Title of Unit: The First English Settlements in America

Vital theme of the unit: Students will learn about the experiences of early English colonists in settling colonies in North America. Students will learn the reasons for settling the colonies of Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth as well as examine the failures and successes of each.

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Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Number of lessons in this unit: Five

Curriculum standards addressed:

Social Studies

4.2.spi.4 Recognize the difference between a barter system and a money system
4.3.spi.3 Recognize the reasons settlements are founded on major river systems
4.6.spi.1 Recognize how groups work cooperatively to accomplish goals and encourage change
4.4.spi.3 Examine how the Mayflower Compact is a symbol of the first United States government
4.1.spi.2 Identify cultural groups who inhabited North America in the 17th century
4.1.spi.1 Identify pre-colonial Native American groups
4.5.spi.5 Determine the reasons for colonial settlement
4.5.spi.8 Interpret a timeline that depicts slave and indentured servants coming from Europe to life in North America
4.1.spi.4 Examine how Native American culture changed as a result of contact with European cultures
4.5.spi.3 Interpret a timeline that depicts major historical pre-Civil War events

Technology used: Textbook cassette tape, Internet, overhead projector

Unit introduction and overview of instructional plan:

Through reading assignments, class discussion, examining primary source documents, using timelines, Internet activity, and writing, students will gain an understanding of reasons for English settlement in North America. Students will learn about important historical figures and their experiences in the founding of Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth. Students will also learn about how Native American culture changes as a result of European exploration and settlement. The students will develop an
understanding of historical events from the founding of Roanoke through to the founding of Plymouth. Students will have an understanding of other European countries’ exploration and settlement in North America prior to this unit.

This unit integrates American history taught in social studies class with reading through the use of book sets and writing newspaper articles and poetry.

Students will address the following questions in order to understand the concepts taught in this unit:

Why were the English interested in starting a colony in America?
Why did the English colony on Roanoke Island become known as the Lost Colony?
Why did colonists go to Jamestown?
What were some difficulties colonists faced at Jamestown?
What product made the colony self-supporting?
Who were John Smith and Pocahontas?
How did cooperation help the settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth?
How did Native American culture change once the Europeans arrived?
Who were the Separatists, and why were they coming to America?
What was the Mayflower Compact?
When did the English settle Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth colonies?
What were some difficulties settlers encountered?

The unit should take approximately two weeks to complete.
“The First English Settlements in North America”

By the sixteenth century, European countries were sending explorers, soldiers, missionaries, and traders to North America. During this period, Spain’s empire dominated over other European countries as they conquered and settled large parts of South and North America. It was during the sixteenth century that England decided to join other European countries such as Spain and France in establishing a foothold in the New World. England’s efforts to colonize in the New World would be led by Sir Humphrey Gilbert and continued by his half-brother Sir Walter Raleigh.

Queen Elizabeth granted Sir Humphrey Gilbert a charter to give out land in America to investors. He wanted to establish a permanent settlement in which he hoped to find treasure and a northwest passage. It could also serve as a base for piracy against the Spanish. He also wanted to make use of the earth for its fruits that it could produce naturally or through the use of human efforts. “After a preliminary reconnaissance of Newfoundland and the Gulf of Maine, Gilbert was lost at sea on the way home. His colony never got on the ground” (Morgan, 24). Gilbert’s half-brother, Walter Raleigh, continued England’s quest of starting a settlement in North America. With the persuasive help of Richard Hakluyt, the Queen of England agreed to grant Raleigh the right to colonize America. Some of the arguments used to convince Queen Elizabeth stated that an English colony could be used as a base to attack the Spanish colonies since the biggest competition to colonize America was between Spain and England. It was also pointed out that Spain’s colonies had made Spain rich for many years and an English colony could bring riches to England. Furthermore, it was a chance to liberate the oppressed peoples of the New World from Spanish rule and to help the unemployed in England by sending them to America to work for England.
In 1584, Raleigh organized an expedition led by Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe to set sail to America to find a good location to start a colony. Their destination was south of Gilbert’s colony. They arrived at Roanoke Island in the summer of 1584. The land and location met their approval. Barlowe went back and told those in England of the treasures at Roanoke Island. He also reported that the Indians in the region were “gentle, loving, and faithfull” (Pobst, 8). This new land was named Virginia in honor of Queen Elizabeth. In 1585, Raleigh sent more men to Roanoke Island to establish a permanent colony.

