

Mary Dyer and religious freedom

1660 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

belief — an idea someone accepts as true

respect — treat someone or something with care and regard

protect — keep someone or something from harm

Look closely



Modern topic illustration created for Massachusetts History Explorers. It is not a historical artifact.

Read the story

Mary Dyer was a Quaker. Colony leaders banned Quakers. She returned to Boston to stand by her beliefs. The government put her to death in 1660. Her story shows the harm of religious intolerance.

Dyer had supported Anne Hutchinson before becoming a Quaker. Her repeated return challenged colonial restrictions. A later memorial records how people remember her; it is different from evidence created during her life.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: King Philip's War

1675–1678

War spread through New England. Metacom, a Wampanoag leader whom English people called King Philip, was part of the conflict. Native and English communities suffered great losses. Native nations survived.

Colonial expansion and land pressures helped produce the war. Alliances differed among Native communities. Southern fighting largely ended in 1676, while conflict continued farther north. Native survivors faced displacement, captivity, and enslavement.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

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.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: 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: Mary Dyer was a Quaker. Colony leaders banned Quakers. She returned to Boston to stand by her beliefs. The government put her to death in 1660. Her story shows the harm of religious intolerance. Dyer had supported Anne Hutchinson before becoming a Quaker. Her repeated return challenged colonial restrictions. A later memorial records how people remember her; it is different from evidence created during her life.

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: Original site illustration.

[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.