

A Society Knit as One:

The Puritans, Algonkians, and
Roger Williams

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A Society Knit as One: **The Puritans, Algonkians, and Roger Williams**

A Unit of Study for Grades 5–8

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INTRODUCTION

I. APPROACH AND RATIONALE

A *Society Knit as One: The Puritans, Algonkians, and Roger Williams* is one of over sixty teaching units published by the National Center for History for the Schools that are the fruits of collaborations between history professors and experienced teachers of World History. They represent specific issues and “dramatic episodes” in history from which you and your students can delve into the deeper meanings of these selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative. By studying crucial turning points in history the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected issues and dramatic episodes that bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow’s history.

Our teaching units are based on primary sources, taken from government documents, artifacts, magazines, newspapers, films, private correspondence, literature, contemporary photographs, and paintings from the period under study. What we hope you achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to have your students connect more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of “being there,” a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian’s craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

II. CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Within this unit, you will find: Teaching Background Materials, including Unit Overview, Unit Context, Correlation to the National Standards for History, Unit Objectives, and Introduction to *A Society Knit as One: The Puritans, Algonkians, and Roger Williams*; Dramatic Moment; and Lesson Plans with Student Resources. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. Although these lessons are recommended for use by grades 5–8, they can be adapted for other grade levels.

The Teacher Background section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the **Dramatic Moment** to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose

Introduction

to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The Lesson Plans include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. The resources consist of primary source documents, handouts and student background materials, and a bibliography.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction.

Teacher Background

I. Unit Overview

Relying on primary sources, this unit explores the Puritans' attempt to create a utopian community in New England. The Massachusetts Bay Colony was in many respects remarkably homogeneous and cohesive, composed of Calvinist Protestants from the middle ranks of England. They shared common goals as well as a common background. The vision of a godly society, where people fit themselves to obey God's will as revealed in the Bible, was broadly shared by Puritans. Striving for individual salvation as they worked for the common good, Puritans tried to build a harmonious religious commonwealth which would be a model first for England and ultimately the world.

But the very loftiness of their goals bred dissension. Although Puritans relied on the Bible to guide them in building their "city on the hill," they had various interpretations of the Bible and different ideas about what kind of laws, institutions, and conduct a utopian society required. From the beginning, tension existed between communitarian notions of social good and the individual pursuit of spiritual salvation. The insistence on obedience to civil authority and adherence to a rigorous legal code was an irritant to both stiff-necked, self-righteous sorts who were convinced of their spiritual superiority and to those members of the colony, who, having migrated for adventure and fortune, were less than devout Puritans. As the colony became more firmly established, the individualistic quest for material well-being further hampered the creation of a community "knit as one."

Focusing on Winthrop's secular sermon "A Model of Christian Charity," the first lesson considers the values, goals, and political beliefs which animated the Puritan experiment. Special attention is given to the concept of the covenant as an organizing principle for Puritan society. The second lesson shows how beliefs affect daily life and studies the way children were raised. The third lesson studies the region's original inhabitants, the Narragansett, and their interactions with the Puritans. The final lesson introduces students to Puritan government. Emphasizing local government, town meetings, and the duties of citizenship, this lesson captures the way in which the Massachusetts Bay Colony provided an important antecedent for the representative government our nation would eventually achieve.

Of all the colonies, the Massachusetts Bay Colony is the one most people look back to for our nation's founding principles. The idea of a covenant, which in some ways anticipated Locke's social contract, was much imitated in other colonies, and even has obvious echoes in the preamble of the *Constitution of the United States*. Appreciating the utopian vision that drew Puritans to the New World is a primary concern of this unit. Their sense of their unique place in world history is a notion that has recurred with frequency in our history, inspiring some of our best and worst behavior as a nation.

Teacher Background

But the importance of the Puritans lies as much in their failures as in their achievements. Their attempts to sustain a homogeneous community of shared beliefs did not succeed. Students need to understand how the ideas that brought Puritans to the New World and sustained them in their early years of settlement led to strife rather than harmony. They need to consider the extent to which a community has the right to insist that all its members share the same beliefs and the extent to which regulating this ideal is possible.

This unit also introduces students to the important voices of dissent—to the alternative developed by Roger Williams—freedom of conscience. His innovative idea of religious tolerance ultimately became the basis for the first amendment of the Bill of Rights. The sharp division he made between church and state was unprecedented, but his reasons, like the Puritans' concept of the covenant, are the antecedents for important values in today's society.

