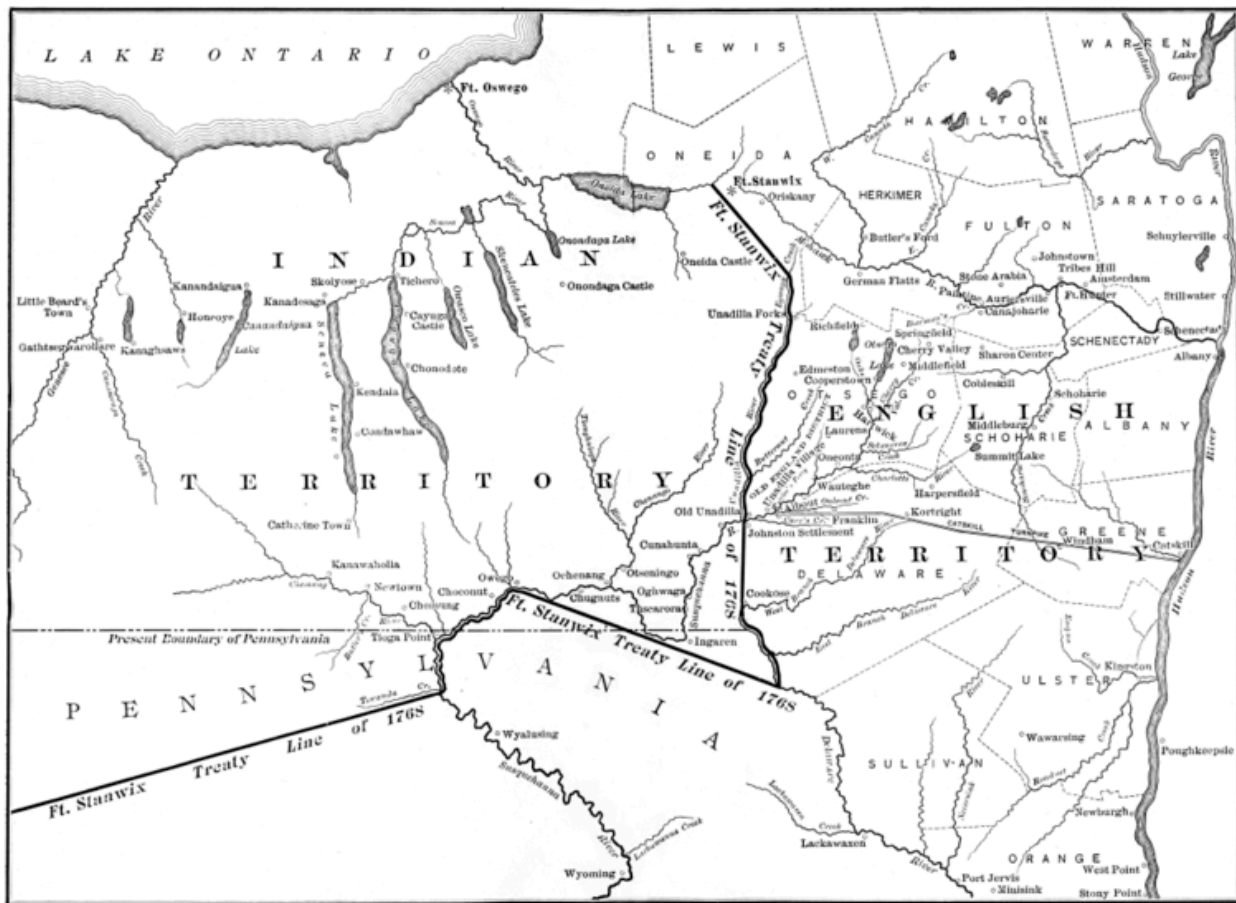
Senecas land taken under the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1784, which they held until the 1960's when the Army Corps of Engineers built Kinzua Dam and flooded the Allegany Valley.

- Students should understand that wampum was used for treaty making and a wampum treaty was the equivalent of a written treaty document when compared to the U.S. treaty documents. Students should demonstrate empathy in understanding that conceptually, the written document and symbolic Wampum belt showed very different representations of the same understandings. How they are interpreted and by whom established relationships of power. In the end, it is the written document that carries legal weight (The Treaty of Canandaigua). The written document could not exist however, without beginning the treaty by laying wampum and establishing that separate and sovereign nations come to this agreement, as brothers, not as father and son.

Helpful additional readings for analysis:

Campisi, Jack and William A. Starna, "On the Road to Canandaigua: The Treaty of 1794" in *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Autumn 1995), pp. 467-490. Accessed at: JStore.

