

★The Mayflower Compact ★

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the responsibilities of the colonists in establishing a new colony and to understand the idea of a social contract, a new and untested concept in the 1600's, which was formed among the colonists to help them make decisions.

Objective

1. The student will formulate a social compact in his or her class after a discussion of the Mayflower Compact.
2. The student will analyze the Mayflower Compact.

Theme-Responsibility

Each person makes decisions and is responsible for his or her actions related to his or her decisions.

NCSS Standards

- Ia. analyze and explain the ways groups, societies, and cultures address human needs and concerns.
- IIf. apply ideas, theories, and modes of historical inquiry to analyze historical and contemporary development, and to inform and evaluate actions concerning public policy issues.
- Vc. describe the various forms institutions take, and explain how they develop and change over time.

Vg. analyze the extent to which groups and institutions meet individual needs and promote the common good in contemporary and historical settings.

VIc. analyze and explain ideas and mechanisms to meet needs and wants of citizens, regulate territory, manage conflict, establish order and security, and balance competing conceptions of a just society.

IXb. explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Xi. construct a policy statement and an action plan to achieve one or more goals related to an issue of public concern.

Time

60 minutes

Materials

- ★ American Heritage Themes handout
- ★ Mayflower Compact
- ★ Dictionaries
- ★ Student handbook or copy of school rules and policies
- ★ Material to post final product
- ★ Website - www.americanheritage.org

Preparation

- ★ Copy handouts
- ★ Gather art supplies (as needed).

Focus

Students will develop an understanding of a social contract as exemplified by the Mayflower Compact. The central idea that a group of people could decide among themselves what others could and could not do was the birth of a new form of government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Before this time the King made all of the decisions about how people were to interact with one another.

Activity

1. Introduce the terms social contract, covenant, compact, promise, agreement, etc. What are they? What do they mean? Have students get into groups, assigning one term to each set of students to define and to give examples of it being used. Share definitions and examples.
2. Pass out handouts on the Mayflower Compact. Read and encourage students to make notes. Discuss the reading including the significance, use, rationale, and purpose of the Mayflower Compact. Address questions. (See Links page on www.americanheritage.org for additional resources on the Mayflower Compact and the Pilgrims.)
3. Explain that almost every group of people who meet to achieve a goal, like passing a class, develops a system of rules and makes agreements among themselves in order to enjoy their basic rights and freedoms. As a class, students will discuss and define the Mayflower Compact and realize how it commits the Pilgrims to religion, government, and civility. Next students will create their own compact as a class or in small groups.
4.
 - A. Ask students in groups to pick out a few rules from their student handbook (or copy of school policies) and justify why those rules are there and/or why they should be omitted. After each group has completed the task, let students share their insights with the class, and then have the whole class seriously consider what promises or compacts they will need to enjoy their basic rights and freedoms in order to prosper/succeed in the class.
 - B. As a whole class, brainstorm a list of classroom rules, edit it, and create a final draft which everyone will sign. Post this class compact!

Closure

Students consider and address these and other related questions: How is the class compact similar to or difference than the Mayflower Compact? How does the class compact serve the class as a whole and students individually? What is its purpose and intent for use? Considering these questions, students write a one-paragraph evaluation of the class compact and provide evidence such as anecdotes, examples, analogy, logic, historical parallels, etc. to support the evaluation.

Students may also write an essay on a thesis related to the Mayflower Compact, social contract theory, a significant pilgrim, or a relevant issue from the reading.

The Mayflower Compact

Self-Government

The English separatist Puritans living in Leyden, Holland, desired for various reasons to transplant their colony to America. In 1619 they secured a patent from the Virginia Company of London for a private plantation in Virginia. The Pilgrims, reinforced by some seventy “strangers” from London, sailed for Plymouth in September 1620 and arrived off Cape Cod in November. They missed the coast of Virginia. Some of the London recruits were a discontented, “undesirable lot” and made “mutinous speeches.” Bradford writes that the “strangers” boasted that they were not under the jurisdiction of the Virginia Company and “would use their own liberty, for none had the power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia and not for New England...” (William Bradford, *Of Plymouth Plantation-1620-1647: A New Edition: The Complete Text, with Notes and an Introduction*, Samuel Eliot Morison, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1993, p. 75).

