

GOOD YEAR BOOKS

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About the Book

THE American History™ DETECTIVE B ★ O ★ O ★ K

By Stacie Hutton

Children, by nature, are inquisitive. They want to explore, collect, sort, digest, organize, analyze and make sense of their worlds, whether it be their homes, their classrooms or their playgrounds. They are immediate creatures, embracing the here and now because they know it—they can hear it, touch it, feel it. That which has already happened is hard to experience in the present. Ask any kid. But what if children could experience history? What if children could experience a historical event and do what comes naturally—ask questions, make assumptions, come to conclusions, and relate the event to present day?

The American History Detective Book makes this possible by using the fascination of crime-scene style investigation to tap into and develop higher-level thinking skills through discovery, investigation, and the asking of questions.

Like real crime scene investigators, students investigate clues that might have been left behind in the moments following a historical event. By using clues included in the book and other everyday items, anyone can re-create a realistic historical scene, leaving clues for investigation. Through the asking of the

inevitable who, what, where, when, why, and how questions, students explore, collect, sort, digest, organize, analyze and try to make sense of the scene, essentially experiencing it as if it was happening now.

Included in the book is a chapter offering guidance to students in creating logical historical clues and directions for setting up their own scenes independently, thus challenging their thinking abilities in yet another way.

The premise is natural, inquiry-based learning. Nothing holds value and interest like that which one works to achieve. Students will be challenged to make inferences and use deductive thinking, experiencing history and the stories behind it—a powerful learning tool. **The American History Detective Book** transforms curiosity into momentum for learning by encouraging students to become active participants in the study of history.

With its inquiry-based learning foundation, **The American History Detective Book** is a great addition to any social studies or American history program and provides educational opportunities in an active framework proven to be a great method of instruction for kids.

Author Stacie Hutton, M.Ed., serves as a trustee on the University of Rio Grande Board of Trustees. She is a former gifted intervention specialist and U.S. history teacher. Stacie has made statewide presentations for the Ohio Center for Law Related Education and the Ohio Association for Gifted Children, and helped author Ohio's Middle School Mock Trial program.



Good Year Books

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THE
American History
DETECTIVE™
B ★ O ★ O ★ K

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Instructions

The primary purpose of this book is to encourage students to inquire about historical events. The American History Detective Book contains 16 historical scenes spanning the time from Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas to the Vietnam War. Students investigate clues that might have been left behind following a historical event. Other scenes are set at the site of a historical event. Many scenes use fictional people reacting to a historical event after it happened. The reproducible Student Activity Sheet (page 71) should guide students as they investigate the scene, yet also encourage students to ask their own questions.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Set up the scene.
2. Review the information on the student page.
3. Allow students to investigate the scene. The student page in each chapter and the Student Activity Sheet will guide the investigation. There are questions to prompt student investigation contained in each chapter, which you may or may not choose to use.
4. Students should research answers to their questions about the scene and the historical event.
5. Discuss with students what they have learned from the scene, and what it tells them about the historical event.
6. Ask follow-up questions.

EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS

Each scene has definite conclusions that students should reach. Teachers may wish to assess students' performance based on their school's grading system. Using the Desired Student Questions will help you further assess student progress.

CLUES

- Clues are either included, everyday items, or historical documents easily found in textbooks, on the Internet, or through other sources.
- Some scenes contain fictional clues. For example, the Constitution scene contains "notes left by an unidentified delegate."

