



The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens

# EARLY ENGLISH EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT OF THE COLONY OF VIRGINIA



Grade 5  
United States History and Geography

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## I. Standards Assessed

### History-Social Science Content Standards

5.4

- 2 Identify the major individuals and groups responsible for the founding of the various colonies and the reasons for their founding. . . .

### History-Social Science Analysis Skill Standards

#### *Chronological and Spatial Thinking*

- (1) Students place key events and people of the historical era they are studying in a chronological sequence and within a spatial context; they interpret time lines.

#### *Research, Evidence, and Point-of-View*

- (1) Students differentiate between primary and secondary sources.
- (2) Students pose relevant questions about events they encounter in historical documents, eyewitness accounts, oral histories, letters, diaries, artifacts, photographs, maps, artworks, and architecture.
- (3) Students distinguish fact from fiction by comparing documentary sources on historical figures and events with fictionalized characters and events.

#### *Historical Interpretation*

- (3) Students identify and interpret the multiple causes and effects of historical events.

**English-Language Arts Content Standards***Reading*

- 1.2 Use word origins to determine the meaning of unknown words.
- 2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.

*Writing*

- 1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions.

**English-Language Development Standards (Level 4)***Listening and Speaking*

- (1) Listen attentively to more complex stories /information on new topics across content areas, and identify the main points and supporting details.
- (6) Ask and answer instructional questions with more extensive supporting elements (e.g., “What part of the story was most important?”)

*Reading Fluency*

- (1) Use knowledge of English morphemes, phonics, and syntax to decode and interpret the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- (4) Use standard dictionary to find the meanings of known vocabulary.
- (6) Use decoding skills and knowledge of academic and social vocabulary to achieve independent reading.
- (8) Read increasingly complex narrative and expository texts aloud with appropriate pacing, intonation and expression.

*Reading Comprehension*

- (1) Describe main ideas and supporting details of a text.
- (2) Generate and respond to comprehension questions related to the text.
- (6) Distinguish between explicit examples of fact, opinions, inference, and cause/effect in texts.
- (7) Identify some significant structural (organizational) patterns in text, such as sequence/chronological order, and cause/effect.

*Writing Strategies*

- (4) Use complex vocabulary and sentences appropriate for language arts and other content areas (e.g. math, science, social studies).

## II. Teacher Background Information

Columbus made his first voyage in 1492 in an attempt to find a more direct route to Asia. On March 3, 1493 he landed in Lisbon, Portugal. He sent one of his captains to Spain with a letter to the king and queen telling them of his discovery which had already caused a stir in Portugal. Columbus's letter to Ferdinand and Isabella was published in April 1493. The Spanish were concerned that Portugal would claim rights to Columbus's discovery. Within a month of the publication of Columbus's letter the Spanish called on Pope Alexander VI, of the Spanish Borgia family, to give Spain exclusive rights to all lands not claimed by a Christian prince. In 1493 the pope divided the unexplored world between Spain and Portugal setting a line 100 leagues west of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands. The following year Spain and Portugal agreed to the Treaty of Tordesillas that moved the line 270 leagues further west.

Although Christian kings of Europe were Roman Catholic they paid little heed to Pope Alexander's proclamation or the later treaty between Spain and Portugal. King Henry VII of England commissioned John and Sebastian Cabot of Genoa to sail west and claim land for England. The Cabots sailed along the coasts of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New England, and probably as far south as Delaware. Based on their voyages, England claimed much of the North American continent. When they returned from their voyages without riches Henry VII lost interest. It was not until the reign of Queen Elizabeth that English mariners began to promote the establishment of colonies in the New World.

In the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century John Hawkins was making a great profit in transporting slaves to the Americas and his nephew Francis Drake sailed around South America claiming land for England in California, previously claimed by Spanish explorers. Seeking a shorter route to Asia, English mariners searched for a northwest passage. Martin Frobisher, financed by a stock company, made three voyages between 1576 and 1578 seeking a fabled Northwest Passage as well as searching for gold. He took miners with him on his second and third voyages and returned to England with over 200 tons of ore that turned out to be nothing more than "fool's gold." The voyages were a failure and stockholders lost a considerable amount of money.