Since the patent, or charter, was only good in Virginia, some form of government had to be established if the settlers were to maintain peace. The Pilgrim leaders drew up the Mayflower Compact, *the first self-imposed self-government* not only in America but in the world. This has become one of the most important documents in American history. The original parchment has long since disappeared. The current text was first printed in London in 1622 in a pamphlet generally known as the “Mourt’s Relation.” This pamphlet contained excerpts from the early colony’s journals and histories. The Mayflower Compact was not intended as a constitution but was an extension of the customary church covenant to help the Pilgrims define their civil circumstances.

This church covenant, sometimes called covenantal doctrine or covenantal theology, as opposed to the “Ruler’s Law” under monarchies, was inspired by religious teaching. These separatist Puritans, as well as later non-separatist Puritan arrivals to America, viewed church and state alike as “associations of the willing faithful.” They were further convinced that the proper form of organization was not a matter of kings and bishops dictating the configuration of worship. They thought the proper form of organization should be one of “believers joined together in voluntary fashion” (M. Stanton Evans, *The Theme Is Freedom: Religion, Politics, and the American Tradition*, Regnery Publishing, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1994, pp. 187-88, 193-94).

separatist Puritans

These Puritans thought that the Church of England was tainted. They wanted to purify the Church of what they thought were transgressions. Because they believed that the Church of England was too corrupt to change, they withdrew and separated themselves from it.

Pilgrims

The name acquired by those who separated themselves from the Church of England (same as separatist Puritans)

“strangers”

This was the name that the separatist Puritans/Pilgrims gave those who traveled to the New World with them but who were not a part of their particular group.

William Bradford

Bradford was the guiding light and principal leader of Plymouth Colony. He was the Governor for a total of 33 one-year terms between 1621 and 1656. *Of Plymouth Plantation-1620-1647*, written by Bradford, is the history of the Pilgrim Colony and was first published the year of his death in 1656.

covenant

An agreement of and between agreeing parties. A formal binding agreement.

non-separatist Puritans

Those Puritans that hoped to purify the Church of England while remaining members of the Church.

Additional Reading

- ★ Demos, John. *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- ★ Morgan, Edmund S. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966.

Later Implications

Another example and extension of church covenant as the basis for self-government may also be found in the words of the “Fundamental Orders of Connecticut” (1639). Connecticut was established and led by the Reverend Thomas Hooker. In January 1639, the freemen of the towns of Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor met in Hartford and drew up the first constitution that created a government, in part “. . . well knowing where a people are gathered the word of God requires that to mayntayne (maintain) the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God. . . .[we] doe therefore assotiate (associate) and conloyne (conjoin) our selves to be as one Publike (Public) State or Commonwelth; and doe, . . .enter Into Combination and Confederation together , to mayntayn and presearve the liberty and purity of the gospell of our Lord Jesus which we now professe. . .”(Henry Steele Commager, Documents of American History, F.S. Crofts & Co., New York, 1943, pp. 22-23). (original spelling)

Further, in 1636, the colony of Providence, later to become part of Rhode Island, was established by the strict separationist Roger Williams because he abhorred what he claimed were “conforming churches” of Massachusetts. He also had been exiled because of his dissent and nonconforming views regarding the relations of church and state. In 1644, the charter for the colony of Rhode Island went into effect. The charter stated that the government should be “democraticall, that is a government held by the free and voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of the free inhabitants” (Evans, p. 195).

strict separationist

One who believed in a complete separation of church and government since government would corrupt the church.

“conforming churches”

Those churches in agreement with the Church of England and the King.

Colonial Quotations Supporting Self-Government

“The *multitude* I am speaking of, is the *body of the people*—no *contemptible* multitude—for those sake government is instituted; or rather, who have themselves erected it, solely for *their own good*—to whom even kings and all in subordination to them, are strictly speaking, servants and not masters.” (Adams’ emphasis)

Samuel Adams, American Revolutionary statesman and Founding Father, Essay in *Boston Gazette*, 1771

“Governors have no right to seek what they please; by this, instead of being content with the station assigned them, that of honorable servants of the society, they would soon become Absolute masters, Despots, and Tyrants.”

