



## Coming to America on the *Mayflower*

In the early 1600s a group of English men and women called Separatists were living in Holland. They had moved there because in England they did not have religious freedom and were forced to belong to the Church of England. They did not believe in the Church of England, so they decided to separate from that church and go to Holland where they could worship God as they chose. But after living in Holland for a while these people began to think that their children were losing their family traditions and becoming too much like the Dutch. They decided that they needed to move again. This time they would go somewhere where they could raise their children as they chose and no one could tell them what religion they had to follow. They chose to sail to the New World—America.

These people, who we now call Pilgrims, hired two ships to take them to America. The two ships were the *Mayflower* and the *Speedwell*. The Pilgrims made an agreement with the Virginia Company to build a settlement in Virginia and begin a new life in America. After loading the two ships with food, water, and other supplies the Pilgrims set sail for America in August 1620. Almost immediately the *Speedwell* began leaking. The Pilgrims had to turn around and sail back to England to fix the ship. Over two weeks passed before the *Speedwell* was ready. On August 21, 1620, the Pilgrims set off again for America. But soon water was again leaking into the *Speedwell*. After sailing nearly 300 miles toward America they had to turn back again. This time the Pilgrims decided to leave the *Speedwell* in England and sail to America with just one ship, the *Mayflower*.

Of course, putting all of the supplies and all of the people from two ships onto one ship made the *Mayflower* very crowded. There were now about 130 people on the small ship, 102 of them Pilgrims. On September 6, 1620, the *Mayflower* set sail once again for America. Unfortunately, because of the delay, the *Mayflower* was going to cross the Atlantic Ocean during the dangerous stormy season.

The first few weeks of the voyage went fairly well. The only real problem was seasickness among many of the Pilgrims. It was cold, wet, and very uncomfortable aboard the ship.

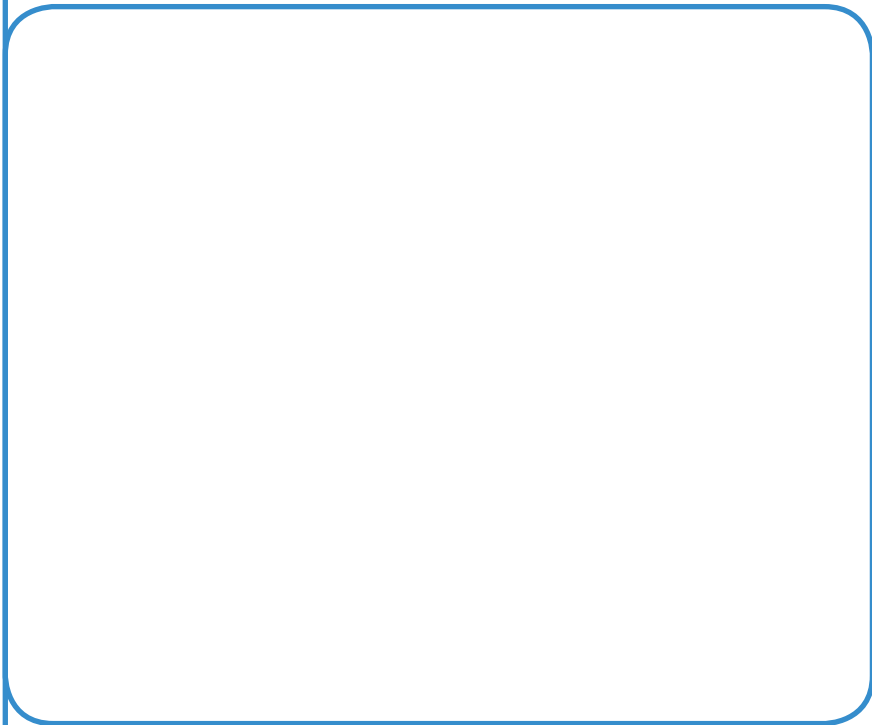
Then violent storms began pounding on the little ship. One man was washed overboard during a storm and was only saved by grabbing a rope and being pulled back onboard. The *Mayflower* began to take on water and a wooden beam cracked. The ship's crew quickly began to plug the cracks in the *Mayflower* and repair the broken beam. The storms pushed the ship farther and farther north. When the storms finally ended the Pilgrims and the crew of the *Mayflower* found themselves hundreds of miles north of where they were supposed to be. But there was some good news as well. A baby was born to Elizabeth Hopkins during the voyage. She named him Oceanus. On November 11, 1620, the *Mayflower* stopped at Cape Cod. It had been sixty-six days since they left England.

