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# Lesson Plan: A Pilgrim's Adventure!

## Materials Needed

- A medium-sized cardboard box (big enough for the child to sit in or play with)
- A small box or bag (like a shoebox or a small backpack) to be a "sea chest"
- Craft supplies: markers, crayons, construction paper (blue, white, brown), child-safe scissors, glue or tape
- A blanket or towel
- Snack items: crackers (like saltines), dried fruit, beef jerky, or cheese cubes
- A few favorite small toys or objects from around the house
- (Optional) Picture book: "The Story of the Pilgrims" by Katharine Ross or "If You Sailed on the Mayflower in 1620" by Ann McGovern

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## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Create** a simple model of a ship (the Mayflower) using a cardboard box.
- **Explain** one challenge of the Pilgrim's journey (e.g., "it was a long trip," "the boat was crowded").
- **Role-play** aspects of life in Early America through imaginative play.
- **Compare** items they would pack for a trip today with what a Pilgrim child might have packed.

## Lesson Activities (Approx. 45-60 minutes)

### Part 1: The Hook - Packing for a Long Journey (5 minutes)

1. **Ask a Question:** "If we were going on a very, very long trip and could only bring one small box of our things, what would you pack?" Listen to their ideas.
2. **Introduce the Concept:** "A long, long time ago, a group of people called Pilgrims went on a trip across the giant ocean. They could only bring a small chest with their most important things. Let's pretend to pack our own chest!"
3. **Activity:** Give the student the small "sea chest" (shoebox/bag). Have them walk around the room and choose 3-4 small, important items to pack for their long journey. Discuss their choices. Why are those items important?

### Part 2: Story & Set Up - The Mayflower Voyage (10 minutes)

1. **Story Time:** If you have a book, read a few pages about the Mayflower journey. If not, tell a simple story: "The Pilgrims sailed on a wooden ship called the Mayflower. It was a very long trip—over two months! The ship was crowded and stormy. They didn't have video games or TVs; they had to play quiet games and help their families."
2. **Build the Ship:** Introduce the large cardboard box. "This is our Mayflower! How can we make it look more like a ship?" Guide the child to decorate the box. They can draw windows (portholes), use construction paper to make a mast and a white paper sail, and write "Mayflower" on the side. This is all about their creative expression.

### Part 3: Imaginative Play - Life at Sea (15 minutes)

1. **Get Onboard:** Have the child climb into their "Mayflower" with their "sea chest" and a blanket.
2. **Set the Scene:** "Uh oh, I feel a storm coming!" Gently rock the box. "The waves are getting bigger!" Encourage the child to hold on tight.
3. **A Sailor's Snack:** Explain that the Pilgrims ate food that wouldn't spoil, like hard biscuits and dried fruit. Share the prepared snack of crackers, dried fruit, etc., inside the "ship." Ask, "Does this taste like the pizza we eat today? Why do you think their food was different?"
4. **Passing the Time:** Ask, "What could we do to pass the time? We can't run around." Suggest simple games like "I Spy," singing a song, or looking at the items in their sea chest.

### Part 4: Landing & Building - A New Home (10 minutes)

1. **Land Ho!:** Announce, "I see land! We've made it to a new home!" Help the child "disembark" from the ship.
2. **Build a Shelter:** "The Pilgrims had to build their own houses. They didn't have a house waiting for them." Use the blanket from the ship and some chairs or couch cushions to build a simple fort. This represents their new home.
3. **Settle In:** Move the "sea chest" into the new "house." Congratulate them on building their first home in a new land.

### Assessment & Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

While relaxing in the new "house," ask gentle, open-ended questions to see what the child absorbed. This is an informal conversation, not a quiz.

- "Show me your Mayflower! What was your favorite part about building it?"
- "Was the trip on the boat easy or hard? Why?"
- "What is one thing that is different about our house and the first house you built here?"
- "What was your favorite part of our adventure today?"

### Differentiation & Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:** Focus more on the sensory and imaginative play. Pre-cut some craft materials. Use simple, direct sentences in your storytelling. The goal is engagement, not historical accuracy.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage more detailed craft-making (e.g., adding an anchor or rigging to the ship). Ask deeper "why" questions ("Why do you think they wanted to leave their old home and take such a risky trip?"). Introduce the name "Wampanoag" as the people who were already living in the new land and helped the Pilgrims.

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