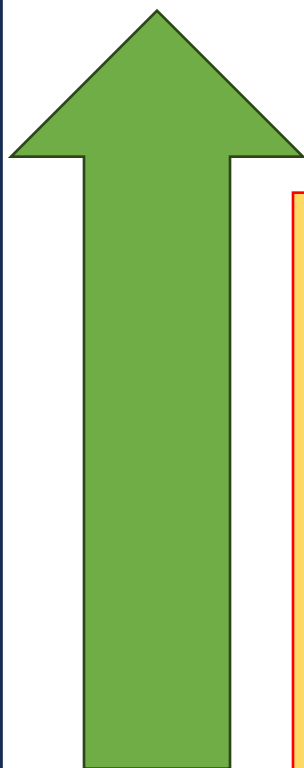


From the Ground Up!

How the Pilgrim Built Their Homes



Submitted by Sandra Sauers

General Society of Mayflower
Descendants

Education Committee

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From The Ground Up

A Lesson Plan on How the Pilgrims Built Their Homes

OBJECTIVE: To examine how Pilgrims built their homes; to become familiar with early colonial homes; and to build a paper Pilgrim house.

USE: For Mayflower meetings, classrooms, home school educators and families.

MATERIALS:

- Samples of materials used by the Pilgrims in the construction of their homes such as daub, wattle, thatch and clapboard.
- Photos or drawings of examples of tools that were known to have been used by the Pilgrims in the construction of their homes.
- Photographs of Pilgrim homes from the 1600's and 1700's. (including oldest home in Plymouth).
- Educational materials to include:
 - Pilgrim Tool Flash
 - Flash Cards
 - Word Search Puzzle
 - Educational Trifold Display (example provided)
 - Cut-out pattern of a Pilgrim House
- Quiz to assess for understanding.

MEETING ORDER

Introduction

- 1) Provide an overview of steps a Pilgrim took to build a home.

• The Pilgrims cut down trees with ax and saw to make posts and beams for the framework, and split the wood to make thin boards called clapboards.
• The floors consisted of pounded down dirt.
• Post holes were dug for framing the home using an auger and shovel.
• A post was set on each corner of the house (four total).
• Beams were attached to posts to form the roof and framework.
• Thatch of grass and reeds covered the roof.
• Clapboard (thin board) was used on the outside of the house.
• Window openings were covered with wood shutters. Door was made of wood planks.
• Chimney was made of clapboard and lined with a mixture of dirt, clay, grass and water known as daub.
• Inner walls were filled with wattle and daub between the building posts.
• Fireplace and hearth were a combination of rock and daub.

2) Show photos of Pilgrim houses to attendees

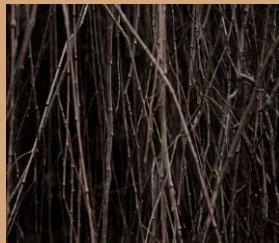


Nineteen (19) family groups were assigned plots of land to build their house on. The plots were 50 feet deep and the width of the lot was about 8 feet multiplied by the number of members in the family. Homes were small and normally 800 square feet. Later homes became larger as stories or wings were added. Family, or a “family group”, could include non-family members as there were few homes built the first year.

3) Provide photographs and describe the process of wattle and daub:



+



+



+



Clay soil, twigs, grass and water-when mixed make a mixture called Daub

Wattle is woven sticks and branches.



Did you know?

The phrase “Breaking and Entering” originated in the medieval period? People used to break through the wattle and daub walls to get into a home, rather than trying to break down the heavy oak doors!

Fun Fact: Daub is derived from the Old French debaur which comes from the Latin dealbare “to whiten”. It is used to describe the process of covering a surface with an adhesive substance such as plaster, mud or grease. However, in its noun form, it means a smear of something. When you are ordering “a bagel with a smear,” you could impress the clerk at the deli by asking for “a daub” instead.

Below: Photograph of Pilgrim Home showing interior walls.

