

Grade 5 Family Letter: The Colonial Period

Dear Fifth Grade Families,

Our Focus

Have you ever moved to a new place? When you move, you may be confronted with unexpected situations that compel you to change your way of life.

In our next unit of study in Social Studies, our fifth graders will begin developing an understanding of the causes and effects of European colonization in the New World.

When, where and why did people move? How did they adapt to their new environments? How did the European colonists make a living? What kinds of governments did they organize in colonial America? Did some have more freedom than others? What other questions will spark our curiosity and prod us to seek answers?

Instructional Approach

Your child will develop his or her understanding of European colonization by exploring the people and events of that time through an inquiry approach:

- Why is the word CROATOAN, carved on a tree, still such an intriguing mystery, even today? Students will use clues to draw their own conclusions.
- Who were the people of Jamestown? Who were the people of Plymouth? Were their colonies successful? Why were they so eager to leave all they knew to risk all in the New World? Students will discover the answers to these questions through the use of primary and secondary sources.
- Who were the people of the original 13 colonies? Why did they choose their colony to start or begin a new life? What choices did they make in the new world in order to be successful.
- Geography and location have a deep impact on the people who live and work there. How did geography shape the New England, Middle and Southern Colonies? Students will learn how the early colonists made a living in their different regions.

After his or her learning experiences the student will choose a colony from one of the original thirteen and create a product from a variety of choices (Ex. journal, video, billboard or blog) . Your child will do this independently to make interesting and appropriate connections that demonstrates an understanding of why people move and make connections about the unexpected situations that happen to affect their way of life.

Family Support

Your support is always appreciated in your child's learning. Here are some ways you can help:

- Discuss the times you and your family have needed to move to a new place. How did life change? How did life remain the same?
- Unless we are Native Americans, we all are immigrants to the New World, coming from different places to begin new lives. Do you know your family's story?
- Where did you come from? Share and discuss with your child.
- Want to know more? Check out history online or visit your local library.

It's our hope that you will find yourself historically and personally curious, too, about our nation's early beginnings.

Sincerely,

Fifth Grade Teachers