Richard Hakluyt the elder and his nephew, Richard Hakluyt the younger, began to urge English competition with Spain and Portugal and sought support for the establishment of colonies in the New World. The elder Hakluyt was a noted London lawyer. He, like others in the latter part of the sixteenth century, was concerned about crime in the capital and the large number of poor vagrants and homeless children that were living in the slums of London. He believed that the establishment of colonies abroad would relieve the situation by transporting settlers to the New World. In addition settlements would help spread Protestant Christianity among the pagan inhabitants and thus do service to God.

His nephew, the younger Richard Hakluyt, an Anglican minister, wrote a pamphlet in 1584 entitled "Discourse on Western Planting" for Sir Walter Raleigh to present to Queen Elizabeth I. The pamphlet urged the Queen to support the establishment of

colonies in North America. He described the bounty of the land and the riches that would result from trade. Like his uncle, he also saw the opportunity to send the urban poor to settle the American colonies.

Raleigh and his half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert won the favor of the queen. Gilbert had long argued that there was a northwest passage through the continent of North America that would provide England with a direct route to China. Queen Elizabeth was not convinced that Gilbert would be successful but granted him a patent “...to discover, searche, finde out and viewe such remote heathen and barbarous landes countries and territories not actually possessed by any Christian prince or people.”<sup>1</sup> He was also given authority to establish a settlement. Gilbert was lost at sea on his second voyage. Walter Raleigh convinced Queen Elizabeth to turn over Gilbert’s patent to him. A favorite of the queen, Raleigh set out to colonize North America. His ships explored south of Newfoundland seeking a more hospitable place to establish a settlement. In 1585–86 he established a colony on Roanoke Island in a territory he named Virginia for Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen. Attempts to supply the colony were halted because of a threatened Spanish invasion of England in 1588. After the defeat of the Spanish Armada supply ships were allowed to sail to Roanoke but by the time they arrived, there was no trace of the colony.

Sir Walter Raleigh helped organize another expedition to plant a colony in Virginia sponsored by a joint stock company. In 1607, four years after the death of Elizabeth, Jamestown, the first permanent English colony established in Virginia, was named for Elizabeth’s successor, King James I.

Thomas Hariot, a prominent English mathematician and scientist and a confidant of Raleigh, wrote of the great prospects of English colonization. Hariot’s *Briefe and True Report* on the Virginia colony published with watercolors by the artist John White was a stimulus to settlement. Just as Hakluyt had been largely responsible for encouraging Queen Elizabeth to support the colonization of North America, Hariot’s optimistic book counteracted negative reports from Jamestown and persuaded colonists that the colony would provide riches and a better quality of life. The Hakluyts’ plan to transport indigents to the colony was put into effect. Hundreds of poor vagrants and homeless children were sent to Jamestown with the promise of a better life reaped from a land of boundless riches and welcoming inhabitants.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America, The Northern Voyages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 566.

### III. Materials Needed

#### Student Readings

Reader's Theater, Setting the Stage for English Colonization of America

Document 1, Richard Hakluyt's *Voyages to the New World*

Document 2, *Nova Britannica*

Document 3, Song, "Oleanna"

Document 4, Children for the Colony of Jamestown

Document 5, Richard Frethorne, A Letter Home

### IV. Lesson Activities

1. Before beginning the lesson review text readings on
  - the early Portuguese voyages searching for a new trade route to Asia,
  - the early Spanish, French, and English explorations of North America, and
  - the religious conflicts in England that distracted the English from establishing settlements in North America.

Use a map in your social studies text book or a classroom map to point out the lands in the Americas claimed by these three nations. Construct a time line as a class activity recording Columbus's first voyage in 1492, the papal line of demarcation (1493), the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), and the voyage of John Cabot (1496). Ask students what they are able to infer from these early entries on the time line. Remind students that communication in the 1490s was rather slow. Considering this, what do the rapid events tell us about the importance of getting involved in exploration of a new route to Asia?