Upon arrival, one of the main ships struck a rock and flooded. This accident caused most of the supplies needed for the colony to be ruined. The general in charge, Richard Grenville, went back to England for more supplies and left Ralph Lane in charge. At first, the settlers had friendly relations with the Native Americans who lived there. However, settlers were not prepared to grow their own food and depended on the Native Americans for their food supply. When the demand for food became too great, the Native Americans refused to provide the settlers with any more food. As relations with the Native Americans deteriorated and the food supply dwindled, the settlers decided to leave the colony and return to England with Sir Francis Drake when he arrived at Roanoke Island in 1586.

In 1587, Raleigh tried again to start a colony in America. This time around he sent men, women, and children to Roanoke Island, led by John White. Not long after arriving, White went back to England for more supplies. He was unable to return to Roanoke for three years because England was at war with Spain, and the queen needed her ships. When he returned to Roanoke in 1590, the colonists he had left behind were
nowhere to be found. The only clue he found was the word “Croatoan” carved on a post. Due to bad weather, White and his crew had to give up the search for the colonists and return to England. Roanoke colony became known as the “Lost Colony”.

England would be persistent in staking claim to land in the New World. In 1606, King James I gave the Virginia Company of London a charter to set up a new colony. The Virginia Company was made up of a group of London entrepreneurs who had three goals in mind when establishing this colony. First, they wanted the settlers to look for gold, silver, and other substances that would make money for England. The second goal was to look for a northwest passage to the Pacific Ocean in order to find a shortcut to Asia. The third goal was to convert the Native Americans to Christianity.

Three ships, the *Godspeed*, the *Susan Constant*, and the *Discovery*, set sail for the New World in December 1606. Captain Christopher Newport was the leader of the expedition. They reached the Chesapeake Bay area in April 1607. Upon arrival, the names of the men chosen by the Virginia Company to oversee the colony were announced. Among the names listed was a man by the name of John Smith, who would later be credited for helping the colony to survive. They built their settlement on a peninsula. “The settlers chose that location for their town because it would be easy to defend against attack from either land or sea” (Sakurai, 7). They called this settlement Jamestown after King James I of England. This location turned out to be a very bad choice. The land was low and swampy, the water was not good to drink, and mosquitoes that carried malaria surrounded the area. Other problems arose as well. Most of the settlers were “gentlemen” who were not accustomed to working. Therefore, many of the settlers did not have the skills necessary to start a colony. They spent their time looking for gold instead of planting crops. By September, over half the colonists had died due to
illnesses, starvation, and Native American attacks. The Native Americans who lived in
the surrounding area were the tribes of the Powhatan Confederacy. They were ruled by
Chief Powhatan, who took the name from the people he conquered. These Native
Americans would prove to be a friend and a foe. Some members of the Powhatan
Confederacy welcomed the colonists and traded with them while others did not want
them on their lands and attacked them.

As mentioned earlier, it was John Smith and his leadership skills that would ultimately
enable the colony to survive. He also invested much of his time in learning about the
Native Americans living in Virginia. He would often be the one to visit surrounding
Indian villages to trade when food supplies were low. “Then, on an exploring expedition
up the Chickahominy River, he was made a prisoner and brought before Powhatan”
(Morgan, 76). According to Smith, the Powhatan Indians were going to beat him with
clubs when Chief Powhatan’s favorite daughter, Pocahontas, rescued him by laying
her head upon his and begged for him not to be killed. Historians are unsure whether this
event really happened. However, it is known that Pocahontas served as a peacemaker
between the colonists and Powhatan Indians.

