

The Virginia Colony (Jamestown) Part 3 Reading Comprehension

During the winter of 1612–1613, Samuel Argall devised a plan to kidnap Powhatan's favorite daughter, Pocahontas, who was visiting friends near Jamestown. Argall bribed two Indians with some copper kettles to lure Pocahontas onto an English ship. Although Pocahontas was suspicious, she boarded the ship and was kidnapped. Argall planned to ransom Pocahontas, but Powhatan was unwilling to meet the demands of the English. Negotiations dragged on for over a year, during which time Pocahontas grew accustomed to life among the English. In captivity, she converted to Christianity, was baptized, and in 1614, married the wealthy tobacco planter John Rolfe. The marriage of Rolfe and Pocahontas resulted in a truce between the Indians and the English. Although Powhatan was unhappy with the marriage and truce, as he realized it would result in the expansion of the English settlement, he grew tired of the fighting and felt powerless to stop it.

Despite the truce, Jamestown remained a dismal place for most of the settlers. Food shortages and disease were rampant in Jamestown. Because Rolfe's tobacco crop showed such promise for profit, many settlers began growing their own, though few reserved space for corn. Tobacco became the cash crop of the Jamestown settlement. In 1614, conditions improved for settlers when Thomas Dale, using his powers as governor, began transferring some of the land to private ownership. In order to continue growing tobacco, the Virginia Company needed a substantial workforce. Through “the headright system,” English settlers were guaranteed 50 acres of land in return for three years of labor. Heads of families that came to the New World were guaranteed 50 acres of land for each person they brought over. With their own lands, settlers began to build houses, tend to their land, and grow crops, which resulted in a new hope and inspiration for a successful colony.

Unfortunately, Jamestown's future was not bright. Powhatan's successor, Opechancanough, attacked the white settlements near Jamestown in order to prevent the settlers from taking more land for tobacco. It was a surprise attack, as the warriors approached the settlements as if they were preparing to trade. The attacks decimated the settlements and resulted in the deaths of 347 settlers, including John Rolfe. The attacks were especially surprising considering the peaceful relations that had reigned for many years. Although the Indians were driven back and eventually completely defeated, in 1624, as a result of the high mortality rates at Jamestown and the colony's poor financial state, King James revoked the colony's charter and made Virginia a possession of the Crown.

1.) Which of the following DID NOT happen to Pocahontas while she was kidnapped?

- a.) She had a child.
- b.) She converted to Christianity.
- c.) She got married.
- d.) She grew accustomed to life among the settlers.

2.) Why was Pocahontas kidnapped?

- a.) So John Rolfe could marry her.
- b.) Because the settlers believed Powhatan would meet their demands to get her back.
- c.) So they could bring her back to England.
- d.) To unite the Powhatans and settlers.

3.) As a result of the marriage between Pocahontas and John Rolfe...

- a.) hostilities ceased temporarily between the Powhatans and settlers.
- b.) war was imminent.
- c.) the Powhatans and settlers became rich.
- d.) Powhatan finally met the ransom demands of the settlers.

4.) Powhatan was _____ with the marriage between his daughter and John Rolfe

- a.) pleased
- b.) unhappy
- c.) surprised
- d.) mortified

5.) Ultimately, Powhatan felt _____ concerning the growth of Jamestown.

- a.) excited
- b.) pleased
- c.) disappointed
- d.) powerless

6.) _____ became the cash crop of the Jamestown colony.

- a.) Corn
- b.) Cotton
- c.) Beans
- d.) Tobacco

7.) As part of the headright system, colonists were guaranteed _____ for _____.

- a.) food; land
- b.) land; food
- c.) food; labor
- d.) land; labor

8.) Who was guaranteed 50 acres of land under the headright system?

- a.) Anyone who came over to Jamestown from England.
- b.) The heads of families
- c.) The heads of families who brought at least one settler from England to Jamestown.
- d.) Settlers who tended their own lands and who grew food for other settlers.

9.) Why were Jamestown and the colony of Virginia made possessions of the Crown?

- a.) The colony's high mortality rate.
- b.) The colony was making incredible profits.
- c.) The colony could no longer grow tobacco.
- d.) John Rolfe was killed.

10.) As more settlers arrived in Jamestown...

- a.) they crowded into existing settlements.
- b.) relations with the Powhatans improved because of the increase in trade.
- c.) less land was available for the Powhatans.
- d.) the settlement of Jamestown became more profitable in the eyes of the British Crown.