



Oregon  
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# 2018 Study Guide

## Manahatta

by Mary Kathryn Nagle



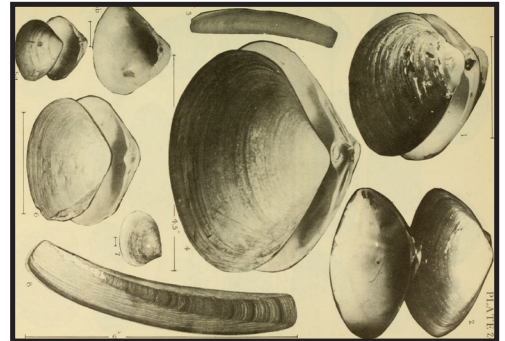
Wall Street Sign by Ramy Majouji, Wikimedia Commons.

### The History of Wall Street

- Wall Street is currently an eight-block-long street that runs in the Financial District of Lower Manhattan in New York City. It is home to the chief financial institutions of the United States.
- In 1626, Dutch settlers took over the island of Manahatta from the Lenape Indians and renamed it New Amsterdam.
- The name of the street originates from an actual wall that the Dutch built in the 17th century to keep the Lenape out of their homeland and to protect against potential English invasions.
- The Dutch settlers brought with them enslaved Africans and used their labor to build the wall in 1653.
- After the British seized control of New Amsterdam, they dismantled the wall in 1699.
- In 1711, the city's Common Council established an official slave market at Wall Street to auction off enslaved Africans to merchants.



*Asaphis deflorata*, Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum.



*East Coast Marine Shells* by Max Romeo, Wikimedia Commons.

### Manahatta

- The Lenape were Manhattan's original inhabitants and they called their island Manahatta, which translates to "hilly island."
- Manahatta was rich with natural resources, with a vast abundance of fruits, birds, fish, and shellfish.
- The Lenape men hunted a variety of animals and fished. The women planted three important crops: corn, beans and squash (known as the Three Sisters, because they were grown together).
- Sharing food was an integral part of the Lenape culture and they believed no one should ever go hungry. When visitors arrived, they were offered food.
- When Dutch settlers first arrived, the Lenape shared their food with them and helped them survive their first winter on Manahatta.

### How many Native languages are still spoken today?

Prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus, approximately 300 languages were spoken in North America. Since then, the number of indigenous languages has dropped considerably. Approximately 150–175 languages are spoken in North America today. Some scholars project that by the year 2050, only 20 indigenous American languages will remain.

## Before seeing/reading the play

1. Research the playwright Mary Kathryn Nagle and her plays. These and other websites provide information:  
<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/persons-of-interest/mary-kathryn-nagle-changes-the-story-in-court-and-on-stage>  
<http://www.pipestemlaw.com/attorney/mary-kathryn-nagle/>  
<https://ygsna.sites.yale.edu/people/mary-kathryn-nagle>  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/17/theater/mary-kathryn-nagle-native-american-playwright-lawyer.html?smid=pl-share>  
<http://msmagazine.com/blog/2018/01/10/mary-kathryn-nagle-fights-for-sovereignty-and-womens-rights/>



Mary Kathryn Nagle

2. Research the Lenape people. What territories did they inhabit? What were some of the daily tasks given to Lenape women? What were some of the daily tasks given to Lenape men? What is a matrilineal-based society? These and other websites provide information:  
<http://www.womenhistoryblog.com/2008/02/native-americans-of-new-jersey.html>  
<http://www.boweryboyshistory.com/2016/06/sad-tale-lenape-original-native-new-yorkers.html>  
[http://tadubois.com/US\\_indigenous/US\\_indigenous\\_subpage\\_lenni\\_lenape.html](http://tadubois.com/US_indigenous/US_indigenous_subpage_lenni_lenape.html)

3. Research the Delaware Nation. How did their name change over time? Where are they located today? Where were they originally located? What were the circumstances around their resettlement? These and other websites provide information:  
<http://delawarenation.com/history/>  
[http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/documents/files/Tribes\\_of\\_OK\\_Education%20Guide\\_Delaware\\_Tribe\\_Oklahoma.pdf](http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/documents/files/Tribes_of_OK_Education%20Guide_Delaware_Tribe_Oklahoma.pdf)

4. Research Pearl Street in New York City. Why was this area significant for the Lenape? What is wampum, and what importance does it have in Natives' lives? These and other websites provide information:  
<http://www.ourtimepress.com/lenapes-griot-voices-christopher-paul-moore-speaks/>  
<http://www.nativetech.org/wampum/wamphist.htm>  
<http://ganondagan.org/Learning/Wampum>



Wampum Wrist Ornament, Native American Collection, Peabody Museum.