John Smith was the key player who was instrumental in improving the living
conditions at Jamestown in September 1608. Although he was very unpopular among
the colonists, they knew they needed his ability to lead. He implemented the “If you
don’t work, you don’t eat” rule that required the work efforts of everyone. More
colonists, including the first shipload of women, and more supplies arrived as the
colony’s efforts to survive continued. Smith reluctantly returned to England in 1609 after
being injured in a gunpowder explosion.
The “Starving Time” at Jamestown occurred during the winter of 1609-1610. The colony was filled with people who were dying of diseases and starvation. They were unable to trade with the Native Americans for food and were attacked when they tried to go outside their fort to hunt and fish. Colonist George Percy wrote that starvation appeared in every face. Of five hundred [people] we had only left about sixty, the rest being either starved through famine, or cut off by the [Indians]”(Sakurai, 17)

By the time June rolled around in 1610, the remaining colonists were ready to leave Jamestown and return to England. However, the arrival of the new governor, Lord De la Warr, as well as new supplies and colonists, changed the minds of those who were seeking to leave. Strict laws were set in place for the colony as the colonists began to rebuild. In 1611, the town of Henrico was established further up the James River.

Things would soon start to get better for Jamestown. In 1614, a settler by the name of John Rolfe married Pocahontas. This marriage helped bring peace to the colonists and the Powhatan Indians. John Rolfe also helped bring prosperity to Virginia when he obtained and planted tobacco seeds from the Caribbean Islands. He was able to develop a sweet tobacco that became very popular in England. Thousands of pounds of tobacco were exported. It was the product that finally made Virginia self-supporting.

Several important events occurred in Jamestown in the year 1619. One major event was when a group of colonists called “burgesses” was elected to make laws. These “burgesses” formed an assembly called the House of Burgesses. “The House of Burgesses, formed in 1619, gave America’s European colonies their representative Government,”(Hakim, 11) The House of Burgesses, governor, and the Governor’s Council were known as the Virginia General Assembly and would be in charge of governing Virginia.
Another significant event of 1619 included the arrival of a Dutch ship bringing the first captive Africans to Jamestown to be sold as indentured servants. As the tobacco industry continued to grow, plantation owners switched from indentured servants to African slaves to fulfill their needs for cheap labor. For many years to come, Africans would continue to be captured and sold into the horrible institution known as slavery.

In 1619, the Virginia Company allowed colonists to own land for the first time in the New World. Land was given to those who agreed to pay their own cost to go to America for themselves, family members, and/or servants.

“In spite of massacres, diseases, fires, and other disasters, settlers continued to flock to Virginia,” (Sakurai, 26). This colony was determined to survive and become the first permanent English colony in America.

The second permanent English settlement was Plymouth colony. It was started by English Separatists, later known as the Pilgrims, in 1620. In England, everyone was supposed to belong to the Church of England. The Pilgrims were being persecuted in England because they did not agree with the ideas of the Church of England and wanted to separate from the church in order to worship God as they pleased. They secretly left England and moved to the Netherlands in search of religious freedom. Although they were able to worship freely in the Netherlands, they faced many challenges living in a foreign country. After twelve years of living there, they decided to move to America.

It was the London Virginia Company who would help the Pilgrims get to America. They financed the Pilgrims’ journey and, in return, the Pilgrims would send them goods from their fishing and farming efforts in the New World. The Pilgrims going to America for religious freedom were joined by others who were hired by the Virginia Company.
They were all in search of a better way of life in the New World. They set sail for America aboard the *Mayflower* in September 1620. The difficult journey lasted over two months. When they finally reached America in November 1620, they realized they were further north than their intended destination. They had landed at Cape Cod which was out of the Virginia Company’s governing jurisdiction. The Pilgrims knew it was in their best interest to come up with laws and a plan of government for this colony. “So, still on board the Mayflower, they wrote a document for every head of the household to sign. The signers pledged to be loyal to the king of England, but they also agreed to follow the wishes of the community. Later, the document became known as the Mayflower Compact. It was the first written outline for government established in what is now the United States” (Santella, 21-22). John Carver was elected the first governor.

When the colonists finally settled on a place to build their settlement, they named it Plymouth after a city in England. It was winter when the Pilgrims arrived. Disaster would soon strike at Plymouth like it did at Jamestown. Half the colonists would die throughout the winter from the cold, starvation, and illness.