2. Tell the class that in the sixteenth century a number of small farmers were put out of work and flocked to urban areas. The poor in London could find no work and many were homeless living off charity provided by churches in the city. A prominent English attorney and his younger cousin, both named Richard Hakluyt, urged the English government to begin settlements in lands claimed nearly a century earlier by John and Sebastian Cabot who explored North America for King Henry VII of England. The Hakluyts believed that colonies were the answer to England's problems. They would bring great wealth through trade; become a place for settling poor and homeless people; and, spread Christianity.
3. Begin the lesson with a Reader's Theater setting the stage for English colonization of North America (Reading 1). There are nine speaking parts in the reader's theater. If you wish, you can add additional characters and create dialogue to further explore

- the efforts to win approval of Queen Elizabeth to encourage the establishment of colonies in North America. Before beginning the Reader's Theater explain that voyages were financed by stock companies. Students should understand that persons who invested in the enterprise bought shares of the company and expected to get a profit in return for their investment. After the performance of the reader's theater script, conduct a brainstorming activity to determine the motives behind English exploration and colonization in the late sixteenth century. List student responses and revisit them at the conclusion of the lesson.
4. Briefly discuss Raleigh's attempt to establish a settlement on Roanoke Island (currently North Carolina) or have students read in their text books about the Lost Colony of Roanoke. Distribute copies of **Document 1**, brief excerpts from Richard Hakluyt's *Voyages to the New World*. Use the questions following the reading as a guide for class discussion. Students should not dwell on fact that the colony was "lost" but focus on the ways in which Hakluyt used accounts to encourage future settlements.
  5. Review textbook readings on the establishment of the Jamestown colony in 1607. Have students read **Document 2**, *Nova Britannica*, and discuss the questions that follow the reading. How effective do you think Hakluyt's *Voyages* and the Virginia Company's *Nova Britannica* were in recruiting settlers? Quote passages from these two documents that you could use to prove your point. You may wish to use this discussion activity as a link to required persuasive writing assignments in Language Arts.
  6. After discussing **Documents 1** and **2** ask students if they think that these readings were exaggerations. Introduce the term "hyperbole" and ask students if they can give current examples of hyperbole. Ask if they have ever exaggerated and if so, why? You may wish to introduce **Document 3**, the folksong "Oleanna" as another example of hyperbole. Explain that this is a Norwegian song that uses hyperbole and is similar to the exaggerations made by sponsors of English colonization.
  7. Based on information gathered from reading, assign students to either work individually or in small groups of no more than three to draw a poster to recruit settlers for the new colony of Virginia. Depending on your class, you may want to organize a poster contest and have the class vote on the poster that best encourages people to settle in Jamestown. Discuss the techniques used to encourage settlement. You may wish to introduce this poster activity by bringing in displays of travel posters that encourage people to choose a particular place to vacation or borrow replicas of nineteenth-century historical posters from a fourth grade teacher that were designed to attract people to California. Have students consider questions such as:
    - What fears do you think people had about making a new home in Virginia?
    - How did you try to quiet those fears in your poster?
    - How did you use the reported riches of America to encourage settlement?
    - If you lived in England in 1609 would you have gone to Virginia? Why or why not?

8. Assign the two readings “Children for the Colony of Jamestown,” **Document 4**, and “Richard Frethorne, A Letter Home,” **Document 5**. Either have students read the two documents or select students to read them to the class. The questions that follow each document may be used for general class discussion. You may wish to discuss the difference between indentured servitude and slavery that was introduced in Virginia a few years later. If you introduce this topic make certain that students understand that the two systems were distinctly different, essentially one was a temporary condition of servitude while the other was permanent and tied directly to race. After briefly discussing these readings have students, working alone, or in the same groups as before, construct a second poster protesting the sending of young persons to Jamestown.

As an extension activity, have students write a letter from Richard Frethorne’s mother or father responding to the young man’s plea for help.

9. Read to the class excerpts from John Logan’s *Tom Savage: A Story of Colonial Virginia*. Why did the Virginia Company want to send more people to colonial Jamestown? How did their advertising of the colony attempt to promote settlement?
10. Review student responses to the brainstorming activity at the beginning of the lesson. Evaluate the responses as a class and construct a chart such as the one below. After students have read accounts in their text book on the Jamestown colony, fill out the chart as a class activity.

#### Motives for Exploration and Colonization

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Sir Humphrey Gilbert |  |
| Martin Frobisher     |  |
| The Hakluyts         |  |
| Sir Walter Raleigh   |  |

## Reader's Theater

### Act I characters

Sir Humphrey Gilbert  
Sir Edward\* (Member of the Royal Court)  
Martin Frobisher  
Stockholder 1\*  
Stockholder 2\*  
Stockholder 3\*

### Act II characters

Richard Hakluyt the Elder  
Richard Hakluyt the Younger  
Sir Walter Raleigh

## ACT I

### Scene 1

*London, 1576. Sir Humphrey Gilbert is speaking to Sir Edward, a member of the British Court of Queen Elizabeth I.*

**Gilbert** I know that we can find a passage through North America that will bring great wealth to England and our beloved queen.

