

LESSON 7 - THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER

THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER

On a warm September day in the year 1620, 102 men, women, and children gathered in the port town of Plymouth, England. They walked up the gangplank of a small sailing ship, bound for a new life in America. Most of the passengers were Separatists. *Passengers are people just traveling on the ship, not the crew sailing it.* They were not only leaving their country behind, but they were leaving their identity as Separatists behind as well. They were now pilgrims, making a pilgrimage in search of religious freedom in the New World.



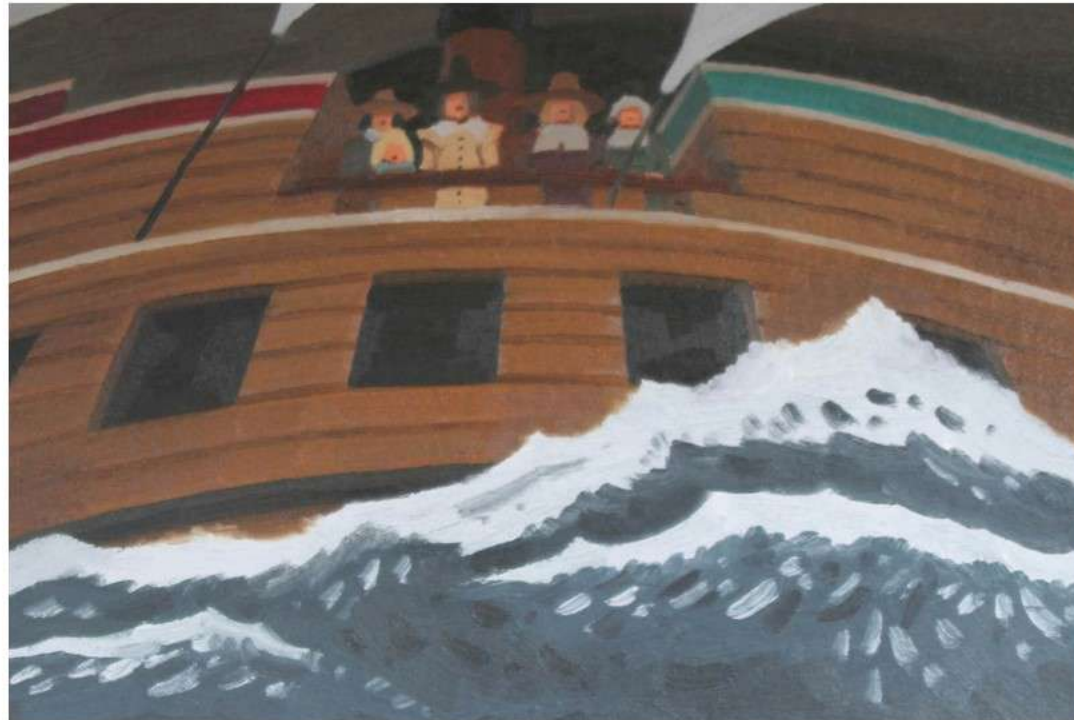
THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOW

The name of their ship was the Mayflower. It was not meant to be a passenger ship. *It was not meant to be a ship to carry people.* Rather, it had been used to carry cargo *or goods* to and from France for many years. The Pilgrims were crowded into an area beneath the main deck along with the ship's cannons. "We do not expect trouble," the ship's master told the Pilgrims, "but we must be ready in case it comes. Pirates patrol these waters, looking for treasure and waiting to capture unprotected ships."