A lesson on some of New England's original inhabitants is crucial. The varied relations between Algonkians and Puritans mark one of the more revealing differences between Williams and other Puritan leaders. But the most significant reason for introducing students to the Narragansett is to draw their attention to a rich and fascinating culture, whose ways of regarding nature are particularly worth appreciating. Their notions of how to work the land were a source of friction between natives and Puritans. Yet, their values may inspire us to a more temperate use of our natural resources.

II. Unit Context

This unit should be taught after studying Pre-Columbian Indians and the Age of Exploration and prior to studying late colonial America and the American Revolution. Students should have a sense of what Native American cultures were like before European contact, with some appreciation of the rich and complex diversity of Native American cultures. From the study of European explorers, they also should have a sense that by the time the Puritans landed, the natives in the region had been in contact with Europeans for over a century.

Contrasting the colonization of the Massachusetts Bay Colony with Jamestown and the Quakers of Pennsylvania would be an excellent way to show that there were different approaches to colonization. Understanding how different these three regions were in their beginnings would help students understand the abiding regional differences that mark American history.

III. Unit Objectives

1. To study historical documents in order to experience history as a dynamic discipline which studies, interprets, and debates the meaning of human artifacts and, through those, humanity's collective past.
2. To examine the way Puritan children were treated from a variety of perspectives and from this study of children to imagine the way ordinary Puritans lived.
3. To appreciate the rich culture of the Algonkians and the way the culture was modified by its contact with Europeans.
4. To consider the way Puritan forms of government anticipated later more democratic practices and yet differed from these practices in certain fundamental ways.
5. To experience the way different sources are used to provide historical understanding.
6. To experience the difference between primary and secondary documents.

IV. Correlation to United States History Standards

A *Society Knit as One: The Puritans, Algonkians, and Roger Williams* provides teachers with extended lessons that address **Era 2** (Colonization and Settlement) of the *National Standards for United States History, Basic Edition* (Los Angeles, National Center for History in the Schools, 1996). Specifically, students analyze the religious motives of Puritan colonizers (**Standard 1A**); examine how English settlers interacted with Native Americans in New England and analyze how Native American societies changed as a result of the expanding European settlement and how they influenced European societies (**Standard 1B**); examine the roots of representative government and how political rights were defined (**Standard 2A**); and, explain how Puritanism shaped New England communities and how it changed during the 17th century and trace the evolution of religious freedom in the English colonies (**Standard 2B**).

Lessons in the unit likewise provide students with the opportunity to apply a number of Historical Thinking Standards including an examination of multiple causation, consider multiple perspectives, examine the influence of ideas and interests, analyze cause-and-effect relationships, assess the importance of the individual in history, and reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration.

Teacher Background

V. Introduction to *A Society Knit as One: Puritans, Roger Williams, and the Algonkians*

In 1629, just before King Charles I dissolved Parliament, he gave a company of prominent Puritans a royal charter authorizing them to settle the Massachusetts Bay region. Other corporations were granted similar patents to develop lands claimed by England, but they operated from English cities under the watchful eyes of the King and his men. Whether by accident or design, no one is certain, the Massachusetts Bay Company charter prescribed no meeting place for company officers. Bay Company officers interpreted this silence as permission to regulate their enterprise from New England. By moving company meetings to Massachusetts, the company's chief officer became the colony's governor and company members became its legislature and judiciary. In effect, the Massachusetts Bay Colony was a self-governing commonwealth, independent and isolated from the King's authority.

Puritans regarded this advantageous charter as providential evidence of God's favor. The patent for the Massachusetts Bay Colony was not only a contract between business partners and the King, it was a covenant with God, a promise to Him which He had enabled. Besides virtual independence, the Massachusetts Bay Colony was distinguished by being a religious enterprise, rather than a merely commercial one. Company directors were less concerned with profit than with constructing a model community which conformed to the word of God. Laws for regulating the civil affairs of New England Puritans were drawn directly from the Bible. Disobeying parents was a capital crime for Puritans not because they were especially harsh, but because respect for parents was the Fifth Commandment in the Bible.