The Wampanoag Indians lived in the region. They would prove to be invaluable to the colony’s survival. In March 1621, an English-speaking Native American named Samoset entered the settlement. “In English, he said, ‘Welcome, Englishmen’”(Santell, 31). He befriended the English and returned with another English-speaking Native American named Squanto. Squanto stayed with the Pilgrims. He served as their interpreter and taught them to live off the land. The colonists also met Massasoit, the Wampanoag’s chief. A peace treaty was signed by the settlers and Massasoit.

The Pilgrims enjoyed a plentiful harvest in the fall of 1621, so they planned a celebration to give thanks to God. William Bradford, governor of the Plymouth colony,
invited the Wampanoag Indians to join them in their celebration that lasted for three days.

“Years later, their celebration would become known as the First Thanksgiving. To the Pilgrims, it was simply a celebration of survival” (Santella, 37).
Annotated Bibliography


Sakurai tells the story of the settling of Jamestown colony, the first permanent English colony in North America. She provides insight into England’s motivation for establishing a colony in America, as well as describes the struggles and tragedies that occurred there. She also provides information about the people who played a significant role in the settling of this colony.


Hakim provides a fascinating look into the story of America. She describes the people and events that helped shape our nation from its formation to the present.


In Morgan’s book, he gives a detailed account of the role slavery played in America’s quest for freedom. He provides helpful insights in describing how and why England established a foothold in America.


Santella writes about the people who settled Plymouth colony and their reasons for settlement. He describes the experiences of the colony’s settlers as they struggled to survive in the New World. He also writes about the Native Americans and their valuable contribution to the settlement of Plymouth colony.


Pobst gives an overview of the development of Virginia from the time the English first arrived until the death of George Washington. She tells of Virginia’s crucial role in leading the fight for independence from England.
Unit: The First English Settlements in America

Lesson Title: “The Lost Colony”

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Essential Question Related to Vital Theme:
Why did the English colony on Roanoke Island become known as the Lost Colony?
- Why were the English interested in starting a colony in America?

Lesson Time: One-two class periods (approximately forty-five minutes)

Curriculum Standards:

Social Studies
4.1. spi.1 Identify pre-colonial Native American groups
4.5. spi.5 Determine the reasons for colonial settlement

Technology Used and How:
Textbook cassette tape: Chapter Four, Lesson Five (Harcourt Brace)

Materials:
See above
Graphic organizer for Roanoke Colony
Textbook Chapter Four, Lesson 5, pp. 171-172 (Harcourt Brace)
History Pockets Colonial America Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, copies of “The Lost Colony” newspaper activity sheet
Copies of Document: (Primary Sources Teaching Kit-Explorers-Scholastic) Roanoke, the Lost Colony 1590

Activity Descriptions and Overview of Instructional Strategies:
Discuss reasons the English wanted to join other Europeans in exploring and settling North America. The students will follow along in their textbooks as the narrator on the cassette tape reads pp. 171-172.

The teacher will read aloud Roanoke: The Lost Colony—An Unsolved Mystery from History by Jane Yolen.

The students will read the document entitled Roanoke, the Lost Colony 1590, which is an excerpt from John White’s log, 1590. The students will discuss John White’s conclusions about the disappearance of the colonists.

The students will discuss theories about what happened to the Roanoke colony.
The students will fill out a graphic organizer concerning facts about Roanoke colony.

**Supporting Assignments/Homework:**
The students will use “The Lost Colony” newspaper activity sheet (Evan-Moor) to write a brief newspaper article about what they think happened to the English settlers.

**Assessment:**
Students will be given a test over the first English settlements at the end of this unit.
Unit: The First English Settlements in America

Lesson Title: “The Founding of Jamestown”

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Essential Questions Related to Vital Theme:
  - Why did colonists go to Jamestown?
  - What were some difficulties colonists encountered at Jamestown?
  - What product made the colony self-supporting?
  - Who were John Smith and Pocahontas?
  - How did cooperation help the settlers at Jamestown?
  - How did Native American culture change once the Europeans arrived?

