Plymouth Colony

Overview: Plymouth Colony was an English colony from 1620-1691. It is also known as New Plymouth or Plymouth Bay Colony. It was one of the earliest successful colonies in North America and took part in the first Thanksgiving in 1621.

Origins of Colonists: The original group of settlers were known as separatists because they had gone against the King of England and the Anglican Church. The group was under religious persecution to leave England. In 1619 they obtained a land patent from the London Virginia Company to let them settle a colony in North America. In 1620 the colonists left for America on the ships Mayflower and Speedwell.

Leaving: The two ships left South Hampton England on August 15th, 1620. The Mayflower had 90 passengers and the Speedwell had 30 passengers. The Speedwell had immediate problems and had to go back. The Mayflower returned and it finally left for America with 102 passengers on September 16th, 1620.

Voyage: The voyage from England to America at these times would typically take 2 months. In the first month the Mayflower had smooth sailing. In the second month they were hit by a strong winter storm which killed two of the passengers.

Arrival: The Mayflower first arrived at Provincetown Harbor on November 11th, 1620. The following day Susanna White gave birth to Peregrine White who was the first child born to a pilgrim in the New World. While exploring the area they ran into a Native American tribe and went looking for another area. The ship soon came across an area they agreed to settle. They were using a John Smith map which indicated the new area was named “New Plymouth”. The Pilgrims agreed to keep the name for their new colony.

Plymouth Rock: One of the more recognizable symbols of the Plymouth colony today is Plymouth Rock. The rock was first identified in 1741 by Thomas Faunce whose father had arrived in Plymouth in 1623. When the rock was taken out it broke in two and the broken piece was placed at the center of town. The rock is a large granodiorite boulder which was supposedly near the landing of the original Mayflower voyage.
**First Winter:** On December 21st, 1620 the first Pilgrims arrived at the area they would settle as Plymouth. They began building houses but severe winter storms delayed construction and many people got sick from scurvy. Their first buildings were built Cole’s Hill which helped support a cannon to protect the Pilgrims. In that first winter 45 of 102 passengers died. They were all buried on Cole’s Hill. By February there were enough buildings to start unloading the provisions and passengers from the Mayflower. At the end of the winter John Carver was elected the new governor to replace Governor Martin.

**First Indian Contact:** On March 16th, 1621 the Pilgrims had first official contact with the Native Americans. The first Indian to make contact with the Pilgrims was Samoset who walked into their colony and announced “Welcome, Englishmen!” Soon the supreme Indian leader of the area was a Wampanoag Indian chief named Massasoit and another leader Squanto met the Pilgrims. They were both concerned about getting diseases or being attacked by the Pilgrims.

**Peace:** On March 22nd, Samoset returned to the Pilgrims with a peace offering from Massasoit. The peace offering was treaty which assured the two tribes would not bring harm to each other and help each other when in need.

**First Thanksgiving:** The “First Thanksgiving” that is commemorated in the United States would have been known by the pilgrims as a harvest festival. The original feast took place in October 1621 and consisted of 53 Pilgrims and 90 Wampanoag Indians including Massasoit and Squanto. The celebration lasted for three days and included a variety of different foods including waterfowl, wild turkeys, fish, deer, and many vegetables.

**Economy:** After learning many ways to live in the New World the Pilgrims were able to improve their economy through the fur trade, agriculture, and fishing. The pilgrims also created many goods such as clothing, house ware, and furniture which brought added wealth to the colony.

**Plymouth Grows:** Over the next few years the Indians helped teach the Pilgrims how to survive in the New World. He following year another ship named the Fortune arrived with 37 passengers. The Fortune filled up on goods from the new colony and headed back to England. In 1623 two more ships named the Anne arrived with 96 new settlers. Each year the colony continued to grow and in 1691 they had a population of over 7,000 settlers.

**Wars:** Over the first few decades the colony was also involved in many wars and battles. The major wars were the Pequot War which was in 1637 and King Philips War in 1675.