Although Puritans sought to build a society bound by Christian love, where individuals would be subordinated to the needs of the community, they resented the confusion between civil and clerical authority embodied in the religious hierarchy of the Church of England. They were opposed to bishops, regarding them as tainted remnants of Catholicism. Puritans regarded the king's authority to appoint bishops as an improper mixing of church and state. They felt members of each church should choose their own minister and regulate their own church affairs. However, for both practical as well as idealistic reasons the Puritans resisted separating from the Anglican Church. Not only were they dependent on the king's good will, they truly hoped that through their example they could reform the church. The Bay Colony sought to keep the church and state distinct by barring ministers from holding civil office. But given their intention to construct a holy commonwealth, authority between civil and religious institutions overlapped.

Convinced of the need for absolute conformity to the standards they were establishing, Puritan leaders limited voting to adult male church members. Puritans hoped such a restriction would help them avoid factional disputes and ensure that leaders and ordinary Puritans shared the same social vision. They also sought community harmony by vigorously enforcing adherence to community standards and obliging everyone to live within a community.

Realizing that people had not changed their essential nature by crossing the Atlantic, Puritans sought to uphold their covenant with God by rooting out sin whenever it appeared. To behave otherwise would have been to condone evil. Thus, Puritans felt themselves responsible for the good behavior of their neighbors. Compact villages were constructed with houses close together to facilitate watching one another. Most of the living in these houses was done in common areas and individuals seldom had their own rooms.

Families, not individuals, were the essential social and economic units. Just as the society was hierarchical so too was the family. Resolutely patriarchal, the family was “a little commonwealth.” Single adults were required to live in families where their behavior could be monitored and under the authority of a patriarch.

The proper rearing of children was as much for parents’ souls as for the well-being of children. Since knowledge of the Bible was the surest way to salvation, children were instructed in reading not so much to advance their material condition but to help their spiritual well-being. The community was also organized around biblical precepts, so understanding of the Bible would help to ensure strict obedience to community norms.

Those drawn to this utopian experiment were a remarkably close-knit and homogeneous group. Puritan leaders were among England’s best educated citizens. Ministers were typically college educated. Company leaders were members of the gentry or rising merchant class, experienced in decision-making and leadership. Unlike the recruits to Jamestown, Puritans were drawn from England’s middle ranks. Yeoman farmers, artisans, and small shopkeepers were actively recruited and were expected to bring their families. They frequently came from the same or neighboring villages and parishes and many doubtless had known one another in England. Religion, however, was the principal basis of their homogeneity.

As Calvinists, Puritans believed firmly in predestination. They accepted that most people were destined for damnation. Since Adam’s fall, they believed, people had demonstrated that they were too morally weak and fundamentally wicked to merit salvation and heaven. Yet, as a demonstration of goodness and power, God selected some people to join Him in heaven. There was no way to be certain of one’s own election. The elect made up the true and invisible church of saints. However, the visible church, like the Church of England, was open to all people—saints and sinners alike. The emotional pressure exerted by this system of belief was often enormous. Puritans constantly sought reassuring signs that they were among the elect. Their emphasis on congregational churches, where groups of believers formed themselves into churches of what they hoped were visible saints, was one way to deal with such pressure. They looked for signs of their spiritual destination. They believed that the capacity to behave morally and to prosper materially were indications of God’s favor.

Puritans took their success in establishing the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a sign of their uniquely favored status. After the first harsh winter, when 200 of the original 700 settlers

Teacher Background

died and another 100 were so thoroughly discouraged they returned to England, the Puritan experiment met with such material success that by 1640 there were 12,000 settlers in New England. The diseases that decimated the populations of Native Americans, assuring Puritans abundant land with little need for armed conflict, were more evidence of God's love. Although perhaps all people and social groups put themselves at the center of their stories, the unique success that greeted the Puritans in their early years combined with their sense of mission is one source for our national tendency to believe in the exceptional role God and history has assigned the American people.

Puritan leaders, like Governor John Winthrop, were concerned that nothing be done to jeopardize the autonomy of their colony. Driving non-conformists from their community was essential to keep their mission uncorrupted. Moreover, their spiritual concerns had a practical aspect: they worried that religious zealots, like Roger Williams, who wanted to separate from the Church of England, drew the wrong sort of attention to the colony. Leaders already feared that migrating to New England with the charter looked like separation. If the king believed that they were attempting to evade his authority, he might revoke their charter.