Resolutions of the Town of Boston, “The Rights of the Colonists,” 1772

“That all power is rested in, and consequently derived from, the people; that magistrates are their trustees and servants. . . .”

Virginia Bill of Rights, the most famous of the Declaration of Rights of the original state Constitutions, drafted by George Mason, American Revolutionary Statesman and Founding Father, 1776

The Mayflower Compact

N O V E M B E R 1 1 , 1 6 2 0

In the Name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, & c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our king and Country, a Voyage to plant the first colony in the northern Parts of Virginia; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Futherance of the Ends aforesaid; And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submissions and Obedience. In Witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth and of Scotland, the fifty-fourth. Anno Domini, 1620.

Mr. John Carver
Mr. William Bradford
Mr. Edward Winslow
Mr. William Brewster
Isaac Allerton
Miles Standish
John Alden
John Turner
Francis Eaton
James Chilton
John Craxton
John Billington
Josias Fletcher
John Goodman
Mr. Samuel Fuller
Mr. Christopher Martin
Mr. William Mullins
Mr. William White
Mr. Richard Warren
John Howland
John Ridgate

Mr. Stephen Hopkins
Digery Priest
Thomas Williams
Gilbert Winslow
Edmund Margesson
Peter Brown
Richard Bitteridge
George Soule
Edward Tilly
John Tilly
Francis Cooke
Thomas Rogers
Thomas Tinker
Edward Fuller
Richard Clark
Richard Gardiner
Mr. John Allerton
Thomas English
Edward Doten
Edward Liester

Rights and Responsibilities

Learning About My School's Student Code of Conduct

School is one place where a student has certain agreed upon rights and responsibilities. While students have certain rights in schools, they also have many responsibilities that accompany those rights. Each school district has a Code of Student Conduct about these rights and responsibilities. As a student, make it your responsibility to know the code for your school district and to review it with your parents. It will help you and other students have a safe and successful educational experience.

Sample: Below are some of the basic rights of students and points of interests mentioned in one school district (*Houston Independent School District Code of Student Conduct*):

- You have the right to attend public schools.
- You have the right to a well-balanced curriculum and instruction.
- You have the right to evaluation of your academic progress.
- You have the responsibility to participate in the educational process by attending class, paying attention, completing assignments, and asking questions if you don't understand a subject you are being taught.
- You especially have the responsibility to behave appropriately, not interfering with the goals of the educational community.

School teachers and administrators have the right and responsibility to respond to student acts of misconduct that interfere with the goals of education.

Level I These offenses generally occur in the classroom and can be corrected by the teacher.

Level II These offenses are more serious than Level I and/or represent the student's inability to control Level I misconduct. Level II offenses call for administrative intervention.

Level III These offenses seriously disrupt the educational process in the classroom, the school, and/or at school-related activities, or are a continuance of repeated Level I, II, or III misconduct. Level III misconduct may result in student suspension and optional removal to an alternative education program.

Level IV Level IV misconducts involve more serious criminal offenses. These include any felony, whether school related or not, unless it is one for which expulsion is required. This level of misconduct requires placement in an alternative education program.

Level V Level V offenses are dealt with by the expulsion of the offending student. Expulsion is fit punishment for violations which seriously threaten the safety of the school community. Expulsion is fit punishment in response to criminal acts of mischief including but not limited to: weapons possession, possession of an illegal substance, and assault.

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Excerpt Example from Houston Independent School District Code of Student Conduct

Foreword

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) has established as one of its primary goals the provision of a high-quality educational program for each student in a safe school environment free of disruptions that interfere with the educational process. The purpose of this *Code of Student Conduct* is to inform all students and parents of HISD's expectations regarding behavior and conduct. The *Code*, reviewed and approved by the HISD Board of Education, is based on the policies of the Board of Education and Standard Practice Memoranda (SPMs). SPMs communicate district administrative procedures and practices.

