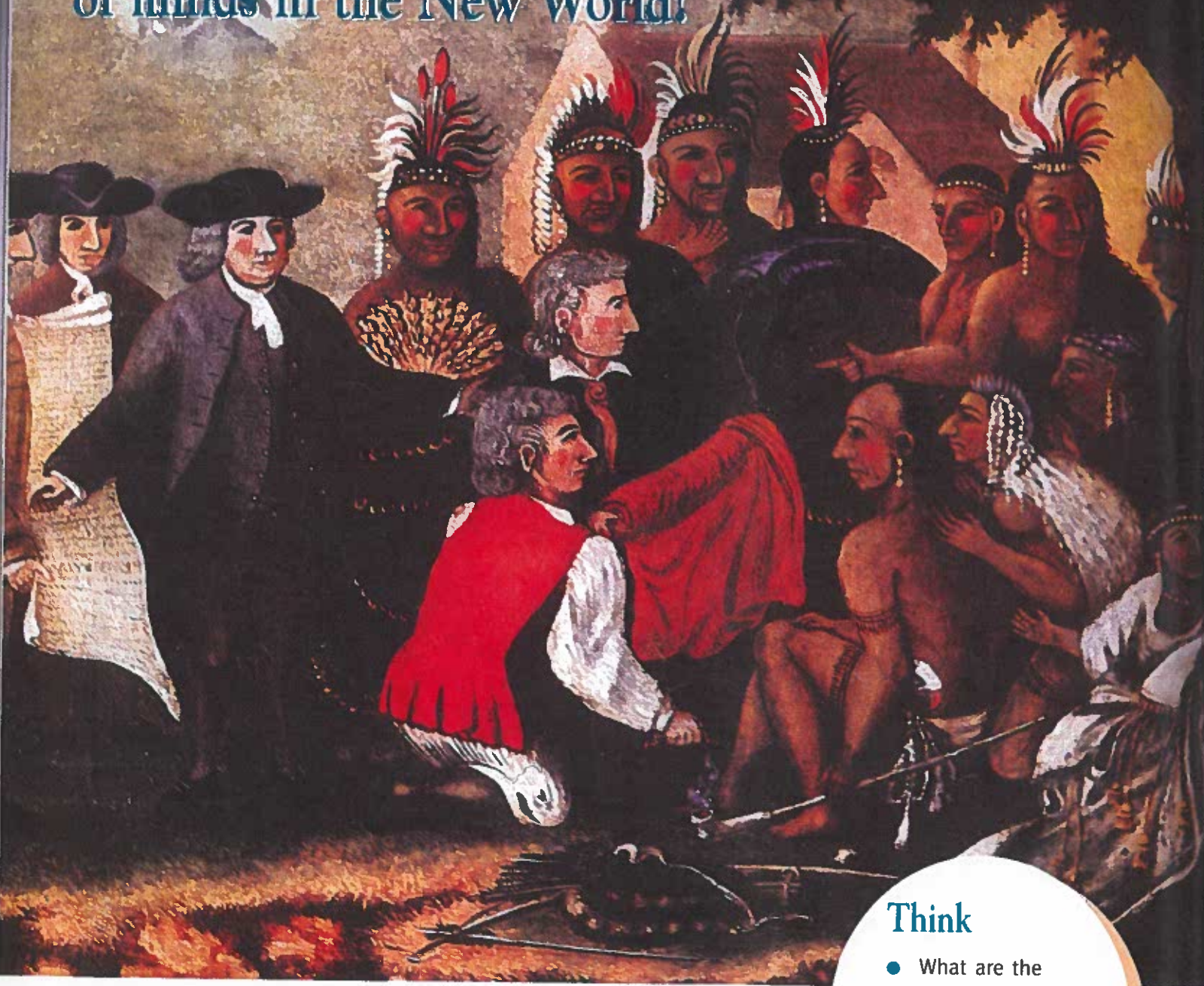


Culture clash

12

Why was there no meeting of minds in the New World?



William Penn's Treaty with the Indians, 1681, painted in 1771

This painting shows an important meeting which took place in 1681. The people on the left are English **settlers** in America. The people on the right are Native Americans.