Mateusz, M.G. *The Treaty of Canandaigua, 1794*. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2006.



THE FRONTIER OF NEW YORK IN THE REVOLUTION  
 (Present County lines inserted.)  
 (Compiled by the author.)

## **Treaty of Canandaigua, 1794 Transcription**

[*Editor's Note:*The word 'Haudenosaunee' is the traditional by which the Six Nations refer to themselves - not 'Iroquois'. ]

### **Treaty of Canandaigua: Established the reservation lands throughout NY for the Six Nations**

A Treaty Between the United States of America and the Tribes of Indians Called the Six Nations: The President of the United States having determined to hold a conference with the Six Nations of Indians for the purpose of removing from their minds all causes of complaint, and establishing a firm and permanent friendship with them; and Timothy Pickering being appointed sole agent for that purpose; ... Now, in order to accomplish the good design of this conference, the parties have agreed on the following articles, which, when ratified by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate of the United States, shall be binding on them and the Six Nations....

ARTICLE 1. Peace and friendship are hereby firmly established, and shall be perpetual, between the United States and the Six Nations.

ARTICLE 2. The United States acknowledge the lands reserved to the Oneida, Onondaga, and Cayuga Nations in their respective treaties with the State of New York, and called their reservations, to be their property; and the United States will never claim the same, nor disturb them, or either of the Six Nations, nor their Indian friends, residing thereon, and united with them in the free use and enjoyment thereof; but the said reservations shall remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase.

ARTICLE 3. The land of the Seneca Nation is bounded as follows: beginning on Lake Ontario, ... the United States acknowledge all the land within the aforementioned boundaries, to be the property of the Seneca Nation; and the United States will never claim the same, nor disturb the Seneca Nation, nor any of the Six Nations, or of their Indian friends residing thereon, and united with them, in the free use and enjoyment thereof; but it shall remain theirs, until they choose to sell the same, to the people of the United States, who have the right to purchase.

ARTICLE 4. The United States have thus described and acknowledged what lands belong to the Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas, and engaged never to claim the same, ... in the free use and enjoyment thereof.

ARTICLE 5. The Seneca Nation, all others of the Six Nations concurring cede to the United States the right of making a wagon road from Fort Schlosser to Lake Erie, as far south as Buffalo Creek; and the people of the United States shall have the free and undisturbed use of this road for the purposes of traveling and transportation. And the Six Nations and each of them, will forever allow to the people of the United States, a free passage through their lands, and the free use of the harbors and rivers adjoining and within their respective tracts of land, for the passing and securing of vessels and boats, and liberty to land their cargoes, where necessary, for their safety.

ARTICLE 6. In consideration of the peace and friendship hereby established, ...the United States

now deliver to the Six Nations, and the Indians of the other nations residing among them, a quantity of goods, of the value of ten thousand dollars. And for the same considerations, and with a view to promote the future welfare of the Six Nations, and of their Indian friends aforesaid, the United States will add the sum of three thousand dollars to the one thousand five hundred dollars heretofore allowed to them..., making in the whole four thousand five hundred dollars; which shall be expended yearly, forever...

