



A Pilgrim Child

OBJECTIVE: Read to learn about the lives of Pilgrim children long ago.

STANDARDS: Social Studies (NCSS): Culture; time, continuity, and change

“I’d like to go back in a time machine and see what it looked like.” —Paul

BEFORE READING

Activate Prior Knowledge

Use the issue’s cover to review what children know about Pilgrims.

Have children look at the cover. Explain that the photo shows a modern boy dressed up like a Pilgrim. There are no photos of real Pilgrims because they didn’t have cameras. Ask, “How can you tell the Pilgrims lived long ago? Then ask, “What else do you know about Pilgrims?” Review that the Pilgrims traveled from England to America on a ship called the *Mayflower*.

DURING READING

Main Idea and Details

Help children organize their learning by finding the main idea and details.

After reading page 2, ask, “What is this issue about?” (*a Pilgrim child’s life*) Then ask, “What two details have you learned about Pilgrim children’s lives so far?” (*what clothes they wore and what food they ate*) Discuss how these details tell more about the main idea. After reading page 3, ask: “What other details did you learn about Pilgrim children’s lives?” (*what chores they did and what games they played*)

AFTER READING

Evaluate

Have children share their opinions on Pilgrim life.

Ask, “Do you think life is easier or more difficult for children today? Why?” (You may want to share information from the Read-Aloud Background first.) For instance, some children might say life is easier today because Pilgrim children had more demanding chores; some might say life is more difficult today because Pilgrim children didn’t have to go to school or do homework!

READ-ALoud BACKGROUND

Life of a Pilgrim

- **Home:** Most Pilgrim homes had only one room and a few small windows. Some had a storage space under the roof called a **loft**, which could be reached by climbing a ladder. The space was used to store food or as a place to put a bed.
- **Clothes:** Both men and women wore **aprons** to protect their clothes. Women’s aprons were long, and men’s were short. Most Pilgrims also wore a cloth collar around their necks. Some collars were ruffled, and some were flat.
- **Work:** Pilgrim children usually woke up very early to do their chores. They helped clean, cook, sew, hunt, fish, and plant. Older children took care of younger brothers and sisters too. Children did not go to school; they learned how to read and write at home.
- **Play:** Pilgrim children played some games that children still enjoy today. They played marbles, catch, and **noughts and crosses**, which was a lot like tic-tac-toe.

Working at Plimoth Plantation

- Paul and his father both work at Plimoth Plantation. Paul’s father plays a **blacksmith**. That’s a person who makes horseshoes for horses. Paul says he would not like to have lived in Pilgrim times, but he would like to go back for a visit! “I’d like to go back in a time machine and see what it looked like,” he says.
- The girl in the photos works at Plimoth too. Her name is Miranda. She says she likes her life today better than she would have liked being a Pilgrim. One reason is the heavy clothes. “It would be too hot in the summer to wear them all the time!” she says.

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