

Follow-up Activities

- Rhode Island is many things, but an island it is not. Have students research the origins behind the state's misleading name and create a poster listing pertinent information about Rhode Island. As an extension activity, have students research the names of other colonial settlements.
- Have the class write journal entries as Roger Williams during the first week of his trek through the wilderness. As an additional activity, divide the class into two groups and have them compose correspondence between Williams and a friend still residing in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.
- Williams supported himself and his family by trading and bartering with the Native Americans of the Wampanoag and Narragansett tribes. Ask students to research what items the colonists and Native Americans traded and bring in similar items to re-enact the bartering system in class.
- In addition to Williams, others such as Thomas Hooker and Anne Hutchinson were also banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Have students research the life of Anne Hutchinson and, based on the information they find, re-enact her trial.
- Massachusetts eventually repealed the banishment of Roger Williams some three hundred years after it was imposed. Have students research when and why the banishment was lifted and report the findings to the class. Discuss what factors would make a legislative body take action on such a matter so many years after Williams' death.
- Twice in Williams' life, major wars broke out between the European settlers and the Native Americans in the New England colonies. Have students compare the sources of these recurring hostilities and examine the role Williams played in both the Pequot War and King Philip's War. Discuss where Williams' loyalties lay in each case and why.

Internet Resources

www.sec.state.ri.us/rihist/earlyyh.htm

Rhode Island On-Line presents a public information kiosk featuring detailed information on the early history of the "Ocean State."

www.nps.gov/rowi/

The National Park Service provides information on the Roger Williams National Memorial, commemorating the life of the founder of Rhode Island and a champion of the ideal of religious freedom.

www.puritansermons.com/

Fire and Ice presents numerous sermons, essays and poems written by the Puritans, Scottish Divines and other Reformed authors.

bc.barnard.columbia.edu/~lgordis/earlyAC/discussions/feb10notes.html

Extensive information on the Pequot War, including maps, a detailed chronology and the complete text of John Mason's *A Brief History of the Pequot War*.

(Continued)

www.gale.com/gale/cwh/hutchin.html

A detailed biography of Anne Hutchinson, American religious leader and poet, who, like Roger Williams, was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Suggested Print Resources

- Avi. *Finding Providence: The Story of Roger Williams*. Harpercrest, New York, NY; 1997.
- Lough, Loree. *Dream Seekers: Roger William's Stand for Freedom*. Chelsea House Publishing, Broomall, PA; 1998.
- Nichols, Joan Kane. *A Matter of Conscience: The Trial of Anne Hutchinson*. Raintree/Steck-Vaughn, Austin, TX; 1996.
- Roman, Joseph. *King Philip*. Chelsea House Publishing, Broomall, PA; 1992.
- Somervill, Barbara A. *The Rhode Island Colony*. Child's World, Chanhassen, MN; 2003.
- Waters, Kate. *Tapenum's Day: A Wampanoag Indian Boy in Pilgrim Times*. Scholastic Inc., New York, NY; 1996.

TEACHER'S GUIDE CONSULTANT

Michael Zuckerman

Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

COMPLETE LIST OF TITLES

- Jamestown
- Plimoth Plantation
- St. Augustine
- The Dutch & New Amsterdam
- The French & Colonial Quebec
- William Penn & Pennsylvania
- The Spanish & Colonial Santa Fe
- Roger Williams & Rhode Island
- Settling the New World

Teacher's Guides Included
and Available Online at:



800-843-3620



Teacher's Guide and Program Copyright 1999 by Schlessinger Media,
a division of Library Video Company
P.O. Box 580, Wynnewood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620
Programs produced and directed by Stone House Productions, LLC
Executive Producers, Andrew Schlessinger & Tracy Mitchell
All rights reserved.

**ROGER WILLIAMS
& RHODE ISLAND**

Grades 3-7

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting *Colonial Life for Children: Roger Williams & Rhode Island*.

Before Viewing: Give students an introduction to the program by relaying aspects of the historical overview to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire further discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and reading resources provided.



Historical Overview

In 1630, the Puritans journeyed across the Atlantic to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The following year, Roger Williams made the same voyage to the New World, where he had been hired as a Puritan minister in Boston. Since the Puritans had left England in search of religious freedom, Williams was shocked to discover that the system the Puritans had created in the New World was just as intolerant as the Church of England. Williams felt people should be able to decide what to believe in for themselves, a principal that he called “Liberty of Conscience.” He also argued for the separation of church and state while questioning the Puritans’ right to claim the land they settled on as their own. Because of his radical views, Williams was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636.

Traveling south during the harsh winter months, Williams was taken in by the Wampanoag Indians and in the spring reached the headwaters of Narragansett Bay, where he established the settlement of Providence. Soon, other colonists seeking greater religious freedom joined Williams in establishing Rhode Island as a democratic colony. In 1663, King Charles II decided to test the concept of religious freedom in Rhode Island and awarded the colony a charter, deeming it a “Lively Experiment.” While Williams’ voice was often alone in criticizing the strict rules of the other New England colonies, his “Liberty of Conscience” would turn up some 150 years later in America’s most important document — the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Time Line

1492 — Christopher Columbus arrives in the New World.

