

Colonization and Revolutionary War Jamestown

In 1607 John Smith and a group of English settlers landed on the coast of Virginia. There, in complete wilderness, they built a village. They named their colony Jamestown, after King James I of England. Jamestown became the first **permanent**¹ English colony in America.

At first Jamestown was managed by a group of men back in England. They had paid for the settlers to go to Jamestown and wanted to make money from their colony. Britain needed raw materials, especially wood for ships. The men knew that Jamestown and areas nearby had many trees. For a year the colonists worked hard, cutting and preparing lumber to be shipped back to England. But they had no time to grow their own food. That first year the colonists almost died from starvation.

The winter of 1609 was nicknamed “The Starving Time.” When Captain John Smith returned from a trip to England, he found that the colony was barely surviving. The Powhatan Indians **raided**² the settlement. Disease swept through the population. Out of the 214 settlers who were alive when Captain Smith left, only 60 had survived. Captain Smith made a rule that if a colonist did not work, that colonist would not get food. Without his **guidance**³ the colony might have **perished**.⁴

The next year colonists began farming. Soon a man named John Rolfe discovered tobacco. Tobacco immediately became popular in England and brought Jamestown a lot of money. Relationships with the Powhatan Indians improved as well. Pocahontas, the daughter of a Powhatan chief, married John Rolfe. This marriage helped to create peace between the Powhatan Indians and the settlers for several years.

¹ **permanent** – lasting

² **raided** – entered and took what was inside

³ **guidance** – direction, leadership

⁴ **perished** – died, been destroyed

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Why was the colony called Jamestown?
 - a. It was named for John Smith's father.
 - b. It was named for the King of Spain.
 - c. James means good luck.
 - d. It was named after King James I of England.

2. How could the settlers of Jamestown have prevented "The Starving Time"?
 - a. by growing their own food
 - b. by sending more lumber to England
 - c. by growing tobacco
 - d. by having brought more money with them

3. How was the second year in Jamestown different from the first?
 - a. The colonists were starving to death.
 - b. The colonists began farming.
 - c. Captain John Smith returned to England.
 - d. The Jamestown settlers started to lose a lot of money.

4. How did the relationship between the Powhatan Indians and the settlers change over time?
 - a. The Powhatan Indians continued to raid Jamestown.
 - b. The settlers began raiding the homes of the Powhatan Indians.
 - c. The settlers and the Powhatan Indians began to get along.
 - d. The Powhatan Indians taught the settlers how to cut down trees.

5. What is this passage mainly about?
 - a. the colonization of America by the British
 - b. "The Starving Time" experienced by the Jamestown settlers
 - c. the relationship between the Jamestown settlers and the Powhatan Indians
 - d. the early development and hardships of Jamestown

6. Why was the colony of Jamestown created?

7. Why did John Smith make a rule that if a colonist did not work, that colonist would not get food? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Tobacco became popular in England _____ John Rolfe discovered it in Jamestown.

- a. though
- b. after
- c. so
- d. until

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

After years of fighting, the marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe helped to improve the relationship between the settlers and the Algonquin Indians.

What? the marriage of Pocahontas and John Rolfe

(did) What? _____

When? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** interact: to act so as to affect each other; communicate.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 720

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines, or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: The passage describes the English colony of Jamestown, including information about why it was founded and how the colonists overcame challenges in creating the first permanent English colony in America.

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d. the early development and hardships of Jamestown

6. Why was the colony of Jamestown created?

Suggested answer: Jamestown was created because a group of Englishmen wanted to make money from raw materials, especially wood, in the area where Jamestown was founded.

7. Why did John Smith make a rule that if a colonist did not work, that colonist would not get food? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

Suggested answer: The passage states that before John Smith made the rule, Jamestown was barely surviving. The colony was suffering from starvation, Indian raids, and disease. Smith probably created the rule to help save Jamestown and make sure that everyone was contributing to the common good of the colony.

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(did) What? **helped to improve the relationship between the settlers and the Algonquin Indians**

When? **after years of fighting**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** interact: to act so as to affect each other; communicate.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.