

The Chesapeake Bay: A Time for Change

ACTIVITY 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE CHESAPEAKE BAY—THEN AND NOW

Part One:

1. Why did John Smith and his crew voyage from England to the Chesapeake Bay? What was their mission? *(To explore the region, to search for a northwest passage to Asia, to convert the native people, to find resources)*
2. What did they find? *(Rich natural resources, indigenous people)*
3. What did they accomplish? *(Extensive mapping and documentation of the early seventeenth-century bay, including physical features, natural resources, and people)*
4. Why do groups like the Chesapeake Bay Foundation feel John Smith's exploration is still important today? *(It highlights the historic role of the bay in the birth of the United States.)*

Part Two:

1. How did the early settlers of Jamestown select its location? What were the positive and negative aspects of that location? *(The area was easy to reach by boat, had deep enough water to make loading and unloading supplies easy, and was uninhabited by natives, so it seemed safe. Unfortunately, it was marshy, providing home to disease-bearing mosquitoes, and the water became brackish in the summer, increasing the likelihood of disease.)*
2. During the years Smith spent exploring the area, what was the land like and how did Native Americans interact with their environment? How did the behavior of the English settlers affect their success? *(The Native Americans Smith encountered were skilled laborers and hunters. They supported themselves well through the natural environment. The English settlers made poor choices and did not work hard until Smith forced them to.)*
3. How did the city of Baltimore both benefit from and harm the Chesapeake Bay and Patapsco River? What major changes happened to Baltimore's economy from its early history to its current state? *(Baltimore's location on the Patapsco River made it a center for industry and shipping until sites down river, closer to the bay and not as polluted as the city's harbor had become, threatened to choke it out. It was revived via an urban renewal project to create the "Inner Harbor," an area largely enjoyed by tourists today.)*
4. Just as the arrival of colonists to the shores of the Chesapeake affected the Native American populations living there, so did technological advances of modern life affect the descendants of those early settlers. Pick one technological advance that affected early Native Americans. Then, pick another technological advance that affected more modern inhabitants of the Chesapeake Bay area. *(Examples may include transportation advances, such as the Bay Bridge, that, while making travel easier in the area, actually led to the isolation of tidewater communities.)*