

Lesson 7

VOCABULARY

charter p. 87

cash crop p. 88

indentured servant p. 89

House of Burgesses p. 89

Pilgrim p. 90

sachem p. 92

READING SKILL

Cause and Effect

Copy the chart below. As you read, list the causes and effects of the Pilgrims settling in Plymouth.

Cause	→	Effect
	→	
	→	
	→	

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

5.1.2, 5.1.5, 5.1.6, 5.1.7, 5.1.8,
5.2.2, 5.2.8, 5.2.9, 5.3.4, 5.3.8,
5.4.1

The First English Colonies



Sir Walter Raleigh receiving the Virginia charter from Queen Elizabeth I

Visual Preview



A Both attempts to settle Roanoke Island were failures.



B Colonists at Jamestown had trouble making a profit until they grew tobacco.



C Pilgrims created a plan of self-government called the Mayflower Compact.



D The Pilgrims had trouble growing food, but were helped by the Wampanoag.

A

THE LOST COLONY

While Spain was getting rich from its colonies in the Americas, England's Queen Elizabeth I and her adviser, Sir Walter Raleigh, came up with a plan to make England a power in the Americas.

In 1585 Queen Elizabeth gave Sir Walter Raleigh a **charter**. A charter is an official document that grants its holder special rights. The charter said that Raleigh was supposed to start a colony for the purpose of finding gold and other riches in North America. Raleigh called the new colony Virginia. Virginia was named in honor of Queen Elizabeth I, the Virgin, or unmarried, Queen.

Raleigh's First Try

After sending explorers to find a good place for a colony, Sir Walter Raleigh decided upon what is now Roanoke, North Carolina. About 100 men were sent to Roanoke Island. Many of the colonists had little experience living off the land. They did not know what supplies they would need. Instead of planting crops, the colonists traded with several Native American groups for food. When Native American groups were not interested in the trade, some colonists stole food. As a result, fighting broke out. Meanwhile, the colonists did not find gold. After a difficult winter, the colonists returned to England.

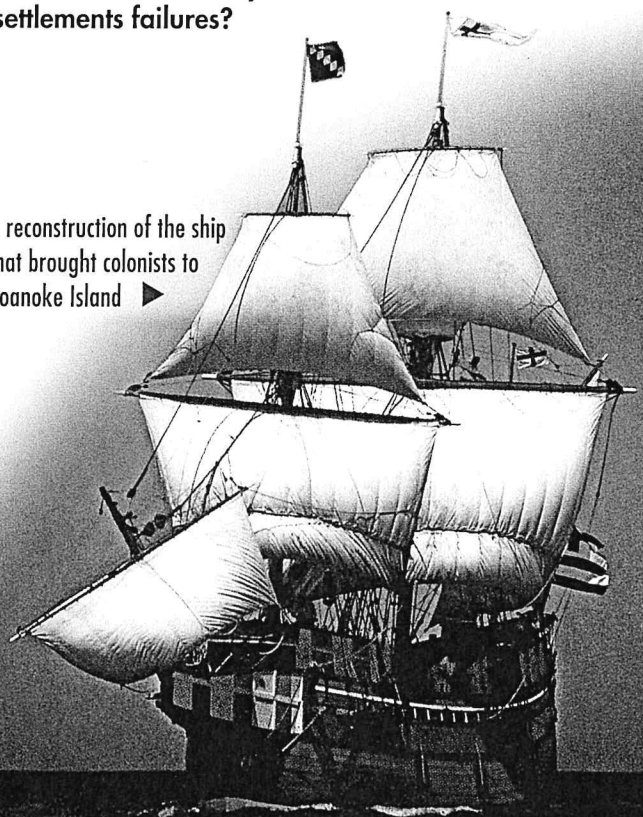
Raleigh Tries Again

In 1587 John White and a second group of colonists settled in Virginia. Supplies ran low and White returned to England for help. He arrived just as war between England and Spain broke out, and England needed all its ships. White did not return until 1590. When he arrived, the colony was empty. No one knows what happened to the colonists.

QUICK CHECK

Cause and Effect Why were the Roanoke settlements failures?

A reconstruction of the ship that brought colonists to Roanoke Island ▶





▲ Today you can visit a model of colonial Jamestown to see how the settlers lived.

B THE JAMESTOWN COLONY

The English decided to continue searching for gold in North America. King James I gave a charter to a merchant company called the Virginia Company. In 1607 the Virginia Company sent a group of 144 men and boys to start a new settlement. The colonists landed near a river that they named the James River. They built a new settlement there called Jamestown. It was the first permanent English settlement in North America.

