Plymouth's First Steps

Challenges, choices, and early successes

5.C.1.8 "Explain the early successes and challenges for Pilgrims of the Plymouth settlement including the adaptation to an unfamiliar and harsh environment practice of self-government established by the Mayflower Compact leadership of William..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two hardships, circle two ways the settlers responded, and write 1 beside an early success. Use your marks to explain how the colony faced its challenges.

A Difficult Beginning at Plymouth

1 In 1620, the Mayflower reached the coast of present-day Massachusetts, far from the place its passengers had expected to settle. The Pilgrims faced cold weather, unfamiliar land, and too little food. They built simple shelters, but illness spread during the first winter. Nearly half the passengers died. Survival would take more than courage. The settlers needed ways to find food, work together, and make decisions.

2 Before stepping ashore, adult men aboard the Mayflower signed the Mayflower Compact. They agreed to make rules for the good of the colony and obey them. This was an early practice of self-government, although women and many others had no vote. After the first governor died in 1621, the settlers chose William Bradford as governor. Bradford helped lead the colony through its difficult early years.

3 Help from the Wampanoag people mattered, too. Tisquantum, a Patuxet man, taught the settlers ways to grow corn in the area. In 1621, the settlers made a peace agreement with Wampanoag leader Ousamequin. As governor, Bradford helped guide the colony while its people planted crops. That fall, the settlers gathered a better harvest. Food was still a concern, but the harvest showed they were learning to live in a new place.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did the Pilgrims need new ways to find food after they arrived?

2. How did the Mayflower Compact help the settlers make decisions together?

3. Why was choosing William Bradford important after the first governor died?

4. How did help from Tisquantum support an early success at Plymouth?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a Plymouth settler telling a new arrival about the colony in fall 1621. Write four sentences explaining an early hardship, how the Compact and Bradford helped the colony, and how help from the Wampanoag contributed to an early success.

ANSWER KEY

Plymouth's First Steps

GRADE 5 · 5.C.1.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two hardships, circle two ways the settlers responded, and write 1 beside an early success. Use your marks to explain how the colony faced its challenges. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did the Pilgrims need new ways to find food after they arrived?	**They had too little food and faced an unfamiliar land and a cold winter.**
2	How did the Mayflower Compact help the settlers make decisions together?	**The men who signed it agreed to make rules for the colony's good and obey those rules.**
3	Why was choosing William Bradford important after the first governor died?	**Choosing Bradford gave the colony a new leader to guide it through its difficult early years.**
4	How did help from Tisquantum support an early success at Plymouth?	**He taught the settlers ways to grow corn in the area, and they gathered a better harvest that fall.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our first winter brought sickness and hunger, so we struggled to survive. The Mayflower Compact gave us rules we agreed to follow, which helped us make decisions together. After our first governor died, we chose William Bradford to lead us through difficult times. Tisquantum taught us ways to grow corn here, and we gathered a better harvest that fall.

Accept answers that connect a passage detail to its effect on the settlement. For Part 3, look for accurate connections among a hardship, the Compact, Bradford's leadership, Wampanoag help, and an early success.