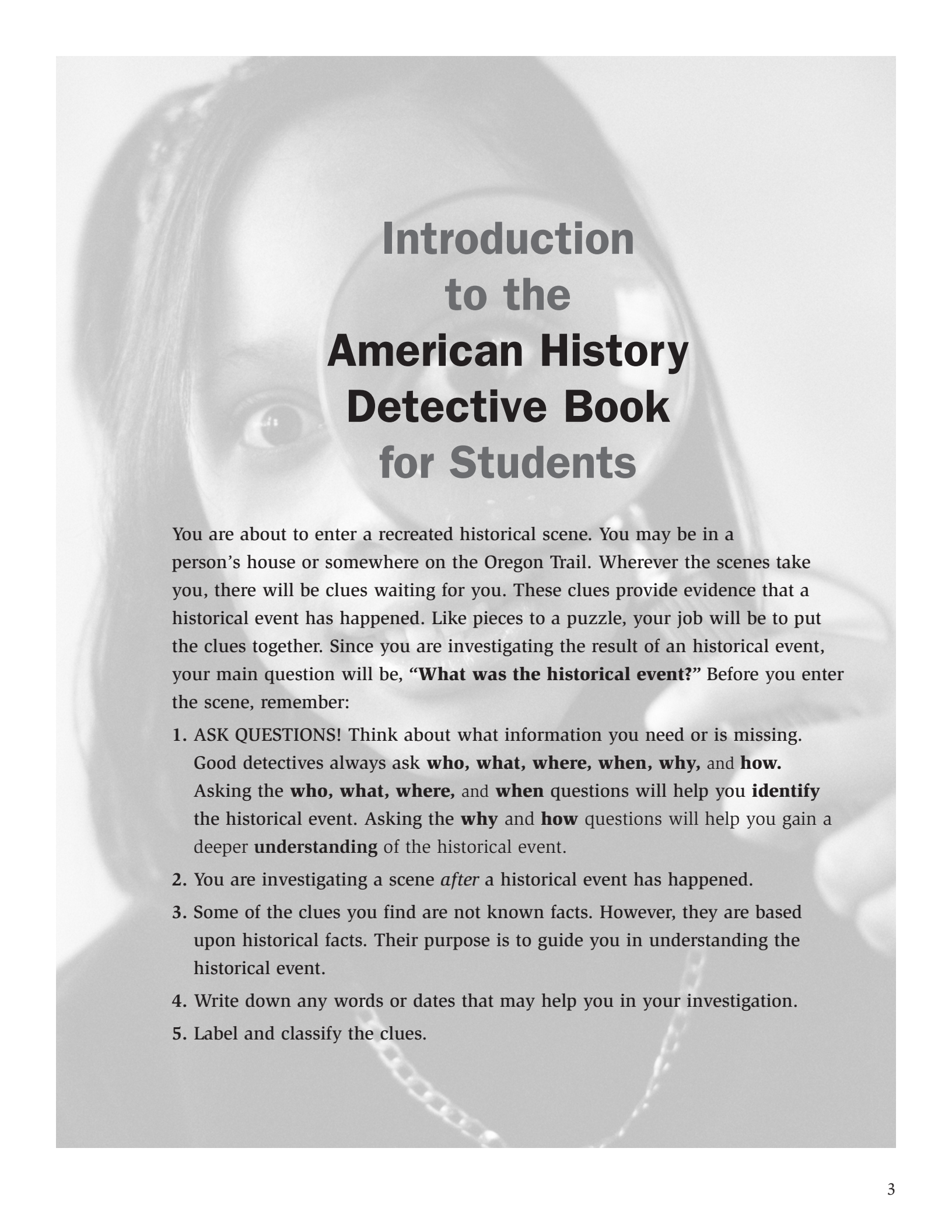
- The clues provided in this book are simulations of real things that existed, or might have existed, at the time the recreated scene takes place.
- Each scene contains a chart that explains the nature of each clue. You may choose whether to share this information with your students.
- You may choose to photocopy certain clues onto parchment-style paper to make them fit the time period.
- You may want to add other clues to a scene if they are appropriate to both the scene and the time period, for example, an old magazine cover.
- If you have a problem finding a suggested clue, feel free to make whatever clue substitution is appropriate and available.
- Yard sales, thrift stores, or flea markets offer excellent low-cost props that can be used as clues in scenes.
- Students might enjoy using magnifying glasses to inspect clues.

