

## Native American tribe in Maine buys back island taken 160 years ago

Level: Elementary

### 1 Warmer

a. Match these indigenous groups and peoples with their countries.

- |              |                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Maasai    | a. New Zealand                  |
| 2. Aramean   | b. Finland, Sweden and Norway   |
| 3. Sinhalese | c. United States                |
| 4. Karen     | d. Kenya and Tanzania           |
| 5. Saami     | e. Sri Lanka                    |
| 6. Inuit     | f. Syria                        |
| 7. Sioux     | g. Myanmar and Thailand         |
| 8. Māori     | h. Greenland, Canada and Alaska |

### 2 Key words

a. Write the words from the wordpools next to the definitions below. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

acre

caretaker

disease

goal

grave

1. a unit for measuring land (= 4,047 square metres) \_\_\_\_\_
2. someone who looks after a piece of land \_\_\_\_\_
3. a place where a dead person is buried deep in the ground \_\_\_\_\_
4. an illness that affects many people and is often caused by infections \_\_\_\_\_
5. something that you hope to do or achieve \_\_\_\_\_

ancestor

charity

massacre

protect

stolen

6. a group that helps other people, often by giving them money \_\_\_\_\_
7. look after something and keep it safe \_\_\_\_\_
8. the action of killing of a lot of people \_\_\_\_\_
9. taken illegally, without asking permission \_\_\_\_\_
10. someone who is related to you who lived a long time ago \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Use some of the key words above to complete these sentences.

1. Our \_\_\_\_\_ is to give free healthcare to everyone who lives here.
2. Hey, someone has \_\_\_\_\_ my bike! It was here 5 minutes ago!
3. They own 200 \_\_\_\_\_ of farmland.
4. My \_\_\_\_\_ came here from France 100 years ago.
5. We should all help to \_\_\_\_\_ the environment.

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- 1 The estate agent called White's Island on Big Lake in Maine "143 acres of forests, with only two owners in the last 95 years."
- 2 In fact, Kuwesuwi Monihq, or Pine Island, its first name, has really just had one "caretaker": the Passamaquoddy, a small tribe of 3,700 Native Americans who lived there for at least 10,000 years.
- 3 It's an important place for the tribe. It has many graves of tribe members who died from diseases brought there by white people.
- 4 Until 2021, no tribe member had been on the island for 160 years.
- 5 "White people stole the land from us, and it was every chief's goal to return it," said Chief William Nicholas.
- 6 In March, 2021, with help from conservation charities, the tribe finally bought the island back for \$355,000.
- 7 Donald Soctomah, a tribe member, said the tribe believes "that nobody 'owns' land. But we have a duty to protect it."
- 8 The return of Pine Island is the latest successful "land back" attempt by US Native Americans. The groups have lost 1.5 billion acres since 1776.
- 9 In July, 2020, the Esselen tribe bought 1,200 acres in California's Big Sur for \$4.5 million.
- 10 In 2019, the Wiyot tribe got back the 280-acre Duluwat Island in California, when the city of Eureka returned it for free, 159 years after a massacre.
- 11 In July, 2020, protesters and tribal citizens blocked roads around the tourist destination of Mount Rushmore, in South Dakota. White people took the land from the Lakota tribe in 1877.
- 12 First Light, a charity in Maine that helps to return tribal lands, gave the Passamaquoddy money to help buy back Pine Island.
- 13 Corey Hinton, a young Passamaquoddy tribe member said: "My people have lived and died on that island since the beginning of time. When the pandemic is over, we will return to dance with our ancestors again."

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### 3 Comprehension check

a. Complete the box with information from the article.

three names for the island	
where it is	
its size	
who 'owns' it now	
how much they paid for it	
who helped them buy it back	

### 4 Large numbers

a. Write these numbers from the article out in words.

1. 10,000 \_\_\_\_\_
2. 43 \_\_\_\_\_
3. 160 \_\_\_\_\_
4. 3,700 \_\_\_\_\_
5. \$355,000 \_\_\_\_\_

b. Now use the numbers in sentences about the article.

### 5 Discussion

a. Work with a partner and follow these instructions.

- Find the island on a map. What can you see nearby?
- Use a browser to find images of the island. If you can, look for a video that shows a panoramic or a flyover view of the island. Describe what you can see.
- Discuss this quote from the article. Do you agree with it? What lands in your country should be protected?  
"Nobody 'owns' land. But we have a duty to protect it."

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### 6 In your own words

a. How many Native American tribes are there in the United States? Circle the correct answer:

5      52      256      562

b. Choose one tribe and find facts about it.

name of tribe	
where they live	
how many members	
interesting fact	
interesting fact	
interesting fact	

c. Tell the other students about the tribe.