

Creative Writing Project following Bradford's Journal:

Your prompt:

Pretend you are one of the Plymouth Colony citizens. Write a creative, one to two page letter home to England, persuading a friend or relative in England EITHER to make the journey and settle in the new land, OR NOT to join you in the colony but stay in England.

Drafting:

Try to adopt some of the language of the journal to make your letter sound more authentic. What kind of language did Bradford use? What kind of examples did he use?

Identify yourself specifically – give yourself a name, your responsibilities in the colony, refer to people you've become friends with, ask about people back home. Get into the character of this person you are pretending to be.

Vividly relate at least THREE DETAILED ANECDOTES of your life in the colony. Use details from Bradford's Journal as your persuasive evidence. You know your friends and relatives are waiting to hear from you after all this time! Don't disappoint them – give plenty of detailed imagery in each short story so they can picture you here in the new colony and can see what life has been like for you. You'll use your textbook for the information, but you can certainly add more details and imagery and drama, as long as you don't stray away from the facts. (For example, if you choose to write about meeting Squanto, give all the details you can imagine, but don't stray away from the facts by presenting him as a mean savage who tried to cheat the colonists out of their seed corn.)

Make your letter sound like a letter, not like a "listing" of answers to the guiding questions I've given you.

Remembering your audience:

Besides people you refer to, and at least three anecdotes of life in the colony, get creative with your letter. If you are writing to a sister, then talk like sisters would talk, about things sisters would talk about. If you are writing to your elderly parents, decide what else you would talk about or ask about other than your life in the colony. What would you talk about if you were writing to a Pilgrim friend? Keep pretending – you are supposed to know these people well, so act like it with your choice of topics. What would that person want to know from you about your new life? What would you want to remind them of from your time with them before you left? Think about the letter recipient, keeping them in mind as you write, to guide your content.

Publishing:

After you have decided what to write about, take some time to think about how to produce this letter project. What could you write this letter on to make it look authentic to the time period? What would you write it with? What would the colonists have used? How can you make the handwriting look real for the time period? What would you enclose with it since you are

sending it to a friend or relative living in England who hasn't seen you for over a year? What do you think that person would like to receive from you, to help remember you by? How will you prepare it for the trip by boat to England?

Creativity, making the letter look authentic to the 1600s, actual details from Bradford's journal, creativity in making your character seem a real member of Plymouth Colony, and including elements that show you are remembering your audience, will all count for this major grade. This major grade is in lieu of a taking a reading test. Make it full of details, and spend some quality time putting it together.

You will present this letter by reading parts of it to the class on the due date.

The grading rubric that I will follow is below:

Plymouth Colony Test, Creative Writing, Rubric:

- _____ Clearly persuasive (obviously "come" or "don't come" in tone)
- _____ Language level (appropriate to the character's voice and audience)
- _____ At least three anecdotes with many details to create interesting stories
- _____ Details of daily life, personalized information, remembering audience
- _____ Historical accuracy – details included from Bradford's Journal, didn't "change" history
- _____ Artistic – letter looks authentic to 1600s
- _____ Presentation – proper etiquette is followed: voice level, eye contact, no distracting movements or sounds, prepared when called on

Planning Page for Creative Writing Letter:

Your character's name: _____

His/her responsibilities in the colony: _____

To whom will you write your letter? _____

What are some details that you will use to develop the character of your relative/friend?

What are some topics that you will ask about or tell about that *relate to your relative/friend* but not to your life in the colony?

Are you persuading them to COME to the Colony, or STAY HOME? _____

What reasons will you give to support your opinion?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What anecdotes will you write out in full detail with lots of imagery of the five senses? These anecdotes should also support your opinion for your recipient to come or stay away. Draft them here.

1.

2.

3.

What kind of paper or other thing will you write your letter on? _____

What will you use to write on it with? _____

What other materials are you thinking of using? _____

What are you thinking of enclosing in the letter as a token of love or remembrance?

What are some other ideas you have for making your letter stand out from all the others in the class?