Captain John Smith

Like the Roanoke colony, the Jamestown colony soon ran out of food. It survived only because of the leadership of John Smith, who proclaimed, "Those who don't work, don't eat!" Smith forced the colonists to plant crops and build homes. In 1609 Smith was injured

when his gunpowder bag exploded, and he returned to England. Without him, the colonists stopped working. The winter after Smith left was called "the starving time." By the end of the winter, only 60 of the settlers were alive.

A New Crop

The Jamestown colonists discovered that Virginia had the perfect soil and climate for growing tobacco. Tobacco had been recently introduced into Europe, and the demand for it was growing.

Colonist John Rolfe harvested the first tobacco crop, which was a huge success. Tobacco became Virginia's first **cash crop**, or crop grown to be sold for profit. Soon the demand for tobacco was so great that new

fields were needed. The colonists decided to take land that belonged to the Powhatan, a group of nearby Native Americans.

Growing tobacco required many field workers. To attract workers, the Virginia Company paid travel expenses from Europe for people who would work in tobacco fields. These **indentured servants** promised to pay back the travel expenses by working five to seven years. After their time of service, they received land and supplies to start farms.

Jamestown's First Government

People in England had been electing their governments for a long time. The Virginia Company, therefore, allowed colonists to establish a colonial assembly similar to the one in England. The representatives were known as burgesses. The assembly, called the **House of Burgesses**, made laws for the colony. Only white men who owned land could vote for representatives. The House of Burgesses first met July 30, 1619, making it the first elected assembly of Europeans in the Americas.

The Powhatan Fight Back

As Jamestown grew, the colonists took more and more land. This threatened the Powhatan way of life. In 1622 the Powhatan attacked English villages. Nearly 350 English settlers, about one-third of the colonists, were killed. These attacks convinced King James I to cancel the Virginia Company charter. In 1624 the colony became a royal colony under the direct control of the king.

QUICK CHECK

Cause and Effect Why was Jamestown a successful colony?

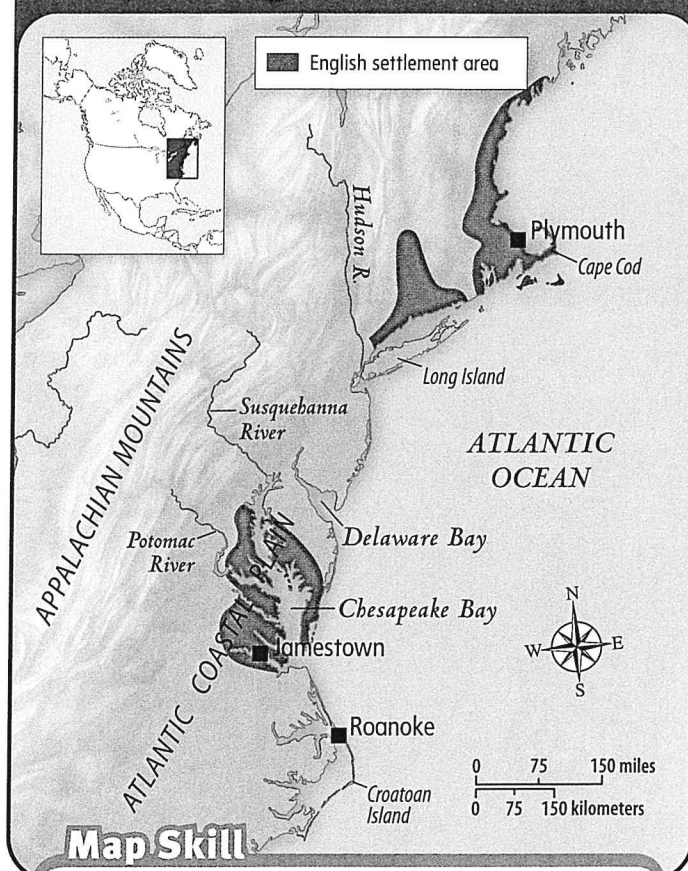
PEOPLE

The Powhatan were a strong and united group. **Pocahontas**, the daughter of the Powhatan chief, often visited Jamestown. In 1614 John Rolfe married Pocahontas. Their marriage helped keep peace between the Powhatan and the colonists. The "Peace of Pocahontas" lasted for several years.



Pocahontas

The First English Settlements



Map Skill
PLACE Which landforms were near English settlements?



THE PILGRIMS

By 1534 King Henry VIII had left the Roman Catholic Church and established the Church of England. In the early 1600s, some groups in England wanted to leave the Church of England. People called Separatists wanted to separate and form their own churches. This type of action was not allowed in England.