This *Code* was developed to protect the rights of all students by:


- providing a districtwide discipline management plan
- specifying the behavior that is expected of all students
- describing the broad range of student misconduct and providing appropriate disciplinary consequences or options for the various kinds of misconduct
- outlining student rights relating to school

Students and parents are expected to become familiar with the provisions of the districtwide *Code of Student Conduct* and the rules and regulations adopted and implemented by their individual schools based upon their School-Based Discipline Management System. Students are also expected to abide by the policies set forth in the *Code* so that they can truly get the most out of their years in school.

Major changes to the *Code* this year include the following:

- changes in accordance with state law to allow for expulsion or referral to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) by HISD for Level IV and V offenses, including for conduct that occurs within 300 feet of the school property line or on the property of another school district in Texas or that was committed by a student at a school district outside of the state
- moving changing of school documents or signing a parent's name on school records from Level II to Level III
- adding use of computers or other means to access and tamper with HISD records, to include grade books or any other public school records maintained by HISD, to Level IV
- adding "hacking" or breach of computer security that results in loss or damage in amount greater than \$1,500 to Level IV
- revising Level V, in accordance with changes in state law, to allow for the expulsion of students who engage in conduct against another student that contains the elements of aggravated assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, murder, capital murder, or criminal attempt to commit capital murder even if the offense occurs away from school
- clarifying that a police report is required for any Level IV or Level V infraction if the infraction also constitutes a violation of the Penal Code
- updating the provisions regarding confinement, restraint, and time-out applicable to students with disabilities

Students and parents should be aware that the Houston Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, marital status, religion, veteran status, political affiliation, or sexual orientation. This policy includes a prohibition on racial harassment and a hostile environment, as this type of harassment denies students the right to an education free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Students may utilize the district's complaint procedures (see p. 18) to address any issues related to these areas without fear of retaliation. In addition, HISD will not tolerate sexual harassment at any level. Any complaint of discrimination of any type will be fully investigated, and the district will take appropriate action.


Kaye Stripling
Superintendent of Schools

August 2003

Responsibilities in Behavior Intervention

The effective enforcement of the *Code of Student Conduct* and the School-Based Discipline Management System is essential in keeping a school and/or school-related activities free of disruption and is dependent on the exercise of the responsibilities by the following:

STUDENTS

- adhere to school, district, and classroom rules and regulations for behavior and good conduct.

PARENTS

- support school, district, and classroom rules for student behavior and ensure that their children conduct themselves according to district standards.
- provide the school with their current address and, when available, current telephone numbers.
- ensure student attendance at school. By state law, student attendance is the responsibility of parents and guardians.
- provide the appropriate school personnel with any student information that will affect the student's ability to learn and the student's behavior.
- read, acknowledge, and understand these rules and the rules applicable to their children's conduct while they are at school.

TEACHERS

- establish classroom-management procedures that concentrate on good student conduct and support school and district policies and procedures.

ADMINISTRATORS

- develop with all members of the school community an effective School-Based Discipline Management System that promotes and maintains the support of good student behavior.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

- approve a behavior code that identifies standards of conduct for students and enact policies and procedures necessary for implementing and enforcing a structured and disciplined learning environment.

Student Responsibilities

The student's responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment at school and/or school-related activities include the following:

- Attending all classes each day and being on time
- Preparing for each class with appropriate materials and completed assignments
- Dressing according to the dress code adopted by each individual school
- Knowing that the use, possession, and/or sale of illegal or unauthorized drugs, alcohol, and weapons are unlawful and prohibited and that students may be subject to random searches in accordance with Board Policy and state and federal law in order to assure a safe school environment
- Showing respect toward others
- Conducting oneself in a responsible manner
- Paying required fees and fines
- Knowing and obeying all school rules in the *Code of Student Conduct* and the School-Based Discipline Management System
- Cooperating with staff members in the investigation of disciplinary matters
- Seeking changes in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels
- Reporting threats to the safety of students and staff members as well as misconduct on the part of any other students or staff members to the building principal, a teacher, or another adult
- Using HISD technology systems for school business purposes only and using school computers and related equipment appropriately
- Abiding by the technology security procedures developed by HISD, such as never leaving a terminal or workstation unattended or unsecured while logged on to a host computer or network
- Reporting all observed or suspected technology security problems immediately to a teacher

In general, all students are entitled to enjoy the basic rights of citizenship recognized and protected by law for persons of their age and maturity. The Houston Independent School District shall foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and district personnel.