5. Research the 1626 “land sale” of Manahatta. Who was present? What was exchanged? These and other websites provide information:  
<http://www.thirteen.org/dutchny/interactives/manhattan-island/>  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-native-new-yorkers-can-never-truly-reclaim-their-home-land-180970472/>

6. What is investment banking? What is the role of investment banks in the U.S. economy? This and other websites provide information:  
<http://www.investinganswers.com/financial-dictionary/investing/investment-bank-598>

7. Research the 2008 financial crisis. What corporations were the biggest influence in the collapse and how did their role affect the U.S. economy? These and other websites provide information:  
<https://www.thebalance.com/2008-financial-crisis-3305679>  
[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-randel/understanding-the-economy\\_b\\_520283.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-randel/understanding-the-economy_b_520283.html)



Wall Street Protest 9/25/2008 by Teri Tynes, Flickr.

8. Research the Tulip Mania of the 17th century. Why is it referred to as a “bubble?” Who was involved and in what way did this bubble burst? These and other websites provide information:  
<https://www.investopedia.com/features/crashes/crashes2.asp>  
<http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20160419-tulip-mania-the-flowers-that-cost-more-than-houses>

9. Who was Se-ket-tu-may-quā (Black Beaver)? What was he known for? These and other websites provide information: <http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=BL001>  
<http://www.americanindianmagazine.org/story/black-beaver-o>

10. Research the 17th-century beaver fur trade. With whom did the Lenape trade? In exchange for beaver fur, what did the Lenape receive in return? This and other websites provide information: <https://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=4208>

## After seeing/reading the play

11. How does the use of contemporary and Native American language inform the world of the play? What does language symbolize in the play? How do the limitations of language permeate the play? What are the miscommunications between characters and what are the effects? What role does language play?

12. How does the relationship between the world of 17th century Manahatta and the world of modern-day Oklahoma develop throughout the play? How does this relationship intensify as the play continues? What can be learned from juxtaposing these two time periods?



Jane rendering by E. B. Brooks.



Le-le-wa'-you rendering by E. B. Brooks.

13. Since each actor plays multiple characters that live in two time periods, what might these duo characters have in common? What do Le-le-wa'-you and Jane have in common? How are they different? What do Se-ket-tu-may-quā and Luke have in common? How are they different? What do Mother and Bobbie have in common? How are they different? Jakob and Joe? Jonas Michaelius and Michael? Toosh-ki-pa-kwis-i and Debra? Peter Minuit and Dick?

14. How did the Dutch take advantage of the language barrier between them and the Lenape? How does this language

barrier continue to grow throughout the play? How does the language barrier affect the relationship between Se-ket-tu-may-quā and Jakob?

15. In what ways is Jane torn between the responsibilities of her new job on Wall Street and the responsibility she has for her family? In what ways are these responsibilities connected?

16. How does Bobbie uphold Lenape traditions? How does Debra? Jane? Luke?

17. What influence does Michael have in his community? How does he assert his influence on other characters? How does he gain and lose influence over the course of the play and why?

18. What events contribute to the violence between the Lenape and the Dutch? How does the violence escalate throughout the play? Why does it intensify?

19. Compare and contrast the relationship between Jane and Luke with that between Se-ket-tu-may-quā and Le-le-wa'-you. How are the relationships similar? How are they different? How do the relationships inform one another? Compare and contrast the relationship between Jane and Joe with that between Le-le-wa'-you and Jakob. How are the relationships similar? How are they different? How do the relationships inform one another?

20. What is the significance of Le-le-wa'-you learning English as a new language and Jane not being able to speak her native language of Lenape?

21. Refer to your research on the Tulip Mania and the 2008 financial crisis. In what ways are the two similar? How are they different? What are the various ways in which history is repeating itself in the play?

22. Refer to your research on the beaver fur trade. What purpose does beaver fur serve for the Lenape, and what does that say about the characteristics of their culture? What purpose does it serve for the Dutch, and what does that say about the characteristics of their culture? How do the differences between the characteristics of the Lenape culture and the characteristics of the Dutch culture continue to manifest throughout the play?

