

Grade 6
Reading - History

"The Mystery of the Lost Colony of Roanoke"

In the late 16th century, England wanted to establish a permanent colony in the New World. The first attempt was on Roanoke Island, located off the coast of present-day North Carolina. Sir Walter Raleigh was the man responsible for this venture.

In 1585, the first group of settlers arrived at Roanoke. However, they found life there challenging and returned to England the next year. Not one to give up, Raleigh sent another group in 1587, led by John White. This group included women and children, indicating that they intended to establish a permanent colony.

White's daughter, Eleanor Dare, gave birth to a baby girl named Virginia, the first English child born in the New World. Due to urgent matters and the need for supplies, White returned to England, leaving the settlers behind. It took him three years to return because of the war between England and Spain.

When White finally came back to Roanoke in 1590, he found the colony deserted. There was no sign of a struggle or battle. The only clue was the word "CROATOAN" carved into a wooden post. White had instructed the colonists to leave a sign if they moved, but this word was not a previously discussed signal. The fate of the settlers remains a mystery to this day. Were they killed? Did they assimilate with local Native American tribes? Did they try to sail back to England and get lost at sea? Historians are still trying to find answers.

Multiple Choice Questions

Why did England want to establish a colony in the New World? a) To compete with Spain b) To find gold c) To establish a vacation spot d) To increase trade routes

Who was responsible for the Roanoke venture?

- a) John Smith
- b) Sir Walter Raleigh
- c) King James I
- d) Christopher Columbus

What was unique about the second group of settlers?

- a) They were all men.
- b) They only stayed for a few months.
- c) They included women and children.
- d) They were from Spain.

Who was Virginia Dare?

- a) The first woman on the island
- b) A Native American who helped the settlers
- c) The first English child born in the New World
- d) The ship that brought the settlers

Why did White take three years to return to Roanoke?

- a) He forgot about the settlers.
- b) He was captured by Native Americans.
- c) The war between England and Spain delayed his return.
- d) He went to another colony first.

What was the only clue White found when he returned?

- a) A deserted ship
- b) A letter from the settlers
- c) The word "CROATOAN" on a post
- d) A map to the settlers' new location

Which of the following was NOT a theory about the settlers' disappearance?

- a) They were killed.
- b) They integrated with local tribes.
- c) They returned to England.
- d) They traveled to the moon.

Roanoke Island is located off the coast of which present-day state?

- a) Virginia
- b) New York

- c) Florida
- d) North Carolina

The first group of settlers at Roanoke returned to England because:

- a) They found life challenging.
- b) They missed their families.
- c) They were attacked by local tribes.
- d) They discovered gold elsewhere.

What was the relation between John White and Virginia Dare?

- a) Father-Daughter
- b) Brother-Sister
- c) Neighbors
- d) Grandfather-Granddaughter

Answers:

1. a) To compete with Spain. England wanted to establish a presence in the New World to rival Spain's growing colonies and influence.
2. b) Sir Walter Raleigh. Sir Walter Raleigh was given the charter to explore and establish a colony in the New World.
3. c) They included women and children. The inclusion of women and children indicated that the settlers intended to stay and establish a permanent colony.
4. c) The first English child born in the New World. Virginia Dare was John White's granddaughter and the first English child to be born in the Americas.
5. c) The war between England and Spain delayed his return. The ongoing conflict made sea voyages risky, delaying White's return to Roanoke.
6. c) The word "CROATOAN" on a post. *Explanation:* This word was carved into a post, but its exact meaning remains a mystery.
7. d) They traveled to the moon. The idea of traveling to the moon was not a conceivable notion in the 16th century.
8. d) North Carolina. Roanoke Island is located off the coast of North Carolina.
9. a) They found life challenging. The initial group found the conditions and resources on Roanoke Island to be tough, leading them to return to England.
10. d) Grandfather-Granddaughter. Virginia Dare was the daughter of Eleanor Dare, making her John White's granddaughter.