

The Pilgrims Come to America

In 1620, the Pilgrims sailed on the Mayflower to America. They were warned that Indians may attack them. The voyage could be dangerous. There could be pirates or hurricanes. The Pilgrims risked their lives.

Why do you think the Pilgrims risked their lives?

Vocabulary:

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It all started with a king. The King of England said that everyone must belong to his church. The Pilgrims wanted to pray in their own church. They tried to meet in secret but the king had the Pilgrim leaders arrested.

The Pilgrims decided to leave England. They sailed on the Mayflower to find religious freedom. They gave up their houses. They said good-bye to their friends.

The ship was very crowded. There were 102 people on the Mayflower. There were 70 men and women and 32 children. The children could not bring any toys. They couldn't run and play. There was no water for washing. They couldn't change their clothes. They became dirty and smelly. The food was not good. The Pilgrims ate the same thing every day. Some of the food had worms.

What do you think the Pilgrims needed to bring with them on the Mayflower?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The Mayflower carried supplies as well as passengers. It carried barrels of water and food, seeds to plant, tools for planting, tools for building houses and clothes, knives, and beads for trading with the Indians.

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The First Winter in Plymouth

The first winter in America was terrible for the Pilgrims. Some people stayed on the ships and others went ashore to work. They cut down trees and built houses. The Pilgrims worked as hard as they could. They could not finish building their homes before the snow fell.

They could not find enough food in the forests. The people were hungry and cold. Many Pilgrims got sick and died. Almost half the Pilgrims died that first winter.

Spring

The long, sad winter passed and spring arrived. One day a Native American walked right into the Pilgrim settlement. The children were terrified. The Native American smiled and said, "Welcome." His name was Samoset and he spoke English. The Pilgrims asked Samoset many questions. They gave him presents. Samoset came back with another Native American named Squanto. Squanto spoke even better English. He liked the Pilgrims and decided to help them. He showed them how to survive in the wilderness - how to hunt for deer, and where to find berries and nuts. He showed them how to plant corn the Indian way. The Indians put fish in the ground when they planted their seed. The fish made the soil richer.

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The Pilgrims worked very hard. They made houses from bark and branches. Each house had one room. The only heat came from the fireplace. They made furniture for their houses. They planted gardens with seeds brought over on the Mayflower.

Summer

By summer, seven houses were finished and more were being built. The gardens were bursting with vegetables. The corn was growing tall. Summer was the best time for the Pilgrims. There was plenty to eat. No one would go hungry.

Fall

When autumn came, the Pilgrims rejoiced over the food they had grown. They had corn, pumpkins, peas, and beans. They wanted to have a celebration. The Pilgrims invited the Indians to join them in a feast. Ninety Native Americans came.

The first Thanksgiving in America lasted three days. The Pilgrims and the Native Americans ate, drank, danced, and played games together. They gave thanks for their new friends and their food. Today we still celebrate. We call it Thanksgiving.

Vocabulary:

| | Words I know | Words I think I know | Words I don't know |
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