

# Imagining Encounters between Europeans and Native Americans

Europeans imagined the inhabitants of the New World before they encountered them in the flesh, shaped by the few stock images that print makers generated of the New World and circulated throughout Europe. The term “Encounter” encourages students to look critically at the ways in which Europeans imagined and represented, both visually and in text, Native Americans and their interactions with them. By looking at historical engravings and reading accounts of the Lenni Lenape by William Penn and others, students draw conclusions about some of the European assumptions that structured Native American-European interactions.

## Essential Questions

- How has social disagreement and collaboration been beneficial to Pennsylvania society?
- What role does analysis have in historical construction?

## Objectives

- Understand point of view in historical narratives and how it shapes the telling of history.
- Distinguish different points of view for historical events.
- Develop critical thinking skills by learning to interpret primary source material.

## Primary Sources

- Kort beskrifning om provincien Nya Sverige uti America
- Leni Lenape Indians
- An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies
- Der Hoch-deutsch americanishe Calender

## Other Materials

- How are Native Americans Portrayed by Europeans
- Excerpt from a William Penn letter

## Suggested Instructional Procedures

1. Review concept of cultural worldview and cultural difference from Worldviews lesson. This could be done either with class discussion or by asking students to answer the question “What is cultural worldview?”

2. Ask students to break into pairs to examine and analyze the four European images of Native Americans using the How are Native Americans Portrayed by Europeans worksheet to organize their observations and findings. Then ask students to write one of their conclusions from the worksheet on board. Discuss the patterns that students identified as a class, and how these patterns reveal how Europeans viewed Native peoples.

3. Have students review the excerpt of a letter from William Penn about Native American life and answer the following questions:

- What terms does he use to describe Native Americans?
- What vision of Native American life does he offer potential colonists? Why?
- What does this reveal about his view of Native Americans?
- How do you think this text, read with the other images, shaped Europeans views of Native Americans before they arrived?
- How might they have shaped their interactions with them?

## Vocabulary

- *Diplomacy*: negotiation between nations.
- *Lenni Lenape*: the group of Algonquin-speaking Native American that once lived in the lower Delaware Valley.
- *Native American*: indigenous or original inhabitants of the Americas prior to European arrival.
- *Negotiator*: an individual who has the authority to represent or speak for a nation or other entity during a diplomatic conference or other process whereby diverse parties resolve disputes, agree upon courses of action, or bargain for advantage.
- *Quaker*: member of the pacifist religious group officially known as the Religious Society of Friends that originated in England in the 17th century.
- *Worldview*: an integrated system of deeply held, largely unconscious beliefs and concepts about the universe (natural and/or supernatural), society and the self.