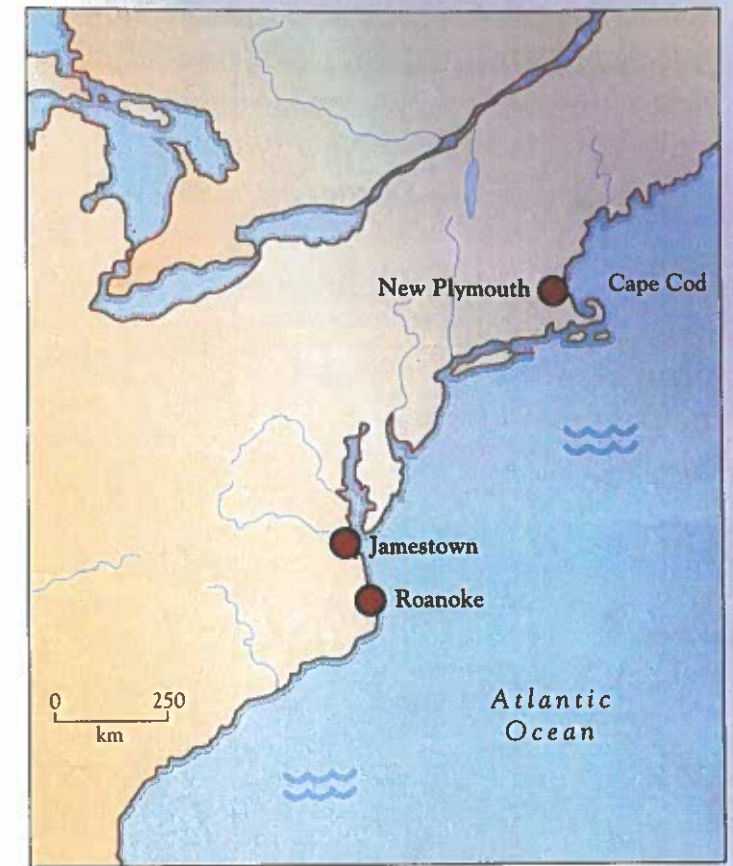
Think

- What are the settlers offering the Native Americans?
- What do you think they wanted in return?

A New World

In 1492, an Italian sailor called Christopher Columbus arrived in a 'New World' – America. Columbus thought he had found a shorter route to the East. He called the people he found in America 'Indians'. About a hundred years later, many people from different European countries began to settle in America. We call these people **colonists**. The lands they settled are called **colonies**.

For the people who lived in America already, this was not a 'New World'. They had lived there for thousands of years. These Native Americans must have been very shocked when the first white people arrived on their shores. The Europeans spoke a strange language. They looked very odd with their white skins and peculiar clothes. They had unusual ways of doing things. Their **culture** was very different from the Native American way of life. At first the two groups of people traded peacefully. They exchanged metal tools and woven cloth for beaver skins and other furs. But before long the two cultures clashed.



The first English colonies in North America

The colonists brought new diseases like measles and smallpox. They were greedy for land. Their guns enabled them to take the land from the Native Americans.