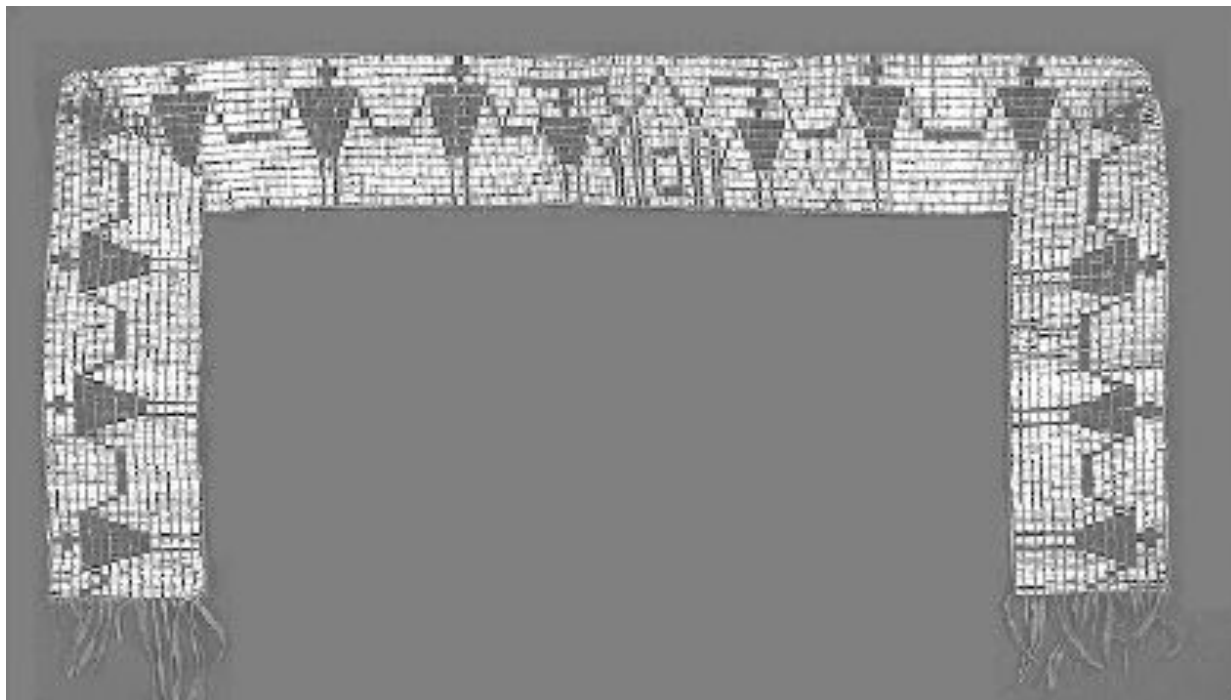
ARTICLE 7. Lest the firm peace and friendship now established should be interrupted by the misconduct of individuals, the United States and the Six Nations agree, that for injuries done by individuals, on either side, no private revenge or retaliation shall take place; but, instead thereof, complaint shall be made by the party injured, to the other; by the Six Nations or any of them, to the President of the United States, or the superintendent by him appointed; and by the superintendent, or other person appointed by the President, to the principal chiefs of the Six Nations, or of the Nation to which the offender belongs; and such prudent measures shall then be pursued, as shall be necessary to preserve or peace and friendship unbroken, until the Legislature (or Great Council) of the United States shall make other equitable provision for that purpose.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said Timothy Pickering, and the sachems and war chiefs of the said Six Nations, have hereunto set their hands and seals.

Done at Canandaigua, in the State of New York, in the eleventh day of November, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

**Signatures....**

[http://www.oswego.edu/library2/archives/digitized\\_collections/granger/canandaiguatreaty.html](http://www.oswego.edu/library2/archives/digitized_collections/granger/canandaiguatreaty.html)



## Analyzing Wampum

January 26, 2011  
Biographies of the Nation Winter  
Colloquium

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## Essential Questions

1. What is Wampum?
2. How did the first treaties between the U.S. government and the Six Nations establish precedents for future relations?

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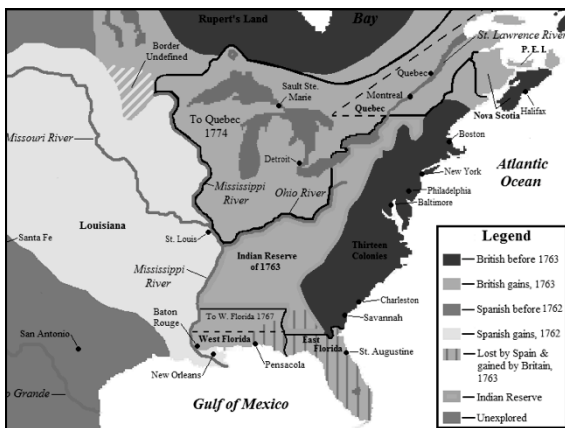
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### Proclamation of 1763

- Lands west of the Appalachian Mountains were declared Indian Territory
- Britain needed time to regulate commerce and settlement in this newly ceded territory.
- The colonists did not support the proclamation.
- To the colonists, it appeared that the crown would be regulating how lands were awarded
- Many resented that local control (through colonial governors) seemed not to apply to the new territory.

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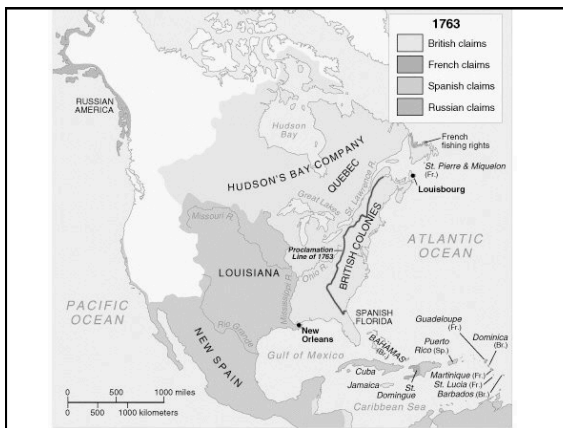
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### Context

- Indians had their own alliances and enemies, and individual nations' conquests of territory in North America was fluid prior to European colonization.