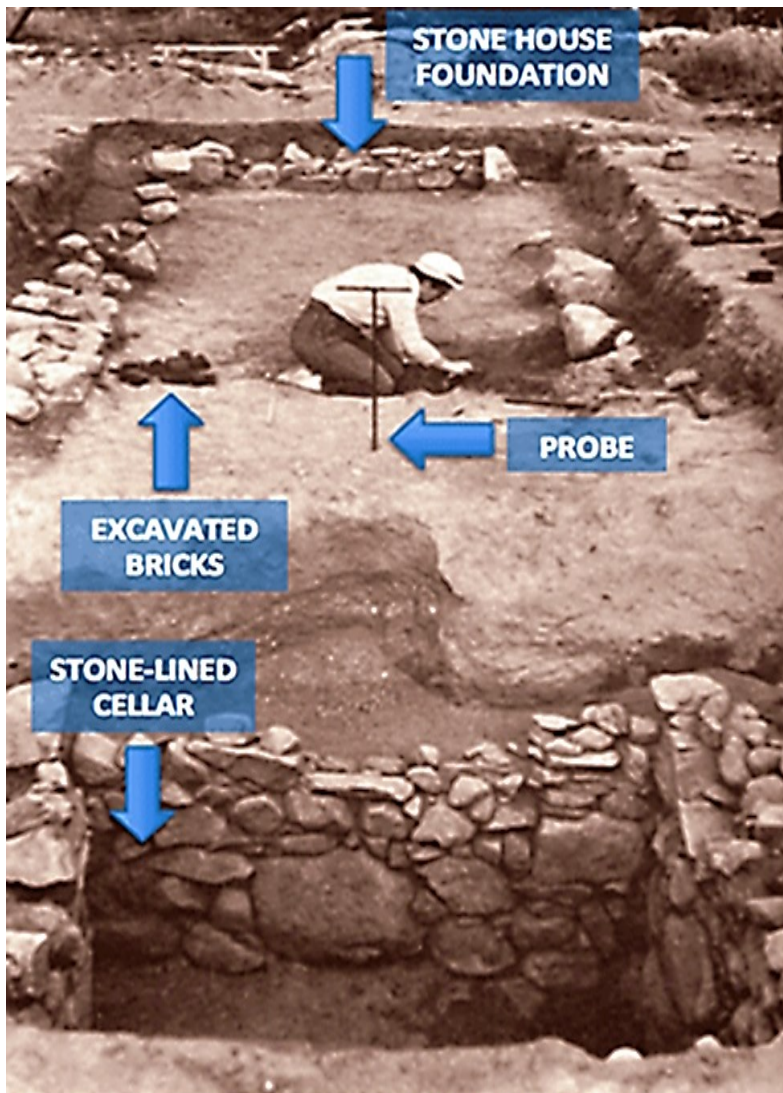


4) Discuss existing Pilgrim homes and provide photographs.

a) The Alden House:



The Alden House was built in circa 1632 and is still owned by the Alden family.



The original home of John and Priscilla Alden was given through the Land Grant of 1627 to John Alden, where they received 100 acres of land. The cellar is all that remains of home.

Property now owned by the Town of Duxbury.

<https://www.town.duxbury.ma.us/>

OPTIONAL VIDEO:

https://youtu.be/p6CY_NfXIL4

b) Jabez Howland House:



The Jabez Howland House is the only existing house in Plymouth where Pilgrims actually spent time. The original 17th century two-story timber framed house consisted of the porch, hall and hall chamber. Jabez Howland, John and Elizabeth's son, lived here with his family until they sold the house in 1680. It was a private residence until 1912 when it was purchased for a museum.

Visit https://pilgrimjohnhowlandsociety.org/The_Jabez_Howland_House for more information

c) Winslow House:



Built circa 1699 for the Honorable Isaac Winslow on land granted to his grandfather, Mayflower passenger Edward Winslow, the Winslow House is one of the least-altered houses still standing in the former Plymouth Colony. This was the third house constructed on the land granted to Gov. Edward Winslow in the 1630s. The property was named “Careswell” after the family home “Kerswell” in Worcestershire, England.

d) Bradford House:

The Bradford House, which is also known as the Major John Bradford Homestead, is the historic house at 50 Landing Road in Kingston, Massachusetts. The Jones River Village Historical Society currently owns the house, and operates it as a historic house museum.

