

“Of Plymouth Plantation” by William Bradford



“But that which was most sad and lamentable was, that in two or three months' time half of their company had died...”

Author Background

- William Bradford (1590-1657)
- Raised Puritan with no formal higher education, was trained as a farmer
- Joined a Nonconformist Christian church (the Separatists), and in 1620 came to America aboard the *Mayflower* in order to escape religious persecution and to form a community where they could worship freely.
- They landed at Plymouth- and Bradford was elected governor no fewer than thirty times as he was an exemplary leader.
- The first winter was extremely harsh and more than half of his colony died-- though Plymouth did later flourish and prosper.

Textual Background

- “Of Plymouth Plantation” was begun in 1630 and continued until 1647.
- Was not intended for publication, but was instead to be used as inspiration for future generations of the Puritan Ideal.
- The first copy was destroyed during the Revolutionary War, but the original was later discovered nearly a century later.
- It was first published in 1856.
- Pay special attention to the plain style--simplicity and clarity of expression.

Close Read: Recall and Interpret

- What hardships did the pilgrims face aboard the Mayflower and in Plymouth? Do you think the Pilgrims were skilled at adapting to unexpected changes? Explain.
- Explain how the Pilgrims survived during the “Starving Time”. What do Bradford's comments reveal about the Pilgrims?
- What did Samoset and Squanto accomplish? Explain the effects of their actions on the Pilgrims. Give examples to support your response.
- Compare the time of plenty in “The First Thanksgiving” to the Pilgrims' situation in “The Starving Time”. What do you think might have happened to the Pilgrims without Squanto's help?

Post-Reading

- With a partner, answer in complete sentences “evaluate and connect” questions 6-8 and “Diction” 1-2 on page 35.
- ****This is HOMEWORK if you don't finish!!****

Post-Reading

- Within a small group 3-4 members, you need to create a timeline of 10 major events from the text.
- Use a sheet of paper to graph your timeline. Your graph should also include at least three images which represent major ideas, symbols, events within the text.

RAFT WRITING

- **Role**- Someone who has observed the new settlers
 - *Mayflower* sailor, Native American Observer, one of the Puritan Settlers
 - **Audience**- His fellow observers
 - **Format**- A narration in the observer's voice
 - **Topic**- The situation described in the excerpt
- **Use your timeline to recreate the situation in the text from a new character's point of view. Use diction, tone, and voice to establish your narrator. 250 words minimum.