Students shall exercise their rights and responsibilities in compliance with rules established for the orderly conduct of the district's educational mission. The district's rules of conduct and discipline and the School-Based Discipline Management System are established to achieve and maintain order in the school. Students who violate the rights of others or district or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established district policies and procedures.

All students are expected to maintain the highest level of discipline and decorum at all school functions. Failure to comply with administrative directives promoting order and respect will result in the student's being removed from participation in school activities, including commencement exercises.

Student Rights and Responsibilities, Board Policies, and Standard Practice Memoranda

The Board Policies and Standard Practice Memoranda of the Houston Independent School District contain the rights and responsibilities of students that are embodied in this *Code of Student Conduct*. A brief description of several of the more important student rights and responsibilities is included in this section. The proper balance of student rights and privileges (•) with student responsibilities and obligations (+) is essential to the orderly conduct of the district's educational mission.

Instructional Programs

- The Houston Independent School District shall be responsible for providing a well-balanced curriculum and for delivering effective instruction to all students enrolled.
- + Students have the responsibility to strive for academic growth by participating in the appropriate educational program to their utmost ability.

Attendance of Students

- Regular attendance and punctuality shall be required of every student.
- + Students have the responsibility to take advantage of their educational opportunity by attending all classes daily and on time unless circumstances prevent them from doing so.

Continuing Education

- Student absences while suspended shall be considered as excused absences.
- + Students have the responsibility to make up all work missed while suspended within five school days after their return to school from suspension in order to receive credit for the work.

Evaluation, Grading, and Promotion/Retention of Students

- Students shall be evaluated on a continuous basis in the most effective manner to determine the extent of their progress.
- + Students have the responsibility to maintain reasonable standards of academic performance commensurate with their ability.

Complaints

- Students may present any complaint to the district, either personally or through a representative, through the appropriate complaint procedures.
- + Students have the responsibility to follow the established complaint procedures and to accept the decision that results from the complaint process.

Student Dress Code and Personal Grooming

- Each individual school shall adopt specific standards concerning dress and personal grooming.
- + All students have the responsibility to become familiar with the school's standards and the responsibility to adhere to them.

Student Publications

- Students are entitled to express, in writing, their opinions and may distribute handwritten, duplicated, or printed materials on school premises or at school-sponsored activities at other locations in accordance with certain conditions and procedures established in Board Policy.
- + Students have the responsibility to become familiar with and follow the conditions and procedures in Board Policy. (See Student Publications, p. 20.)

Students and School Property

- Students are expected to show proper respect for both persons and property.
- + Students are responsible for their own actions directed toward school property and for damages to property.

Search of Property and Students

- Students are entitled to the guarantees of the Fourth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution, and they are subject to reasonable searches and seizures.
- + Students have the responsibility not to carry on their person or to have on school property or at school-sponsored events such items as drugs, weapons, alcohol, paging devices, or other contraband materials in violation of school policy or state law.
- School officials are empowered to conduct reasonable searches of students and school property when there is reasonable cause to believe that students may be in possession of drugs, weapons, alcohol, or other materials ("contraband") in violation of school policy or state law. Students who bring contraband onto school grounds may be searched in order to secure the school environment so learning can take place and to protect other students from any potentially harmful effects stemming from the contraband. School property such as lockers and desks shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to search.
- Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the use of school lockers or school desks.
- The administration may utilize dogs and metal detectors as provided by HISD policies and applicable laws. Metal detectors and trained dogs may be used at random locations and times by HISD personnel as determined by HISD administrative and law enforcement personnel.

The 18-Year-Old Student

- The 18-year-old student who has adult status may enroll in and attend public school.
- + The 18-year-old student who is enrolled in public school has the responsibility to follow the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the school district.

The 18-year-old student who has more than five unexcused absences may be withdrawn due to nonattendance for the remainder of the semester. An Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee shall be convened prior to the withdrawal of an 18-year-old student with disabilities for nonattendance.