

She went to live in England, where she became famous as 'Princess Pocahontas'. She died while giving birth to a son in 1617, at the age of 22, and is buried in Gravesend, England. In 1624, Smith published a book called 'The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England and the Summer Isles', and here he described how Pocahontas had saved his life. Did he forget to mention it in his earlier account, or did he invent the story after Pocahontas had become famous?

Comprehension

Circle the correct answer.

- 1 John Smith was born in
 - a Virginia.
 - b England.
 - c Jamestown.
 - d India.
- 2 His job in Jamestown was to
 - a do the cooking.
 - b sell food to the Indians.
 - c get food and other things needed by the settlers.
 - d find rivers.
- 3 In December 1607, he set out
 - a to find Indians.
 - b to find where the Chickahominy river ended.
 - c to look for the Chickahominy river.
 - d to find where the Chickahominy river began.
- 4 He was captured by the Indians
 - a while trading with them.
 - b while fighting against them.
 - c because he was a white man.
 - d because he was a chief.
- 5 The Indians believed
 - a he wanted to steal their goods.
 - b he was going to kidnap their chief.
 - c he was going to kill them.
 - d he was responsible for the death of one of their number.
- 6 The Indian chief
 - a sentenced Smith to death.
 - b said he was not guilty.
 - c ordered Smith to return to Jamestown.
 - d killed Smith.

- 7 As Smith lay with his head on a stone, a girl
 - a cut off his head and held it in her arms.
 - b lay down on him so that he could not be killed.
 - c threw herself upon him and put her head in his arms.
 - d talked to him.
- 8 The girl then asked the chief
 - a for Smith's head.
 - b to let Smith live.
 - c to let her marry Smith.
 - d to kill Smith.
- 9 Some years later, the girl
 - a married Smith.
 - b married the chief.
 - c married an Indian.
 - d married another Englishman.
- 10 Pocahontas was
 - a not really a princess.
 - b a real princess.
 - c a princess because she married a prince.
 - d an Indian leader.

Vocabulary

Answer the following questions, referring to the passage.

- 1 Which words in lines 4-5 mean 'responsible for'? _____
- 2 Which words in line 9 show that Smith often met Indians? _____
- 3 Which word in line 17 shows that it was not certain that Smith had killed an Indian? _____
- 4 Which word in line 23 means 'came near'? _____
- 5 Which word in line 27 means 'appealed to'? _____
- 6 Which words in lines 27-28 mean that Pocahontas's father could not deny what she asked for? _____
- 7 Which word in line 32 means 'talked to each other'? _____
- 8 Which word in line 39 means 'brought out in print'? _____

Pocahontas

Complete the following using one word only in each space.

- John Smith was one of the best-known settlers in Virginia in the 17th century. He lived in Jamestown. (1) _____ he was responsible for (2) _____ food and supplies for the settlers there. (3) _____ he did by trading with the Indians. (4) _____ 1607, Smith wanted to find the source of the local river, but (5) _____ the result of a fight, he was captured (6) _____ Indians and ordered to be put to death. Just as he was about to (7) _____ killed, the chief's daughter, Pocahontas, ran out, held him in her arms, and asked her father to release (8) _____. The chief agreed, made Smith a member of the tribe, and then (9) _____ him go back to Jamestown. Pocahontas later married (10) _____ man called John Rolfe. She went to live in England and died at the early age of 22.

Something Extra

Circle the word that does not belong.

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1 food | supplies | getting |
| 2 went | arrived | came |
| 3 famous | best-known | unknown |
| 4 settlers | contact | colonists |
| 5 young | head | arms |
| 6 request | beg | forgive |
| 7 return | discover | go back |
| 8 refuse | deny | request |
| 9 prisoner | chief | captive |
| 10 revenge | companion | friend |



Pocahontas begs for Smith's life

John Smith was one of the best-known English settlers in Virginia at the beginning of the 17th century. In 1607, he was in charge of getting food and supplies for the colonists of the settlement of Jamestown. He made difficult and dangerous trading trips which brought him into frequent contact with the Algonquin Indians.

In December 1607, Smith had set out to discover the source of a nearby river, the Chickahominy, when he was seized by Indians in an incident that was to make him famous. During the struggle, Smith had apparently killed one of the Indians. In revenge for this, Powhatan, the Algonquin chief, ordered him to be put to death.

On the day he was to die, Smith was led out and made to kneel down and lay his head on a large stone. Then, several Indians carrying clubs approached and prepared to crush his head. Suddenly, a young girl ran out from the crowd of Indians and threw herself upon him, taking his head in her arms.

The young girl was Pocahontas, Powhatan's daughter, who was 12 years old at the time. She begged her father not to have Smith killed, and the chief was unable to refuse his daughter's request. Smith was forgiven and was then adopted into the tribe. Later, he was allowed to return to Jamestown. What made Pocahontas do such a thing? It seems that while Smith was being held captive, he had entertained the girl by telling her stories, although it is unclear in what language they communicated.

Is this famous story true? There appear to be doubts because it is not mentioned in Smith's own written account of the period, nor did his companions write anything about it. What is definitely known is that a few years later Pocahontas married John Rolfe, an English gentleman, and became a Christian.