Lesson Time: Two-three class periods (approximately forty-five minutes)

Curriculum Standards List:

Social Studies
  - 4.2. spi.4 Recognize the difference between a barter system and a money system
  - 4.6. spi.1 Recognize how groups work cooperatively to accomplish goals and encourage change
  - 4.1. spi.2 Identify cultural groups who inhabited North America in the 17th century
  - 4.1. spi.1 Identify pre-Colonial Native American groups
  - 4.3. spi.3 Recognize the reasons settlements are founded on major river systems
  - 4.5. spi.5 Determine the reasons for colonial settlement
  - 4.5. spi.8 Interpret a timeline that depicts slave and indentured servants coming from Europe to life in North America
  - 4.1. spi.4 Examine how Native American culture changed as a result of contact with European cultures

Technology Used and How:
  - Textbook cassette tape: Chapter Four, Lesson Five (Harcourt Brace)

Materials:
  - See above
  - Textbook Chapter Four, Lesson 5, pp. 173-174 (Harcourt Brace)
  - *Slavery Time Line*, p.75 (Writing in the Content Areas-Instructional Fair)
  - Crayons/colored pencils
  - Graphic organizer for Jamestown Colony
  - “Pocahontas” activity sheets, pp.80-81 (History Pockets Colonial America – Evan Moor)
Activity Descriptions and Overview of Instructional Strategies:
Students will read and discuss “Success at Jamestown” on pages 173-174 in textbook.

The teacher will read aloud and discuss The Jamestown Colony (Cornerstones of Freedom) by Gail Sakurai.

Students will examine a slavery timeline and write a paragraph summarizing what they learned from the timeline.

Students will complete a graphic organizer on Jamestown Colony.

Supporting Assignments/Homework:
“Pocahontas” Activity Sheets, pp. 80-81 (History Pockets Colonial American – Evan Moor)

In this activity, students will read a brief biography about Pocahontas. Then, they will draw a picture of her and write an acrostic poem using the letters of her name.

Assessment:
Students will be given a test over the first English settlements at the end of this unit.
Unit: The First English Settlements in America

Lesson Title: “Plymouth Colony”

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Essential Questions Related to Vital Theme:
- Who were the Separatists, and why were they coming to America?
- What was the Mayflower Compact?
- How did cooperation help the settlers at Plymouth?

Lesson Time: Three-four class periods (approximately 45 minutes each)

Curriculum Standards List:

Social Studies
- 4.2. spi.4 Recognize the difference between a barter system and a money system
- 4.6. spi.1 Recognize how groups work cooperatively to accomplish goals and encourage change
- 4.4. spi.3 Examine how the Mayflower Compact is a symbol of the first United States government
- 4.1. spi.2 Identify cultural groups who inhabited North America in the 17th century
- 4.1. spi.1 Identify pre-Colonial Native American groups
- 4.5. spi.5 Determine the reasons for colonial settlement
- 4.1. spi.4 Examine how Native American culture changed as a result of contact with European cultures.

Technology Used and How:
- Internet Scavenger Hunts: American History (Scholastic)
- Internet Activity – “Live at Plymouth”, p.17
- Computer Program: Accelerated Reader

Materials:
- See above
- Textbook Chapter Four, Lesson 5, pp 174-177 (Harcourt Brace)
- Copies of Document: (Primary Sources Teaching Kit-Colonial America–Scholastic) Mayflower Compact
- Santella, Andrew. The Plymouth Colony (We the People). Minneapolis: Compass Point Books, 2001. (Multiple Copies)
- Graphic organizer for Plymouth Colony

Activity Descriptions and Overview of Instructional Strategies:
- Students will read and discuss “The Founding of Plymouth” on pages 174-177 in the textbook.
Students will examine *Mayflower Compact* document and answer questions related to the document.

Students will complete an Internet activity about “Life at Plymouth”. They will read about the daily life at Plymouth and answer questions. The students will also fill out a chart comparing the lifestyles of the Pilgrim and the Wampanoag Indians.

Students will read and discuss *The Plymouth Colony (We the People)*. After students have read the book, they will complete the graphic organizer on the Plymouth colony using information from the textbook and *The Plymouth Colony (We the People)*.