The Bradford house was built circa 1714. The photo below shows the western portion of the house, including the central chimney. Documentary evidence suggests the building was expanded c. 1750 to its present width. The house was restored to its 18th-century appearance in 1921 by George Francis Dow, which was around the time of its purchase by the Jones River Village Historical Society. The property includes an English barn that was moved to the site in 2002. The house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006. The house was built by descendants of Governor William Bradford of Plymouth (d. 1657), and remained in the hands of the family until the late 18th-century. It replaced an earlier house, built circa 1674, for which foundation evidence was discovered immediately west of the present house.



50 Landing Road, Kingston, Massachusetts



William Bradford's House in Plymouth

e) Richard Sparrow House:

Although not a Pilgrim house, the Richard Sparrow House is a historic house located at 42 Summer Street, and is the oldest surviving house in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The house was built circa 1640 by Richard Sparrow. Richard Sparrow was an English surveyor who arrived in Plymouth in 1636. He was granted a 16-acre tract of land in 1636 on which the house was later built. Sparrow moved to Eastham in 1653. The house is currently operated as a museum and art gallery and is part of Plymouth Village Historic District.



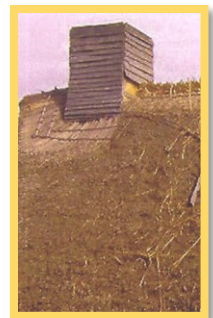
Above photo from 1910



Fires were kept low to keep the chimney from catching on fire.

Thatching in the early years of the seventeenth century, became so popular that the local council at Plymouth, fearing a major fire, banned further use of 'straw and reed' for roofing houses, in 1636; only 'board or pale' could now be used".

Pale - A narrow board pointed or sharpened.



f) Mayflower Society House:

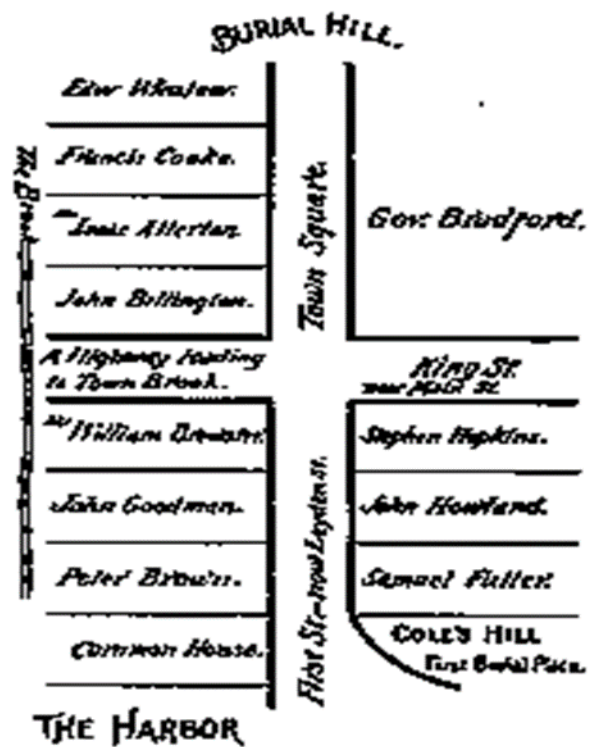
The Mayflower Society Home was originally built in 1754 by Edward Winslow, a loyalist who escaped to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He died in 1784 and was buried in the Old Burying Ground located in Halifax, Nova Scotia. His son, Edward Winslow, made significant contributions to the establishment of the loyalist colony of New Brunswick. Winslow was the great-grandson of Edward Winslow, who was the third Governor of Plymouth Colony. The mansion contains 18th century period decorations and furnishings.

The Mayflower House Museum is an 18th-century period historic house museum in Plymouth, Massachusetts operated by The Mayflower Society.





Leyden Street in Plymouth, Massachusetts was built by the Pilgrims and is the oldest continuously inhabited street. Interestingly, it was named First Street, then Great Street and Broad Street. Finally, it changed to Leyden Street in 1823.



