



Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 1, WEBISODE 3

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

When King James threatened the Puritans “to harry them out of the land or else do worse,” a congregation of Separatists from Scrooby in Nottinghamshire, England, emigrated to Holland. After eleven years in exile, they decided to move again, this time to North America. The sixty-five-day voyage on the *Mayflower* was a horror for the saints (those who left England for religious reasons) and strangers (those who left for other reasons). Finally sighting land on November 9, 1620, the *Mayflower* anchored at Provincetown at the tip of Cape Cod.

Before disembarking, forty-one men signed the Mayflower Compact by which all agreed to establish a “Civil Body Politic” (temporary government) and be bound by its law. This was the first such self-government in the New World. Pilgrim leader William Bradford cited “the discontented and mutinous speeches” of some of the strangers who asserted their “owne libertie; for none had the power to command them, the patente they had being for Virginia and not for New England...”

Some historians theorize that the Pilgrims had missed Virginia on purpose, not wanting to settle in a place where the Church of England had influence. The strangers, however, wanted to join an established community where they could make their fortunes. The wilderness of New England had no appeal for them. By signing the compact, both saints and strangers agreed to be ruled by “just and equall lawes” at the consent of the people and by elected officials.

Teacher Directions

1. Write the following quotation on the chalkboard or on chart paper.

“[We] covenant...ourselves together...to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws...for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.”

2. Explain to the students that these words are from the Mayflower Compact. The words compact and covenant mean an agreement or contract.
3. Students, in their teams, discuss the following questions.
 - What circumstances made the Mayflower Compact necessary?
 - What kind of laws did the passengers commit themselves to obey?
 - Why is the Mayflower Compact one of the great documents of American history?



Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.



History Sleuth

4. Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions.

During the long voyage the saints (those who left England for religious reasons) and the strangers (those who left to make their fortunes, for adventure, or for some other reason) did not always get along well. When the *Mayflower* reached Plymouth instead of Virginia as planned, the strangers threatened an uprising. To ensure cooperation of all the colonists and thereby the survival of the colony, the passengers agreed to enact just and equal laws and to obey them. The Mayflower Compact is the first instance of self-government in America.

Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheets: *Deciphering the Mayflower Compact*.
2. Explain the activity. Each team reads aloud the Mayflower Compact, ignoring the number cues in parentheses. Students speculate about the meaning of the document. Teams read the document a second time using the numbered key. Students discuss their observations about the Mayflower Compact and what it means. Working together, students complete the activity sheet. Team members read aloud the questions, and the team reaches consensus in its responses to the questions. Students take turns writing the answers for the team.
3. Teams share their answers in a class discussion.

Note to the Teacher: Possible answers for the activity sheet may include the following.

- No women signed the compact. At the time, a woman depended economically upon a man who signed for her.
- "Civil body politick" refers to a government or a law making body. This is an example of how the men agreed to join together to govern themselves.
- The compact states that the signers are coming to honor God, to spread the Christian faith, and on behalf of King James and Great Britain. Some students may suggest that these seem very noble reasons, as the Pilgrims were escaping religious persecution and had a much more self-serving reason for settling in America.
- A possible paraphrase follows: We honor God and our role to spread the Christian faith as well as swear allegiance to King James of Great Britain by starting a new settlement in the very northernmost part of Virginia. We do solemnly and in the presence of God and one another agree to join together to form a government for the purpose of keeping law and order and safety. We agree to make whatever rules and laws

are necessary for the general good of the colony, and we agree to follow and obey these laws.

4. Students may add that all women should sign this compact, a list of rights and privileges, and even some general laws.

Teacher Directions

1. Explain the following situation to the students.

Imagine you have just arrived in a new land and are about to establish a settlement there. What laws do you think will help the settlement survive? What kind of government would be best?

2. Draw up a plan of government for the new colony. Include a list of basic rights that will protect the citizens.

Teacher Directions

1. Introduce the only known primary source account in existence that describes the events that occurred while the *Mayflower* was at sea. William Bradford (the Puritan governor of Plymouth who led the settlement through its difficult early years) wrote of the voyage in his history *Of Plymouth Plantation*.
2. Students listen as you read William Bradford's *Account of the Mayflower's Voyage* aloud. Pause after each paragraph for the students to paraphrase the account. If necessary, explain that to paraphrase is to put into your own words.
3. Ask the students.
 - Why do you think the passengers on the *Mayflower* were willing to brave such a harrowing voyage to settle in America?
 - How did the *Mayflower* passengers take a giant step towards freedom?
4. Students list the freedoms that the *Mayflower* passengers sought and design a stamp to commemorate one of those freedoms.



What do you
Think?



Moving Toward
Freedom



Connections

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Technology/Library — Students take a virtual tour of Plimoth Plantation @ <http://pilgrims.net/plimothplantation/vtour/index.htm>.

Technology/Library — Students research the passenger lists from the Mayflower to discover what became of the first settlers at Plymouth. William Bradford recorded this information.

