

# First Colony of Religious Freedom

The early colonies of New England were founded by English people, called Pilgrims, who sought religious freedom. The Pilgrims escaped religious persecution and founded Plymouth Colony in 1620. (1) Ten years later, many Puritans left England to found the city of Boston.



(2) These early fighters for religious freedom often suffered for their convictions. In England, Puritans were burned at the stake when they refused to give up their beliefs. Leaving the comforts of England for the wild forests of New England was difficult and dangerous. (3) We can only imagine how profound their faith must have been.

In 1631, a young Puritan named Roger Williams sailed to Boston in search of religious freedom. His concept of religious freedom differed from that of other New England Puritans. Although most Puritans wanted to be free to practice their own religion, they were not very tolerant of people whose religious beliefs differed from theirs. Williams wanted total religious freedom for all people. (4) It was against his morals to tell anyone how to worship. (5) He believed that people should be free to sanctify the beliefs and practices of any religion that they chose to follow.

Williams's beliefs also extended to the power of the king of England. He felt that the king had no right to give away Native American land.

Williams's preaching offended the Puritan authorities, who sent him away from Boston. (6) After contemplation and discussion, the authorities decided to order Williams back to England. They sent someone to bring Williams back to Boston and prepare him for departure. (7) Perhaps Williams's intuition told him that the authorities were coming, or perhaps friends had warned him. In any case, when the authorities arrived, Williams was not there.

Despite the harsh New England winter, Williams and his family traveled farther into the wilderness. There, he purchased land from friendly natives and founded the colony of Providence, Rhode Island. It was the first colony to have total religious freedom. (8) In fact, Williams even refused to disseminate his own religious beliefs to others. Persecuted people, including Baptists, Quakers, Jews, and French Huguenot Protestants were able to freely practice their religions in Providence. Williams was also known for his ability to make peace with Native Americans.

(9) When not engrossed in religious practices or in the defense of Providence, Williams studied the languages and cultures of neighboring Native Americans. He shared this knowledge in the book *Key into the Languages of America*. (10) This book provided lucid explanations of the words and grammars of these languages.

Although he accomplished many things, Williams is best remembered for his courage—traveling deep into the wilderness in search of religious freedom.

Each sentence below refers to a numbered sentence in the passage. Write the letter of the choice that gives the sentence a meaning that is closest to the original sentence.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Ten years later, many \_\_\_\_\_ left England to found the city of Boston.  
 a. public speakers      b. circus entertainers      c. business leaders      d. religious people
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. These early fighters for religious freedom often suffered for their \_\_\_\_\_.  
 a. thoughtfulness      b. clarity      c. beliefs      d. feelings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. We can only imagine how \_\_\_\_\_ their faith must have been.  
 a. clear      b. unfamiliar      c. deep      d. strict

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. It was against his \_\_\_\_\_ to tell anyone how to worship.  
a. deep thoughts      b. idea of right      c. strict conduct      d. feelings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. He believed that people should be free to \_\_\_\_\_ the beliefs of any religion.  
a. modify      b. think about      c. state clearly      d. make holy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. After \_\_\_\_\_ and discussion, the authorities decided to order Williams back to England.  
a. questioning      b. understanding      c. explanation      d. consideration
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Perhaps Williams's \_\_\_\_\_ told him that the authorities were coming.  
a. feeling      b. strong opinion      c. clarity      d. deep thought
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. In fact, Williams even refused to \_\_\_\_\_ his own religious beliefs to others.  
a. make holy      b. think deeply      c. spread      d. consider
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When not \_\_\_\_\_ in religious practices or in the defense of Providence, Williams studied the languages and cultures of neighboring Native Americans.  
a. found guilty      b. occupied      c. uninterested      d. easily understood
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. This book provided \_\_\_\_\_ explanations of the words and grammars of these languages.  
a. clear      b. complicated      c. strict      d. difficult

Indicate whether the statements below are TRUE or FALSE according to the passage.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Puritans moved to New England to escape religious persecution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Roger Williams worked all his life to establish his own religion in New England.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Because of his work disseminating religious views, Roger Williams was very popular with the Puritan authorities.

### WRITE THE DERIVATIVE

Complete the sentence by writing the correct form of the word shown in parentheses. You may not need to change the form that is given.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The oath that the clergy took \_\_\_\_\_ their bonds to their religion. (*sanctify*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Some decisions require \_\_\_\_\_. (*contemplate*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When time is short, a decision may have to be made by \_\_\_\_\_ rather than by careful reasoning. (*intuition*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Some public speakers are noted for their \_\_\_\_\_. (*lucid*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ followed strict rules of personal behavior. (*puritanical*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Persons \_\_\_\_\_ of crimes usually pay a penalty. (*conviction*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The more interesting an activity, the more easily we become \_\_\_\_\_ in it. (*engross*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Issues of \_\_\_\_\_ are of interest to many people. (*moral*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A carefully planned campaign can have \_\_\_\_\_ effects on election results. (*profound*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Timely \_\_\_\_\_ of information is useful to society. (*disseminate*)