



Name _____

Date _____

Overcoming Problems: John Smith

It was the 1600s. A man mapped the Chesapeake Bay area. He learned from the Native Americans who called the Bay home. Then he had an accident. He needed help. He was hurt by a stingray! The man, John Smith, went back to Jamestown to get better.

Think:

Life was hard in the 1600s. What other problems might John Smith have?

John Smith was only 16 when he left England. His father had died. He was now ready for a new life. By 1596 he had joined others as they fought with Spain. Then he made his way to the Mediterranean Sea. Here he worked on merchant ships. Soon he was fighting in a war again. Others saw that he was a good soldier. He was made a Captain. Before long he was wounded and ended up being sold as a slave. He finally escaped and made his way back to England.

By this time, John Smith knew that he liked adventure. He wanted to go to the "new world." He joined with the Virginia Company to settle Virginia. When he stepped off the boat, he learned that he was to be one of the leaders of the new colony!

The new settlers experienced many problems in Jamestown. They had little fresh water. There were many diseases. A very harsh winter made life difficult. The Algonquian Indians were upset by these new settlers. They often stole supplies from the people of Jamestown. It wasn't long before John Smith was captured by the Algonquians. He was taken to their chief, Powhatan. The story is told that Powhatan liked him. John Smith later wrote that the chief's young daughter, Pocahontas, had saved his life.

A few weeks passed weeks and John Smith was set free. But he saw that Jamestown was full of problems. People did not want to work. There were fights among the leaders. Supplies were growing short. John Smith decided to go north

to the Chesapeake Bay. He wanted to look for supplies. He thought he would also make maps of the area.

John Smith returned to Jamestown in 1608. He was elected president of the council. He saw that too many settlers were not doing their fair share. He made laws that said people had to work. He traded with the Algonquians to get food. Jamestown began to grow.

John Smith had to return to England in 1609. He had a very bad gunpowder burn. His strong leadership had helped Jamestown to succeed. But, the leaders of the Virginia Company did not like him. They did not want his help anymore. So, he did not return to Virginia again.

In 1614, he again sailed to America. He was to explore Maine and Massachusetts. Upon his final return to England, he spent the rest of his life writing books about his adventures.

Why Did It Happen?

Why did these things happen? Write the reason on the line.

1. John Smith went to France when he was 16 years old.

This was because _____.

2. Life was hard for the people of Jamestown.

This was because _____.

3. John Smith went back to England in 1609.

This was because _____.

4. He became a Captain in the army.

This was because _____.

5. He went back to Jamestown from the Chesapeake Bay area.

This was because _____.

6. He made laws that said people had to work.

This was because _____.

7. Jamestown grew.

This was because _____.