The Pilgrims decided to build their settlement near Cape Cod in a place they named Plymouth. The *Mayflower* stayed in Plymouth through the winter as the Pilgrims built their houses, and the ship finally returned to England on April 5, 1621.



### Telling the Story in Six Parts

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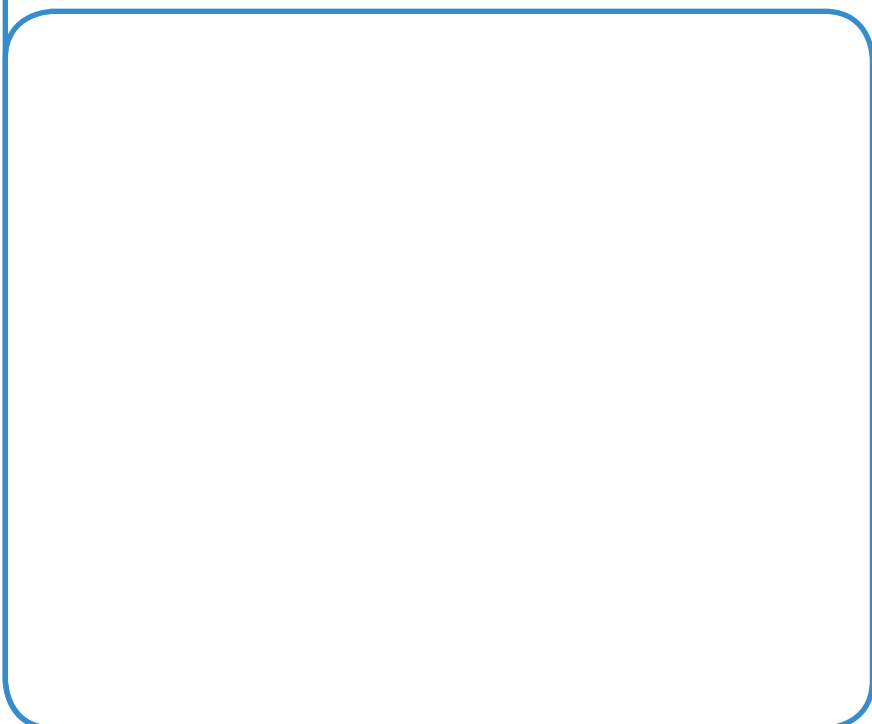
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## The Mayflower Compact

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal Subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King JAMES, by the grace of God of Great *Britain, France, and Ireland* King, Defender of the Faith, &c.

Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and honor of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the Northern parts of VIRGINIA, do by these presents solemnly & mutually in the presence of *God* and one of another, covenant, and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, acts, constitutions, offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony: unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names, *Cape Cod* 11. of *November*, in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King JAMES, of *England, France, and Ireland*, 18. and of *Scotland* 54. Anno *Domini* 1620.