Math/Technology/Library — How much food does a person need for a year? Students research the amount of food needed by one person for a year.

Language Arts/Library — Students read “The Courtship of Miles Standish” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Art — Students create their own examples of rustic or folk art. Students make toys from natural materials and decorate them or decorate clothing and common household items using only materials available to the early colonists.

Local History/Geography — How might early settlers have used your local area? Is there fresh water nearby? Is there a food source? What materials could be used to build shelters? Students research the resources of their local area and how early settlers might have used them. Students draw a map of the area and indicate the best spot for a settlement.

Language Arts/Library — Students find examples of words and expressions that were part of early American English. What words do we use today instead of those early words? Students find some words that are currently in the process of change.

Science/Library — Students list some ways of preserving food before canning and freezing were available. Students research what foods were preserved in those ways and try the techniques.

Science — Students plant herbs such as thyme, basil, and rosemary. Students taste them as fresh herbs and then dry them, and finally prepare a dish using the dried herbs.

Language Arts — Students write to Plimoth Plantation for directions in planting an authentic kitchen garden.

Deciphering the Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact

[November 11, 1620]

In the Name(1) of God Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord King James(2) by the grace of God, of great Britaine, Franc, and Ireland king, defender o the faith, &c.

Having-undertaken for the glorie of God(3), and advancements of the Christian faith and honour of our king and countrie, a vouage to plant the first Colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia(4), doe by these presents(5) solemnly and mutualy in the prsence of God, and one of another, covenant & combine our selves together into a civil body politick; for our better ordering(6), & preservation & furtherance of the ends aforesaid (7); and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame(8), shush just & equall lawes, ordinances(9), Acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete(10) & convenient for the generall good of the Colonies unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11 of November, in the year the raigne of our soveraigne Lord King James of England, France, & Ireland in the eighteenth and of Scotland the fiftie fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

Mr. John Carverll
Mr. William Bradford
Mr. Edward Window
Mr. William Brewster
Isaac Allerton
Myles Standish
John Alden
John Turner
Francis Eaton
James Chilton
John Craxton
John Billington
Joses Fletcher
John Goodman

Mr. Samuel Fuller
Mr. Christopher Martin
Mr. William Mullins
Mr. William White
Mr. Richard Warren
John Howland
Mr. Steven Hopkins
Digery Priest
Thomas Williams
Gilbert Winslow
Edmund Margesson
Peter Brown
Richard Britteridge
George Soule

Edward Tilly
John Tilly
Francis Cooke
Thomas Rogers
Thomas Tinker
John Ridgdale
Edward Fuller
Richard Clark
Richard Gardiner
Mr. John Allerton
Thomas English
Edward Doten
Edward Liester

ACTIVITY: First, with your team, read aloud the Mayflower Compact ignoring the number cues in parentheses. Now read it a second time using the numbered key. Discuss with your group some observations about this compact.

1. Most notably who did not sign the compact? Why do you think this is so?

2. Explain what you think the phrase "civil body politick" means?

3. Why do the signers of the compact write they are coming to America? How does this support what you know to be true?

4. Paraphrase the compact in standard English. Add anything to this you think the signers were remiss in omitting.

KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE MAYFLOW COMPACT

1. Frequent capitalization was a common practice in the early 1600s. Some languages, such as German still capitalize nouns frequently. A capital letter began many nouns or important words. They were not always consistent in this practice, nor were they consistent in spelling words.
2. The word "dread" was usually used to imply deep awe or reverence. The Pilgrims did not want to anger the king so they portrayed themselves as loyal subjects and used a polite form of address. They did not fear him; more likely they did not like him because of his religious beliefs, but were demonstrating respect.
3. God's glory is mentioned before the king's honor because as a religious people they saw this as most important, followed by spreading the Christian religion. The honor of king and country came third in this list of priorities.
4. Virginia is mentioned because they were supposed to go to Virginia. The land in front of them did not yet have a name. In fact, they were not entirely certain where they were, except that they were too far north. "Northern parts of Virginia" seemed as good a name as any.
5. Here "presents" means "formal statements."
6. "Better Ordering" means here to bring better law and order.
7. "Ends aforesaid" refers to the ends or purposes mentioned earlier—advancement of the Christian faith, etc.
8. They could not just say "enact" instead of "enact, constitute, and frame." Civil societies enact laws, constitute a form of government, and frame ordinances. They also should have said "elect" since one does not enact, frame, or constitute officers.
9. "Frame ordinances" means, in today's terminology, making codes such as in education codes or building codes. After a number of laws have been passed they are organized into a set of ordinances which brings all the laws on a given topic together in one place and puts them in a logical order. A logically ordered set of ordinances was often called a frame—sometimes a frame of government. The term ordinances was a synonym for statutes.
10. "Meet" means in conformity with our wishes.
11. "Mr." Usually referred to a gentleman—someone of higher rank than a commoner but not a nobleman.