

The settlement at Roanoke. From 'goodliest and most pleasing territorie' to abandoned settlement: what went wrong?



In September 1585, Ralph Lane, Governor of Roanoke in Virginia wrote a letter to Richard Hakluyt describing the new settlement. He called it the 'goodliest and most pleasing Territorie of the world'. But only nine months after this letter was written, all the settlers decided to leave America and return home to England. Three more attempts to establish a settlement at Roanoke also failed. It was not until 1607 when a colony was established at Jamestown that there was a permanent presence in America of English settlers. What went wrong? Why did the Roanoke settlement fail?

You can make you own mind up by looking at the documents and information in the following case studies: What problems did the settlers face? and Why did the settlement fail?

You can record your answers and thoughts on the worksheet
Let's investigate!

Teacher's Notes

(1) General Information

This resource is based on accounts of the Roanoke settlement published in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The books are available for consultation in the Archives and Special Collections Searchroom [hyperlink to <http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/asc/>], University of Durham, Palace Green.

References:

Map of Virginia taken from Robert Burton, *The English Empire in America*, London, 1739. (Routh 57 G 2)
Image of Walter Raleigh taken from John Harris, *Navigantium atque itinerarium*, Vol 2, London, 1744 (Routh 68 B5-6)
Image of Richard Grenville taken from John Harris, *Navigantium atque itinerarium*, Vol 2, London, 1744 (Routh 68 B5-6)
Images of Amerindians from Thomas Hariot, *Algonquian Indians of the Chesapeake area*, 1590 (XX+917.55)
Map of Virginia taken from Cornelius Whthliet, *Descriptionis Ptolemaicae augmentum Louvain*, 1597 (Routh 57 C 17)
Richard Hakluyt, *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, London, 1600 (Bamburgh H6 28-29)
Captain John Smith, *General History of Virginia*, London, 1624 (Maltby+ M18)

(2) Contents and use of resource

This resource focuses on the first attempts to establish a permanent English settlement at Roanoke, North America. It uses accounts written by some of the settlement leaders to consider the problems faced by the settlers and the reasons why it failed.

The investigation has been designed to be as flexible as possible. Each case study could be used as a whole class resource or students could be put into groups to work on a single source before returning for group discussion. A worksheet [hyperlink to worksheet] has been provided so pupils can record their answers in a Word document, thus also providing an ICT opportunity.

As with most historical sources, these accounts were written by adults for adults and, consequently, the language may be considered advanced. In addition, pupils may struggle with the typography (for example, s appearing as f and u appearing as v). To help overcome these problems, a full transcript and a simplified transcript have been provided for every source. There is also a link to a glossary on every page. Nevertheless, some pupils may still need extra assistance. Teachers should also be aware that students may need advice on how to refer to the Amerindians. The terms used in the accounts include 'savages' and 'brutes' which are clearly unacceptable today.

In each case study, there is a section entitled 'More Information' which provides basic background and contextual information. A Links button also appears on every page which directs pupils to other useful websites. Since the story of the Roanoke settlement is reasonably complex, a detailed timeline has also been provided.

(3) Curriculum Links

This resource has been constructed to support to QCA Scheme of Work, Unit 19: What were the effects of Tudor exploration at Key Stage 2. [Hyperlink to <http://www.standards.dfee.gov.uk/schemes2/history/his19/?view=get>]

It also supports various aspects of the Knowledge, Skills and Understanding section of the National Curriculum and could be used to cover aspects of the NC requirements for KS 2 English. There are also clear links with ICT.

(4) Ideas and activities

(a) In addition to the worksheet, a writing frame has been provided. This asks students to imagine that they are one of the settlers on the first expedition and to write a letter back home describing the problems they are facing. More work on imagining what life was like could also be done by looking at the sources in more detail.

(b) The sources we have are all from the settler's side of the story. Pupils could be put into groups and asked to brainstorm what they think the Amerindians thought of the immigrants.

(c) How would a tabloid or broadsheet newspaper have dealt with the subject if they had been around in Tudor Times? Students could be asked to write articles that would have appeared as the expedition started out and when it returned in failure.

Links

http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/hh/16/hh16d1.htm A detailed and informative history of the Roanoke settlement from the National Park Service.

<http://www.britishexplorers.com/woodbury/raleigh1.html> Provides a detailed timeline relating to the settlement at Roanoke.

http://www.publicbookshelf.com/public_html/Our_Country_Vol_1/roanokei_dc.html An extract from a publication entitled *Our Country* which was published in the nineteenth century.

