

# ROGER WILLIAMS



## BIOGRAPHY

# ROGER WILLIAMS

Roger Williams was born in England around 1603. He was a Protestant who believed that the church and the state should be separate. But this was not a popular opinion at the time, so he faced persecution. In 1630, Williams left England for North America, hoping to start a new life. He arrived at Boston in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and then started preaching in Salem and Plymouth.

But it did not turn out as Williams had hoped. The Puritans who were already established in the colonies did not like Williams' views on freedom of worship, and they banished him from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638. He resettled in what is now Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, on land granted to him by Native Americans. Williams called the site Providence because he believed God had provided for him in his hour of need.

Before long, other like-minded people settled with Williams at Rhode Island, and they set up Portsmouth on one of the islands in the bay. Another settlement, Newport, was founded when some of the settlers fell out and moved to the other end of the island to set up their own settlement.

In 1644, Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport came together as the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Williams started trading with the Native Americans, and learned much about their language and way of life. He published important early records on the subject.

Between 1654 and 1658, Williams was the colony's governor. Then in 1675, war broke out that turned the settlers against the Native Americans that Williams had been friendly with before. Although Williams was captain of the militia at Providence, he could not stop Providence from being destroyed by fire in 1676. But Williams helped rebuild Providence after the war, and the colony recovered.

# 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 'like-minded'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'like-minded' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'like-minded'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'like-minded'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'like-minded' 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: banished	threw out

# Sequencing

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

But the people there did not like Williams' views, so they threw him out of the colony.

So Williams went to North America to start a new life.

Williams was later governor of the colony in Rhode Island.

Roger Williams was born in England around 1603.

So Williams set up a colony in Rhode Island, where like-minded people settled to avoid persecution.

First, Williams lived and preached in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

In England, Williams faced persecution because of his religious views.

# Get to the facts

1 When did Roger Williams leave England for North America?

2 Where did Williams arrive?

3 Who granted Williams land in Rhode Island?

4 What did Williams call his first settlement?

5 When was Williams the colony's governor?

# Make a story...

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

## Fire in Providence

Imagine you are Roger Williams in 1676. Providence, the colony you have worked so hard to set up, is in flames...

**Below is a plain text version for printing:**

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## 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 – banished                      Synonym – threw out

## Sequencing:

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

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## **Get to the facts:**

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- 2 Where did Williams arrive?
- 3 Who granted Williams land in Rhode Island?
- 4 What did Williams call his first settlement?
- 5 When was Williams the colony's governor?

## **Make a story...**

### **Fire in Providence**

Imagine you are Roger Williams in 1676. Providence, the colony you have worked so hard to set up, is in flames... (now complete the story)

# Roger Williams

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