

The True Story of Pocahontas

book, lyrics, and music by Julie Fulcher

Audience: Students in grades K-5

Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Connections:

Language Arts, Multi-Cultural, History, Biography, Women's Studies

English:

K.1a, K.1b, K.1c, K.1d, K.2a, K.2c, K.2d, K.2e, K.2g, K.3c, K.3h, K.4b, 1.1a, 1.1c, 1.1d, 1.1e, 1.2a, 1.2b, 1.2d, 1.3a, 1.3b, 1.3c, 1.2e, 1.4a, 2.1b, 2.1c, 2.1d, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2e, 2.3d, 3.1a, 3.1c, 3.2a, 3.2b, 3.2d, 4.1, 4.1c, 4.1d, 4.1f, 4.2, 4.2d, 4.3, 4.3a, 4.3b, 4.4a, 4.4d, 4.4e, 5.1, 5.1a, 5.1c, 5.2a, 5.2c, 5.2d, 5.3

History:

K.1, K.1a, K.2, K.3, K.6, K.7a, K.8a, K.8e, K.8g, 1.2, 1.10d, 1.10e, 2.2, 2.10a, 2.10d, 3.3b, VS.1d, VS.2d, VS.2e, USI.3b, VUS.1

Additional Resources:

Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend

Historic Jamestowne, National Park Service
<https://www.nps.gov/jame/learn/historyculture/pocahontas-her-life-and-legend.htm>

Pocahontas

Historic Jamestowne, Jamestowne Rediscovery
<http://historicjamestowne.org/history/pocahontas/>

Pocahontas (1595 - 1617)

National Women's History Museum
<https://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/pocahontas/>

Pocahontas and the Powhatans of Virginia

Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
<http://www.historyisfun.org/jamestown-settlement/powhatan-village/pocahontas-and-the-powhatans-of-virginia/>



Statue of Pocahontas at Historic Jamestowne. Source: Flickr.

Pocahontas is a name known to every school-age child and yet her true story is shrouded in myth. Join Virginia Repertory Theatre on this adventure into Pocahontas' life.

With an emphasis on historical facts, Pocahontas is revealed as a playful, strong-minded young girl who changes her world before she will change her beliefs or herself. Follow Pocahontas as she grows from a girl who helps the Jamestown colonists survive, to the young woman, wife, and mother who carries her message of peace and mutual cooperation across the Atlantic to the mighty King of England. Join Pocahontas on her amazing journey and see how courage and determination can change the world.

Daily Lives of the Powhatan People

In the play, Pocahontas said,

"I had many responsibilities as a child. From early on I was taught the jobs of women in our culture. I learned to plant seeds and harvest food, gather firewood and cook. I was also taught the art of making pottery and baskets. By the time I was your age, I was making clothes from animal skins. Oh, and I imagine I made enough cordage to go all the way around the world and back."

On a separate piece of paper, draw a scene from a Powhatan village. Use some of the items Pocahontas describes in your picture.

In addition, include three of the following in your picture:

longhouse **"the three sisters"** **fishing** **hunting**
English settlers **basket making** **Powhatan "toys"**



Inside a longhouse with Chief Powhatan
(detail of John Smith map, 1612)

Read the sentences below. Which of the words in bold completes each sentence correctly?

1. The Powhatan Indians lived in **adobe homes** / **longhouses** / **teepees**. In summer, when heat and humidity increased, the mat walls could be rolled up or removed for better air circulation.
2. Some of the duties of the Powhatan **women** / **men** included cooking and preparing food, gathering firewood, and collecting water for cooking and drinking.
3. The Powhatan Indians lived in towns located near **rivers** / **oceans** / **mountains**, which were sources of food and transportation, and offered a place to bathe.
4. Cordage (rope) was made of Pemannaw **grass** / **roots** / **flowers** and used for many things like house building, fish nets, baskets, and clothing.

Bonus: In what ways were the daily lives of the English different from that of the Powhatans?

History and Truth vs. Legend

Read the following quote from the play, and discuss it. Do you agree? How do you think writers are influenced by their own experiences? Do you think we can ever know a "historical truth?"