TIPS

- Although the intent of the activity is for students to ask their own questions, you may give students as much information as you wish (*see student pages at the back of the book*).
- You may want to practice inference skills with your students prior to implementing the activities in this book within your classroom.
- Primary source documents like the Mayflower Compact can be found on the Internet.

OTHER USES

- Since guidelines are provided for students to recreate their own historical scenes, this book could be a guide for creating scenes from events not covered in this book.
- You may use this book in your reading program to evaluate students' comprehension and inference skills.



Introduction to the American History Detective Book for Students

You are about to enter a recreated historical scene. You may be in a person's house or somewhere on the Oregon Trail. Wherever the scenes take you, there will be clues waiting for you. These clues provide evidence that a historical event has happened. Like pieces to a puzzle, your job will be to put the clues together. Since you are investigating the result of an historical event, your main question will be, “**What was the historical event?**” Before you enter the scene, remember:

1. **ASK QUESTIONS!** Think about what information you need or is missing. Good detectives always ask **who, what, where, when, why, and how**. Asking the **who, what, where, and when** questions will help you **identify** the historical event. Asking the **why** and **how** questions will help you gain a deeper **understanding** of the historical event.
2. You are investigating a scene *after* a historical event has happened.
3. Some of the clues you find are not known facts. However, they are based upon historical facts. Their purpose is to guide you in understanding the historical event.
4. Write down any words or dates that may help you in your investigation.
5. Label and classify the clues.



CHAPTER 1: Columbus Arrives

GOAL

To examine Christopher Columbus' goals for and the actual result of his first voyage

OVERVIEW

The scene takes place as Columbus is ready to depart on his first voyage. The journey's purpose was to establish trade routes for very lucrative spices, but incidentally resulted in Columbus landing in the Americas. Columbus believed he could reach the East Indies by a new route, but instead hit an undiscovered continent. This led to the first colonization of America.

VOCABULARY

trade winds—prevailing patterns of easterly winds

navigation—the science of understanding one's location, and planning and following a route

route—a course of travel

Don—a title of respect for the Spaniards, like "Sir"

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Christopher Columbus was born in approximately 1451 in Genoa, Italy. Although his family members were weavers, as a young man, Columbus defied family tradition and learned sailing. He also had a knack for languages; he learned Latin, Portuguese, and Castilian Spanish. He read extensively on the subjects of history, geography, and astronomy, and from these readings, developed theories about the world. His knowledge of trade winds, for example, was a key factor in his successful exploration of the Atlantic.

Columbus believed that if he sailed westward from Spain, he would reach the East Indies. For several years, he unsuccessfully tried to gain financial support for his voyages from both the Spanish and Portuguese kings. Luck intervened when in 1492,

King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, with the lucrative spice trade in mind, agreed to fund his explorations. The monarchs agreed to a contract giving Columbus a portion of all riches discovered. As the contract states, "Don Christopher may take the tenth part of all merchandise, whether it be pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, spices, or other things, and give the other nine parts to your Highnesses."

On August 3, 1492, the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria set sail. On October 12, 1492, land was sighted in what is now the Bahamas. However, Columbus did not realize he was in the Caribbean; he believed he was in Asia, so he named the land San Salvador. He called the people he encountered *indios*, the Spanish word for Indians.

Columbus made three more voyages; in one, he claimed Central America for the Spanish. After his journeys he was named Admiral of the Ocean Sea and Governor of the Indies, as was stated in his agreement with the rulers of Spain. However, his governing ability came into question, and eventually Columbus was arrested and relieved of his duties as governor. He was later freed and given funds for a fourth voyage, but his governing powers were never restored. He died in 1506.

Although Columbus was not the first to land in the Americas, as that distinction likely belongs to the Vikings, Columbus did bring attention to the continent, leading to its colonization. Historians still debate whether Columbus realized he had landed on a new continent.