5) Discuss the excavation of the Plymouth settlement

“A team from the University of Massachusetts Boston has excavated a section of the original Plymouth colony settlement on Burial Hill in Plymouth, MA. Before it was known as Burial Hill this area was Fort Hill, the location of the colony’s fort and meetinghouse at the westernmost edge of the 17th-century town. In addition to many artifacts from the time period, the excavations uncovered 17th-century trash pits, a calf burial, remains of at least one post-in-ground building, and part of the palisade— a fence of wooden posts— that encircled the settlement. The calf bones are significant because the Pilgrims raised domesticated cattle, while Native Americans in the area did not. The building discovered in the excavation was partially built into the hillside, with daubed interior walls, and a simple fireplace built into the building’s dirt floor. The building contained broken pottery and other household trash that shows it was used as dwelling, as well as several trade items. These discoveries are the first-time people have found part of the seventeenth-century settlement in downtown Plymouth. The team also found a stone-tool workshop, Native pottery, and other artifacts indicating that Native Americans used Burial Hill before the Pilgrims’ arrival, and also visited the settlement to trade with the colonists.” (Personal correspondence, Dr. David Landon) Dr. Landon has also recommended the following video for more information: www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_2ma9szAT0.



Image courtesy of Dr. David Landon, University of Massachusetts Boston

Excavations at the Burial Hill site and around the homes of the Pilgrims, will give us more information as to how they lived, i.e. the pottery found, even the trash is important. I wonder what future excavations will say about the 20th Century trash.

Internet Site to Visit- Robert Waterman House Site

“AHS identified and removed the buried remains of an intact c.1638 house in Marshfield, Massachusetts. It is the only completely excavated 17th-century Plimoth Colony house. The house was occupied for only a few years before it burned down and was abandoned. The site provided volumes of data on early houses and foodways, evidence of how English settlers adapted to life in southern New England. The house was built on wooden posts set in the ground, with no stone or brick. The large quantity of recovered ceramic and glass vessels, household goods, and carbonized botanical remains and animal bones.”

<https://www.ahs-inc.com/expertise/below-ground-resources/historic-period-archaeology>

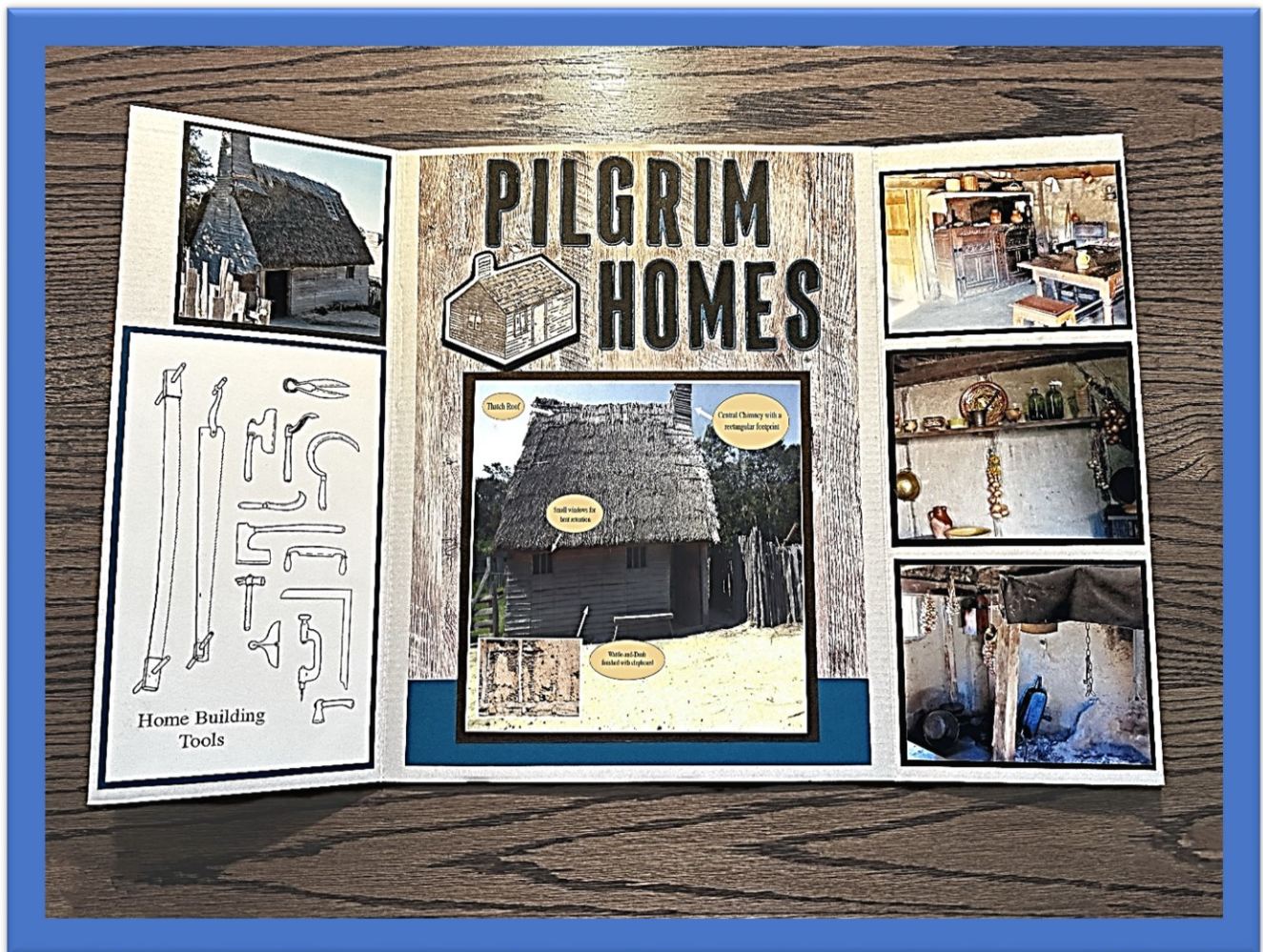
Visit the site for further information on this project.