**Edward** What makes you so sure? The Spanish and French have failed to find a passageway.

**Gilbert** I have studied maps of the continent and there are great rivers that cut across the continent. Just think of the wealth we will have with a short and safe route to China.

**Edward** But, Sir Gilbert, no one has been able to find a passage either from the northern or southern seas.

**Gilbert** We, the English, are far better seamen than the French or Spanish. With our skill we will find that passage way. I just need our great queen to give me her support and I can raise the funds for a voyage.

**Edward** You must know that Martin Frobisher has organized a stock company to pay for a voyage of discovery.

**Gilbert** Yes, he is a good sailor and I'm sure that he will prove that I am right. There is a passage through the continent.

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\* Fictitious characters.

Scene 2

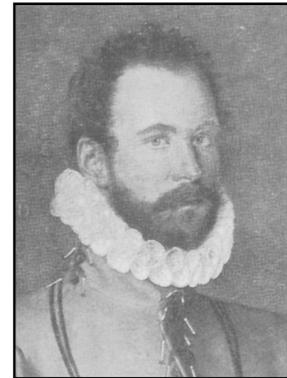
*London, 1577, Martin Frobisher has just returned from North America and is reporting to the stock company that paid for his voyage.*

**Frobisher** We sailed by the coast of Greenland and found a strait that I named for myself. Frobisher Strait leads to an outlet that will prove to be the long searched for Northwest Passage. I sent some of my crew to explore the area and they reported seeing many deer, wild birds, bears, rabbits, and foxes. The land is fertile and will provide all the food that we should ever need.

**Stockholder 1** Martin, this is a great discovery! What do you need to get ready for another voyage?

**Frobisher** I will need ships, more men, and mining equipment. We believe there is gold in the mountains around Frobisher Strait. If you can provide the money we need for one or two more voyages we will return with our ships loaded with gold.

**Stockholder 2** We will raise all the money you need for two more voyages. Take some men experienced in mining with you. Make all preparations to sail again as soon as possible.



**Martin Frobisher**

Scene 3

*London, 1580, Stockholder's Meeting two years after Frobisher's third voyage. For two years the rocks that Frobisher brought back have been examined and proved to be completely worthless.*

**Stockholder 1** What are we to do with the more than 200 tons of worthless rock that Frobisher brought back from America?

**Stockholder 2** We gave him all the money he asked for and what do we have in return? Tons of rocks and no passage way to China! We will have to declare bankruptcy.

**Stockholder 3** How could we have been fooled? The land he described as being so rich is actually worthless. We let our desire to make great profits blind us, we should have known better.

**Stockholder 1** We all know how much gold the Spanish are mining in their colonies. It was only logical for us to believe Frobisher. How did we know that all these sparkling rocks that he brought home were nothing other than "fool's gold?"

**Stockholder 3** I understand that Martin is doing better now that he has decided to spend his time raiding Spanish ships. Maybe our stock company should have just bought a fleet of pirate ships to steal Spanish gold!

**Stockholder 2** Oh, if we had only known.

## Act II

Scene 1

*London, 1580. A scene in the home of Richard Hakluyt the elder. He is talking to his younger cousin also named Richard Hakluyt.*

**Hakluyt** I think England should begin to set up colonies in this new land. We can not let Spain take possession of all this land.

**Richard** Of course you are right. But what can we do? It seems like Queen Elizabeth is too distracted by other problems than to encourage settlement of North America.

**Hakluyt** There are but three goals of colonization. First, and most important, we must establish colonies in order to convert the pagans who live there. Second, we need to develop trade. To meet these two important goals, we must also conquer the land.

**Richard** But, how can we convince our government to act?

**Hakluyt** One of the things we should do is to point out all the crime in London that is caused by so many poor people and orphan children with no way of supporting themselves. If we would set up colonies in America these poor people could be sent there to farm and learn to provide for themselves.

**Richard** That would help solve the problem of so many poor beggars in London. Our prisons are filled with criminals. Wouldn't it be better if we sent them to farm in America rather than execute them for stealing to keep alive?