John Carver	Richard Warren	Francis Eaton	Richard Britteridge
William Bradford	John Howland	James Chilton	George Soule
Edward Winslow	Stephen Hopkins	John Crackstone	Richard Clark
William Brewster	Edward Tilley	John Billington	Richard Gardiner
Isaac Allerton	John Tilley	Moses Fletcher	John Allerton
Miles Standish	Francis Cook	John Goodman	Thomas English
John Alden	Thomas Rogers	Digory Priest	Edward Doten
Samuel Fuller	Thomas Tinker	Thomas Williams	Edward Leister
Christopher Martin	John Ridgdale	Gilbert Winslow	
William Mullins	Edward Fuller	Edmond Margeson	
William White	John Turner	Peter Brown	

### Analyzing the Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact	The Mayflower Compact Analysis
<p>In the name of God, Amen. We . . . the loyal Subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King JAMES . . .</p>	<p>Who wrote this compact?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and honor of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the Northern parts of VIRGINIA,</p>	<p>Why did they take a voyage?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>do by these presents solemnly &amp; mutually in the presence of <i>God</i> and one of another, covenant, and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick,</p>	<p>What action are they taking?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid . . .</p>	<p>Why are they doing this?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

### Analyzing the Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact	The Mayflower Compact Analysis
<p>to enact . . . such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, acts, constitutions, offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony: unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.</p>	<p>What will they do now?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names, <i>Cape Cod</i> 11. of <i>November</i>, in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King <i>JAMES</i>, of <i>England, France, and Ireland</i>, 18. and of <i>Scotland</i> 54. <i>Anno Domini</i> 1620.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Summary:

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## Excerpts from a Letter by Edward Winslow, December 11, 1621

Loving, and old Friend,

[W]e have built seven dwelling houses . . . and have made preparation for divers others. We set the last spring some twenty acres of Indian corn, and sowed some six acres of barley and peas, and according to the manner of the Indians, we manured our ground with herrings . . . which we have in great abundance . . .

Our corn did prove well, & God be praised, we had a good increase of Indian corn . . . our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a more special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labors . . . at which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain, and others. And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty. We have found the Indians very faithful in their covenant of peace with us . . . it hath pleased God so to possess the Indians with a fear of us, and love unto us, that not only

the greatest king amongst them called Massasoit, but also all the princes and peoples round about us, have either made suit unto us, or been glad of any occasion to make peace with us . . . so that there is now great peace amongst the Indians themselves, which was not formerly, neither would have been but for us; and we for our parts walk as peaceably and safely in the wood, as in the highways in England, we entertain them familiarly in our houses, and they as friendly bestowing their venison on us. They are a people without any religion, or knowledge of any God, yet very trusty, quick of apprehension, ripe-witted . . .

I never in my life remember a more seasonable year, than we have here enjoyed . . . For fish and fowl, we have a great abundance, fresh cod in the summer is but coarse meat with us, our bay is full of lobsters all the summer, and affordeth variety of other fish . . . all the springtime the earth sendeth forth naturally very good sallet herbs: here are grapes, white and red, and very sweet and strong also. . . . [T]he country wanteth only industrious men to employ, for it would grieve your hearts (if as I) you had seen so many miles together by goodly rivers uninhabited, and withal to consider those parts of the world wherein you live, to be even greatly burdened with abundance of people. . . . I forbear further to write for the present, hoping to see you by the next return, so I take my leave, commending you to the Lord for a safe conduct unto us. Resting in Him  
Plymouth in New England this 11 of December, 1621.

Your loving friend  
E. W.

Source: *Relation or Journall of the Beginning and Proceedings of the English Plantation Setled at Plimoth in New England, by Certaine English Aduenturers both Merchants and Others* (London: John Bellamie, 1622), 60–64.



## Analyzing a Letter by Edward Winslow, December 11, 1621

### Critical Thinking Questions

Use quotations from the text in the answers to these questions.

1. Whose planting technique did the Pilgrims copy?

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2. Why did the governor send "four men on fowling" (to go bird hunting)?

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3. What did Chief Massasoit and his men bring to the celebration?

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4. According to Winslow, what is the Pilgrims' relationship with the American Indians?

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5. According to Winslow, are the Pilgrims afraid of the American Indians or are the Indians afraid of the Pilgrims?

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6. What kinds of food are there for the Pilgrims to eat?

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7. Does Winslow want more people to come to America?

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8. Using evidence from the text, where do you think Edward Winslow's friend might live?

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