

**HISTORICAL DOCUMENT I****The Mayflower Compact, 1620**

IN September 1620, a group of 102 men, women, and children set sail from Plymouth, England, on a small ship called the *Mayflower*. These people, called Pilgrims, wanted to escape the religious persecution they had experienced in England. When the Pilgrims finally anchored off Cape Cod, they knew that they needed a plan to begin their colony. Before leaving the ship, all 41 adult male Pilgrims signed the Mayflower Compact, an agreement that the Pilgrims would govern themselves. The Mayflower Compact became one of the first forms of self-government in North America.

IN ye name of God Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord King James, by ye grace of God, of Great Britaine, Franc, & Ireland king, defender of ye faith, & c. Haveing undertaken, for ye glorie of God, and advancemente of ye Christian faith and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly & mutuallly in ye presence of God, and one of another, covenant, & combine ourselves together into a Civill body politick; for our better

ordering, & preservation & furtherance of ye ends aforesaid; and by vertue hereof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just & equall Lawes, ordinances, Acts, constitutions, & offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete & convenient for ye generall good of ye colonie: unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witnes whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd ye -11- of November, in ye year of ye raigne of our soveraigne Lord King James of England, France, & Ireland ye eighteenth, and of Scotland ye fiftie fourth. Ano Dom. 1620.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. According to the document, why did the Pilgrims undertake their voyage?
2. What reasons do the Pilgrims give for forming a "Civill body politick"?
3. What powers do the Pilgrims claim for themselves?