<http://personal.pitnet.net/primarysources/barlowe.html> An account of the first voyage to Virginia in 1584 by Arthur Barlowe.

<http://www.nationalcenter.org/ColonyofRoanoke.html> Extracts from an account of the Roanoke Colony by Ralph Lane, a Governor of the settlement.

<http://personal.pitnet.net/primarysources/ronoake.html> John White's account of the attempt made to find the settlers in 1590.

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/raleigh.htm> Copy of the Charter granted to Raleigh by Elizabeth I empowering him to establish a settlement in Virginia.

<http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Den/7812/roanoke.html> A brief but illustrated timeline relating to the settlement at Roanoke.

<http://www.iath.virginia.edu/vcdh/jamestown/page2.html> A new interactive site relating to the settlement at Jamestown. It makes use of images, maps and other original sources.

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot37/snapshot37.htm> A Snapshot from the National Archives Learning Curve investigating the contact between Native Americans and the settlers of Jamestown.

Timeline

1584	April-July	Walter Raleigh funds an expeditionary voyage from Plymouth to America to investigate whether it would be possible to set up a colony.
	13 July	The ships land. They meet the brother of the chieftain of Roanoke Island.
	September	The company returns to England. They take back several items including skins and pearls. They also take two Amerindians, Manteo and Wanchese. This generates interest and support for another expedition.
1585	9 April	Five ships and 2 pinnaces carrying the first settlers set sail from Plymouth. The expedition is led by Sir Richard Grenville.
	26 June	The company lands in America and spends the next month searching for a suitable place to establish a settlement.
	End of July	A colony is established on Roanoke Island. Ralph Lane is made Governor.
	Summer	Relations with the native Amerindians are good and the settlers receive a lot of help from them.
		Grenville leaves the settlement and returns to England for supplies.
	Autumn and winter	Relations with the Amerindians start to deteriorate. The Amerindians no longer help supply the colony with food and the settlement is attacked.
		Grenville arrives back in England but his return with supplies is delayed.
1586	Winter and spring	Food is scarce. Lane sends parties to the coast and to the mainland to live on shellfish and to look for any ships.
	January	Elizabeth I agreed to the naming of the land as 'Virginia'. She knighted Raleigh and made him 'Lord and Governor of Virginia'.
	June	A fleet of 23 ships led by Sir Francis Drake is spotted off the coast. Drake offers to give Lane and the settlers fresh supplies and a number of ships or passage back to England. Lane accepts the first offer. However, a storm blew many of the ships out to sea. The settlers decide to return to England.
	August	A relief ship sent by Raleigh arrives at Roanoke. It finds the settlement deserted and returns to England.
		Three ships, led by Grenville, arrive in Virginia. They search for the settlers. Grenville leaves 15 men and enough supplies for 2 years. Nobody knows what happened to these men.
1587		Sir Walter Raleigh organises another expedition. This

		time, women and children are allowed to make the voyage.
	8 May	The expedition sets off from Plymouth.
	22-25 July	The ships arrive at Roanoke. They discover that the fort has been destroyed. Relations with the native Amerindians are not very friendly.
	August	A group of friendly Croatoan Amerindians accuse the Roanoke Indians of killing the 15 men left by Grenville. The English settlers decide to get revenge by attacking the town of Dasamonquepeuc. However, the Roanoke indians have fled and it is Croatoans who are attacked.
	18 August	The first child of English parents is born in the settlement. The baby girl is called 'Virginia'.
	27 August	Governor White sets sail for England to obtain more supplies.
		Nobody knows what happened to the colony after that date.
1590	20 March	The threat of the Spanish Armada and continued hostilities meant that White was not able to organise a return journey until March 1590.
	August	The supply ships reach Hatoraske, a harbour near Roanoke, and start to look for the settlers.
		At Roanoke, the party finds the word CROATOAN carved on a tree. White decides that the settlers must have moved to Croatoan. He also decides that they must not have been in danger as there was no cross carved near the name – the sign that White had agreed with the settlers before he left.
		White tries to get to Croatoan but bad weather forces him to abandon the mission.
1592		Sir Walter Raleigh is imprisoned for marrying with the Queen's permission.
1602		Raleigh sends a final expedition to establish a colony at Roanoke. It fails and the settlers return to England.
1607		The first successful colony at Jamestown is established.