**Hakluyt** Richard, you are well educated and know the power of the pen. Write about the importance of establishing settlements in America and how it will help solve the problem of crime in London. Explain to anyone willing to read how important it is that we begin to set up colonies.

**Richard** Yes, but remember Frobisher's voyages. Who will put up the money needed to set up colonies after his failure?

**Hakluyt** The stockholders who put up money for Frobisher were misguided. We need to make sure that people recognize the three goals I have stated. And always remind people how important it is to solve the crime problem caused by poor beggars in London and our other large cities.

**Richard** Walter Raleigh, a favorite of Queen Elizabeth, is a friend of mine. Maybe he can help win approval from the queen to set up colonies in America.

**Hakluyt** Richard, why not write a pamphlet explaining how important it is to colonize and present it to your friend Raleigh.

Scene 2

1584, Home of Richard Hakluyt the Younger. The younger Hakluyt is seated at his desk. Walter Raleigh is standing looking over his shoulder as Hakluyt finishes writing.

**Richard** Walter, it is finally finished. Will you give copies of this to our beloved queen and to important members of the Court?

**Raleigh** Of course, Richard. You have done a great service to our country. I am sure that Queen Elizabeth will be very impressed with this book that explains how important it is for us to compete with Spain in the Americas. You have explained better than anyone how important colonies will be for England. Your cousin should be very proud of you as you have written for all to understand what he has been saying for years.

**Richard** If only the queen will agree. I regret that your half-brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert was lost at sea last year on his return from his second voyage to find the Northwest Passage. I fear that this great loss will cause Queen Elizabeth to ...

**Raleigh** Don't be concerned, the Queen has already told me that I could continue my brother's work.

**Richard** I know that you are planning a voyage soon and I wish you luck.

**Raleigh** Richard, I don't think you realize how important you are in this effort. You are more important in this task than any ship captain. Continue to write about the richness of America and we will succeed in becoming a great and wealthy country.



Sir Walter Raleigh

## Richard Hakluyt

Richard Hakluyt the Younger, a Protestant minister, published several books to encourage the establishment of English colonies in America. He collected different eyewitness accounts of explorations to America for his book, *Voyages to the New World*. The book became so popular that it has been said that no English ship traveled to America in the 1600s without a copy of Hakluyt's *Voyages*. The following report from *Voyages* tells of the riches to be had in America and the friendly people who lived there.

*The following is a report written in 1584 to Sir Walter Raleigh on the fertile land and the friendly Indians around Roanoke.*

Primary Source

We were entertained with all love, and kindness, and with as much bounty, after their manner, as they could possibly devise. We found the people most gentle, loving, and faithful, void of all guile [sneakiness], and treason... The earth brings forth all things in abundance, as in the first creation, without toil or labor. The people only care to defend themselves from the cold, in their short winter, and to feed themselves. . . .

Contemporary English

The Indians entertained us with love and kindness. They gave us many gifts which is their custom. We found the people to be most gentle, loving, and faithful. They were not sneaky or in any way disloyal to us. The land is rich and produces an abundance of crops without any work like the Garden of Eden. The people are only interested in defending themselves from the cold during their short winter and to feed themselves. . . .

*The following is from a letter from Ralph Lane of the Roanoke colony to Richard Hakluyt. The letter was written in September 1585 shortly after the colony was first settled.*

Primary Source

...it is the goodliest and most pleasing territory of the world; for the continent is of a huge and unknown greatness, and very well peopled and towned, ...and the climate so wholesome that we had not one sick since we touched the land here. To conclude, if Virginia had but horses and kine [cattle] in some reasonable proportion, I dare assure myself, being inhabited with English, no realm in Christendom were comparable to it.

Contemporary English

...it is the best and most pleasing territory of the world; for the continent is so large that it is of unknown greatness. It is very well populated and has towns. The climate so good that not one person became sick since we landed here. To conclude, if Virginia only had horses and a reasonable supply of cattle, and was settled by the English there would be no country in the Christian world that could compare to it.

Source: Richard Hakluyt, *Voyages to the New World* (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1972).

## Questions

1. If you were aware of these reports from the exploration of Virginia, would you be willing to settle there? Why or why not?
2. How fertile is the land? Could you grow enough food to feed people who would settle there?
3. What do the reports tell about the Indians who live in the area?
4. Could you depend on the Indians for help if you settled at Roanoke?

