

POCAHONTAS



BIOGRAPHY

POCAHONTAS

Pocahontas was born around 1595. She was the favorite daughter of Powhatan, chief of the Algonquian Native Americans, who lived in the area that English people colonized and called Virginia. Pocahontas met the colonists when she was a teenager, and she turned out to be very important in the history of the colonization of North America.

The colonists, who built a fort called Jamestown, struggled to survive in their first months and years of settling, as they did not know how to grow food effectively in their new environment. But things improved for the settlers when Pocahontas and her people traded with them and helped them to produce food.

But relations between the settlers and Native Americans were not always peaceful. At one point, Pocahontas saved the life of the settler John Smith, after he had been captured by Powhatan. Powhatan was about to kill Smith when Pocahontas stepped between him and her father, and pleaded for the colonist to be spared.

As it happened, Pocahontas was later captured during a fight between the colonists and the Algonquian. It was during her period of capture that she met John Rolfe, in 1614. Rolfe was an English tobacco farmer, and Pocahontas fell in love with and married him. Pocahontas was taken to England, where she was introduced to the King, and she became a famous person even in her own lifetime. The marriage meant there were good relationships again between the Algonquian and the colonists for a time, and this prevented further starvation.

Pocahontas became ill and died when sailing back to America from England in 1617. She was only 22 years old.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word '**colonists**'.

b From that sentence, suggest what '**colonists**' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word '**colonists**'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to '**colonists**'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think '**colonists**' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: famous person	celebrity

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Pocahontas and her people helped the colonists so they did not starve.

On the way back from England, Pocahontas fell ill and died.

Later on, Pocahontas herself was captured. She then met John Rolfe.

Pocahontas was born around 1595 in Virginia.

When settler John Smith was taken captive, Pocahontas pleaded for his life to be spared.

English colonists arrived and settled at Jamestown, Virginia.

Pocahontas and John Rolfe married, and then Pocahontas went to England.

Get to the facts

1 Which Native American tribe did Pocahontas belong to?

2 Whose life did Pocahontas save?

3 Who did Pocahontas marry?

4 Who did Pocahontas meet in England?

5 When did Pocahontas die?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Sailing

Imagine you are Pocahontas. You are about to sail to England, but you have never been in a huge sailing ship before... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'colonists'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'colonists' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'colonists'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'colonists'.
- e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'colonists' means.

Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – famous person

Synonym – celebrity

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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Get to the facts:

- 1 Which Native American tribe did Pocahontas belong to?
- 2 Whose life did Pocahontas save?
- 3 Who did Pocahontas marry?
- 4 Who did Pocahontas meet in England?
- 5 When did Pocahontas die?

Make a story...

Sailing

Imagine you are Pocahontas. You are about to sail to England, but you have never been in a huge sailing ship before... (now complete the story)

Pocahontas

Pocahontas was born around 1595. She was the favorite daughter of Powhatan, chief of the Algonquian Native Americans, who lived in the area that English people colonized and called Virginia. Pocahontas met the colonists when she was a teenager, and she turned out to be very important in the history of the colonization of North America.

The colonists, who built a fort called Jamestown, struggled to survive in their first months and years of settling, as they did not know how to grow food effectively in their new environment. But things improved for the settlers when Pocahontas and her people traded with them and helped them to produce food.

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