



# PILGRIMS

A simulation of the first year at Plymouth Colony

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## PURPOSE

In schools throughout America boys and girls celebrate Thanksgiving by dressing up as Pilgrims and Indians, and having a feast in their classrooms. They see pictures of clean, well-dressed Pilgrims and listen to a story about how they were helped by the Indians, but what they miss is the real drama behind the Pilgrims' first year in the New World. These hardy settlers were lucky to have survived at all, and those who did lived with the loss of loved ones and fear of Indians. They endured bitter cold, deadly diseases, and lack of food.

The purpose of PILGRIMS is to give students a closer look at the struggle that was part of everyday life in Plymouth Colony. Students vicariously experience the hardships of life in the New World as they make decisions and face consequences just as the Pilgrims did nearly 400 years ago. By the end of the simulation your students will have a deeper, richer understanding of why the Pilgrims gave thanks and why we honor them today.



“  
... why we honor them today ...  
”

Specifically, your students will experience the following:

### **Knowledge**

1. the differences between Separatists and Pilgrims
2. why the Pilgrims came to the New World
3. the hardships aboard the *Mayflower*
4. the difficulties of surviving in the New World
5. the first Thanksgiving and what happened afterward

### **Feelings**

1. appreciation for the difficulties experienced by the Pilgrims
2. uncertainty as decisions are made
3. helplessness as disease strikes their colony
4. satisfaction as their colony grows
5. confidence as their writing skills improve

### **Skills**

1. how to proofread their written work
2. how to help other students with their written work
3. practice making log entries
4. practice decision making
5. practice working cooperatively in groups

## OVERVIEW

In PILGRIMS students establish colonies in the New World and try to do a better job of surviving than the original Pilgrims. Unlike other simulations where teams compete against each other, PILGRIMS has students compete not against themselves but against the original Pilgrims. Success depends on hard work, good decisions, and luck. Each team, along with the historical Pilgrims, has a map of its colony and a list of colonists prominently displayed on a bulletin board. Consequently, during the simulation teams can follow how their progress compares with the original Pilgrims' progress. They can see the houses that are built, the fields that are planted, and the number of their colonists who have survived. The challenge for each team is to surpass the Pilgrims' achievements by working harder and making better decisions.

The unit begins when students review the story of the Pilgrims, form teams, and create a list of 104 colonists. Next, they select a site for their colony. They base their decision on the same information that was available to the Pilgrims. They can settle anywhere in New England where there is a natural harbor.

Once they have selected a colony site, each team boards a "ship" that is actually marked out on the floor in a 6'x 3' rectangle (the amount of space for each Pilgrim aboard the *Mayflower*). Students must work in these crowded conditions to earn points that get them across the Atlantic. After landing, they first create their own laws to govern themselves, and then they post sentries.

Teams now begin working in their colony. They build houses, search for food, and plant crops. They must establish peace with the Indians and develop a lucrative trade so they can pay off their debts. Just as the Pilgrims faced hardships so will your students. They must overcome disease, hunger, cold, Indian attacks, and fire. Two types of fate cards determine these hardships. First is Colonial Fate based on the time of year a team arrived in the New World. The second type of fate, Pilgrim Log Fate, is based on hard work. Hard work is simulated when students make entries in their Pilgrim Logs. The better the entries in their Pilgrim Logs the better their fate.

By the end of the simulation, students have increased their understanding of the hardships Pilgrims faced and the difficulties they had in being the first New England settlers. The simulation concludes with a PILGRIM TEST, a search for the Ultimate Pilgrim, and an optional Thanksgiving feast.



“

*... an optional Thanksgiving feast ...*

”

## SIMULATION ELEMENTS - 1

**Phases:** PILGRIMS is divided into nine phases. Each phase takes approximately one hour of class time. It begins with an overview of the day's activities, a list of materials you will need, and the lesson plans. Colonial Fate and Pilgrim Log Fate are included in the lessons. Following the lesson plans are the pages that need to be duplicated—*typed in capital letters*—e.g., SURVIVAL ACTIVITY, WRITING GUIDE.

**Bulletin board colonial settlement maps:** On the bulletin board is a ROUTE TO NEW ENGLAND for the whole class and a NEW ENGLAND SETTLEMENT MAP for each team. (These bulletin board maps are like score sheets that show the students how well they are doing compared with the Pilgrims.) The team maps include the name of the colony and the month the colonists arrived. They have places for colonists to add the houses they build and the fields whose acres of food they have harvested.