## NOVA BRITANNIA

*Offering Most Excellent fruites by Planting in Virginia.  
Exciting all such as be well affected to further the fame.*

In 1609 the Virginia Company published a pamphlet to attract people to invest money in the new colony. The pamphlet told of a land of riches; a land that would make money for people who bought stock in the Virginia Company. It also encouraged adventurers to travel to Virginia where they would find wealth.

Primary Source

The country itself is large and great assuredly, though as yet, no exact discovery can be made of all. ...The air and climate most sweet and wholesome, and very agreeable to our nature. It is inhabited with wild and savage people that live and lie up and down in troupes like herds of deer in a forest... They are generally very loving and gentle, and do entertain and relieve our people with great kindness. The land yields naturally for the sustenance of man, abundance of fish, infinite store of deer, and hares, with many fruits and roots.

There are valleys and plains streaming with sweet springs; there are hills and mountains making a sensible proffer of hidden treasure, never yet searched. The land is full of minerals, plenty of woods; the soil is strong and sends out naturally fruitful vines running upon trees and shrubs. It yields also resin, turpentine, pitch, and tar; sassafras, mulberry trees, and silkworms; many skins and rich furs; many sweet woods and costly dyes; plenty of sturgeon and timber for shipping. But...if bare nature be so amiable in its naked kind, what may be hoped when art and nature both shall join and strive together to give best content to man and beast?

Contemporary English

The country is large and great. As yet there is no exact discovery of all the land that is within the country. ...The air and climate are most agreeable and healthy. The people who live here are uncivilized. They live in groups like herds of deer in a forest. ...They are usually very loving and gentle people. They are helpful to us and show great kindness. This land provides for everything we need to live. It has a great deal of fish, unlimited deer and wild rabbits and many fruits and edible roots.

There are valleys and plains with pure water springs; there are hills and mountains where there is certain to be hidden treasure that has never before been found. The land is full of minerals, plenty of woods; the soil is so rich that vines with fruit grow naturally on trees and shrubs. The land is also rich with many important materials. It has great supplies of resin, turpentine, pitch, and tar that are profitable. The valuable roots of sassafras trees are used to cure illness. There are mulberry trees with silkworms and many animal skins, rich furs, and plenty of fish. The land has many sweet woods and forests of timber for shipbuilding. There are also plants that produce very expensive dyes. Just think of it. If this land that is not cultivated is so rich, what may we expect when our people skilled at farming cultivate this rich land? It will provide wealth for us beyond belief.

Source: *Virtual Jamestown*, <<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/jamestown-browse?id=J1051>>.

## Questions

1. How does the Virginia Company try to get people to invest in the new colony?
2. What goods from the colony could be sold in England for great profits?
3. What can settlers expect to find in the colony of Virginia?
4. What dangers will they face in Virginia from the Indians who live there?
5. How difficult will it be to make a living?

## Vocabulary

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>amiable</b>            | agreeable; pleasant  |
| <b>assuredly</b>          | without question; with certainty   |
| <b>hares</b>              | wild rabbits   |
| <b>infinite</b>           | never-ending; unlimited  |
| <b>naked kind</b>         | land that is not cultivated; abandoned; left alone   |
| <b>pitch</b>              | a tar like substance   |
| <b>relieve our people</b> | cheer us up  |
| <b>resin</b>              | natural substance from plants that was used in printing inks, varnishes, and even medicine |
| <b>sassafras</b>          | dried root bark of a tree; used to flavor; often considered as a medicine                  |
| <b>sensible proffer</b>   | reasonable place for   |
| <b>sturgeon</b>           | a large popular type fish  |
| <b>sustenance</b>         | provisions; food; necessities for living   |
| <b>troupes</b>            | groups or crowds of people   |

## “Oleanna,” A Norwegian Folksong

Ole, oleanna, ole, oleanna  
ole, ole, ole, ole, ole, oleanna

Oh to be in Oleanna,  
that’s where I’d like to be  
Than to be in Norway  
and bear the chains of slavery.

Little roasted piggies  
rush around the city streets  
Inquiring so politely  
if a slice of ham you’d like to eat.

Beer as sweet as muncheners  
springs from the ground and flows away.  
The cows all like to milk themselves,  
And hens lay eggs ten times a day.