Despite being thrown out of Massachusetts Bay Colony, Roger Williams was a Puritan. He is remembered for establishing a colony predicated on religious tolerance, a concept he called "soul liberty," but his religious convictions stemmed from a stiff-necked, utterly relentless pursuit of what he was persuaded were the true principles of Puritanism. He, too, was a Calvinist who believed in predestination and the essentially wicked nature of humanity, but he was much less confident that congregational churches, even if their membership were closely monitored, could be pure. Since true purity could not be found in any established church, the righteous should abandon the hope of finding it in any human institution. Williams was convinced that true sanctity had no need, nor any unique ability, to impose moral enlightenment on others. The outward forms of behavior could certainly be regulated, but it was beyond human ability to impose spiritual virtue. Only God had such power. For humans to believe their institutions could foster grace was presumptuous. Thus, when Williams upheld a separation of church and state, he was unconcerned with the peace of the state; his interest was to preserve the unhindered pursuit of individual religious experience.

His desire to acknowledge the Algonkians as the rightful owners of the land stemmed from the same inflexible self-righteous attention to pursuing truth ruthlessly. He saw that the land was not unworked territory and the Algonkians did have a sense of proprietorship. Consequently, he had no doubts that they were its legitimate owners. The assertion commonly made by Puritan leaders, called *vacuum domicilium*, that they were entitled to claim any land that appeared to them to be unused was flatly rejected by Williams.

The first years of Puritan and Algonkian interaction were relatively tranquil. Part of the reason for this apparently smooth meeting was that Algonkians had had regular contact

with Europeans for almost a hundred years prior to the arrival of Pilgrims and Puritans. Algonkian culture had already been affected by this contact and Algonkians had some understanding of European culture and people. They had begun to incorporate technological innovations brought by Europeans into their traditional cultural crafts. But the most profound effect of this early contact was the transmission of contagious diseases by Europeans. Thousands of native people, with no resistance to diseases like smallpox, measles, and bubonic plague, died. Just a few years before the arrival of the Pilgrims, there were about 72,000 Native Americans in the New England region; by 1690 these people had been essentially destroyed.

English settlers tended to be contemptuous and distrustful of Algonkians because of their seasonal mode of living. Coastal tribes had summer villages where they raised corn and fished, and inland winter settlements in sheltered valleys. Their summer residences were domed huts made of two layers of woven mats, while their winter dwellings were more substantial log dwellings which resembled modern Quonset huts. Indeed, the design for Quonset huts in the 1940s was based on a native form of housing from Rhode Island. This mobility was the source of two sorts of confusion on the part of Europeans: mobility was confused with rootlessness and the slash and burn agricultural practices done by women led Europeans to assume that Algonkian men were lazy. The effect of these misapprehensions fueled English ethnocentrism. The goal of bringing Christianity to Native Americans was at best pursued half-heartedly, despite being one of the principal aims listed in the Massachusetts Bay Charter. Regardless of their disdain, the English were initially interested in preserving sufficiently cordial relations so that they could engage with the Algonkians in the highly lucrative fur trade. They also sought to control those tribal groups responsible for manufacturing wampum, a medium of exchange. Once the fur-bearing animals had been hunted out, the English were interested in acquiring Algonkian land and less concerned in sustaining decent relations between people. Once the beaver were decimated and the Algonkian people were sufficiently weakened, preserving their autonomous existence proved impossible.

VI. Lesson Plans

1. The City on the Hill
2. The Fifth Commandment: "Honor thy Father and thy Mother"
3. A Heart Sensible of Kindness
4. The Wisest Invention

Dramatic Moment

A Model of Christian Charity

The constant rocking had become a little noticed part of the Puritans' world. Two months on board cramped wooden ships had made the memory of unmoving ground as distant as dry clothes, fresh vegetables, and the ability to walk without constantly ducking, twisting, or grabbing for support. What would stretching out on a hill in the new world be like? Would the trees be like those in England? Would there be fierce beasts and hostile savages? Would the land be rich and fertile and grow those sweet good grains and grasses that people and their beasts need to survive? These were probably the thoughts of many of the Puritans as they approached the rocky coast of North America.