**List of colonists:** Each team has to make a list of 104 colonists who go to the New World. Whenever a colonist dies, one name is crossed off the list. It does not matter which name. Use a bright red marker so students can easily see the decision. In order to make this list *meaningful and personal*, students should list family members, relatives, and friends. The list goes on the bulletin board below each team's NEW ENGLAND SETTLEMENT MAP. Make sure everyone in the classroom can easily see it.

**Mayflower passengers:** This list of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims who came to the New World has 102 names and two extra spaces for babies who will be born during the first year. Students will use this list in the same way they use their team's LIST OF COLONISTS. The latter list is for your students' teams; the MAYFLOWER PASSENGERS LIST is for the Pilgrims. Whenever a Pilgrim dies, cross that name off the list with a bright red marker. The names of the Pilgrims who die are followed by a number that corresponds to the number on the list of *Mayflower* passengers. This number will make it easy for you to locate the names. This list goes below the Pilgrims' NEW ENGLAND SETTLEMENT MAP. Make sure everyone in the classroom can easily see it.

“  
... five  
pages  
plus a  
title  
page ...  
”

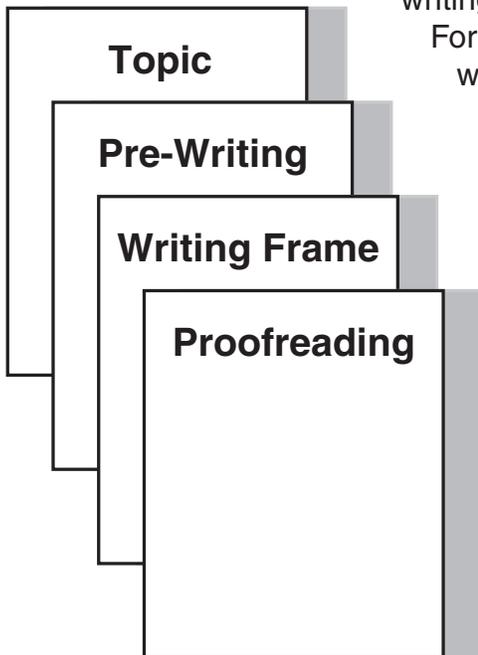
**PILGRIM LOGS:** Students are responsible for making daily entries in a PILGRIM LOG. A handout sheet for each log page comes with this simulation. The log is to have five pages plus a title page. It is for use by primary age students. You will have to put together a log for each student by making copies of the log pages. Each entry is about a half page long and works well with the younger students. You can avoid this duplication with older students who can write longer entries. Have them use notebook paper (one sheet per log entry) instead of the log pages that come with this simulation.

## SIMULATION ELEMENTS - 2

If you choose to use notebook paper, you will still need to make copies of the title page and the log's last page—"Building the Settlement"—for each student's log. The "Building the Settlement" page must go at the end of each student's PILGRIM LOG.

The entries in the PILGRIM LOGS must be as *neat* and as *correct* as the students can make them. They may make rough drafts of their entries on scratch paper before recopying them into the log. Beginning in Phase 3, you will select two logs from each team, read them, and assign a score. (See Scoring Pilgrim Logs below.) This score determines the Pilgrim Log Fate for the day. The better the log entry, the better the fate. The emphasis in this log is on *correctness*. To help students compose their thoughts and check their work, a WRITING GUIDE is provided for each log entry.

### WRITING GUIDES



**WRITING GUIDES:** These guides are designed to help students make good entries in their PILGRIM LOGS. Each guide has four parts: **Topic**, **Pre-writing activity**, **Writing frame**, and **Proofreading**. In the first part, students receive a specific topic to write about. Next, the pre-writing activity gives students ideas to help them with their writing. For primary students and older students who say "I don't know what to write," a writing frame is provided. This frame gives the students a topic sentence and leads them into writing a log entry by completing sentences and filling in the blank lines. You, as teacher, may also use the writing frame to demonstrate how a log entry could be written. At the bottom of the guide are seven questions to help students proofread their papers.

The guide's sole purpose is to help students make entries in their PILGRIM LOGS. *Its use is optional*. You may give one copy to each student or one copy to each team. You may make a display copy and discuss the guide with your entire class, or you may not use it at all. Whether or not and how you choose to use the WRITING GUIDE is up to you. The important thing is for your students to make accurate, neat, and correct entries in their logs.

