

Aboard the *Mayflower*

It was a very difficult trip for the Pilgrims to reach their new home. There were supposed to be two boats crossing the Atlantic Ocean together, but one of the ships could not make the trip because it began to leak. The ships returned to England, and the Pilgrims who decided to keep going crowded into one boat, the *Mayflower*. It took 66 days, more than two months, for the Pilgrims to cross the ocean. At first, it was just seasickness that was a problem. Then, the seas grew very rough and dangerous. There were times the sails could not be used because the wind was so strong. No one knew if they would survive to reach the New World.

There was not much room on the *Mayflower*. The Pilgrims had to take everything with them that they might need to start a new colony. They knew there wouldn't be stores or gardens or anyway to get food until they planted it and it had time to grow, so they had to take food. They also had to take seeds, dishes, tools, blankets, and anything else they might need.

The Pilgrims had planned to settle in the area around northern Virginia, but the seas were too rough, and they decided to try to find a place to settle farther north. They anchored in Provincetown Harbor and spent much time exploring and looking for the best place to settle.

Before the new colony could get started, the people had to agree to create a government that could make laws. If they didn't have laws, there couldn't be a new colony. Everyone would just be doing whatever they wanted to with no one in charge. The people signed the Mayflower Compact, their promise to form a government and follow its laws, just like they had to follow the laws back in England.

The Native Americans, especially the Wampanoags, were very helpful to the Pilgrims when they started their colony, which was called *Plimouth*. Today we spell the name of the colony *Plymouth*. Without the Wampanoags' help, the colonists might not have survived. They taught the colonists how to grow vegetables in the new land, how to hunt the animals, and how to gather shellfish that were safe to eat.

After the first year in their new home, the Pilgrims had a very good harvest and held a large celebration. They invited the Native Americans to join them, and we remember that feast as the first Thanksgiving.



Writing Prompt #5

You can hardly believe it. People are fighting over who is going to be in charge in the New World. Can't everyone just be happy that you made it across the terrible ocean alive? You hear about a meeting and sneak closer to try to hear. What are the men talking about?



Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines for text entry.