In Oleanna land is free.  
The wheat and corn just plant themselves.  
Then grow a good four feet a day,  
While on your bed you rest yourself.

Source: <<http://supersearch.mudcat.org/@displaysong.cfm?SongID=4455>>. Translation from the Norwegian by Pete Seeger, 1953.

## Children for the Colony of Jamestown

In 1619 the Virginia Company arranged for 100 children aged 12 and older to be sent to Virginia to work as indentured servants. Indentured servants had their passage paid to North America in return for working for a period of time, usually about five to seven years. The following year officers of the company wanted another 100 children to be sent to Jamestown. This time children were not willing to be sent to America and protested. Sir Edwin Sandys, who had taken over control of the Virginia Company, wrote for permission to send the children against their will. The children were sent to Jamestown.

Primary Source

Right Honorable:

Being unable to give my personal attendance upon the Lords, I have presumed to address my suit in these few lines unto your Honor. The City of London have by act of their Common Council, appointed one hundred children out of their superfluous multitude to be transported to Virginia; there to be bound apprentices for certain years, and afterward with very beneficial conditions for the children. . . . Now it falleth out that among those children, sundry being ill disposed . . . declare their unwillingness to go to Virginia, of whom the City is especially desirous to be disburdened, and in Virginia under severe masters they will be brought to goodness. But this City wanting authority to deliver, and the Virginia Company to transport, these persons against their wills, the burden is laid upon me . . . to procure higher authority for the warranting thereof. May it please your Honor therefore, to vouchsafe unto us of the Company here, and to the whole plantation in Virginia, that noble favor . . . to discharge both the City and our Company of this difficulty. . . .

Contemporary English

Your Honor:

Since I am unable to speak to the House of Lords [upper branch of the English Parliament] in person, I have presumed to address my case in these few lines to your Honor. The City of London has by act of their Common Council, appointed one hundred children of the great number of hopeless children in this city to be sent to Virginia. In Virginia they will be taught a useful trade for a certain number of years. This will be very helpful for the children. Now it seems that a number of these children are not willing to go. The City of London does not wish to be burdened with these idle children. In Virginia they will work for strict masters who will teach them to be good citizens. Since this City does not have the right to send unwilling children to America, it is left up to me to get higher authority to send them. May it please your Honor to give the Company here in London, and to the colony of Virginia, this just and honorable favor. This will help both the City and our Company out of this difficulty.

Source: Erik Bruun and Jay Crosby (eds), *Our Nation's Archive: The History of the United States in Documents* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 1999), p. 42.

## Questions

1. Why would the city of London want to send the children to America?
2. Why do you think the children were unwilling to go? What evidence can you find that would explain their unwillingness to go to Jamestown?
3. What arguments does Lord Sandys use to get permission to send the children to Jamestown?
4. According to Lord Sandys, will the children benefit from being sent to work in America as indentured servants?

## Vocabulary

|                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| apprentice        | trainee; a beginning worker   |
| procure           | to obtain; to get; to acquire |
| multitude         | large number; massive amount  |
| sundry            | a variety; a number           |
| superfluous       | surplus; extra                |
| vouchsafe         | to grant or to furnish        |
| wanting authority | not having the authority      |

## Richard Frethorne, A Letter Home

Richard Frethorne came to Jamestown as a young indentured servant. We have no record of his age when he arrived. Richard wrote a letter home to his parents on March 20, 1623 three months after landing in Virginia. In those three months two-thirds of his shipmates died. Richard described life as an indentured servant in Jamestown and begged his father to pay the money owed for his passage to America so that he can return home.

Primary Source

Loving and kind father and mother...this is to let you understand that I your child am in a most heavy case by reason of the nature of the country in such that it causes much sickness, . . . which make the body very poor and weak, and when we are sick there is nothing to comfort us. For since I cam out of the ship, I never ate anything but peas and loblollie. As for deer or venison I never saw any since I came into this land. There is indeed some fowl, but we are not allowed to go and get it, but must work hard both early and late for a mess of water gruel and a mouthful of bread and beef. People cry out day and night, Oh that they were in England without their limbs and would not care to lose any limb to be in England again, yea though they beg from door to door, for we live in fear of the enemy every hour.... We are in great danger, for our plantation is very weak. . . .