But others were more concerned with the nature of the society they would construct than the land on which they would live. Their leader, John Winthrop, was particularly anxious that they avoid the fighting and selfish pursuit of individual fortune that had brought the settlement of Jamestown so much suffering and death. Already tempers were frayed. Each family had been given a patch of deck in the dark hull. Somehow in these confined quarters among the barrels of supplies, farm tools, and household goods people had to cook, eat, sleep, and fill the empty hours of waiting. Not only children but adults grew restless and crabby with so little to do in spaces too confined even for the few necessary shipboard chores. If passengers were not sick from the rough seas or frustrated by trying to complete even simple tasks on rolling decks, they were bored. As the days stretched into weeks and the weeks became months, passengers started to bicker. The fellowship and shared vision that had brought them together was in danger of disintegrating in argument and petty feuds. To remind them of their purpose and to inspire those worried about the unknown adventure that awaited them, Winthrop spoke to those gathered around him on the flagship *Arbella*.

Speaking in a firm voice to be heard over the creaks of straining timber, he said:

“We must love one another with a pure heart fervently, we must bear one another’s burdens, we must not look only on our own things but also on the things of our brethren. . . .

Thus stands the cause between God and us: we are entered into covenant with Him for this work; we have taken out a commission, the Lord hath given us leave to draw our own articles. Now if the Lord shall please to hear us and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then hath He ratified this performance of the articles contained in it. But if we shall neglect the observation of these articles . . . the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us. . . .

Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck and to provide for our posterity is to follow the counsel of Micah to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God. For this end, we must be knit together in this work as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. . . . We must delight in each other, make others’ conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together: always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, our community as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us. . . . We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies, when He shall make us a praise and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantations: ‘The Lord make it like that of New England.’ For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us.”

Reprinted as published in the *Winthrop Papers, Vol. II 1623–1630* (Massachusetts Historical Society, 1931).

Lesson One

The “City on the Hill”

A. Objectives

- ◆ To examine documents which show the underlying values that guided the formation of the Puritans’ concept of community.
- ◆ To understand the Puritan concept of covenant and appreciate the ways in which this idea continues to influence the way Americans interact.
- ◆ To appreciate the way people’s abstract values affect their material environment.
- ◆ To speculate about the values that students believe necessary for the society they want to create.

B. Lesson Activities

1. Ask students what they know about the Puritans. They might know that they were early English settlers of North America. They may also know that they were motivated to come to America for religious reasons.
2. Pass out copies of the **Dramatic Moment**, excerpts from John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Charity,” and have students read along as you read it to them. If the text is too difficult, you might let them use the simplified version, **Document A**. Have them discuss and ask questions about the text.
 - a. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group one paragraph to analyze and pass out “The Model of Christian Charity Worksheet” with questions to guide them in their analysis (**Worksheet 1**).
 - b. When each group has answered their set of questions, have them report their findings to the class. Different groups may have had various responses to the reading. As long as they have not simply misread Winthrop, variations should be accepted, but the reasons for differences should be explored.
 - c. From this activity students should understand that the Puritans of New England lived together on the basis of a dual covenant: their agreement with God to follow the laws they had laid down and their agreement with each other to adhere to those laws. Students should also understand that Winthrop was requiring them to follow these

laws in body and spirit. Thus, there was intense pressure in Puritan society to conform to a shared set of customs, laws, and even beliefs. Rigid enforcement of uniform behavior was a persistent problem for the Puritans.

3. The next activity is intended to show students how beliefs have real consequences on the way people live. It should also give students an opportunity to work with maps and consider some of the factors which determine where people live and how they organize their physical space. Have students brainstorm about the needs, concerns, and technology of the Puritans which helped them decide where to live.
 - a. Ask students what geographical needs helped determine where the Puritans lived. Possible answers include: safe harbor for ships, healthy fresh water, good land for farming, trees for building and fuel, location easily defended from beasts and potential enemies, either European or native.
 - b. After students have speculated about the geographical features, pass out copies of the first map printed in North America—taken from William Hubbard’s “A Narrative of the Troubles with Indians in New England” (**Document B**). Have students find Salem. Not altogether confident that the location of Salem was safe, Winthrop ordered the fleet to sail on until he came to the sites of what became Charlestown and Boston. Have students locate Charlestown and Boston. Students might be able to tell that Boston is on a peninsula that is connected to the mainland by a narrow neck of land. Ask students why a peninsula with a fresh water spring would have been a particularly desirable spot for Winthrop to found his city on a hill.

Lesson One

- c. Then ask students to speculate about the technological factors which helped determine what the Puritans' buildings would look like. To make this question more comprehensible and to remind students of how different the world of the Puritans was from our own, you might ask them the difference between the buildings of today and those the Puritans could build. Divide the chalkboard in half and label one side "Now" and the other side "Then."