**Scoring PILGRIM LOGS:** There are two reasons for scoring the PILGRIM LOGS. First, you want to see that your students are making entries in their logs that are neat and accurate. Second, you will determine the Pilgrim Log Fate of each team based on the log entries. In order to do well, students need to know *exactly* what is expected and how their log entries will be scored. This is explained on the SCORING PILGRIM LOGS sheet.

## SIMULATION ELEMENTS - 3

This paper explains how individual logs will be scored and how the two logs' scores will be combined to determine a team's fate. You may choose to modify the way the logs are scored. Working alone or with the class, you decide what must be done to get a "very good" and "good" evaluation. For example, you might say two or three mistakes are acceptable to earn a "very good" evaluation. You may wish to give a "needs to improve" to any entry that has a run-on sentence or has a sentence that does not begin with a capital letter. *The scoring rubric is up to you, but your students must know exactly what is expected of them.*

During the course of the simulation you should try to read each student's log at least two times. The scoring takes place while your students are making their log entries. You go to a team and take a log from one of the students. Quickly reading one of the entries, you give it a score of "very good," "good," or "needs improvement." (You may score any entry you want except the one they are currently working on.) In the margin next to the entry place either a + for very good, a √ for good, or a – for needs improvement. Return the log to the student and pick up another log from the same team. Quickly read this log entry and give it a score. Now you assign the Pilgrim Log Fate to the team.



“ *The Pilgrim Log Fate can have three consequences ...* ”

The Pilgrim Log Fate can have three consequences: if both logs score a "very good," the fate is **Miracle**; if both logs score a "good"—or if one is a "good" and the other a "very good"—the fate is **Destiny**. Whenever one of the two logs needs improvement and receives a –, the fate is **Misfortune** regardless of the other student's score. On a slip of paper jot down the team's name and their fate (Miracle, Destiny, or Misfortune). Then go on to the next team and read/evaluate two of their entries. Continue this until you have read two log entries from each team.

Since the entries are expected to be neat and free from major errors, the readings should go very quickly. You should be able to easily read and score the logs while the students are making their entries. If for some reason this is not possible, it is permissible to collect the logs and score them at a later time and then read the Pilgrim Log Fate when you have finished.

## SIMULATION ELEMENTS - 4

**Fate consequences:** Two types of fate are used in this simulation. The first is called Colonial Fate. It is usually located at the beginning of each phase. It describes the fate of the Pilgrims and the fate of the teams. Colonial Fate covers the colonists' experiencing death, disease, food shortages, fires, and Indian encounters. Colonial Fate is beyond the control of the teams. It has already been determined based on the month of their arrival.

The second kind of fate is called Pilgrim Log Fate. It is located at the end of each phase—beginning with Phase 3. Students have some control over this kind of fate because it is based on their hard work in the Pilgrim Logs. After you score two logs from each team, you award the Pilgrim Log Fate of Miracle, Destiny, or Misfortune. Miracle is the best fate to get because it gives the teams houses, food, and protection. Destiny is also good because it does not harm the colonists, but Misfortune must be avoided, for it brings death and destruction.

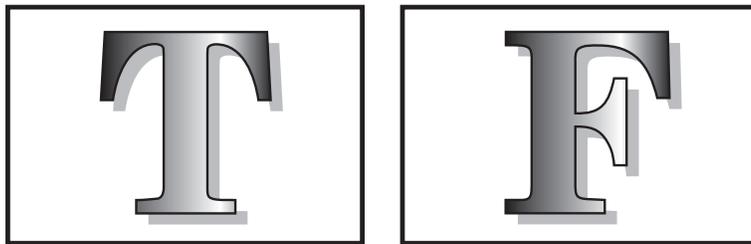
**T/F statements:** These statements are used during certain phases so that teams can earn additional points. T/F Statements contain facts, trivia, and lies about the Pilgrims. Their purpose is different during each phase, but the procedures for using them are always the same. When

the directions call for using the T/F Statements, have each team take out their T and F cards. These are half sheets of paper with a large **T** printed on one and a large **F** printed on the other. They stand for True and False. Next, read aloud a T/F Statement. Teams discuss whether the statement is true or false. After 30 seconds have each team hold up

either a T sheet or an F sheet to show their answer. Quickly scan each team's answer. Teams with correct answers are rewarded according to the phase's directions. For example, during Phase 2 a correct response earns points to help teams cross the ocean. During Phase 4—if they give a correct answer—teams get extra houses they can add to their settlements. There is no penalty for a mistake.