[T]here is nothing to be gotten here but sickness and death... I am not half, a quarter, so strong as I was in England, and all is for want of victuals . . . I have eaten more in a day at home than allowed me here for a week. . . . If you love me you will redeem me suddenly, for which I do entreat and beg. . . . Good father, do not forget me, but have mercy and pity my miserable case. I know if you did but see me you would weep to see me. . . . The answer of this letter will be life or death to me; therefore, good father, send as soon as you can. . . .

Contemporary English

Loving and kind father and mother I am writing to let you understand that I, your child, am in a serious danger. This country causes much sickness. We have all sorts of diseases that make our bodies weak. When we are sick we have no medicine or anything to help us get well. Since I got off the ship, I never ate anything but peas and a watery boiled cereal. Since I arrived here I have never seen deer. There are some chickens but we are not allowed to go and get them. We must work hard from early morning to late in the evening for a meal of watery cereal and a mouthful of bread and a little beef. People cry out day and night, Oh that they were in England. They would rather be at home without an arm or leg even if they had to beg from door to door. Here we live in fear of the enemy every hour. We are in great danger, for our colony is very weak.

There is nothing here but sickness and death. I am not half, not even a quarter, as strong as I was in England because we have so little food. . . . I have eaten more in a day at home than I eat here for a week. . . . If you love me you will pay the company for my passage to America immediately. I beg you. Good father, do not forget me, but have mercy and pity my miserable case. I know if you could see me now you would cry seeing how bad off I am. The answer of this letter will be life or death for me; therefore, good father, send for me as soon as you can. . . .

Source: Linda Monk, ed., *Ordinary Americans: U.S. History Through the Eyes of Everyday People* (Alexandria, VA: Close Up, 1994), p. 15.

## Questions

1. What is Richard asking his father to do?
2. How bad are conditions in the Virginia colony?
3. Do you believe that Richard is exaggerating the conditions in Jamestown? Why or why not?
4. How can you tell if Richard is accurately describing life for an indentured servant in Virginia?
5. What additional evidence do you need to find out if Richard was being truthful?

## Vocabulary

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>entreat</b>   | plead; ask for help   |
| <b>gruel</b>     | a thin cereal made from boiling grains that are available (see loblollie) |
| <b>loblollie</b> | gruel; a watery porridge or cereal  |
| <b>redeem me</b> | rescue me; free me by repaying the cost of my passage to America          |
| <b>scurvy</b>    | a disease caused by the lack of vitamins from fresh fruits and vegetables |
| <b>victuals</b>  | food  |

## Print Resources

Bulla, Clyde. *A Lion to Guard Us*. Harper Trophy, 1989.

This book is based on a true incident. Three children leave London in 1609 and travel to Jamestown to find their father. (Nonfiction)

Fritz, Jean. *The Lost Colony of Roanoke*. Putnam, 2004.

The fate of the people who settled in America's first English colony in Roanoke is still a mystery. In 1587 a group of 115 English settlers established a colony with the purpose of stopping Spain from holding North America. When re-supply of the colony was delayed by the threat to England by the Spanish Armada, this English foothold on American soil was lost forever.

Hermes, Patricia. *Our Strange New Land: Elizabeth's Jamestown Colony Diary*. Scholastic, 2000.

In 1609, Elizabeth sails with her family from Plymouth, England, to Jamestown, Virginia, bringing families to America's first permanent English colony for the first time. This is the story of their hardships and triumphs from August to October the first year. Part of the "Dear America" series this book is based on documentary evidence and, though fiction, uses real names and refers to factual events.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Starving Time, Elizabeth's Jamestown Colony Diary*. Scholastic, 2001.

Set in 1609-10, this is the story of the poor leadership, hardships, and suffering endured by the settlers in Jamestown during the first year. It is based on documentary evidence and, though fiction, uses real names and refers to factual events.

Kent, Deborah. *In the Southern Colonies*. Benchmark Books, 2000.

Learn about daily life during colonial times in this "How We Lived" book. Illustrations in the book add to understanding the text.

Korman, Susan. *Walter Raleigh*. Chelsea House, 2000.

Korman introduces readers to Raleigh's various roles as soldier, explorer, writer, leader, scientist, and member of Queen Elizabeth I's court. The introduction is by Arthur Schelsinger, a noted American historian.

Sakura, Gail. *The Jamestown Colony*. Children's Press, 1997

This is a readable fictionalized account of the Jamestown settlement started in 1607.