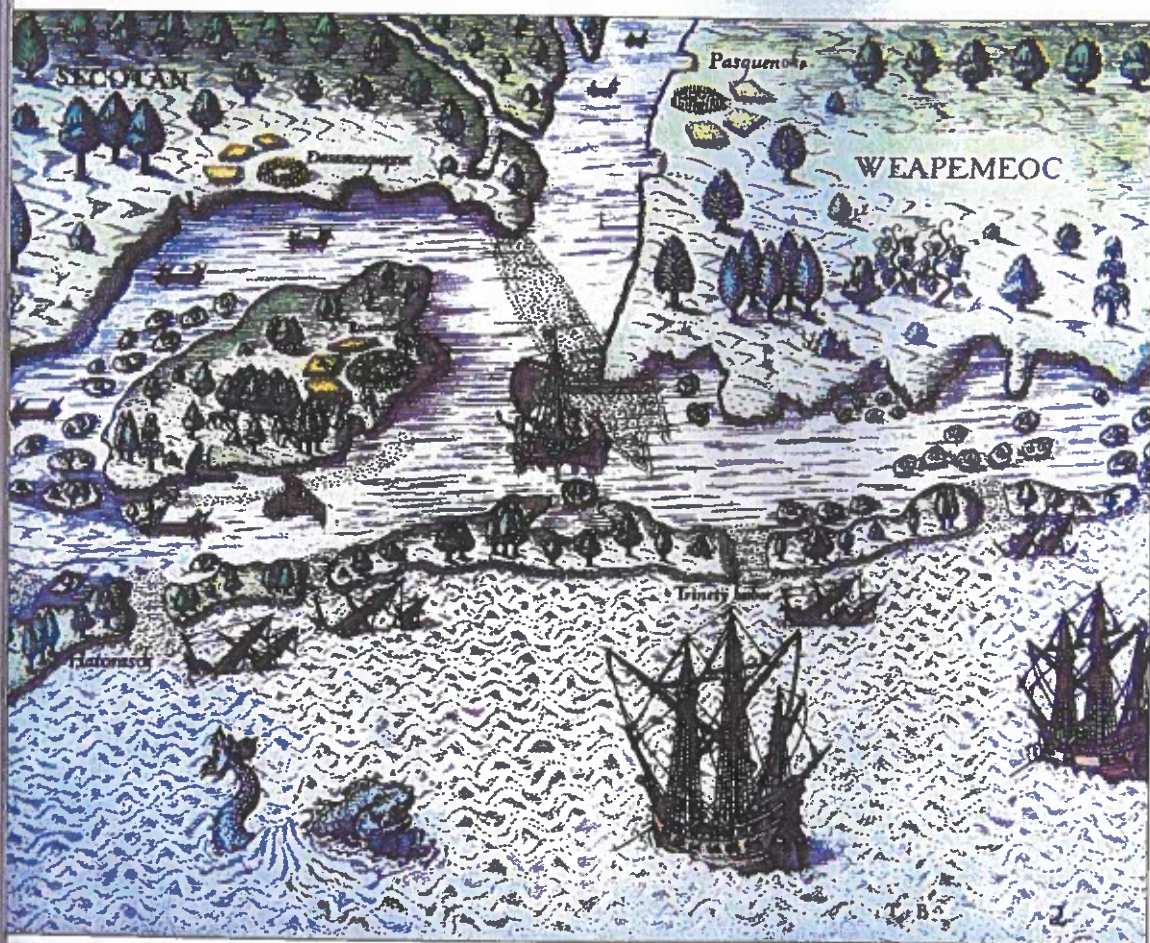
Your enquiry

In this enquiry you will find out about the first three English colonies in the New World – Roanoke, Virginia and New Plymouth. You will work out why the white colonists clashed with the Native Americans. At the end of your enquiry you will explain why there was no meeting of minds in the New World.

The first colony: Roanoke

In 1585, a small group of English colonists tried to settle at a place called Roanoke in the New World. They had been sent by Walter Raleigh. Raleigh wanted to find out as much as he could about this part of the New World. He was determined that England should be the first European country to colonise North America.

Raleigh's expedition was carefully planned. He even sent an artist called John White. White's task was to draw accurate pictures of the new plants, strange animals and puzzling people that the colonists found in the New World. He began by making this map of the coastline where they landed.



John White's map of the coast at Roanoke, 1585

The Native Americans who lived in this part of the New World were called the Algonquin. John White made friends with them and made some very careful paintings of their way of life.

Think

- What dangers did the English colonists face?
- What clues are there on the map that this might have been a good place to live?

This picture shows one of their villages.

Life in an Algonquin village was very different from life in Europe. Native Americans believed that the land could not be owned by individual people. The land was part of nature and was for everyone to share. It could not be sold or fenced-off into little parcels. Native Americans believed in sharing the things they owned.



John White's painting of an Algonquin village

In an Algonquin village, people did not hunt just for themselves, but for the whole village. No one was allowed to go hungry if there was food to share.

