About the Book

With beautiful illustrations, this picture book narrates the historic three-thousand-mile journey of the one hundred and two passengers aboard the Mayflower and their settlement at Plymouth Harbor. The Pilgrims encountered stormy seas and dangerous living conditions, but their determination was ultimately rewarded as they adapted to life in New England and celebrated their first harvest thanks to help from the local Native Americans.

Suggested Classroom Activities

**Literature/Language Arts**

**Title Page**—Call students’ attention to this page and introduce the words “title,” “author,” and “illustrator.” Point out the location of each on the page, and then have students look at a variety of picture books and identify the titles as well as authors’ and illustrators’ names. Remind them that even if they can’t read the words, they can locate the title, because it is usually in larger print. They can locate the author, which is usually below the title and is preceded by the word “by,” and the illustrator is usually located below the author.  

*CCSS RL.K.6; RI.K–3.5; RI.K.6*

**Fiction vs. Nonfiction**—Call students’ attention to the fact that this book is *nonfiction*, meaning that it contains words and illustrations that convey true and accurate information or facts, as opposed to fiction, which denotes a story that comes from an author’s imagination. After reading the book to the class, ask students to recall some of the facts they remember. Show them how to refer back to the text to check whether their memory of the facts is accurate. Create a classroom chart showing the facts that have been learned from reading this book. They can also include the page number where each fact is stated.  

*CCSS RL.1.5*

**Time Line**—Call students’ attention to the time line at the end of the book. Point out to them that a time line is another way of showing information, and that it is arranged in *sequence*, or in the order that events occurred. Create a class time line showing the dates of important classroom and school events that occur during the school year.  

*CCSS RL.K–3.1,3; SL.K–3.2; RI.1–3.5*

**Leaving Home**—Ask students to imagine what it would be like if they suddenly had to leave a home they were accustomed to and embark on a long, possibly dangerous journey. Whom would they regret leaving behind? What items would they take on the trip and why? What could they do for fun on the journey?  

*CCSS RI.3.6*
Writing Letters—Ask students to imagine what it would feel like to be a passenger on the Mayflower during the sixty-five days at sea. If they were going to write a letter to a friend or a relative back in England, what would they say? Have them use details from the text to describe the journey, including what they ate, where they slept, and the sounds, smells, and feelings they experienced on the trip. They can also describe how they “felt” when they finally reached land in the New World, and what life was like in their new village. CCSS W.K–3.3

First Thanksgiving—Have students recall the first Thanksgiving as described in the book and then compare it with their own family Thanksgiving traditions. How are they the same or different? CCSS RI.K–3.1; RI.3.6

Research / Electronic Resources

Mayflower II—www.plimoth.org/what-see-do/mayflower-ii presents information on the ship that most closely resembles the original Mayflower. Includes a link to many details about the Mayflower II, which now rests at Plymouth Plantation in Plymouth, MA.

Wampanoag Tribe—www.plimoth.org/what-see-do/wampanoag-homesite describes how this tribe probably would have lived at the time the Mayflower arrived at Plymouth Rock, including information on their homes, foods, farming, and crafts.

Pilgrims and the Wampanoag—www.plimoth.org/what-see-do/17th-century-english-village/english-village-FAQs#VillQuest13 presents many details, via questions and answers regarding the Pilgrims’ life in Plymouth and their interactions with Chief Massasoit and his tribe. Teachers can impart as much of the controversial information to students as they feel the students are old enough to handle.

Classroom Activities prepared by Sandy Schuckett, school library consultant.

About the Author and Illustrator

Mark Greenwood has a passion for history and legends and is the author of many books for children, published both in the United States and his native Australia. His work has been honored by Kirkus Reviews (Best Book of the Year) and the Bank Street College of Education Children’s Book Committee. He has twice received the West Australian Premier’s Award. He lives with his wife, illustrator Frané Lessac, in Fremantle, West Australia. Visit his website at www.markgreenwood.com.au.

Frané Lessac, born and raised in New Jersey, has illustrated forty books for children. Several of her books have been honored as NCSS-CBC Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People. Frané received the Muriel Barwell Award for distinguished service to children’s literature, which is given by the Children’s Book Council of Australia. Visit her website at www.franelessac.com.