Possible answers under "Now"

Heavy motor-driven machinery
Lumber and brick yards
Glass windows
Central heating
Plumbing
Electricity for cooking and light
Iron and concrete as building materials

Possible answers under "Then"

Saws, hammers, and axes
Joined wood with notches because nails were scarce
Rocks, lumber, twigs, mud, and thatch used as building material
Candles for light
Fireplaces for heat and cooking
No indoor plumbing
Small windows covered with oiled skins or, later, thick glass windows imported from Europe
All water hauled in buckets

d. When students have an idea of what to expect, pass out the pictures of Puritan houses, **Document C**. Be sure they understand that these are reproductions of the first English huts—the originals did not survive. Once the urgent need for basic shelter had been satisfied, the Puritans built more substantial homes. A few of these sturdy homes still exist, but, as in the one pictured, most have been modified. Have them look at the picture of the exposed corner and have them consider the skill involved in such carpentry. Ask them how they would like living in such homes, and how they would feel about the lack of privacy. Point out that even after the Puritans were more firmly established and they were building permanent houses, individuals seldom had their own rooms.

e. Using the discussion on privacy as a transition, ask students how Puritan beliefs might have influenced the way they organized their villages. First, ask students to list some of the Puritan's values. These might include:

Devotion to God

Helping each other

Sharing

Keeping an eye on each other

Trying to be good citizens

Working hard

f. Next ask students how each of these values might have been revealed in buildings or the way people organized their towns. If students are still having trouble connecting values to the physical world, they may have to be guided by quite specific questions. Such questions might include:

1. What are some buildings whose functions are revealed by their appearance?
2. Where do you think they would build their meeting houses (their term for church): on the edge of town or in the center?
3. Would people build houses close together or far apart?

Lesson One

- g. Tell students that we have few town maps from this period. However, in journals and the pages of early town records there is often enough information for historians to reconstruct the physical features of seventeenth-century town life. From such records, historians know that Puritans tended to live close together in compact villages. Fields surrounded the village and were divided among individuals according to their social standing. The center of town had a common where villagers let their animals graze and a meeting house where church services and town business were conducted. When villages were built beside rivers, houses tended to be laid out side by side on both sides of a street that ran parallel to the river. Usually meadowlands for grazing livestock were situated between the road and the river. Once students understand the scarcity of seventeenth-century New England town maps, pass out the sketch of the “Proposed Site for the Ipswich Meeting House,” **Document D**.
- h. The Ipswich map and petition both reflect the centrality of religion and the tensions brought about by growth and expansion. Ask students why that site was chosen and why the people who made the petition wanted to show the relationship between their houses and the meeting house. Have students tell you how this can be interpreted as evidence of the centrality of religion in the lives of the Puritans.

Teacher Background: Proposed Site for the Ipswich Meeting House

In 1667, when this petition was written, the town of Ipswich had been so long established that the nearest land available for new settlement was as much as seven-and-a-half miles from the original meeting house. Families had to make this trip each week to attend church services. Understandably these distant settlers were interested in establishing their own church. They drew this sketch to show where they wanted to locate their meeting house. Earlier settlers of Ipswich, who lived closer to the original meeting house, did not want these settlers to break off and form their own meeting house. Such an act was often the first step in establishing a separate community. Although this method of multiplying communities occurred with some frequency in Massachusetts Bay, members of parent communities often resisted what appeared to them to be the fragmentation of their community. The conflict in Ipswich is an instance of this tension between older and newer settlers. Indeed, although the folks living near the Chebacco River managed to have their own church and minister by the end of the seventeenth century, they were not formally incorporated into their own town until 1819.

C. Supplementary Activities

1. Have students draw maps or pictures of a Puritan town. A more ambitious project would be to have students build models of Puritan homes which you may combine to make a Puritan village. Have students write a paragraph explaining why the village looks as it does.
2. Have students construct their own communities predicated on a set of values of their own choosing. This will develop students' imaginations and give them a grasp of the key concept that values affect environment. Begin by asking students for examples of contemporary buildings or other material objects that reflect particular values. Once the class has a sense of the rich diversity of artifacts which can reveal values, have students design their own communities. Each student should design a community that reflects the values he or she is interested in promoting. For instance, if athletic activity is highly valued by the community planner, a town might be designed with playing fields, a sports stadium, and gymnasium in the center of town. In addition to roads, there might be bike paths and running trails. Each house could be equipped with a gymnasium. Similar sorts of communities might be designed for people interested in ecology, computers, or individual privacy.