QUESTIONS TO PROMPT STUDENT INVESTIGATION

- What was the agreement between Christopher Columbus and the Spanish rulers?
- Was it Columbus' goal to discover America?

DESIRED QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

- Why does the agreement list gold and spices?
- Where was Columbus intending to sail?
- What did he actually find at the destination?

SETTING UP THE SCENE

Reserve an approximately 8' x 8' area. Place the map on the desk. Any other items can be scattered near the desk. The desk should appear as a captain's quarters in the stronghold of his ship.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Ocean waves, fan to simulate wind

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What advice would you have given Christopher Columbus?
- What do you think is Columbus' most significant accomplishment?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Further Research

- Research other explorers of the time, such as Marco Polo
- Compare Columbus' map to a current world map
- Create a chart listing all the major explorers of the time period and their accomplishments
- Research the life of Queen Isabella of Spain
- Research early European theories regarding the Earth

2. Student-Created Clues

- Write an additional log where Columbus acknowledges that he was in North America and describe what he thinks may happen in this new land
- Write a letter from one of Columbus' crew members to his family back home

3. Role-Play

- Students will work in groups of three to research Christopher Columbus and then interrogate him regarding his role in the scene/historical event. One student will be the detective and the other student will role-play how the character might have answered the question. The third student will be a fact checker. The "fact checker's" responsibility will be to make sure the comments and questions from the interrogation match the facts. See the Student Activity Sheet on page 71 to accompany this activity.

SUGGESTED CLUES

CLUE	PURPOSE
Desk	Where Columbus might have kept his personal and business items
Map	Establishes that Columbus is taking a voyage
Rope	Establishes that the scene takes place on a ship



FOR THE STUDENT DETECTIVE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

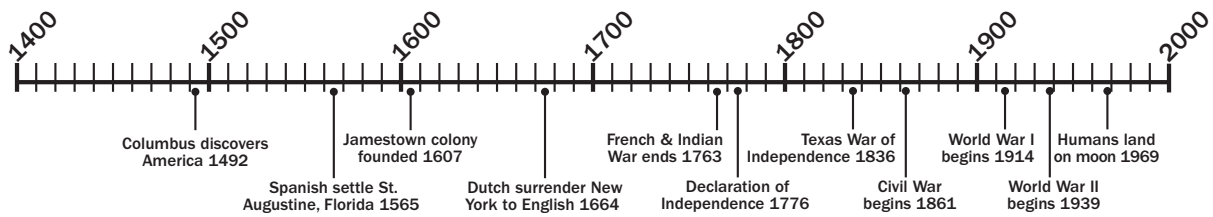
Students should be reminded that the map in the scene will appear different from modern maps.

THE SCENE

You hear the rumbling of a ship crew unpacking their gear and getting ready to set sail. You also hear sea birds, feel the wind, and the floor creaks as you step on it.