**Colony Ends:** In 1686 the area of Plymouth was absorbed into a larger government under the Dominion of New England. The other areas in this government included Rhode Island, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. The new government was a failure and after failing to get a new charter Plymouth Colony officially became part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on October 17th, 1691.
Review Questions:

1. What is Plymouth Colony also known as?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. In what years did Plymouth colony exist?
   ________________________________________________________________

3. What were the original settlers known as for going against the King of England?
   a) devils
   b) separatist
   c) emptiness
   d) exiled

4. Who did they obtain a land patent from?
   a) Boston Land Company
   b) London Virginia Company
   c) Land Patent’s of Germany
   d) French Builders association

5. What two ships did they originally leave on?
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

6. How many passengers did the Mayflower have when it finally left in September, 1620?
   a) 10
   b) 30
   c) 90
   d) 102

7. How long would a voyage take from Europe to America in the early 1600's?
   a) 1 week
   b) 2 months
   c) 3 days
   d) 2 years

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8. Where did the Mayflower first arrive on November 11th, 1620?

____________________________________________________________________

9. Who was the first child born to a Pilgrim in the New World?

____________________________________________________________________

10. Whose map were they using as a guide to find their new area of New Plymouth?
    a) John Smith
    b) Captain Carver
    c) Samuel De Champlain
    d) Frank Hudson

11. Where was the broken off piece of Plymouth rock placed?
    a) local zoo
    b) center of town
    c) town court
    d) on a wall

12. Where did the Pilgrims build their first buildings in Plymouth?

____________________________________________________________________

13. How many Pilgrims died during that first winter?
    a) 0
    b) 12
    c) 45
    d) 104

14. Who was elected governor to replace Governor Martin?

____________________________________________________________________

15. Who was the first Native American to make contact with the Pilgrims?

____________________________________________________________________
16. Who was the leader of the Wampanoag tribe?
__________________________________________________________

17. In what year was the first Thanksgiving that is celebrated in the United States each year?
__________________________________________________________

18. What are 3 food items that were at the first Thanksgiving?
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

19. What were 2 parts of the Pilgrims economy?
__________________________________________________________ &  __________________________________________________________

20. How many settlers was there in Plymouth in 1691?
   a) 1,000
   b) 7,000
   c) 2 million
   d) 18,000

21. What were the major wars that Plymouth Colony was involved in?
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

22. When did Plymouth colony end and become part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony?
__________________________________________________________
Vocabulary: Use each word in a sentence or define each word.

Persecution - 

Harbor - 

Provisions - 

Agriculture - 

Waterfowl - 

Colony -
Answer if each statement is True (T) or False (F)

1. The Mayflower had a problem and was forced to return back to England __________

2. The colonists got a land patent from the German Land Exchange. __________

3. The original Mayflower voyage left with 102 passengers ______________

4. A voyage from Europe to America would usually take 2 months. __________

5. The Pilgrims used a Jason Myers map to locate Plymouth ____________

6. Plymouth rock broke in 4 pieces when they tried to move it. ____________

7. 5 Pilgrims died during the first winter in Plymouth. ______________

8. Squanto was the supreme leader of the Wampanoag tribe. ____________

9. By 1691 there was a population of 7,000 Pilgrims in Plymouth. __________

10. Plymouth colony ended up becoming part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691. ___________
Plymouth Colony Word Search

K Q V F Y E H J I G D A J I D N
V G W N I N L L P X N K W U N J E
E X Z N R F O W V F I G E Y D W U
H M U K M D L L U J V Q Y U I I G
Q G K P C S E N O D I N B F A K B
P I L G R I M S R C G V V T N P N
B K S E F W Q E W I S G M D S L J
Y K R R I U W S X C K B Q Y R M J
E W I K A O Q F L T N C Y H K V U
R V C N L I P H P C A K R T S P F
E O T F T T T L C Q H G W G B V C
R O Y X S C P E Y U T J H X G I S
B A V X A H J Y I M E L T T E S Z
M A D R E L B A O M O F A F N D D
K S Q U F H W F H P Z U X D E W N
A Y R S M M Q G U Z A P T I U X L
T Y D Y Y K X J X K P G I H B Y L

COLONY
FEAST
INDIANS
MAYFLOWER
PILGRIMS
PLYMOUTH
ROCK
SETTLE
SQUANTO
THANKSGIVING