Modern Version of “A Model of Christian Charity”

1. The way we live will prove that we really believe the religious ideas that most people only say they believe. We must truly love each other, without just pretending to care about one another. We must help each other. We should not just take care of our problems; we should also take care of our neighbors' problems.
2. This is how our relationship with God works: We have joined with Him in a covenant [a mutual agreement like a contract]. We made the agreement with God, but He is letting us decide the rules for that agreement. We have promised that each of us will obey these rules. Because we have promised to act in certain ways, we are hoping that God will be generous and bless us. If God chooses to hear our prayers and brings us safely to the New World, it is because He has approved the terms of the agreement with Him that we have made and begun to follow. But if all of us do not obey these rules, God will be angry, get revenge for our lies, and make sure we understand what happens to people who break their agreement with Him.
3. Now the only way to avoid making God angry and to protect our future children and grandchildren is to follow the advice of Micah [an Old Testament prophet]: to be just, to love mercy, and to be humble believers in God. To behave this way, we must be knit together in this work as one man [we must work together so well that we become like one person]. We must behave with each other like loving brothers and sisters. We must be willing not to take more than we need, if there are people who are without life's necessities. We must treat each other humbly, gently, patiently, and generously. We must enjoy each other, share all things—good and bad—with each other: rejoice together, mourn together, and labor and suffer together. In all the work we do, we must always remember the rules of our agreement with God and our places in the community, acting together to make one whole. In this way, all of us working together as one person in a spirit of peace, we will enjoy the continued blessing of God, who will enjoy filling our spirit with His goodness and making us His own people. He will bless us so that we will understand more of God's wisdom, power, goodness, and truth than we did in the past. With God on our side, ten of us will be as strong as a thousand of our enemies. He will give us glory and make others praise us so that men in future colonies will say: “The Lord make it like that of New England.” For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us.

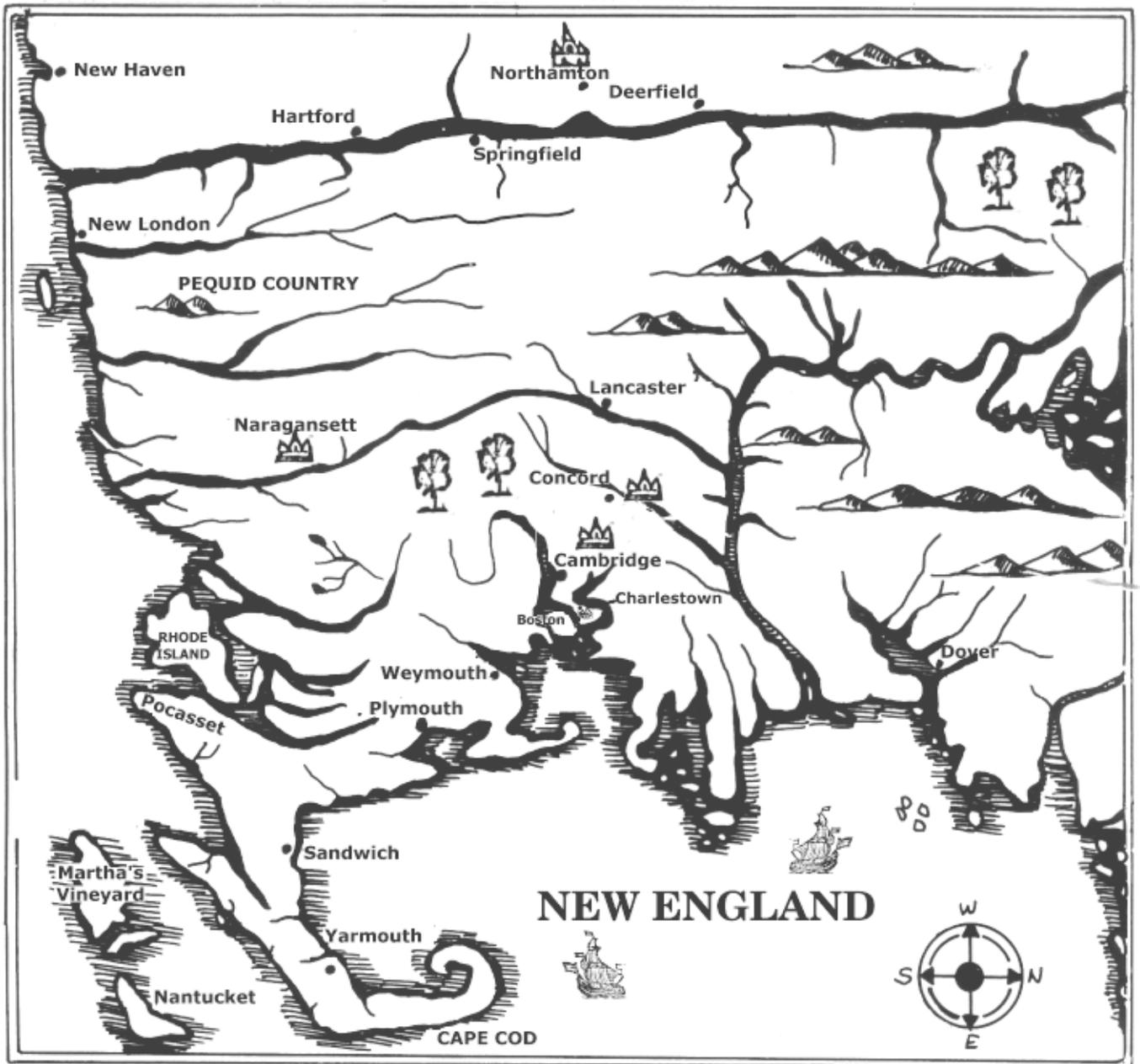
Worksheet for “The Model of Christian Charity”

