

Name _____

Focus on Freedom

FUNDAMENTAL ORDERS OF CONNECTICUT

Reverend Thomas Hooker and his congregation established the Connecticut settlement at Hartford in 1636. Together with others who had settled at Windsor and Wethersfield, the free citizens of Hartford assembled and drew up the document that has been called the first American state constitution.

Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God by the wise disposition of His Divine Providence so to order and dispose of things that we, the inhabitants and residents of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield are now . . . dwelling in and upon the river Connecticut [Connecticut] and the lands thereunto adjoining; and well knowing where a people are gathered together the Word of God requires that, to maintain a peace and union of such a people, there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require; do therefore associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one public state or commonwealth, and do, for ourselves and our successors and such as shall be

adjoined to us at any time hereafter, enter into combination and confederation together, to maintain and preserve liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus which we now profess, as also the discipline of the churches, which, according to the truth of the said Gospel, is now practised among us. As also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed according to such laws, rules, orders, and decrees as shall be made, ordered, and decreed, as follows:

—FUNDAMENTAL ORDERS OF CONNECTICUT, 1639

Examining the Document

Reviewing Facts

1. Describe the function of the Court of Election.
2. Identify the main role of the General Court.

Critical Thinking Skills

3. Identifying Assumptions Why did the people of Connecticut believe that it was necessary to organize a government?

1. It is ordered, sentenced, and decreed that there shall be yearly two general assemblies or

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THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT

On November 11, 1620, after a rough journey of 65 days, the Mayflower dropped anchor in Provincetown harbor, near the tip of Cape Cod. Although the Pilgrims had pledged to set up their colony within the limits of the original grant of the Virginia Company, navigational errors led them to the New England area. With adverse winds and winter close at hand, the Pilgrims stayed where they were and set about establishing their colony. Although the Pilgrims were still English citizens, they were in a region that had no authority. The Pilgrim leaders knew, therefore, that they would have to set up some form of government. On November 11, 41 men aboard the Mayflower signed the Mayflower Compact.

al good of the colony unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

In WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. *Anna Domini, 1620.*

—MAYFLOWER COMPACT

Examining the Document

Reviewing Facts

1. Explain why, according to the Mayflower Compact, the Pilgrims set sail for the Americas.
2. Describe the powers the Mayflower Compact gave the Pilgrims.

Critical Thinking Skills

3. Understanding Cause and Effect Why was the Mayflower Compact an important step toward democracy?

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread [revered and feared] sovereign Lord King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents [this document] solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant [promise] and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic [group organized for government] for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue [authority] hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances [regulations], acts, constitutions, and offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet [fitting] and convenient for the gener-