As you go from phase to phase, you just continue on with the next statement. You do not start over. If you last read statement 22 in Phase 3, you will continue with statement 23 in Phase 4. (**Note:** When you play *Ultimate Pilgrim* during Phase 9 you will start again at number one. This is explained in more detail in Phase 9.)

**Survival activities:** These are brief mini-simulations that take from 10 to 30 minutes to play. Each one is unique and independent of the others. Through these activities teams protect their colony, find food, build houses, make peace with the Indians, plant crops, and trade



## SIMULATION ELEMENTS - 5

trinkets for furs. They also provide students with additional information about the Pilgrims. They are used in Phases 3-8.

**Costumes:** In order to add realism to this simulation, have your students bring in old tattered shirts, blouses, sweaters, or sweatshirts. Have them wear these during each phase of the simulation. Pilgrim costumes like bonnets, vests, and hats made from construction paper will not hold up and their use is not recommended.

**Thanksgiving feast:** This simulation ends shortly after the fall harvest. If you would like to have a Thanksgiving feast as a culminating activity, an optional re-creation of New England's first Thanksgiving is presented in this Teacher Guide. It gives you all the information you need to involve your students and their parents in an historically accurate Thanksgiving feast. Such "happenings" at the end of a simulation can be memorable. Students love them.



## UNIT PLANS - 1

The three unit plans given on these three pages are intended as examples. **Note:** *Alter them as desired.*

### UNIT TIME CHART (9 Days)

Phase <b>1</b>	Phase <b>2</b>	Phase <b>3</b>	Phase <b>4</b>	Phase <b>5</b>	Phase <b>6</b>	Phase <b>7</b>	Phase <b>8</b>	Phase <b>9</b>
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9



**The Nine-Day Unit Plan** is a traditional lesson-by-lesson format. The students may work on one lesson a day for nine days. Note: you may decide to use the nine days preceding Thanksgiving.

- **Phase 1:** Teams are formed. Colonists are listed. Pilgrim Log scoring is explained. Log entries are made.
- **Phase 2:** Teams board ships and cross the ocean to their new colonies. Students make log entries.
- **Phase 3:** Mayflower Compacts are written. SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 1: Protecting the Colony. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 4:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 2: Building the Settlement. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 5:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 3: Finding Food. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 6:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 4: Peace with the Indians. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 7:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 5: Spring Planting. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 8:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 6: Trading Expeditions. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 9:** COLONY EVALUATION. PILGRIM TEST. Debriefing. Thanksgiving feast (optional)

## UNIT TIME CHART (3 Days)

| Phase    |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>9</b> |
| Day 1    |          |          | Day 2    |          |          | Day 3    |          |          |



TEACHING TIP

The **Three-Day Unit Plan** can be used any time of year but was specifically designed for the three days prior to Thanksgiving vacation. To complete this simulation in three days, you must devote the entire class time to the simulation. Since the activities in each phase are so different, the students do not get bored.

### ● DAY 1

- **Phase 1:** Teams are formed. Colonists are listed. Pilgrim Log scoring is explained. Log entries are made.
- **Phase 2:** Teams board ships and cross the ocean to their new colonies. Students make log entries.
- **Phase 3:** Mayflower Compacts are written. SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 1: Protecting the Colony. Log entries are made and scored.

### ● DAY 2

- **Phase 4:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 2: Building the Settlement. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 5:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 3: Finding Food. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 6:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 4: Peace with the Indians. Log entries are made and scored.

### ● DAY 3

- **Phase 7:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 5: Spring Planting. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 8:** SURVIVAL ACTIVITY 6: Trading Expeditions. Log entries are made and scored.
- **Phase 9:** COLONY EVALUATION. PILGRIM TEST. Debriefing. Thanksgiving feast (optional)

### UNIT TIME CHART (9 Weeks—or 4 and 1/2 Weeks)

<b>Week 1: Phase 1</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 2: Phase 2</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 3: Phase 3</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 4: Phase 4</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 5: Phase 5</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 6: Phase 6</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 7: Phase 7</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 8: Phase 8</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)
<b>Week 9: Phase 9</b> (See description of this phase on previous page.)

- **Note:** *Do two phases per week and cut this Unit Time Chart in half. You can then finish all nine phases in four and one-half weeks.*



**The Nine-Week Unit Plan** is to accommodate those teachers who work with students once a week for a couple of hours. The unit would use the nine phases described on the previous two pages. However, note that *the nine weeks can easily be cut in half if students complete two phases per week.*