Think

- What do you think the colonists found strange about the Native Americans?
- What do you think the Native Americans found strange about the colonists?

them maize. When the Algonquin refused, the two groups began to quarrel. Things were starting to go wrong. Soon they were fighting. In the end the English colonists were forced to leave. The first English colony in the New World had failed.

STEP 1

Use the introduction to this enquiry and the story of the first colony at Roanoke to answer the following questions:

- 1 Why did the colonists go to the New World?
- 2 What did they do when they got there?
- 3 Why did they clash with the Native Americans?

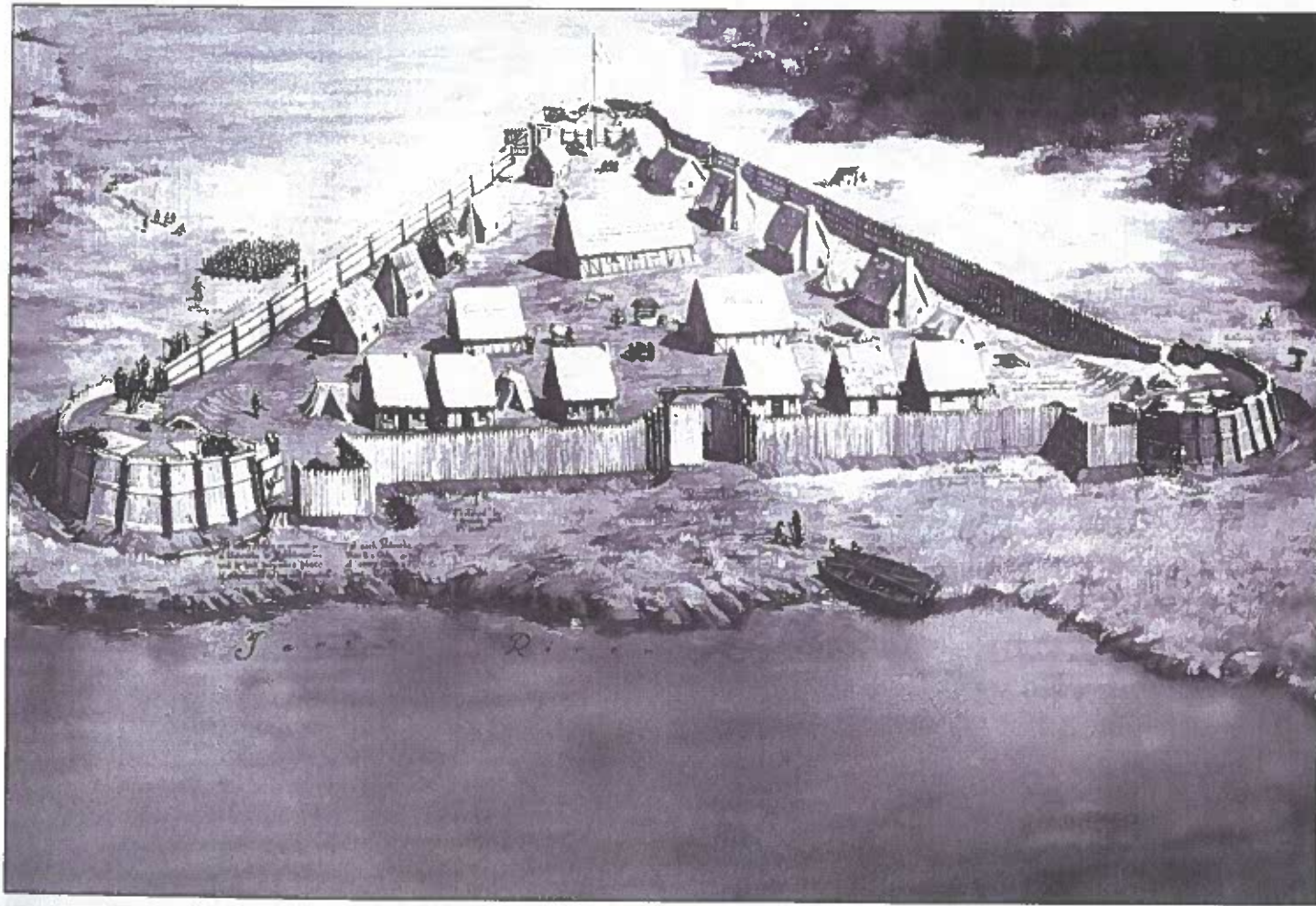
At first the English colonists at Roanoke were on good terms with the Algonquin. The Algonquin showed the colonists how to plant maize. They exchanged animal skins for glasses, knives and cooking pots. Two Algonquin even went back to England to meet Elizabeth I!