Many Separatists were threatened by the English government and tossed into jails. This led one group of Separatists, known as **Pilgrims**, to ask permission to settle in Virginia. A pilgrim is someone who travels

to a place for religious reasons. The Virginia Company agreed to pay for the voyage.

The *Mayflower*

On September 16, 1620, the Pilgrims and other colonists boarded the *Mayflower* at Plymouth, England, and set sail for Virginia. On board were more than 100 men, women, and children. For 66 days the tiny, crowded ship crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Finally, in November someone spotted land.

The *Mayflower* had reached land, but not Virginia. The Pilgrims came ashore on Cape Cod in what is now Massachusetts. By the time they landed, it was almost winter. They decided to settle the area near where they landed. The Pilgrims called their settlement New Plymouth, which is today Plymouth, Massachusetts.

A Step Toward Self-Government

The Pilgrims took steps to establish a new colony in this place not yet claimed by England. Before they left the ship, the Pilgrims wrote a form of government for their new colony. They called their agreement the *Mayflower Compact*. The compact, or agreement, was an early plan of self-government by colonists in North America. Only men signed the compact.

◀ The *Mayflower* often sailed in rough seas as it crossed the Atlantic Ocean.



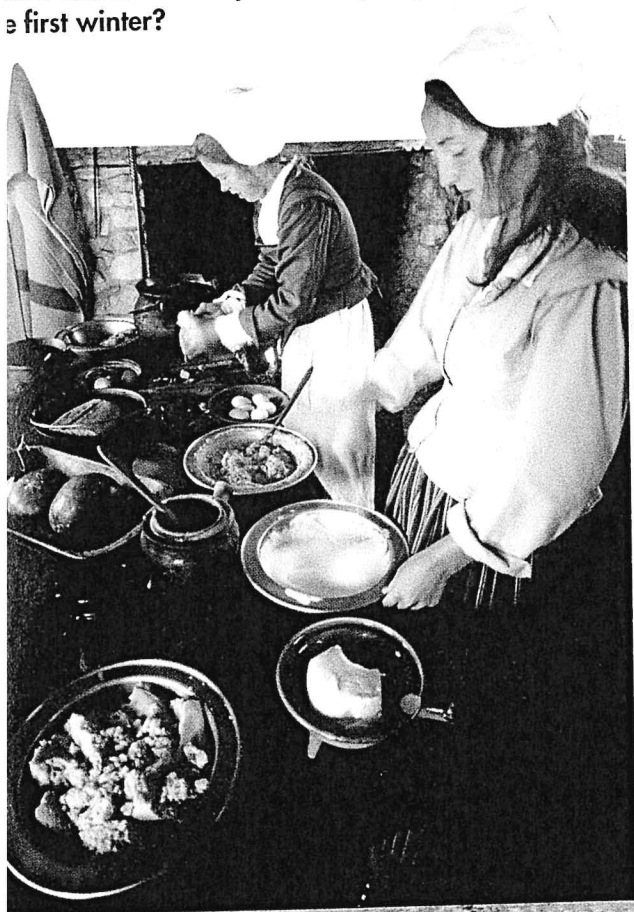
Life in Plymouth

The Pilgrims had a difficult time almost from the beginning. By the time they landed, it was cold, making it more difficult to build a colony. The Pilgrims did manage to build some small shelters, but many avoided the rigid cold by huddling together on the *Mayflower*.

Some of the Plymouth colonists were from cities such as London, and had never farmed. In addition, the Pilgrims were not prepared for harsh Massachusetts winters. By the end of the first winter, almost half of the 100 settlers had died from starvation and disease. If it had not been for the help of nearby Native Americans, most of the settlers might have died.

QUICK CHECK

Cause and Effect Why did many Pilgrims die during the first winter?



Citizenship

Cooperation and Compromise

People cooperate when they work together to make rules or laws or to solve a problem. People compromise when they give up part of something they want. By getting along and working together, everyone contributes to a solution.



Write About It Write a paragraph about a time you gave up something you wanted in order to solve a problem or settle a disagreement.

◀ These reenactors show Pilgrim life after the first difficult year.

D NATIVE AMERICANS SAVE THE DAY

Remember all those people searching for the Northwest Passage? By the time the Pilgrims arrived, disease carried by Europeans had killed many of the Native Americans in the region. One of the largest groups, the Wampanoag, had lived for centuries along the coast where the Pilgrims landed. The Massachuset, Narragansett, Pequot, and Mohegan groups also lived in the area.

