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.

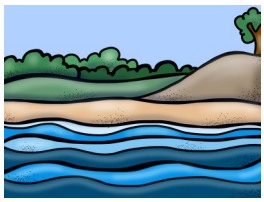
After the first year in their new home, the Pilgrims had a very good harvest and held a large celebration. They invited the Native Americans to join them, and we remember that feast as the first Thanksgiving.

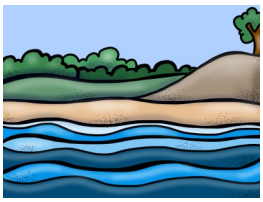
Writing Prompt #2

Your little brother just kicked you again. There are around eighty people cramped into this one room beneath the main deck, so you have to sleep close together. How do you talk yourself into not being mad at him?

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?





The American Revolution

In the early 1700s, America was not a free country. Great Britain was in control of the land, and the people who lived in America were called colonists. Great Britain had spent a great deal of money on the French and Indian War to stop France from taking control of land in the colonies that Britain said was hers. To help pay for that war, Britain decided to make the colonists pay extra money for things so Britain could use that tax money any way they wanted.

The taxes were very hard for the colonists to pay. Britain taxed many things people used every day. The colonists did not feel it was right to be taxed when they did not get to vote about the taxes. They wanted representation in Britain's government.

One of the taxes was on tea, and the colonists drank a lot of tea. There were laws about where the colonists could buy tea, and then, the tea they bought was taxed! The colonists wanted to do something to show Britain how they felt about these taxes. They tried talking to the government, but they wouldn't listen. One night, some of the people from Boston dressed up like Native Americans so no one would know who they were, and they dumped all the tea from ships in Boston Harbor into the water.

This made Britain very angry. They wanted to punish the colonists for ruining the tea, so they passed more new laws the colonists did not get to vote on. One law closed Boston Harbor and said it would only be opened when the colonists paid for the tea and were respectful of the British. Other laws made the governor of Massachusetts very powerful because he was part of the British army and would do the things the king wanted. There were many British troops in Boston and other areas.

The colonists tried to work out the problems, but Britain would not listen. When the British tried to find ammunition the colonists had been storing in case of a fight, Paul Revere and two other men rode to warn the people that the British were coming. Fighting started, and the colonists met to decide what to do. They finally signed a Declaration of Independence telling Britain they wanted to be a free country. When the Declaration of Independence was read to the people, the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was rung.

Britain tried to stop the people from being free. The war was long, and many people died, but in the end, the colonists won, and a new nation was born.

Writing Prompt #1

Everyone is angry with King George III because he keeps raising taxes and making them pay more for the things they need. You overhear some kids making fun of the king. What do you do? What do you say?

Writing Prompt #4

You are almost asleep in your bed at your home near Boston Harbor when you hear a commotion outside. You run to the window. What is happening? What do you do?

Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Kentucky. He did not have a chance to go to school for long, but he loved to read books. As he grew up, he worked in a store and then went on to study law and become a lawyer. He moved to Springfield, Illinois, while he was practicing law. Later, he ran for Congress. He had a debate against Stephen A. Douglas, the man who was running against him. Lincoln felt slavery should be stopped, but Douglas felt the people should vote on whether or not there should be slavery. Even though Lincoln lost the election, he became very well known.

In 1860, Lincoln ran for president and won. He became the sixteenth President of the United States. Lincoln loved animals. He helped find homes for orphaned kittens, had a favorite dog and a favorite horse, and his sons even had pet goats and a pet turkey.

After he became president, many Southern states broke away from the United States and formed their own country. When that happened, the Civil War started. Lincoln said slaves in states that had broken away from the United States (also called the Union) were free. He gave a speech in Pennsylvania, at a place called Gettysburg, where a great battle had taken place. This famous speech is known as Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Lincoln ran for president again in 1864, and won.

The Union was winning the war. In 1865, General Lee, who led many of the troops from the Southern states that had left the Union, surrendered to General Grant. The surrender happened at the home of Wilmer McLean in a small town called Appomattox Court House in Virginia. The Civil War ended very soon after that. The soldiers who had been fighting against the Union were given passes called parole passes to help them get back home after the surrender. A few days after the surrender, Lincoln and his wife went to see a play. He was shot by an actor named John Wilkes Booth. Lincoln died the next day and was buried in Springfield, Illinois.

©Bonnie Rose Hudson WriteBonnieRose.com

Writing Prompt #4

You can hear your parents talking late into the night about the presidential elections. What are they saying? What do you think it will be like to have a new president?

Writing Prompt #6

You are living in a small house in Gettysburg when a terrible battle breaks out. You have to get to someplace safe. Describe where you go and how you get there..

World War II

World War II was a terrible war fought between 1939 and 1945. Almost every part of the world was involved. While the troops were away fighting, life was hard for the people back home, too. They missed their family members and worried about them being safe. They were also proud of them for being so brave and helping people who needed help. In some countries, it was so dangerous even at home that parents sent their children to other places to keep them safe until the war was over.

At that time, many women did not have jobs outside of all the work it took to take care of their homes and families, but with so many of the men away fighting the war, they had to help fill in. They took jobs like building the equipment needed for the war and for home.

The troops needed food to eat, and they needed food for the people they were helping. Because of this, there wasn't as much food to buy back home, so food and other items were rationed. That meant you were only allowed to buy a certain amount of some things such as sugar. You were given a card or a book that told the grocery store how much sugar you were able to buy. When you had bought all of the sugar you were allowed to have, you had to wait until you were given more cards or books that allowed you to buy more sugar. This was done to make sure everyone could buy some sugar but that the all the sugar wouldn't be bought by just a few people. The same thing was done with many other items.

Because food was harder to get, many people planted gardens. During World War II, these were called "victory gardens." Growing their own food helped people have what they needed to keep their families healthy.

People also helped at hospitals where the wounded troops were sent to recover. Famous people would sometimes visit the hospitals to try to cheer up the troops. Other people would do all they could to help the troops as they recovered.

Another thing people did at home was buy bonds or stamps. This was like saving money. Later, the bonds or stamps could be cashed in to get the money with interest, but until they were cashed, the government could use the money to fight the war.

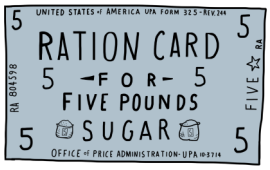
The war finally ended, and the troops came home, but it took a long time. Many people died in the war, and many who came home were hurt. Everyone back home was happy to be together again, but many things had changed, and life would never be exactly the same again.

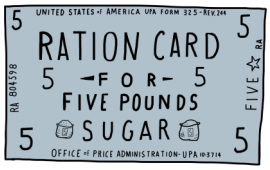
Writing Prompt #1

Your mom is a nurse at a local military hospital. Some famous actors and actresses are coming to visit the injured troops. You want to go to help cheer them up, too. What do you do?

Writing Prompt #6

All the kids in your class are writing letters to wounded soldiers to help cheer them up while they are recovering in the hospital. What do you say in your letter?


UNITED STATES of AMERICA OPA FORM 325-REV.244
RATION CARD
5 -FOR- 5
FIVE POUNDS
SUGAR
OFFICE of PRICE ADMINISTRATION-OPA 10-3714


UNITED STATES of AMERICA OPA FORM 325-REV.244
RATION CARD
5 -FOR- 5
FIVE POUNDS
SUGAR
OFFICE of PRICE ADMINISTRATION-OPA 10-3714