Peace did not last for very long. Soon a hundred English soldiers came to Roanoke. They built a fort and started to take over the land. They forced the Algonquin to give

The second colony: Virginia

In April 1607, three small ships dropped anchor in Chesapeake Bay. The 105 people who had survived the difficult journey from London were a mixture of sailors, adventurers, poor farmers, gentlemen and criminals. These new colonists were hoping to find gold and silver in the New World.

As the colonists stepped onto dry land their legs felt shaky after four months at sea. They noticed Native Americans in the forest. Some of them had read stories which made them frightened of the native people. The colonists expected trouble. They quickly chopped down trees to build houses. The colonists called their settlement Jamestown after their king in England. They surrounded their settlement with a wooden stockade to protect themselves from attack by the Native Americans.



A reconstruction of the fort at Jamestown

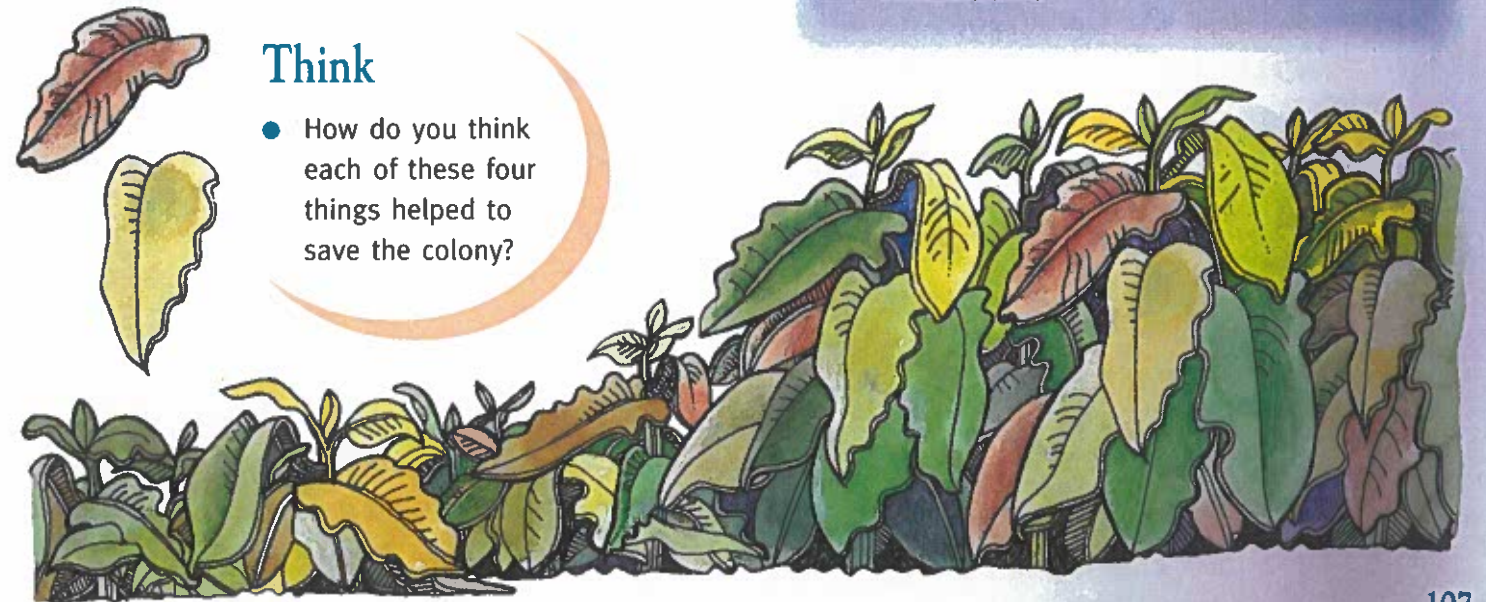
The colonists managed to survive their first few months in the New World, but they soon used up their supplies. They began to steal food from the Native Americans. The colonists became weak. Many caught malaria and died. After two years there were only 38 people left in Jamestown.