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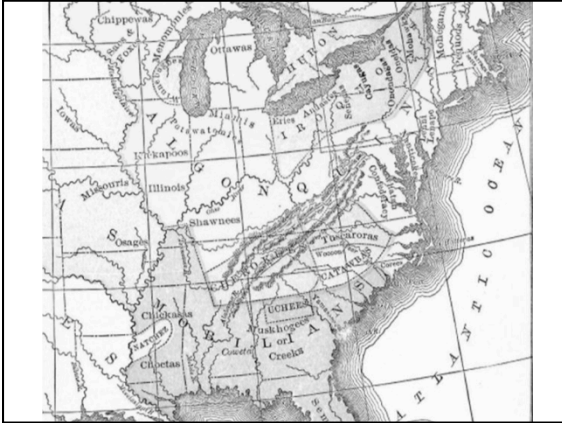
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### The Iroquois and the American Revolution

- During the American Revolution, Britain supported Indian nations in this territory by providing weapons and encouraging frontier warfare with the colonists.
- The Iroquois split in their support between the United States and Great Britain. This split fractured the Six Nations.
- After the American Revolution, the U.S. named this new territory the Northwest Territory. In order for the United States to organize and settle the territory, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 standardized western land settlement and organization.

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### Wampum

Another approach to treaty-making

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**Making and maintaining alliances:  
The importance of Wampum**



- Wampum were tiny shells and beads woven into belts
- Served as a contract between two parties
- Record tribal history
- Sign of sincerity before treaty talks

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**Wampum**

- Atlantic whelks (type of shell) made the tubular beads
- Atlantic clam (Quahog) made the rectangular purple beads
- Serious agreements were recorded with purple the predominant color
- Wampum makers were skilled artisans. They were trained in how to record tribal history.

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**The Hiawatha Belt**



- Test your powers of analysis. Note colors. Purple is a serious agreement. This is most likely the oldest recorded Wampum Belt.
- Clue: Count the number of symbols!

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**Iroquois Confederation**  
(Haudenosanunee "People of the Longhouse")

- Prior to 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Five Nations)
  - Mohawk
  - Oneida
  - Onondaga
  - Cayuga
  - Seneca
- After 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Six Nations)
  - Tuscarora

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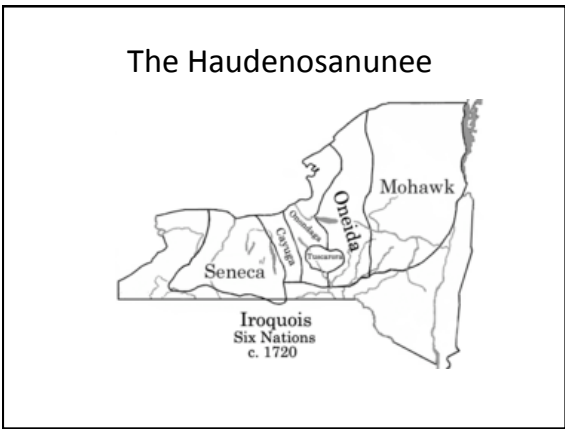
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**Hiawatha Belt**

- Represents the first United Nations agreement (Probably 16<sup>th</sup> Century)
- Pine Tree is at the center (Great Peace)
- All joined by 5 Iroquois Nations

*"The Peacemaker used as a symbol of our Confederacy not a flag, but a tree, the great white pine. The Tree of Peace. And at the base of that tree grow four white roots in the four cardinal directions of the earth: north, south, east, and west. And any nation that can embrace the concepts of peace, power, and righteousness can follow back one of those roots to the tree of Peace and join there with us."*

**G. Peter Jemison, Faithkeeper, Cattaraugus Reservation of the Seneca Nation**

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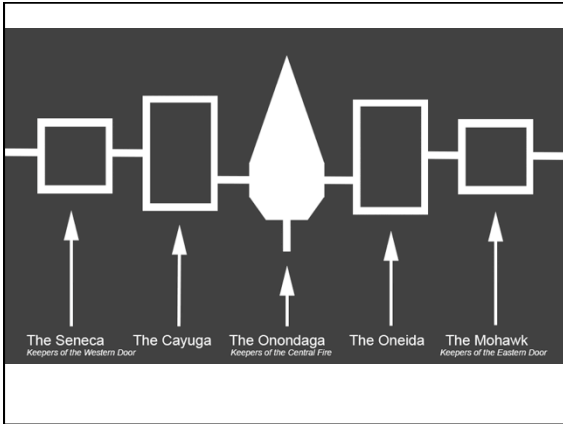
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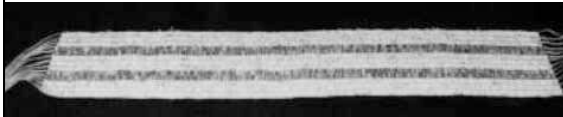
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**Two Row Wampum Belt**



- Test your abilities! Sketch the Wampum Belt in your notebook. Be sure to indicate colors.
- Now, hypothesize as to its meaning.

