

## TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

### *Lesson Title - Mayflower Compact*

#### *From Leslie Cicilline*

Grade – 5

Length of class period – 60 minutes

Inquiry – Why should women be an equal part in the signing of the Mayflower Compact and the governing of the English colony of Plymouth?

Objectives- Students will infer what it would have felt like to be a woman on the Mayflower and part of the Plymouth Colony.

Students will define and apply vocabulary from the Mayflower Compact.

Materials - Mayflower Compact (attached)

<http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/Passengers/passengers.php>

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

- Read the copy of the Mayflower Compact from the site
- Assign groups/pairs of students words to define using context clues and dictionaries:

solemnly, mutually, covenant, civil body politic, preservation, enact, constitute, frame, just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, submission and obedience.

Reread the compact with the student's definitions/synonyms.

- Have students highlight or write down what they think is the most important part of the compact and explain why.
- Ask students to take the role of one of the women in the colony and prepare a speech for Governor Bradford explaining why women should also sign the compact and be part of "the governing body". Furthermore, have them quote and use the vocabulary from the compact to defend their position.
- In cooperative groups, have the students compose their own compact.

[http://www.history.com/topics/mayflower/videos?paidlink=1&cmpid=PaidSearch\\_Googl](http://www.history.com/topics/mayflower/videos?paidlink=1&cmpid=PaidSearch_Googl)

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

- Vocab quiz
- Speech
- Students created "Compact"

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

3.2 #4 Describe views and feelings of people in the past using personal experience and/or outside readings

## THE MAYFLOW COMPACT

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

Having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November [New Style, November 21], in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

*Signing the Mayflower Compact by Edward Percy Moran*



John Carver  
William Bradford  
Edward Winslow  
William Brewster  
Isaac Allerton  
Miles Standish  
John Alden  
Samuel Fuller  
Christopher Martin  
William Mullins

William White  
James Chilton  
John Craxton  
John Billington  
Richard Warren  
John Howland  
Steven Hopkins  
Edward Tilly  
John Tilly  
Francis Cook

Thomas Rogers  
Thomas Tinker  
John Rigdale  
Edward Fuller  
John Turner  
Francis Eaton  
Moses Fletcher  
Digery Priest  
Thomas Williams  
Gilbert Winslow

Edmond Margeson  
Peter Brown  
Richard Bitteridge  
Richard Clark  
Richard Gardiner  
John Allerton  
Thomas English  
Edward Doten  
Edward Liester  
John Goodman  
George Soule

**Mayflower Compact – What is it?**

The Mayflower Compact is a written agreement composed by a consensus of the new Settlers arriving at New Plymouth in November of 1620. They had traveled across the ocean on the ship Mayflower which was anchored in what is now Provincetown Harbor near Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The Mayflower Compact was drawn up with fair and equal laws, for the general good of the settlement and with the will of the majority. The Mayflower's passengers knew that the New World's earlier settlers failed due to a lack of government. They hashed out the content and eventually composed the Compact for the sake of their own survival.

All 41 of the adult male members on the Mayflower signed the Compact. Being the first written laws for the new land, the Compact determined authority within the settlement and was the observed as such until 1691. This established that the colony (mostly persecuted Separatists), was to be free of English law. It was devised to set up a government from within themselves and was written by those to be governed.

**Mayflower Compact – What did it say?**

The original document is said to have been lost, but the writings of William Bradford's journal *Of Plymouth Plantation* and in Edward Winslow's *Mourt's Relation: A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth* are in agreement and accepted as accurate. The Mayflower Compact reads:

*"In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord, King James, by the Grace of God, of England, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, e&. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents, solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid; And by Virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the General good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord, King James of England, France and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini, 1620."*

### **Mayflower Compact – Who signed it and why?**

One of the first lists of the Mayflower Compact's signers was provided by William Bradford's nephew, Nathaniel Morton. The names are published in his 1669 *New England's Memorial*. They are also posted by the Avalon Project of Yale University. Some of the more familiar names includes are those such as: John Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, William Brewster, Isaac Allerton, Myles Standish, and John Alden.

When creating the Mayflower Compact, the signers believed that covenants were not only to be honored between God and man, but also between each other. They had always honored covenants as part of their righteous integrity and agreed to be bound by this same principle with the Compact. John Adams and many historians have referred to the Mayflower Compact as the foundation of the U.S. Constitution written more than 150 later.

From the site: <http://www.allabouthistory.org/mayflower-compact.htm>