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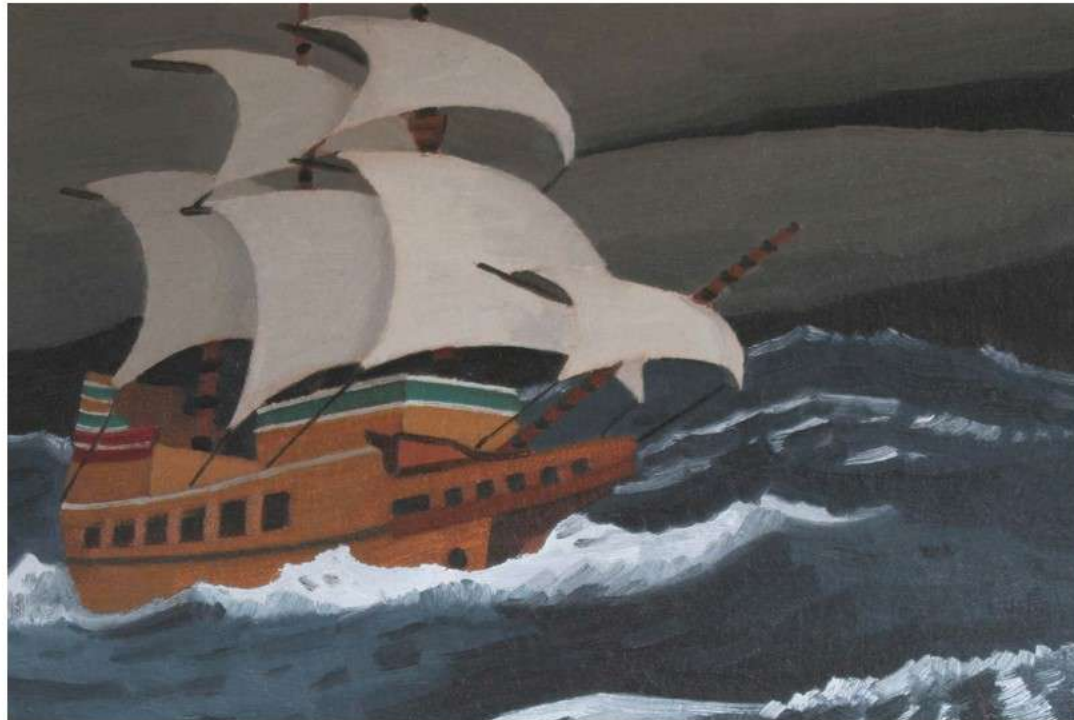
The passengers took turns going up on deck for fresh air and exercise. Despite the calm seas, a few of the passengers, unused to the constant motion of the ship, felt ill. *They were seasick.* The air between decks was often stale, adding to their discomfort. Gradually, they grew used to their cramped *or crowded* conditions on board the Mayflower. The Atlantic Ocean, however, was only waiting until they were far from shore to spring her traps on them. "Storm clouds, Cap'n!" cried a sailor one day.



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"Aye-aye," replied the captain. "See to it that everything is tied down so it won't wash overboard if we start taking on heavy seas. Warn the passengers to do the same." *Overboard means over the side of a boat or ship into the water.*

Soon enough, the storms and high winds of the North Atlantic struck with fury.



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Now, even those who had so far been untroubled by the ship's motion felt sick. The Mayflower, tossed high on huge waves, was lifted and dropped down forcefully again and again. Rains poured down upon the ship, and dripped between the decks. A few men offered to help the crew. One was tightening some ropes when a great wave hit the Mayflower from the side. Before he could grab his rope, the wave struck with all its might. With a cry, the man was thrown over the side.



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“Man overboard!” yelled the ship’s navigator. Three men rushed to the side of the ship, throwing ropes toward the struggling man. He managed to grasp one of them and held on desperately as he disappeared beneath the water. Sputtering and gasping for air, he bobbed up to the surface, still holding the rope in his hands. The sailors drew him closer to the ship and, reaching over the side, one of the sailors grasped the man’s arm and pulled him to safety. Fortunately, the storm soon blew itself out, but the passengers remembered their fear. After that, few of them dared to go on deck except in smooth seas.



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At last, on a clear, cold November day, the cry went up, "Land, ho!"

They left in September, so they've been on the ship for almost two months. [If a monthly calendar is available, show two pages on a monthly calendar.]

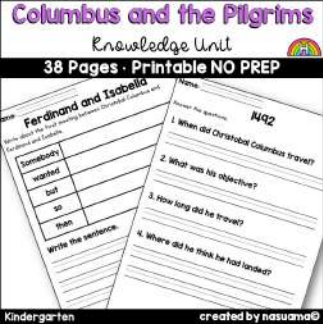
"Glory to God!" the Pilgrims cried. *Glory means praise or honor given to someone who is important or does something good.* They had crossed the wide ocean and reached the eastern shores of North America at last. *[Point to England on a world map and then to North America.] The Pilgrims left Europe and arrived in America.*



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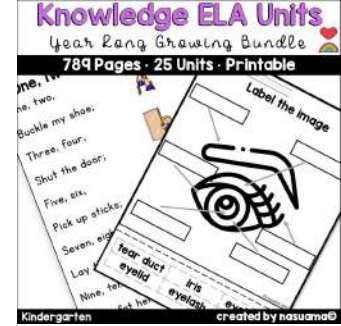
The Pilgrims had no idea what to expect of the new land ahead of them, but they had heard stories of native people living there. So, while they called their destination *or landing place* the New World, perhaps it was not such a new world after all. *[Point to North America.]*





COLUMBUS AND THE PILGRIMS

BUNDLE



Name: _____

The Mayflower

Answer the questions.

1. Who were the people sailing to America?

2. On what continente did they start their voyage?

3. To what continente were they traveling?

DO YOU NEED EXTRA ACTIVITIES?

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