THE PILGRIMS: First Year in the New World

A replica of the Mayflower, *the ship that brought the Pilgrims to the New World*

The Pilgrims were a group of English settlers trying to find religious freedom in the New World. They disagreed with the Church of England and had established a new church. In England, they were known as Separatists, since they wanted to separate from the Church of England.

The Pilgrims left England in September 1620. About 102 passengers and 30 crew men were on the *Mayflower*, a 100 foot sailing ship. The ocean crossing was rough after the first month at sea. Finally, the Mayflower reached North America. The group made several stops, including Cape Cod and Provincetown, Massachusetts. They did not find an area they liked for a permanent settlement. On December 1620 they found an area of Massachusetts that they liked. They named the new settlement Plymouth.

The first winter was very difficult for the Pilgrims. The weather was harsh. They had not built shelters on land, so most of the Pilgrims lived on the Mayflower during the winter. The men went on shore during the day to build shelters, but it was very slow work. Many were sick. Almost half of the passengers died that first winter.

When spring came, the settlers met the Native Americans who lived in the area, the Wampanoag tribe. The Wampanoag were friendly to the settlers. They gave them food and sold them land to farm. One Wampanoag named Squanto taught them how to fish for seafood and grow corn. It was a difficult life for the settlers, but they worked hard to make a new life in the new land.

When autumn came, the settlers harvested their crops. They had buildings to live in during the upcoming winter. Of the Pilgrims that left England, 53 of the settlers had survived. Only four of the original 13 women were alive. To celebrate the harvest, the Pilgrims held a feast. About 90 Wampanoag members came to the feast, bringing food. This feast is now known as the first Thanksgiving.

Questions

1. Who are the characters?

2. Where and when does the story take place?

3. Why is this reading a historical fiction reading? Explain with 4 characteristics.

LIVEWORKSHEETS