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2/2/2022

Joseph Cullen is Embarrassed about “James’ Town”

“James’ Town” by Joseph Cullen is used to inform the reader about the atrocious mistakes made by the Virginia Compony as well as England when trying to settle the first English colonies in the Americas. The article opens with an excerpt describing the situation as wells as the authors point of view, regarding the settling and establishment of James Town as a series of mistakes. The author can quicky sway the reader into a negative conception of the James Town settlement before the first lines of the article Using the blurb above the introductory lines of text.

The First lines of the article immediately describe the dreary weather on the day these would be colonists set out. This sets a tone for the rest of the journey and open the article less like a blurb from a history textbook and more like a story, trying to foreshadow the events in the upcoming future. The same happens when he originally talks about the passengers, quickly commenting about their class and qualifications. This makes the reader immediately loose hope in the crew before they have even left the shores of London, England.

His pessimistic view of the colonists only become more obvious as the article continues. The lows of the trip pointed out and picked apart for everything the author can get. Yet the High points in their journey are depicted with literally one word: “Despite the bad beginning, the remainder of the voyage was relatively uneventful.” (Cullen 3) The author uses this contrasting language throughout the article solidifying his undoubtful notion that nothing positive came out of the settlement of James Town Virginia.

With this expression the author is successfully able to portray a motley crew and an unprepared England for the treacherous trip to colonization of the Americas. The author also does not fail to recognize Roanoke, a previously failed colony in which the inhabitants disappeared with almost no trace. This attempts to sow seeds of doubt into the readers mind as they follow along in this historic step forward for modern day America in current day Virginia.

The passage could successfully convince the reader of the ultimate down fall of this settlement if it weren’t for hindsight. Using misleading imagery, negative descriptors, a biased description of characters, and unfair comparisons. It is almost impossible not to fall into the alluring trap and believe that the colonial Virginia and the people involved won’t live to see the near future. This weird contrast from this article to reality make the reader think about all the possibilities, and not examine history as a sequence of unrelated events but as a whole.

Colonial James Town is significant to my life today because it was the start of the English colonization of The Americas, and the first step towards a foundation that made America today. Many of the morals portrayed by these colonists to survive are still extremely prevalent today. For example, when the rule was set by John Smith: If you don’t work, you don’t eat. This mindset is still seen today in modern day American’s ideals to “Pick yourself up by your bootstrap” and our very self-centered view of the world.

Using Descriptive language, the author is able to show a ragtag group of settlers despite all odds survive the first few years in the Americas and set in stone American ideals still prevalent throughout culture today. The author is successfully able to tell an intriguing and interesting story, while also staying historically accurate. But most importantly, the author can make the reader think about the first few years, of what soon will become the United States.