Helping the Pilgrims

Massasoit was the Wampanoag **sachem**. A sachem, or leader, was the head of each group of Native Americans. One person

living among the Wampanoag was a member of the Pawtuxet named Squanto. In 1615 he had been captured by English sailors and eventually learned to speak English. A sachem called Samoset learned to speak English from fishermen who visited the area. These three Native Americans helped the Pilgrims survive their first years in the region we call New England.

The Pilgrims had settled on land that was once the home of the Pawtuxet. Disease had wiped out the Pawtuxet years earlier. Squanto decided to live among the Pilgrims and farm



is Pawtuxet land. He showed the Pilgrims how to grow maize, using fish to fertilize the soil. He taught the newcomers how to trap rabbits, deer, and other wild animals. He also showed them where to fish.

Thanksgiving

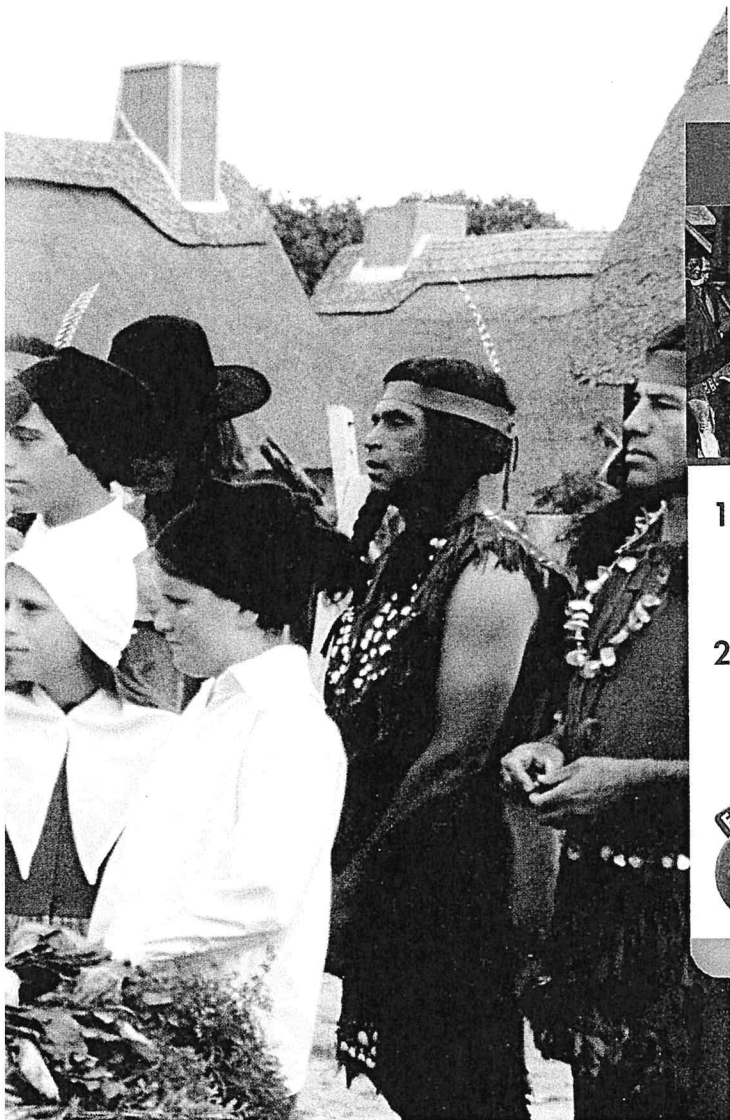
By the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims had built even houses in the Plymouth colony. With the help of Squanto, they learned to grow maize and barley. The Pilgrims celebrated their first harvest with three days of feasting. Massasoit and 90 Wampanoag came to the feast, bringing five deer. The Pilgrims added wild goose and duck.

▼ This recreation of Thanksgiving brought together descendants of Pilgrims and Native Americans who took part in the first Plymouth Thanksgiving.

During this time many Native American and European groups held harvest festivals to give thanks for the growth of their crops. The Spanish, French, and English colonists held thanksgiving services in America before the Pilgrims' celebration in 1621. The feast shared by the Pilgrims and Wampanoag would later be called our country's first "thanksgiving." Just as then, we still gather with friends, give thanks, and eat!

QUICK CHECK

Cause and Effect Why did the Pilgrims hold a thanksgiving feast?



Check Understanding



1. VOCABULARY Write a synonym for each vocabulary word.

charter sachem pilgrim

2. READING SKILL Cause and Effect Use your cause and effect chart from page 86 to write about the Pilgrims settling in Plymouth.

Cause	→	Effect
	→	
	→	
	→	



3. Write About It Write about how life changed for the Pilgrims after they met Native Americans.