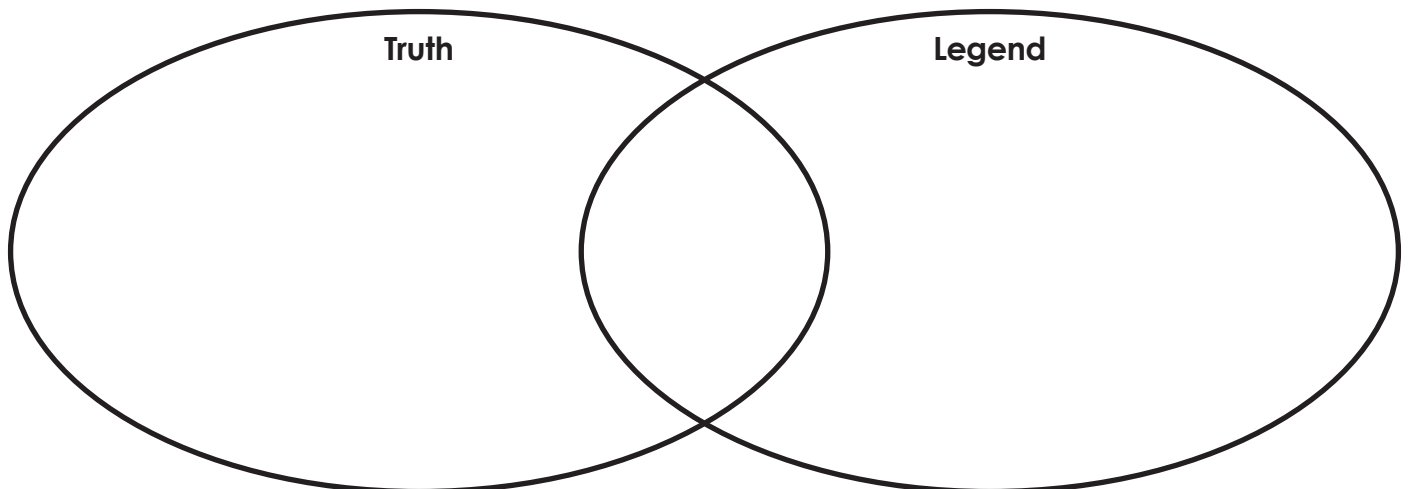
"History is never totally, absolutely true. Letters, essays, articles and other historical documents are always written from the perspective of the writer. And that perspective, or way of seeing things, is influenced by the writer's own experiences. So there is no way to know the exact historical truth of any event, no matter how many facts or documents we have."

Terms to Know

perspective (noun): A particular point of view.

Synonyms: outlook, view, viewpoint, standpoint, attitude, frame of reference.

Use the Venn diagram below to record "truths" and "legends" about Pocahontas. Are there events that fall into both categories?



Did You Know?

Until 2015, the federal government did not recognize any Virginia Indian tribes. The Pamunkey are the first Virginia tribe to be recognized by the federal government. The tribe counts Pocahontas among its members; it is part of the Powhatan Confederacy. Chief Powhatan is buried on the tribe's reservation.

Virginia recognizes the following tribes: Mattaponi, Pamunkey, Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Rappahannock, Upper Mattaponi, Nansemond, Monacan Indian Nation, Cheroenhaka (Nottoway), Nottoway of Virginia, Patowomeck.

Source: <https://commonwealth.virginia.gov/virginia-indians/>

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Virginia Repertory Theatre Presents...

The True Story of Pocahontas
 book, lyrics, and music by Julie Fulcher

Virginia Repertory Theatre
 Nathaniel Shaw, Artistic Director
 Phil Whiteway, Managing Director

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Theater Etiquette



Clap, but know when to do so.

You should clap after a play, act, or song, or right before intermission. If you loved the show, you can give a "standing ovation" at the end. That's when you stand up while applauding.

It's quiet time (sort of).

If the play makes you laugh or cry, that is fine, but you can chat with your friends afterwards. Show the actors respect and quiet they need to focus on their roles. Being quiet allows the rest of the audience to concentrate on the play.

Behind the Curtains

Many people with different skills and talents work together to make a production such as *The True Story of Pocahontas* come to life. Can you match these theater jobs with their descriptions?

set designer

a person who plays a role or character in stage plays, motion pictures, television broadcasts, etc.

playwright

a person who creates the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance.

stage manager

this person's job is to pull together all the pieces and parts of a play – the script, actors, set, costumes, lighting and sound, and music to create a production.

actor

this job focuses on using light to create effects that match the mood of various scenes in a performance.

costume designer

this person is a writer of scripts for plays. The script tells a story through the actions and words of the characters.

lighting designer

this person creates the physical surroundings of a play, including any scenery, furniture, or props used throughout the play.

director

this person helps the director and helps organize the actors, designers, stage crew, and technicians throughout the production of a play.