Then several things happened which saved the colony:

- 1 Another ship brought new supplies and more colonists from England.
- 2 The colony found a strong leader, John Smith. He made everyone work hard.
- 3 One of the settlers, John Rolfe, married Pocahontas, daughter of the Native American chief in the area. Attacks by Native Americans stopped.
- 4 The Native Americans gave the colonists a strange weed which looked like dandelion. It was tobacco. King James hated it, but people in England loved it.

Think

- How do you think each of these four things helped to save the colony?



The colony grew stronger. More and more people arrived from England. All along the banks of the Chesapeake river colonists set up plantations. These plantations produced only one thing – tobacco. The Native Americans of the Chesapeake knew that they could not survive if they lost their hunting grounds. In 1622 they decided to fight back.

When their leader was murdered by the colonists the Native Americans attacked the English settlements. A third of the colonists were killed. After the war of 1622 John Smith said that the colonists now had a reason to destroy the Native Americans.

STEP 2

Use the story of the second colony at Virginia to answer the following questions:

- 1 Why did the colonists go to the New World?
- 2 What did they do when they got there?
- 3 Why did they clash with the Native Americans?

The third colony: New Plymouth

In September 1620, 101 men, women and children squashed on board a small ship called the 'Mayflower'. Nearly half the people on board were Puritans. In 1603, when James VI of Scotland became King of England, he had told the Puritans:

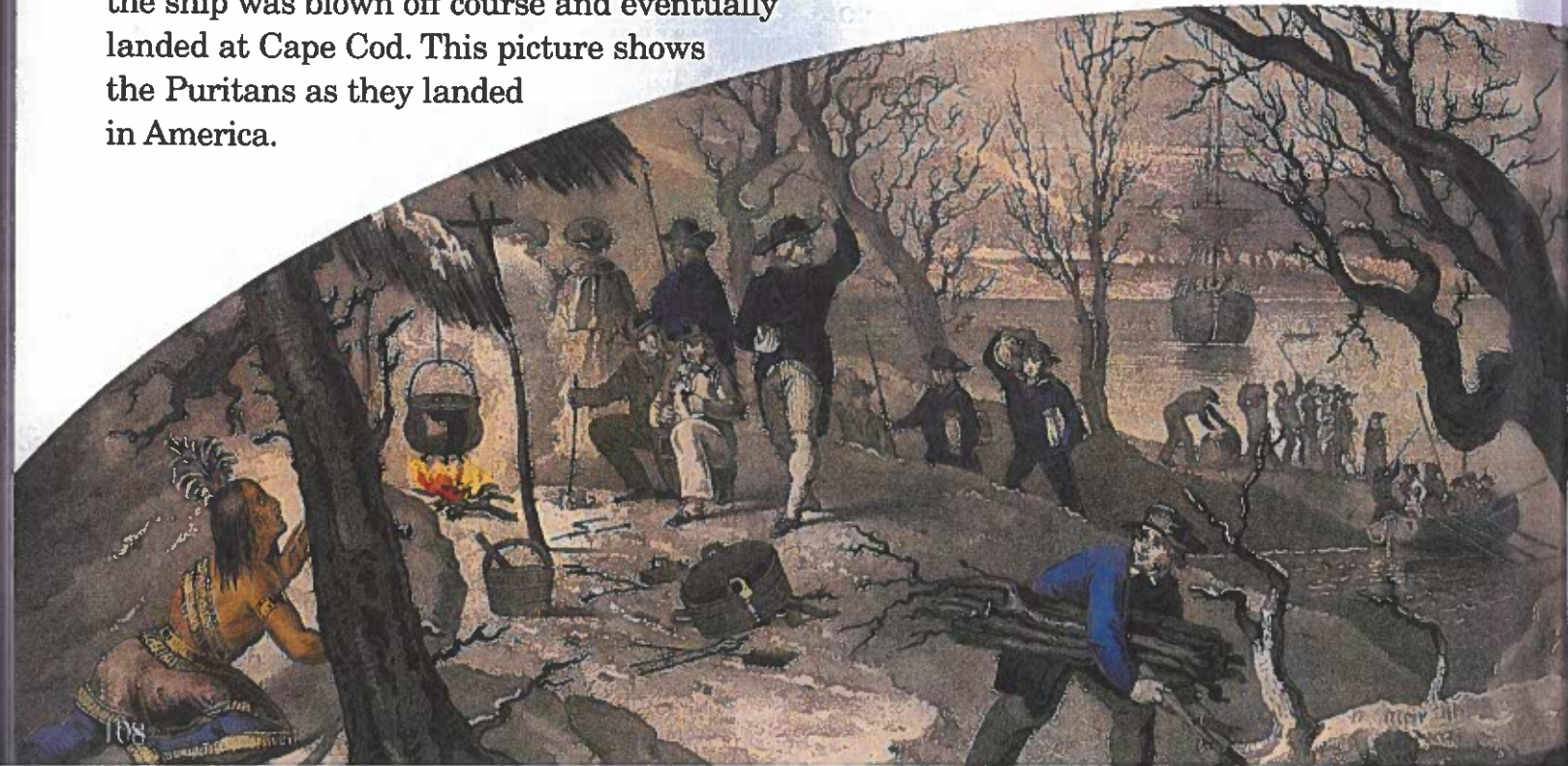
You must obey me or I will chase you from this land, or else do worse.

