

# Lesson Plan to Supplement the Cartographic Creation of New England

(Tailored to ESL or ELL students.)

## Appropriate for students in:

- U.S. History, Global Studies, World Geography, Regional Studies
- Tailored to ESL or ELL students

**Objective:** Demonstrate that New England (and all regions) are social constructions – i.e. they are created, not discovered

**Time:** Approx. 45 minutes

## Materials:

- Online exhibition
  - 2 maps
  - handout
  - PowerPoint
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## Plan:

1. Show students a modern map of New England.
  - A map can be found at: [http://wikitravel.org/en/New\\_England\\_\(United\\_States\\_of\\_America\)](http://wikitravel.org/en/New_England_(United_States_of_America))
2. Ask students a few questions about New England:
  - What is New England? (a region of U.S. ...)
  - How many states? (6)
  - Which states? (ME, NH, VT, MA, CT, RI)
  - Had you heard of New England before today? Before you came to this class? Before you came to the U.S.?
  - Associations with New England? Does anything come to mind when you think about New England?
3. Ask: Has New England Always Been Here?
4. Have students view the online exhibition *The Cartographic Creation of New England*. This lesson plan examines, in particular, the section entitled “New England Defined.”
5. Let students know that this lesson is about the history of the formation of New England.
6. SEE ATTACHED HANDOUT: it contains background information on the map *New England, The Most Remarkable Parts Thus Named*
7. Look at the map: *New England, The Most Remarkable Parts Thus Named*
8. Use HANDOUT to explore/interpret this map.
9. Finally, connect this old map to modern-day constructions of region. To examine modern-day constructions of Maine/New England, use the images included in the accompanying PowerPoint. These images are from Yankee Magazine. You might also show students old copies of Yankee or Downeast Magazines.



## HANDOUT:

### THE CREATION [MAKING] OF NEW ENGLAND

**A note about vocabulary help: words that mean the same thing are in [brackets].  
But please stop me if you don't know a word!!**

#### A Little Information about JOHN SMITH:

- Born around January 1580
- Died 21 June 1631
- English soldier, explorer, and author
- Helped establish [start] the first permanent [long-lasting] English settlement in North America at Jamestown, Virginia
- Smith explored the region [place, area] we now call New England – he mapped the territory [land] and wrote a book about the region, called *A Description of New England*, in 1616
- Smith was the person who named New England
- He encouraged [urged, pushed] people to move to New England with his maps and his writings.

#### A Little Information about JOHN SMITH/NEW ENGLAND MAP:

- *New England: The Most Remarkable [sic] Parts Thus Named* was first printed in 1616/17
- The map was created from John Smith's observations [what he saw] of the New England coast made during his 1614 voyage to the area
- The version that we are looking at is the ninth "state," (define) published in 1635
- So, we're talking about the days when native peoples inhabited [lived in] North America and Europeans were just starting to explore and settle this place.

**Take a few minutes to look at the map. What do you notice? Do you have any questions about the features of the map?**

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## Some Notes on the Interpretation [Analysis] of the Map:

- This map was not intended [meant] to guide explorers in new lands, but to promote [encourage] colonization (define: does anyone know what a colony is?) back in Europe and to convince wealthy people to give money to help colonization.
- In other words, this map is kind of like an advertisement for New England – this map tries to make New England look like a nice place to live so European people will move there
- The map shows the land as a good place to set up a colony – New England offered wealth [money, riches] and resources [goods that are used to make money].
- Most features were named (as the title says) by Prince Charles.
- Englishmen like Smith viewed America as property that the Europeans could take.
- But remember: who lived in this place before the English? Do you think they used the name “New England”?

### So, what does this map tell us about regions?

This map is a reminder that New England was created by people. The map’s purpose (to encourage colonization) reminds us that regions are created by people who have cultural biases (define: prejudices, preferences, beliefs, ideas, favorites).

New England did not always exist. It is not a separate landmass [continent, island] or geographical feature [like a mountain]. Instead, it had to be named and defined [outlined]. European explorers like Smith did not discover New England; they created it. (Talk about this difference.) Before this map was printed, there was no “New England.” Further, Smith had a specific purpose [goal, aim] when he made this map: to advertise for New England as a colony. Because of English beliefs [ideas] at that time, Smith saw lands in North America as free land. So, New England was “created” at a specific time, because of biases, and for profit [money].

#### General Conclusions:

- Compare 1635 map to 2012 map. They look different, right? Where is New England?
- Regions are created and defined by people.
- Regions are sometimes created for specific reasons – like “making a living” or other reasons.

### What about today?

Some people have stereotypes about different regions. Let’s look at Maine, for example:

- Maine is advertised in a certain way to attract [draw, invite] tourists [people who are travelling on vacation] – just as John Smith advertised for New England with his map.

Look at magazine pictures. How does this magazine portray [picture] Maine?

- If someone is from a faraway place, they might think Maine is old-fashioned and full of nature. Magazines like this build and create stereotypes.
- People might not think that Maine is a place where we have internet and factories and cities and universities ... but we do!!

So, this is the same as the New England/John Smith map: ideas and stereotypes about a place might be created or made for certain [particular] reasons, like profit or money-making. It is important to think about the reasons WHY we have certain ideas about regions and WHY we hold certain stereotypes.