

John Smith maps the coast

1614 | Grade 2 · Read & notice

Words to know

map — a drawing or display that represents places

coast — land next to the ocean

purpose — the reason something is done

Look closely



John Smith's New England map, in an edition cataloged around 1624 by the Leventhal Map & Education Center. First published in 1616 after his 1614 voyage.

Read the story

John Smith sailed along the coast and made a map. He called the region New England. Native people already lived there. The map helped English readers picture the coast, but left out many stories.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. What happened in this reading? Tell one fact.
2. Who or what is this reading mostly about?
3. Choose a word from the word bank. Explain it in your own words.
4. Look at the picture and its caption. What does it help you notice? Is it from the time of the event?

Follow-up reading: The Great Dying

1616–1619

A terrible sickness spread through many Native communities near the coast. Many people died. Families lost loved ones. Survivors kept caring for each other. Native nations continued, and their descendants live here today.

How are the two readings alike or different? Tell a partner one connection. Which event came first?

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.2.1: ask and answer questions; RI.2.2: identify a main topic; RI.2.7: use images and words; W.2.2 and SL.2.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: John Smith sailed along the coast and made a map. He called the region New England. Native people already lived there. The map helped English readers picture the coast, but left out many stories. Smith's map was first published in 1616 and later reissued. A map's publication date can differ from its voyage date. English place names promoted colonization and expressed a viewpoint.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: John Smith; Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center at the Boston Public Library. Public domain historical map.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's HTML page. External sources may need adult guidance.