**Supporting Assignments/Homework:**

P.177, #1-4 in textbook

**Assessment:**

Students will take the Accelerated Reader test over *The Plymouth Colony (We the People)*. The score will be recorded in the grade book.

Students will be given a test over the first English settlements at the end of this unit.

Internet activity – “Life at Plymouth”
Unit: The First English Settlements in American

Lesson Title: “Using Timelines to Understand History”

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Essential Question Related to Vital Theme:
When did the English settle Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth Colonies?

Lesson Time: One class period (approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour)

Curriculum Standards List:

Social Studies
4.5. spi.3 Interpret a timeline that depicts major historical pre-Civil War events

Technology Used and How:

Materials:
Textbook Chapter Four, Lesson 5, pp.171-177 (Harcourt Brace)
11 x 14 White Construction Paper
Colored pencils
Timeline Rubric

Activity Descriptions and Overview of Instructional Strategies:
On a piece of 11 x 14 white construction paper, students will construct a timeline of important events in the English settlements from 1585-1691. Students will use the textbook, graphic organizers for each colony, and various reference books to locate information. Students will be given a rubric prior to doing this activity in order to know the expectations.

Supporting Assignments/Homework:

Assessment:
A rubric will be used to assess students’ timelines.
Unit: The First English Settlements in America

Lesson Title: “Using Reader’s Theater to Bring History to Life”

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Essential Questions Related to Vital Theme:
What were the reasons for English settlements in America?
What were some difficulties settlers encountered?
How did Native American culture change after the Europeans arrived?

Lesson Time: One class period during Reading class (approximately one hour)

Curriculum Standards List:

Social Studies
4.1. spi.2 Identify cultural groups who inhabited North America in the 17th century
4.4. spi.3 Examine how the Mayflower Compact is a symbol of the first United States government
4.5. spi.5 Determine the reasons for colonial settlement
4.1. spi.4 Examine how Native American culture changed as a result of contact with European cultures

Technology Used and How:

Materials:
Copies of Play Script: Trouble at Jamestown (1601-1616) - (10 Easy-to-Read American History Plays That Reach All Kinds of Readers – Scholastic)
Copies of Play Script: Fish Heads and Snake Skins – The Pilgrims at Plymouth (1620-1621) – (10 Easy-to-Read American History Plays That Reach All Kinds of Readers – Scholastic)

Activity Descriptions and Overview of Instructional Strategies:
Students will rehearse and perform historical plays during Reader’s Theater time in reading class.

Students will be divided into two groups and assigned roles. One group will perform the Jamestown play and the other group will perform the Plymouth play. Students will work with their group to practice their roles. Then, each group will present their play to the class.

Supporting Assignments/Homework:

Assessment:
Students will be given a test over the first English settlements at the end of this unit.
# Timeline Rubric

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<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>The timeline has a descriptive title that accurately describes the material and is easy to locate.</td>
<td>The timeline has an effective title that accurately describes the material and is easy to locate.</td>
<td>The timeline has a title that is easy to locate.</td>
<td>The title is missing or difficult to locate.</td>
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<td><strong>Legibility</strong></td>
<td>Legible handwriting</td>
<td>Mostly legible handwriting</td>
<td>Writing is not legible in some places.</td>
<td>Writing is not legible.</td>
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<td><strong>Dates</strong></td>
<td>An accurate date has been included for each event.</td>
<td>An accurate date has been included for almost every event.</td>
<td>An accurate date has been included for most events.</td>
<td>Dates are inaccurate and/or missing.</td>
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<td><strong>Accuracy of Facts</strong></td>
<td>Facts are accurate for all events reported on the timeline.</td>
<td>Facts are accurate for almost all events reported on the timeline.</td>
<td>For are accurate for most of the events reported on the timeline.</td>
<td>Facts were often inaccurate for events reported on the timeline.</td>
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<td><strong>Sequence</strong></td>
<td>Events are placed in accurate order.</td>
<td>Almost all events are placed in proper order.</td>
<td>Most of the events are placed in proper order.</td>
<td>Most events are inaccurately placed on the timeline.</td>
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<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>The timeline had at least 11-15 events related to the topic.</td>
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