Activity

On the Mayflower

Grades: PreK–K, 1–2

Overview
Kids read about the Mayflower and make a cardboard model of the ship with each part labeled.

Comment
The photography in *On the Mayflower* is fantastic. It brings to life the voyage of the Mayflower and the hardships faced by the passengers. Students love imagining that they are at sea aboard the *Mayflower*. I still remember "sailing" on the *Mayflower* as a kindergarten student in 1975.
Objective
Students will "identify and describe the events or people celebrated during United States national holidays and why we celebrate them." — Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework

Materials
- On the Mayflower: Voyage of the Ship's Apprentice & a Passenger Girl by Kate Waters
- cardboard, cardboard tubes or broomsticks, paper towels, markers, measuring tape, box cutter, etc.
- refrigerator box (You can use these materials individually, or together. It is not necessary to have both to complete this activity successfully.)

Set Up and Prepare
The building of the Mayflower itself takes anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour, depending on what it is built of, and the amount of detail put into it. You then need to schedule additional time for students to engage in dramatic play.

Directions
Working with small groups of students, use your blocks, and/or boxes, to create the Mayflower. (Due to space, you may decide to only build portions of it.) You might decide to lay down some blue cloth for the ocean, or to make provisions with which to "stock" the ship. See Cardboard Mayflower (PDF).

Supporting All Learners
It is sometimes difficult for young children to understand that the photos are not of the actual Pilgrims, but of actors portraying them. It is useful to have this conversation before reading the book.

Lesson Extensions
Make models or drawings of the Mayflower. Scholastic publishes a number of curriculum guides that feature the Mayflower, one of which is listed in Related Resources.
Make labels to put in different areas of the ship. Aft, deck, and rigging could be some of the labels students post.

Related Resources

- Plimoth Plantation living history museum's official website (http://www.plimoth.org/)
- Scholastic's The First Thanksgiving website (http://www.scholastic.com/scholastic_thanksgiving/)
- Easy Make & Learn Projects: The Pilgrims, the Mayflower & More: 15 Fun-to-Create Reproducible Models That Make the Time of the Pilgrims Come to Life by Donald M. Silver, Patricia J. Wynne

Subjects: Reading, Pilgrims, Ships, Holidays, Social Studies, History, Vocabulary, Geography