

Mayflower, Compact, and Patuxet

1620 | Grade 8 · Analyze & connect

Words to know

agreement — a plan or promise people accept together

rule — an instruction about what is allowed

community — people connected by a place or something they share

Look closely



Modern reconstruction of the English village at Plimoth Patuxet Museums. These are not surviving buildings from 1620.

Read the story

Mayflower passengers crossed the ocean. Some men signed an agreement about rules called the Mayflower Compact. The newcomers built Plymouth at Patuxet, a Wampanoag place. Native people had lived there long before.

The Compact organized a colonial community but did not give everyone equal political rights. Women and many others did not sign. It did not transfer Native ownership of land.

A timeline helps put events in order, but order alone does not establish a cause. People acted with the knowledge and choices available to them at the time. Records can reveal some experiences while overlooking others. Compare a contemporary source with a later interpretation. Explain the source's purpose, the detail it contributes, and a question it cannot answer on its own.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. Write an objective summary. Separate the event from the writer's interpretation of its importance.
2. Explain a cause, consequence, or continuity supported by the text. Identify a connection that would need more evidence.
3. Open the research source. Identify its creator or institution and purpose. Is it a contemporary source, a later account, or both?
4. Evaluate the image's date and purpose. Explain one useful detail and one limitation without treating an illustration as eyewitness evidence.

Follow-up reading: A harvest gathering

1621

Wampanoag people and Plymouth colonists shared a gathering. Ousamequin, also called Massasoit, came with many men. They brought deer. We know only some details. This was not the first time people gave thanks.

Edward Winslow's surviving English account does not supply every guest, food, or viewpoint. The later American Thanksgiving holiday and the 1621 gathering are related but different stories.

Write a paragraph comparing these events. Use evidence from both passages, distinguish chronology from causation, and identify a perspective missing from the readings.

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.8.1: cite evidence; RI.8.2: objective summary; RI.8.6: analyze purpose and viewpoint; RH.6–8.1–2: evidence and summary in history; W.8.2: explanatory writing.

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

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Mayflower passengers crossed the ocean. Some men signed an agreement about rules called the Mayflower Compact. The newcomers built Plymouth at Patuxet, a Wampanoag place. Native people had lived there long before. The Compact organized a colonial community but did not give everyone equal political rights. Women and many others did not sign. It did not transfer Native ownership of land.

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: English village at Plimoth Patuxet — [Trlsie / Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0](#).

[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.