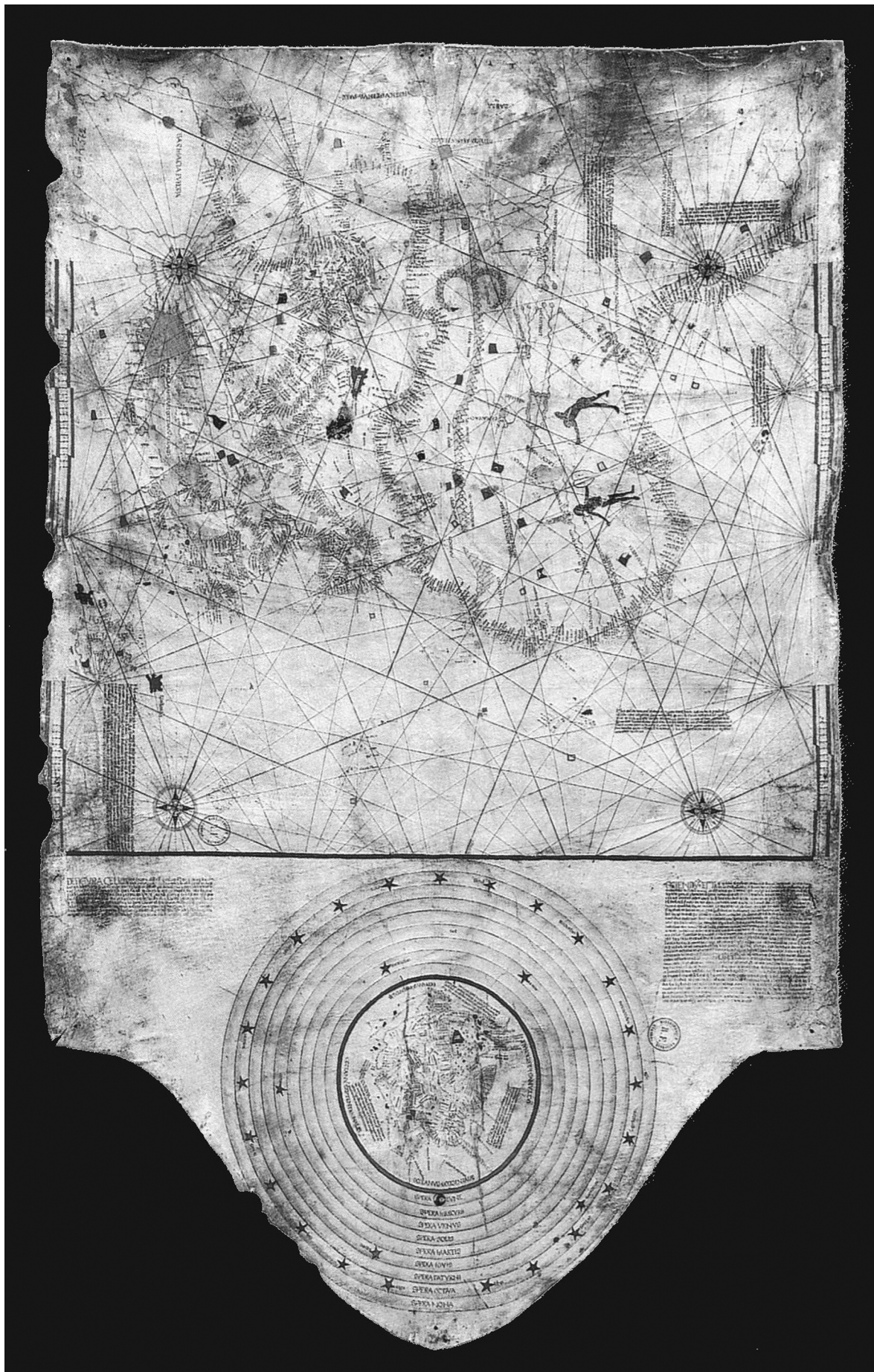
NON-ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

- The names of the other crew members



On the timeline above, indicate the approximate year in which the scene takes place.

DETECTIVE'S NOTES AND SKETCHES





CHAPTER 2: The American Colonial Era

GOAL

To examine the circumstances around the drafting and signing of the Mayflower Compact

OVERVIEW

This scene takes place on the *Mayflower* shortly after the arrival of the Pilgrims to the new land, and just after the historical signing of the Mayflower Compact aboard the ship. The Compact was signed amid reports of potential mutiny upon arrival in America. The “notes” clue in the scene alludes to the non-Separatist passengers aboard the *Mayflower* and the fact that the Mayflower Compact was the first time the note-taker was permitted to participate in an act of self-government.