Glossary

Abusing	Mistreating, taking advantage of
Apothecary (apothecarie)	Plants used to make medicine
Barke or Barque	A small sailing ship
Cassava/ Casada	A plant whose root can be used as food
Chieftain	Leader of a group or tribe
Christendom	The Christian world
Coarse	Rough
Colony	An area (region or country) controlled by another country
Courtier	Someone who serves the monarch at court
Cultivate	Grow
deteriorate	Grow worse
encampment	Camp, normally a military camp
Equerry	An officer of the Royal Household serving the Royal family. Normaly connected with horses.
Establish	To set up
Expeditionary	Relating to a journey made for a specific purpose
Exploit	Make use of
Flax	A plant whose stem can be used to make thread and, therefore, cloth
Generate	Creates, brings into being
Harvest	Time of the year when crops are gathered in before winter
Hostilities	Being in opposition to, at war with
Incessantly	Continuing without stopping
Interrogate	To question
Intreated or entreated	Pleaded
Maine	The mainland rather than an island
Minerals	Natural inorganic matter
Pinnace	A light boat propelled by sails or oars
Planters	Another name for a settler
scarce	In short supply
Sowed	Scatter seed over the ground, to plant
Spanish Armada	A fleet of Spanish ships that hoped to invade England in 1588

What problems did the settlers face?



In August 1585 a party led by Sir Richard Grenville landed in Virginia and tried to establish a colony. But only 10 months later the colony had failed and all the surviving settlers returned to England. Sir Walter Raleigh organised another expedition in 1587. This also failed. Nobody knows what happened to these settlers – when a British ship arrived to look for them in 1590 the sailors found no signs of them.

Setting up a new colony was never going to be easy. Although the first reports that were sent back home said that there was plenty of food, the settlers had to rely on Amerindian help. They also relied on getting more help and supplies from England – a ten week journey away. Reports of food shortages were common. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first settlers decided to return to England when they had the chance.

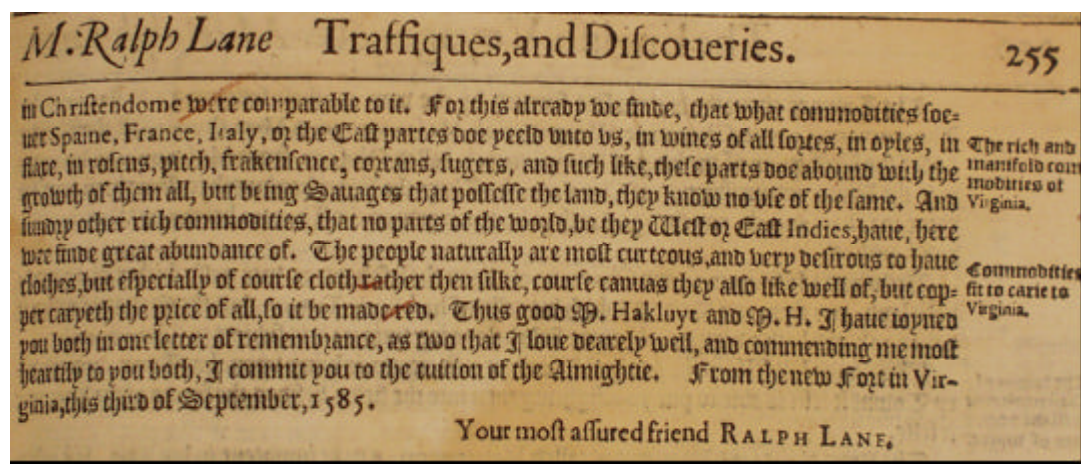
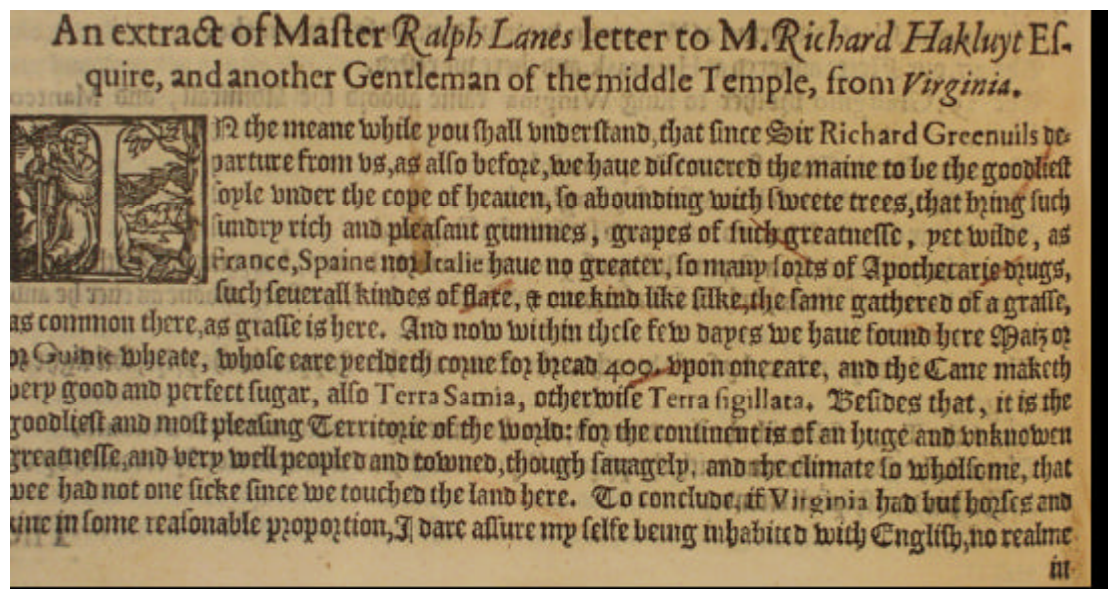
You can find out more about the problems faced by the settlers by studying the following sources. Don't forget that you can record your answers and thoughts on the worksheet.