1607 — The English establish their first permanent settlement at Jamestown..

1620 — The Pilgrims depart for the New World aboard the Mayflower. Initially bound for Virginia, they land instead at Plimoth, establishing a new colony and a constitution of their own.

1630 — The Puritans establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

1631 — Roger Williams and his wife Mary arrive in the New World.

1636 — Roger Williams is banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and travels south, where he establishes the settlement of Providence.

1644 — Roger Williams petitions the King of England for a royal charter in an effort to define the boundaries and rules for the colony of Rhode Island.

1663 — A royal charter is issued to confirm the 1644 patent of Rhode Island, granting the colony absolute “Liberty of Conscience.”

Vocabulary

banishment — The act of being expelled or removed by the established authority from a colony, state or country.

Puritans — A group of English Protestants who established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630.

Church of England — The established church in England.

Pilgrims — A group of English settlers who sought religious freedom in America and established Plimoth Plantation in 1620. *(Continued)*

“Liberty of Conscience” — A principle coined by Roger Williams, referring to a person’s right to practice religious freedom.

dissident — Someone who disagrees with an established opinion or group.

Anne Hutchinson — A dissident who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638 because of her religious beliefs.

pastor — The religious leader of a Protestant congregation.

Wampanoag Indians — A tribe of eastern North American Indians living in the vicinity of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and Plimoth Plantation.

Narragansett Indians — A tribe of eastern North American Indians living in the vicinity of present-day Rhode Island.

provisions — A stock of food.

trek — A difficult journey, often through the wilderness.

headwaters — The source of a stream or other body of water.

trading post — A store where goods from afar are bought, sold or bartered for local goods, usually found in a frontier area.

Cocumscusoc — The Narragansett term for the area where Roger Williams built his trading post.

Canonicus — A Narragansett Indian chief who shared a friendship with Roger Williams.

negotiator — Someone who arranges a compromise, deal, treaty or other peaceful settlement between two or more parties in a dispute.

trencher — A wooden platter for serving food.

primary school — Another term for an elementary school.

democracy — A form of government in which power rests in the hands of officials who are elected by the people.

judicial system — The part of the government that handles legal matters.

rogue — A mischievous or immoral person.

synagogue — The house of worship and communal center of a Jewish congregation.

atheist — A person who does not believe in the existence of God.

charter — A document defining a colony’s rules and boundaries.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Find out what students know — or think they know — about the Pilgrims and the Puritans. Discuss the reasons that these two groups had for leaving England.
- Have students locate England and Massachusetts on a current world map. Discuss the length and conditions of the Puritans’ voyage to the New World.
- Point out the locations of Providence, Plymouth and Boston on a current map of the United States. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the locations the Pilgrims and Puritans chose to establish their settlements.
- Today in America, religion and government are separate, but that was not the case in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Explain the concept of separating church and state, instructing students to watch and note how this principle evolved in Colonial America through the efforts of Roger Williams.

Focus Questions

1. Why did the Puritans leave England?
2. What did Roger Williams mean when he spoke about “Liberty of Conscience?” How did his ideas differ from those of other Puritans?
3. How did Williams’ attitude towards the Native Americans differ from those of his fellow colonists?
4. Why did Williams leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony?
5. What was the trek Roger Williams took and why was it so dangerous?
6. What major difference was there between the houses in Providence and other Puritan homes in the colonies?
7. What was Smith’s Castle?
8. Who was Canonicus?
9. How was life in Puritan Rhode Island different from our lives today? What are some similarities?
10. What was mealtime like in the average Providence household?
11. What did Williams look like?
12. What form of government was practiced in Rhode Island?
13. Why did other colonists refer to Rhode Island as “Rogue’s Island?”
14. What was King Charles II talking about when he referred to Rhode Island’s “Lively Experiment?”
15. Why did the Native Americans eventually wage war against the English?

Follow-up Discussion

- Discuss why Roger Williams would willingly put himself at odds with the Puritan leaders of the colony. Ask the students whether there are causes or beliefs in their own lives that they would fight for at the risk of being ostracized from their community, school, friends, etc.
- Williams accepted the Indian outlook that land was given, not purchased, and once said that “Rhode Island was purchased by love.” Review with the class how Williams, the Puritans and the Narragansett Indian tribes viewed land rights. What impact did this have on the relationship between the colonists and the Native Americans?
- Discuss the changes that took place in Providence later in Williams’ life. Williams once said Providence was a town full of “profit, pleasure and preferment.” With this in mind, discuss with the class what Roger Williams might think of America today.
- Based on the information presented in the program, ask students to describe what a typical day was like for a child growing up in Puritan Massachusetts or Rhode Island. How was it different from a kid’s life today? What was schooling like?
- Even after being banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Williams acted as a negotiator between the English and Indians. Discuss the reasons Williams might have had to aid those who sent him into exile. Ask the class what they would do if they were in Williams’ situation.