AHS is an award-winning cultural resource management (CRM) firm based in Storrs, Connecticut. Incorporated in 1995, AHS is an affiliate of PAST, Inc., a nonprofit archaeological and historic research organization established in 1976.

Please note that this article states it is a Plimoth Colony house, the house is situated in Marshfield, Massachusetts. The excavation provides the reader with information that would be pertinent to our own Mayflower descendants' homes and the artifacts that have been a part of their lives.

6) Educational Material Example

Trifold Display



6) Following the meeting, attendees will be provided with the following interactive activities:

- Name That Tool
- Flash Cards
- Word Search Puzzle
- Build Your Own Pilgrim House cutout (Cardstock should be used for the house, and scissors, glue and crayons/colored pencils should be provided. Enlarge the picture to get a larger house.)
- A quiz to assess participant understanding

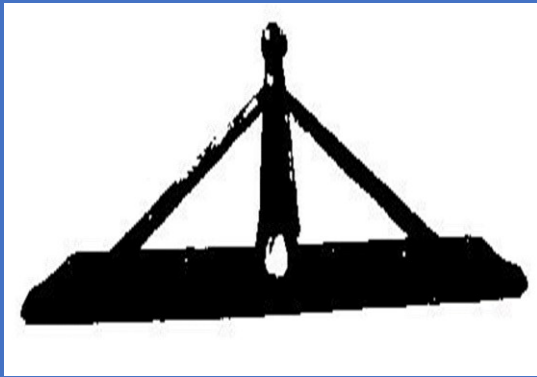
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Activity: “Name That Tool”

- 1) Members may remain in current seating arrangement.
- 2) Designate a member as the Team Leader at each table who will hold up the flash cards for the other attendees at the table to guess what the tool is. Power Point may be used for this activity.

Optional: Awards may be distributed to the attendees at each table who guess the most tools correctly.

