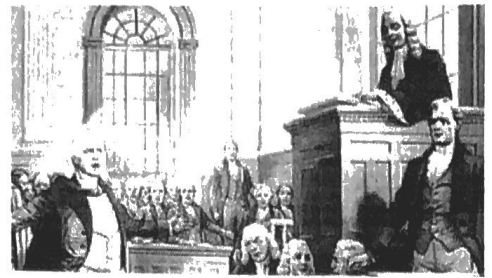


## STATION 4 John Peter Zenger Trials

DIRECTIONS: Read and complete the questions.



No democracy has existed in the modern world without the existence of a FREE PRESS. Newspapers and pamphlets allow people to exchange ideas and to voice dissent. When a corrupt government holds power, the press becomes a critical weapon. It organizes opposition and can help revolutionary ideas spread. The Trial of JOHN PETER ZENGER, a New York publisher, was an important step toward this most precious freedom for American colonists.

John Peter Zenger was a German immigrant who printed a publication called the NEW YORK WEEKLY JOURNAL. The publication harshly pointed out the actions of the corrupt royal governor at the time, William Cosby. It accused the government of rigging elections and allowing the French enemy to explore New York harbor. Basically, it accused the governor of an assortment of crimes and basically labeled him as corrupt. Although Zenger merely printed the articles, he was put in jail. The authors were anonymous, and Zenger would not name them.

In 1733, Zenger was accused of LIBEL, a legal term whose meaning is quite different for us today than it was for him. In his day it was libel when you published information that was opposed to the government, whether it was true or not. Zenger never denied printing the pieces. The judge therefore felt that the guilty verdict was never in question. Something very surprising happened, however.

The trial began and Zenger's attorney admitted that Zenger printed the charges and demanded the prosecution to prove them false. The judge ordered the jury to convict Zenger if they believed he printed the stories. But the jury, believing the publication to be true, returned in less than ten minutes with a verdict of not guilty.

Cheers filled the courtroom and sound spread throughout the countryside. Zenger was hailed a hero. The first building blocks of free speech were in place.

1. Explain why John Peter Zenger was on trial.

exposed corruption in the government

2. What conclusion did the jury reach at the end of the trial?

jury found JPZ not guilty

3. What freedom did the Zenger trial help to establish in the colonies?

Freedom of the Press

4. Why is this freedom important today?

If the gov't can control the press, they can control what people know

## STATION 3

## House of Burgesses



DIRECTIONS: Read and complete the questions.

With the successful growth of tobacco in Jamestown the economy began to improve. King James of England took steps to establish a stable government there. In 1619 he sent a governor with orders to consult colonists on the important matter of maintaining a profitable and successful settlement that would attract more settlers.

The House of Burgesses was established and became the 1st self-representative government in the colonies. The Virginia Company of London was in charge of appointing the governor. The governor in turn appointed important members of the colony to be on his personal council. Other members of the House of Burgesses had to be white men over the age of 17 who were land owners. These Burgesses or representatives were chosen by election among the landowning male colonists. The House of Burgesses, which met at first only once a year, could make laws which could be overruled by the governor or the directors of the Virginia Company. This continued to be the standard until 1624. At this time, King James and England took much more control of things in Virginia, restricting the powers of the House of Burgesses.

The idea of electing representatives to make decisions on behalf of the colonists was important and new. It gave colonists a chance to control their own government for the first time. It is important to note that women, indentured servants and Native Americans could not vote.

1. What is a Burgess?

a representative

2. Explain the importance of the House of Burgesses.

It was the 1st self-representative gov't in the colonies

3. What qualifications were needed to be elected a Burgess?

white male, at least 17 yrs. old, land owner

4. Who was ineligible to vote?

women, indentured servants, and native Americans

5. In what way was the House of Burgesses an advance toward democracy?

people could vote and have a say

## STATION 2

## The Mayflower Compact



DIRECTIONS: Read and complete the questions.

Faced with the need to keep order in their colony, the Pilgrims drew up the Mayflower Compact. Below is an excerpt from the Compact. It established a government based on the consent of the governed.

November 11, 1620

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread (revered and feared) sovereign Lord King James, having decided 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 this document solemnly and mutually (together) in the presence of God, and of one another, covenant (promise) and combine ourselves together in 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 equal laws, ordinances (regulations) acts, constitutions, and offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient of the general good 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

-Signed and agreed upon by all 41 men aboard the Mayflower

1. When and where was the Mayflower Compact signed? November 11, 1620

Cape Cod - (aboard the Mayflower)

2. According to the Mayflower Compact why did Pilgrims set sail for the New World?

for religious freedom

3. What was the purpose of the Mayflower Compact?

establish order in the colony

4. How do you think the Pilgrims benefitted from the Mayflower Compact?

people had a say in the gov't

5. In what way was the Mayflower Compact an advance toward democracy?

equal protection under the laws

# STATION 1

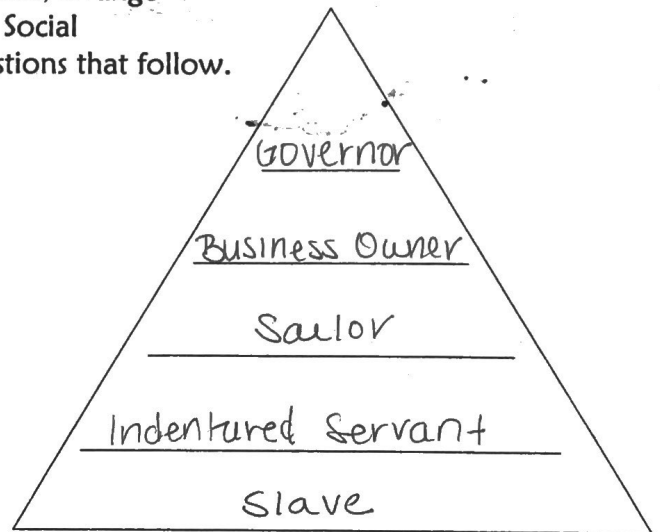
## Colonial Social Hierarchy



Upper Class	These men were the elite, wealthy, well bred, and well educated landowners. Men of the Upper class could vote and held high public government positions.
Middle Class	Men of the middle class could vote but few held public office. These men owned small farms, ran stores or small businesses, were skilled tradesmen or belonged to professions such as ministers, doctors and lawyers.
Lower Class	Men of the lower class could not vote, none held public office, few owned property and most were illiterate. These men were manual workers, servants, apprentices, sailors and hired hands but also included semi-skilled tradesmen.
Indentured Servants	Indentured servants were not paid any wages for up to 7 years. Indentured servants had few rights. They could not vote, they were not allowed to marry or to leave their houses and travel without permission and were not allowed to buy or sell anything.
African Slaves	Approximately 20% of the population of North America were African slaves and had no rights.

**DIRECTIONS:** Based on the information above, arrange the people in the word bank on the Colonial Social Hierarchy Pyramid properly. Answer the questions that follow.

African Slave  
 Governor  
 Business Owner  
 Indentured Servant  
 Sailor



1. Which classes of colonists were allowed to vote? \_\_\_\_\_

Upper + Middle classes

2. Which groups of people had no say in government? \_\_\_\_\_

Lower class, Indentured Servants, African slaves

*Read each statement and determine whether it is true or false. Circle the correct answer.*

3. Upper Class women had the right to vote. True or False
4. Indentured Servants were not paid any wages for up to 7 years. True or False
5. African slaves had the right to own land. True or False
6. Middle Class men owned small farms and businesses. True or False
7. The Lower Class could participate in government. True or False