He did not say what 'do worse' might mean. But many Puritans did not wait to find out. They decided that it was time to give up on England and to build their own godly community in a new land. At first they settled in the Netherlands, but in 1620 a small group sailed to the New World.

The Puritans and other colonists on the 'Mayflower' had a stormy journey across the Atlantic. They wanted to go to Virginia, but the ship was blown off course and eventually landed at Cape Cod. This picture shows the Puritans as they landed in America.

It was the middle of winter. The colonists were forced to build their houses while the snow was falling. Before spring came they had built some small log cabins, but half the colonists had died of cold or disease. The ones who survived now faced a new problem – hunger.

They were saved by a Native American called Squanto who had learnt to speak English from the colonists at Jamestown. Squanto showed the settlers at New Plymouth how to plant maize. The colonists began to hunt animals in the woods and fish for lobsters in the sea. They also started to buy furs from the Native Americans. By the autumn of 1621 the colony at New Plymouth was secure. To celebrate their success the colonists held a huge feast. They invited the Native Americans to celebrate with them.



Good relations with the Native Americans did not last long. The Puritans thought that they were chosen by God to farm the land in the New World. One Puritan described the Native Americans as '... only savage and brutish men, just like wild beasts'. The Puritans felt that the Native Americans did not use the land properly. The colonists began to put up fences and to take land away from the Native Americans.

The idea of dividing up the land seemed very strange to the Native Americans. For hundreds of years they had lived in harmony with the world around them. Now the white colonists were destroying this world with their fences, guns and diseases.

In 1622, trouble broke out when a group of new colonists arrived from England. The colonists stole maize from the Native Americans and killed their leader. They cut off his head and stuck it on top of the fort at New Plymouth. The cultures had clashed. The peace had ended.

STEP 3

Use the story of the third colony at New Plymouth to answer the following questions:

- 1 Why did the colonists go to the New World?
- 2 What did they do when they got there?
- 3 Why did they clash with the Native Americans?

Thinking your enquiry through

The picture below shows a Native American and a colonist. They are face to face, but there is no meeting of minds. Draw an outline picture of the two faces,

and beneath each one show all the things which explain why the two cultures did not live peacefully together in the New World. The list has been started for you.