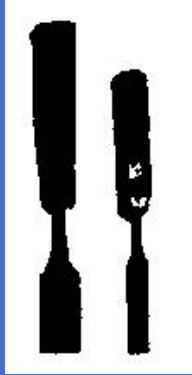
- 3) Time allotted: 15 – 30 minutes



LEVEL



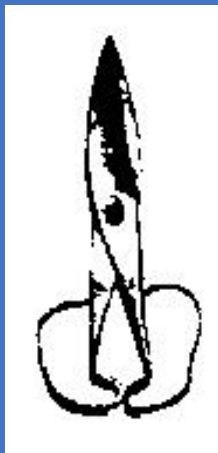
HOE



CHISELS



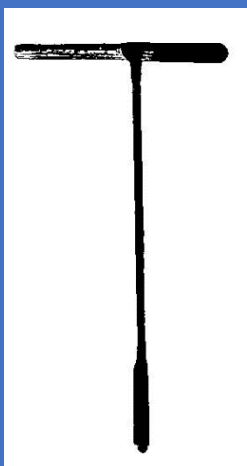
SQUARE



SCISSORS/SHEARS



MEASURING INSTRUMENT



AUGER



TWO-MAN SAW

Activity: Word Search

Pilgrim Home Word Search

C	H	I	S	E	L	S	R	E	T	A	W	U	E
C	E	A	U	G	E	R	R	P	T	W	I	G	S
S	H	O	V	E	L	H	W	C	R	S	H	A	D
E	O	C	L	E	E	T	H	A	T	C	H	A	E
E	O	N	L	E	V	E	L	L	E	N	L	L	M
I	P	D	A	A	I	R	E	S	A	M	A	E	B
C	T	O	A	I	P	S	Q	U	A	R	E	F	D
C	E	G	R	U	L	B	W	L	Q	Y	Y	O	E
L	N	E	M	A	B	S	O	A	F	F	T	O	I
A	T	E	A	T	R	E	A	A	T	A	I	R	W
Y	H	A	M	M	E	R	H	E	R	T	O	D	I
I	T	Y	E	N	M	I	H	C	R	D	L	O	N
E	C	E	C	A	L	P	E	R	I	F	R	E	N
H	F	O	U	N	D	A	T	I	O	N	Q	W	T

SQUARE
ROPE
AUGER
NAILS
CHIMNEY
ROOF
THATCH
WATTLE
BEAM
HAMMER
SHOVEL
FIREPLACE
CLAY
FOUNDATION
LEVEL
DAUB
TWIGS
WATER
CLAPBOARD
CHISELS

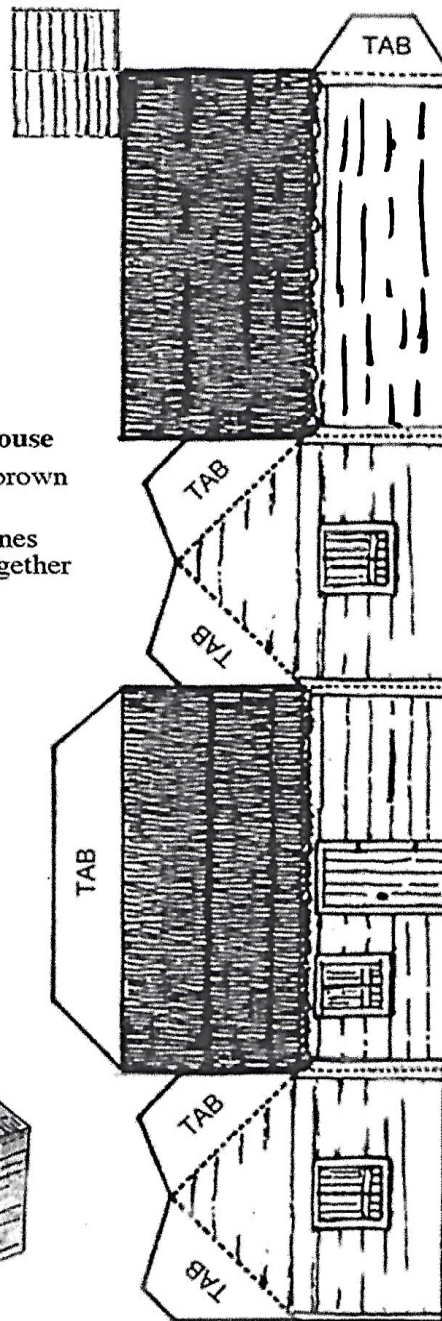
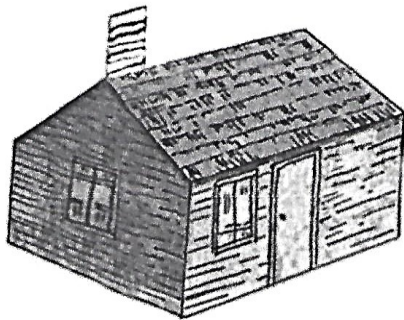
Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/7109774/>

Activity: Build a Pilgrim House

- 1) Members may remain in current seating arrangement to build, or cutout may be taken home.
- 2) Provide crayons/colored pencils, glue and scissors to members participating in activity. Print on cardstock. Increase size of picture to make house larger.
- 3) Allotted time 15–20 minutes.

