

Weave Your Own Wampum

Wampum Belts are symbolic documents made of handwoven shell beads, created by Indigenous People of the Eastern Woodlands.

Wampum in North America were made by shaping shells into beads.



Whelk Shell



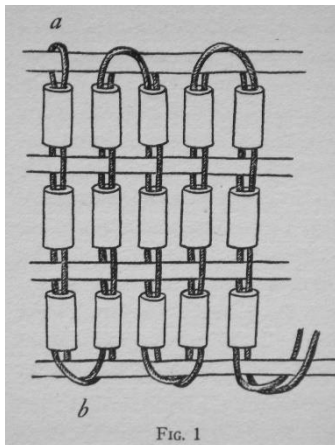
Quahog Shell



Conch Shell

Wampum **white and purple bead** are set in symbolic designs that record important events, relationships with neighboring Nations, and oral traditions.

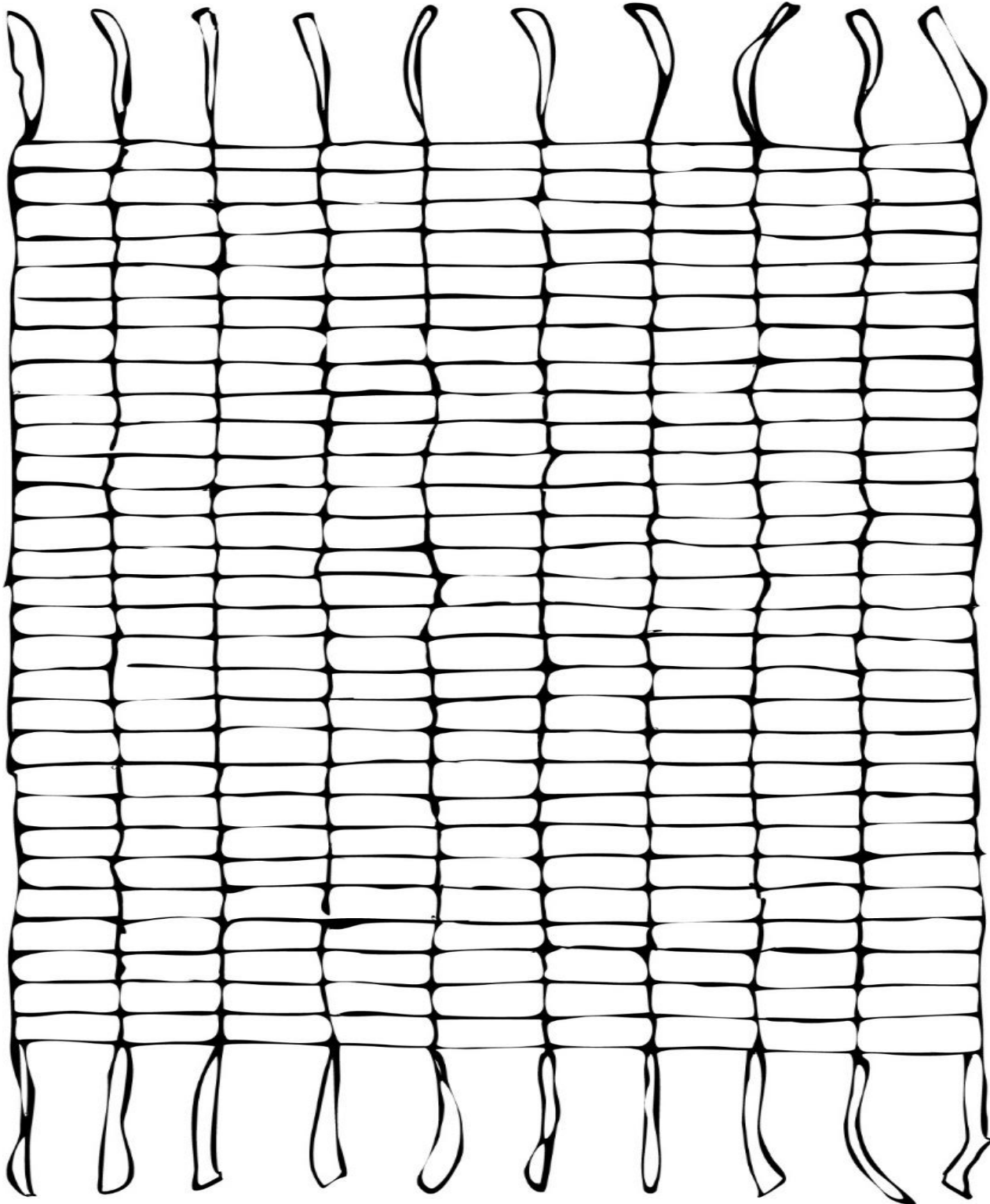
The beads are woven together with **sinew, cotton, linen, hemp, or hide**.



Wampum are not worn. They are given to leaders and handled by those telling related stories during ceremonies or celebrations.

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DIRECTIONS: Use a pencil to create symbols or patterns on the belt below that represent an important event in your family, school, or community. Then, follow the steps on the next page to make your own Wampum Belt with recycled materials!



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MATERIALS:

Light weight color paper 	Drawing Utensils 	Safety Scissors 	Glue 	Piece of Cardboard 	String 
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STEP ONE: Create a colorful pattern or shape design on the wampum belt outline above.

STEP TWO: Pick out color paper that is purple and white. You can also paint or color scrap paper!

STEP THREE: Fold, then cut your purple paper into 2 inches wide strips. Repeat process with the white paper.

STEP FOUR: Fold, then cut paper strips into 2-inch squares.

STEP FIVE: Place glue on edge of square and curl edges into one another to create cylinder bead. When dry cut in half. You will want to make enough of each color for your design.

STEP SIX: Use cardboard and string [to make a loom](#).

STEP SEVEN: Tie a long string onto a bobby pin. Use the bobby pin to slide your paper beads onto the string. Match the first column on your belt design.

STEP EIGHT: Slide the strung beads under the loom strings. Move each paper bead to sit in the empty space between each loom string. Push the bobby pin back through the paper beads. Continue until pattern is complete.

STEP NINE: Knot the ends to secure your paper beads in place. You have now created a paper weaving inspired by Wampum belts!