1. Rules for Puritans (questions on paragraph one):
 - a. How does Winthrop want Puritans to act?
 - b. Does this mean that he believes that Puritans are better than others?
 - c. Winthrop is telling his followers to do more than just help each other; he wants them to watch each other. Why?
 - d. How do you feel when people try to help you when you do not ask for it? Do you always want that help?
 - e. What do we call people who give advice or help when we do not ask for it? Are the names we use for such people compliments or insults? Do you think the Puritans were so different from us, that they always welcomed such behavior?
 - f. Examine the paragraph and explain why it is so important that Puritans monitor each other’s behavior.

 2. The special quality of Puritans (questions on paragraph two):
 - a. What does Winthrop think is special about Puritans?
 - b. Who makes the rules for the agreement between God and the Puritans?
 - c. How do Puritans know if their rules are correct?
 - d. If the rules are correct what does that mean the Puritans must do in the new world?
 - e. Historians believe that Winthrop is telling the Puritans that there are really two covenants: one covenant between the Puritans and God; one covenant between each Puritan and the group. What in this paragraph makes historians believe this? Hint: what happens if some Puritans begin to ignore their covenant with God?
 - f. Explain how Winthrop plans to have the Puritans keep their agreement with God.
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3. How to follow the rules and the reward for obeying (questions on paragraph three):
 - a. What must Puritans do to keep their contract with God?
 - b. Why would obeying these rules be more difficult for some people than others?
 - c. What will happen if they succeed?
 - d. How is what Winthrop is asking the Puritans to do different from just obeying the rules? Hint: your parents can make you eat all your dinner, but can they make you enjoy a food you do not like?
 - e. Explain why you think it was possible or impossible to achieve what Winthrop was requiring the Puritans to do.

A Map of New England from William Hubbard's
"A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New England," 1677



Map based on the original redrawn by Carole Collier Frick, enhanced by M. M. Olivas.

Pictures of the First English Homes Built by the Puritans



Framework of temporary thatched huts used by Puritans in their first years of settlement. These are reproductions found at the 1630 colonial village in Salem, Massachusetts.



Finished temporary thatched huts used by the Puritans in their first years of settlement.

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One room cottages built by the Puritans in their early years. Note that the chimneys are made of stone, clay, and wood and that the only visible windows are covered with wooden shutters.



Corner of a house built in about 1690. Note that logs are square and joined by dovetailing, rather than by nails or notches.



House built before 1698. Such houses are called garrison houses and were sturdily built to act as fortresses. Although the roof is new and the glass in the windows is probably modern, the chimney may be the original. Brickyards were among the first enterprises started in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

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