Build Your Own Pilgrim House

1. Color the roof yellow or brown
2. Color the sides gray
3. Cut out the heavy black lines
4. Fold and glue chimney together
5. Fold on the dotted lines
6. Glue the tabs to finish



Design by Robin Sauers

Activity: Mayflower Pilgrim Quiz

FROM THE GROUND UP, HOW THE PILGRIMS BUILT THEIR HOMES

1. WHAT DID THE PILGRIMS USE FOR THE INNER WALLS?

2. HOW DID THEY COVER THE ROOF? NAME THE MATERIAL THEY USED.

3. WHAT WAS THE MATERIAL THEY USED ON THE OUTSIDE WALLS?

4. NAME A TOOL, OR TOOLS, THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN USED TO PLACE A ROOF BEAM.

5. WHAT IS WATTLE? WHAT IS DAUB?

6. WHAT IS AN AUGER USED FOR?

7. WHAT DO YOU FEEL WAS THE GREATEST PROBLEM PILGRIMS HAD IN BUILDING THE HOMES?

8. SHARE ONE INTERESTING THING YOU LEARNED ABOUT THE PILGRIM HOME.

Answers: 1. Wattle 2. Thatch/grass and reeds 3. Clapboard 4. Hammer and level 5. Twigs and mud/clay/grass/water 6. Post holes

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Some photographs and graphic designs courtesy of Robin Sauers and Sheryl Schilling.

About the Author



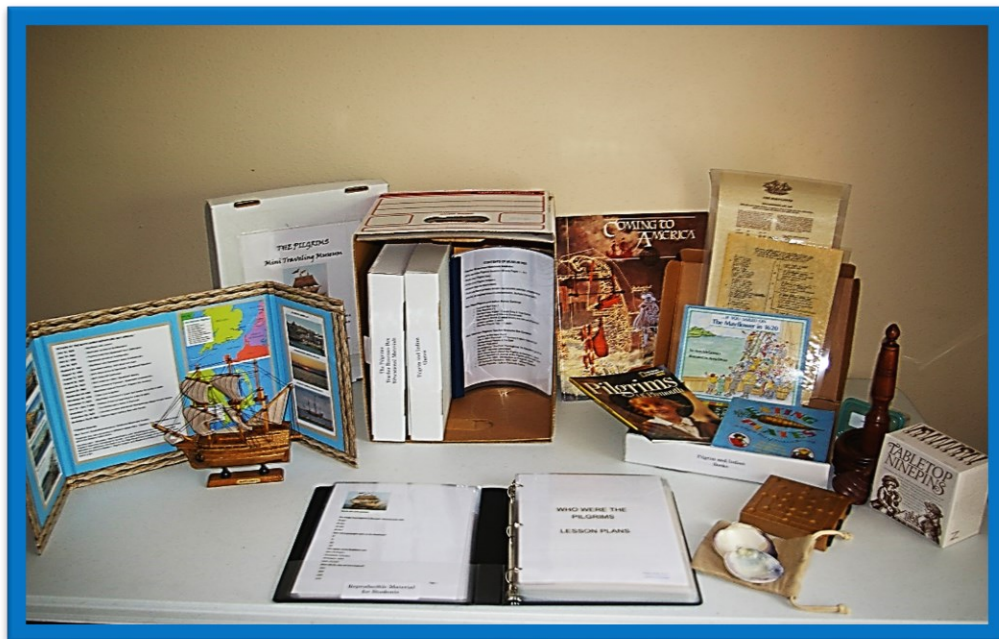
Sandra Sauers, became a General Society of Mayflower Descendants member in 2011, and is a founding member of the Pilgrim Peter Brown Society.

Sandra is the Educational Chair of the Texas Mayflower Society and Chair of the Houston Colony.

Sandra's main achievement is the creation of the Mayflower Mini-Museum Boxes that are loaned to schools throughout the State of Texas.

When I became a member of the Mayflower Society, I realized that the Pilgrims story was not adequately taught in our elementary schools. This led me to create educational materials for the teachers and librarians to use as a no-cost, in-depth resource to teach their students about Pilgrim history. I am grateful for all the educators who introduce the history of our Pilgrims to their students. ❤️

-Sandra Sauers



Sandra's Mayflower Mini-Museum Box