VOCABULARY

colony—an area or region with people who have left their parent country to live in a new land under the rule of and for the benefit of the parent country

patent—a legal document conferring a right for a limited amount of time, in this case to land

treason—a serious crime against one’s country or ruler, usually committed by disobeying fundamental laws, advocating for violent political change, or aiding the enemies of one’s government

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

England officially broke with the Roman Catholic Church in 1535, and the ensuing decades saw great religious strife between Catholics and reform-minded Protestants. By the early 17th century, England was firmly Protestant, with the Church of England as the established religion. This did not end religious debate, and numerous Puritan groups felt the need for further reform and a stricter adherence to biblical

scripture. Since the Church of England was controlled by the King and the government, religious dissent could mean political dissent—and might even be considered treason.

One dissenting group, a “Separatist” congregation led by William Brewster, left for Holland in 1608, where freedom to worship was tolerated. However, life in Holland was hard and did not suit the Separatists, and in 1617 they decided to emigrate to America. They obtained the financial support of the Virginia Company, and about half the group returned to England in July 1620 to join in final preparations for their voyage.

After some delays, the reorganized group of 102 passengers (including a number of non-Separatist emigrants) sailed from Plymouth, England aboard the *Mayflower* on September 6, 1620. After a 65-day voyage, they found themselves off Cape Cod in New England—far to the north of Virginia where they had a “patent” to lands on which to settle. Faced with settling in a place where they had no legal rights, and concerned that the non-separatist “Strangers” among them might not obey the Separatist leaders, the passengers drew up the “Mayflower Compact.” This document outlined the manner in which they were to govern themselves.

Signed by 41 male passengers on November 11, 1620, the Mayflower Compact was the first document drafted in America that established the fundamentals of a self-governing society.

By mid-December 1620, the *Mayflower* anchored for the winter in an area called Plymouth, and the settlers came ashore to establish their colony. The harsh conditions and sickness that first winter killed nearly half the colony, but the settlers persevered and their colony survived.

QUESTIONS TO PROMPT STUDENT INVESTIGATION

- What is a “dissenter”?
- Why were the Pilgrims called “Separatists”?

DESIRED QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

- What is the Mayflower Compact?
- Who are the “strangers”?
- Why does the document say Virginia?
- Why was it important to the note taker?

SETTING UP THE SCENE

Reserve an approximately 10' x 10' area in your room. Place the quill pen and candle or lantern on a table or desk, along with several small sheets of paper. All items can appear slightly damp or musty. You can have sacks, boxes and others items scattered about to make it appear as though passengers are preparing to leave the ship.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Ocean, sea gulls, creak of masts, and rigging sounds

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think the Separatists did not like living in Holland?
- What do you think could have happened in the new colony without the Mayflower Compact?
- What do you think were the long-term effects of the Mayflower Compact?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Further Research

- Devise a document like the Mayflower Compact providing rules and guidelines for the behavior of their classmates if they had no authority figures.
- Pretend that one of the male passengers declined to sign the Mayflower Compact. Split into teams and debate each side.
- Write a diary entry as one of the passengers who was not a Pilgrim.
- Create another clue that may have appeared in this scene.
- Research what life was like during a 17th-century sea voyage.

- Research how 17th-century ships navigated at sea.

2. Student-Created Clues

- Write a letter that William Bradford might have written to the Virginia Company explaining why the colony was established in New England, and not in Virginia as originally planned.
- Create a clue that may have appeared in this scene (see Chapter 17 for help) and write a paragraph defending this clue.

3. Role-Play

- Work in groups of three to research William Bradford or William Brewster and then interrogate that historical figure regarding his/her role in this scene/historical event. One student will be the detective and the other student will role-play how the character might have answered the question. The third student will be a fact checker. The fact checker's responsibility will be to make sure the comments and questions from the interrogation match the facts. See the activity sheet on page 71 to accompany this activity.
- Students may also brainstorm a list of other historical figures they wish to question.

SUGGESTED CLUES

CLUE	PURPOSE
Quill pen and inkwell	Establishes time period
Table and chair	Establishes cabin location
Mayflower Compact	Not in scene, students will reference document upon investigating clues
Candle or lantern	Establishes time period
Notes of an unidentified passenger	Provides reference to Mayflower Compact