

A Visit to Plimoth Plantation

This rock stands at the place where the pilgrims actually landed. It was November of 1620 when they reached Cape Cod, Massachusetts. It had taken 66 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

Many pilgrims were weak from the long voyage on a ship where they were in close and cramped quarters. Winter was right around the corner. They would not be able to plant food until next spring. They would have to prepare shelters and find a way to feed themselves.



This is a reconstructed 17th century English village. The pilgrim men built the houses out of logs, wood, hay, mud and rocks. The houses in the small village were built close together for protection. They needed to help one another in order to survive. The pilgrims faced many hardships that first winter. Starvation, pneumonia, and scurvy (illness due to lack of fresh fruits and vegetables) led to the deaths of 44 people, as recorded by William Bradford.

The pilgrims quickly found that they had to learn more about farming. Squanto, an English speaking Native American from the Pawtuxet tribe, taught the pilgrims how to plant corn. Planting a fish head with the corn seed proved to be very successful. He also taught them how to be more successful hunters and where to fish.

Everything they did must be done by hand. In the picture at the right you can see a wooden wheelbarrow and wooden barrels.



This is the inside of a 17th century home. Most houses were one room. They would light small fires in the hearth. This is where they cooked and the heat would also keep them warm during the cold months. It also provided some light so they could do other work. The pilgrims cooked, ate, and slept in this room.



Both of the above structures, as well as the one below to the left, are part of the Wampanoag Homesite. They were the first Native Americans the pilgrims encountered after arriving in Massachusetts. You will see that the houses are mat-covered and bark-covered. Trees were plentiful on the northeast coast so wood and bark is used for many things.



When you visit you may see Native Americans cooking over an open fire using only ingredients that were available during the 1600's. They fished and hunted wild game in the forests. Fire was also used as the tool to hollow out trees to create a boat (see the picture below on the right). These boats were used for fishing, transportation, and exploring.



Test Your Thinking Skills

1. With which statement would the author NOT agree?

- A. You can learn a lot by seeing these original structures built by the pilgrims.
- B. The Wampanoag found many ways to use the resources of the forest.
- C. Fish were an important part of the Wampanoag diet.
- D. Wampanoag boats were not just used for fishing.

2. All of the following would be true EXCEPT-

- A. At Plimoth Plantation you can see both pilgrim and Wampanoag villages.
- B. Fires were built both inside and outside of shelters.
- C. Pilgrim houses had only one room.
- D. The Wampanoag constructed tepees of animal hides to live in.

3. Which of the following statements is expressed in the pictures or captions? There is more than one answer.

- A. The pilgrims built fires inside their homes.
- B. The Mayflower was a large ship.
- C. Fire is used for more than cooking.
- D. Native Americans were at the first Thanksgiving.

4. What is the meaning of the underlined word in the sentence below?

Both of the above structures, as well as the one below to the left, are part of the Wampanoag Homesite.

- A. environments
- B. resources
- C. villages
- D. shelters

5. What is this article MOSTLY about?

- A. The daily life of a pilgrim
- B. How the Wampanoag lived
- C. What you can see at Plimoth Plantation
- D. The homes of the pilgrims and Native Americans in the 1600's

Test Your Thinking Skills Answer Key

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