23. What in the play is exchanged that is mutual? What are the fair trades that are literal and figurative? What are the unfair trades in the play?

24. Compare and contrast Jane and Debra and their individual connections to the Lenape language. How are their connections different? How are they similar? What is their relationship to the past? How does that relationship effect their actions in the present?

25. How does the 1626 "land sale" affect Bobbie centuries later in regard to the mortgage on her home? How might

Bobbie losing her home and the Lenape being forced to leave Manahatta be connected? How does “ownership” come into play? How do some characters take advantage of the cultural differences surrounding the concept of “ownership?” What does ownership mean to individual characters? What does it mean to go home for the Native characters?

26. In what ways is the Lenape belief system characterized as wrong and the Christian belief as right in both time periods? Which Native characters have adopted the white Christian way of life? What are the consequences of practicing traditional Native ways? What are the consequences of practicing the Christian way of life?

27. Refer to your research on the Lenape tribe and matrilineal-based society. How does the breakdown of power within the Lenape tribe differ from the breakdown of power for the Dutch? How does this power conflict contribute to the events of the play? Who are the women that carry the play forward and why? Who makes the rules in the play and how do they use their power?



Luke rendering by E. B. Brooks.



Se-ket-tu-may-qua rendering by E. B. Brooks.

28. Bobbie tells Luke, “But we need you. To walk in both worlds. Just remember, you can talk their talk, walk their walk, but the moment you forget who you are, they have you. And then you’re walkin’ in one world, not two.” How does Luke walk in both worlds in the play? How does Jane? Do either Luke or Jane ever walk in just one world? How does walking in both worlds affect them personally?

29. What behavior, and by which character, would you consider “honorable” in the play and why? Dishonorable? What determines honorable behavior?

30. What qualities in a person are deemed admirable or successful in the financial world by Joe and Dick? How does Jane take on those qualities? What sacrifices must Jane make to take on those qualities?

31. Near the end of the play, Bobbie states to Jane, “White man takes this. White man takes that . . . and I been proud of you. For all that you’ve achieved. What you accomplished. But I never imagined, never dreamed, their education would make you one of them.” Why might Bobbie think Jane is “one of them?” Why doesn’t Bobbie want Jane to buy the house?

32. Jane tells Dick, “I love math because it’s predictable. It’s all a bunch of patterns and you never have to worry about what’ll happen next because it’s already happened.” Who in Jane’s life has been unpredictable? How has Jane been unpredictable in the play?

33. In reference to the Lenape making frybread when the government only gave them flour and lard, Debra says “But it [frybread] represents what’s best about your people. Our resilience. No matter how much they take away from us, we always make something out of nothing.” What events in the play have forced the Native characters to be resilient?



Frybread by Stacy Spensley, Flickr.

34. How is justice served at the end of the play? What circumstances are unjust? Which characters are treated unjustly at the end of the play and why? Which characters are treated justly and why?

35. The action of the play take places in different locations and time periods. How are the locations and time periods differentiated on the stage? What information do the different settings provide? What effect does the set design have on your understanding of the play? How are the characters affected by their environments?

36. What are the environmental impacts of the choices made by Dutch characters: intentional, anticipated or otherwise?



Bobbie rendering by E. B. Brooks.



Mother rendering by E. B. Brooks.



Set Design for *Manhatta* by Mariana Sanchez.

## Financial Terms

- **Mortgage:** A loan of money which you get from a bank in order to buy a house. Mortgaging is a way to use one's property, like land, a house or a building, as a guarantee for a loan. It is a transfer of rights to a piece of property that is canceled once the loan is paid off.
- **Foreclosure:** A process by which homeowners lose their property, because they have failed to make mortgage payments.
- **Tranche:** A French word meaning "slice" or "portion." In the world of investing, it is used to describe a security that can be split up into smaller pieces and subsequently sold to investors.
- **ARM:** An adjustable-rate mortgage has an interest rate that periodically changes.
- **DTI:** Debt-to-Income ratio. Your DTI ratio compares how much you owe with how much you earn in a given month.
- **FICO:** The Fair Isaac Corporation is the largest and best-known of several companies that provide software for calculating a person's credit score.
- **IHS:** The Indian Health Service is an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. It is responsible for providing federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives.

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