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**Two-Row Wampum**

- Thought to be the first treaty between a European Nation and the Five Nations
- Between Dutch in New York and Five Nations in the 17<sup>th</sup> century
- Declaration of Friendship and Coexistence
- Called Guswenta
- 4 ft. long, 2 rows of purple beads, separated by three links between
- 3 links symbolize Peace, Friendship, Forever
- This is the ultimate treaty between the Five Nations and European (and later) American governments.

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**Two Row Wampum  
also Covenant Chain Treaties**

- Baseline for treaties between Iroquois and North American governments (European to U.S.)
- Two sovereign nations
- Separate, but parallel
- Coexistence without interference

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*You say that you are our Father and I am your son. We say, We will not be like Father and Son, but like Brothers. This wampum belt confirms our words. These two rows will symbolize two paths or two vessels, traveling down the same river together. One, a birch bark canoe, will be for the Indian People, their laws, their customs and their ways. The other, a ship, will be for the white people and their laws, their customs and their ways. We shall each travel the river together, side by side, but in our boat. Neither of us will interfere in the internal affairs of the other. Neither of us will try to steer the other's vessel.*

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**Who benefits?**

- Jigsaw Read: The Treaty of Canandaigua—Each person reads only one article—Article 1 and Intro are together
- Take Notes: Column 1=How does the treaty benefit the U.S. government?
- Take Notes: Column 2=How does the treaty benefit the Six Nations?
- Report back to your group

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### Design a Wampum Belt

- If you were the Haudenosaunee artisan designing the wampum belt for this treaty, what would it look like?
- As a group, design a Treaty of Canandaigua wampum belt.
- Present your design to the class.
- Remember: This treaty is still in existence! It has been strained, but is not broken.

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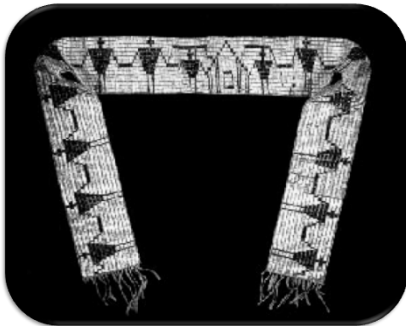
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### The Canandaigua Treaty (1794) Washington Covenant Belt



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### Great Chain, or Covenant Belt

- Thought to be presented by the U.S. government to the Iroquois in 1794 to mark the Treaty of Canandaigua
- 13 figures are linked by wampum and form chain of friendship between 13 states and Iroquois confederacy
- Longhouse with 2 figures is the Iroquois Confederacy (Mohawk are the Keepers of the Eastern Door and Seneca are the Keepers of the Western Door)
- Length is 6 ft., 3 ½ inches and Width is 5 ¼ inches.
- There are 15 rows of beads ~10,000 beads

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### Understanding Language

- Now examine the Treaty Belt
- Discuss with your group: How is the text of the treaty like the belt? How is the text of the treaty different from the belt?

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### Essential Question(s)

1. What is Wampum?
2. How did the first treaties between the U.S. government and the Six Nations establish precedents for future relations?

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### Websites

- Weave a Virtual Wampum Belt:  
<http://www.nativetech.org/beatwork/wampumgraph/index.html>
- History Through Arts Wampum Lesson:  
<http://www.historythrougharts.org/main/program/americanindian/Wampum.pdf>
- Smithsonian Institution Wampum Lesson Plan:  
<http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/online/catlinclassroom/lessonplans/al-bplan.html>

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## Resources

- The Covenant Chain:  
<http://www.iroquoisdemocracy.pdx.edu/html/covenantchain.htm>
- Treaty of Fort Stanwix:  
<http://earlytreaties.unl.edu/treaty.00007.html>
- Cayuga Nation Treaties:  
<http://www.cayuganation-nsn.gov/Home/LandRights/Treaties/TreatyofCanandaigua>
- Canandaigua Treaty Belt Info:  
<http://www.cayuganation-nsn.gov/Home/LandRights/Treaties/TreatyofCanandaigua>

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