Let's investigate!

Read source 1

Part of a letter sent to Richard Hakluyt by Ralph Lane, dated 3 September 1585

Taken from *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, Richard Hakluyt, London, 1600, pp.254-255



Q1. Make a list of all the things that Lane thinks are good about the new country.

Q2. What does he think is wrong with America?

Q3. What does he think of the Amerindians?

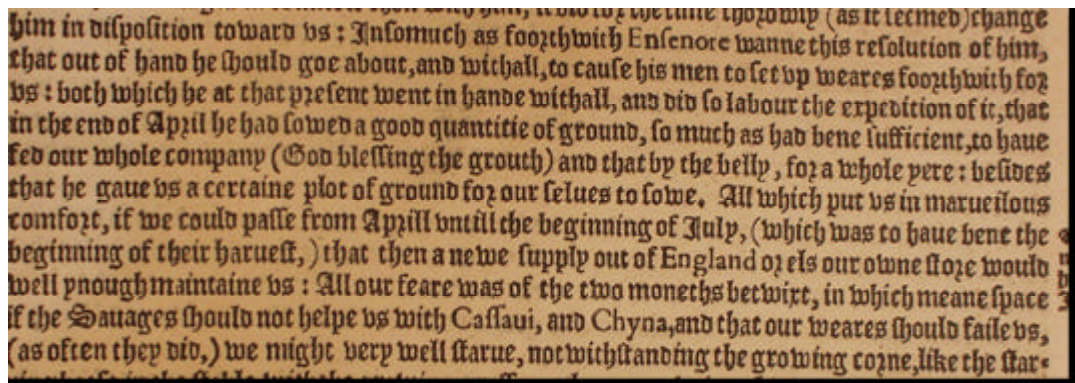
Q4. If you received this letter, would you think America was a good or bad place to live? Why?

Q5. England wanted to establish a colony in America for many reasons. Does this letter give any hints why it was important? (Read the second half of the letter very carefully.)

Read source 2

A description of the help given to the settlers when they first arrived by some of the Amerindians.

Taken from *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, Richard Hakluyt, London, 1600, p261



Q6. What did Ensenore persuade Pemisapan to do?

Q7. What did the settlers fear?

Q8. Why do you think that the settlers needed Amerindian help?

Q9. What do you think the Amerindians thought of the settlers?

Read Source 3

The wording of a letter from the settlers to the people of England explaining why they had asked John White to return.

Taken from *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, Richard Hakluyt, London, 1600, p.285

Whay it please you, her Maiesties subiects of England, we your friends and countrey-men, the
 planters in Virginia, doe by these presents let you and euery of you to vnderstand, that for the pre-
 sent and speedy supply of certaine our knowen and apparant lackes and needes, most requisite
 and necessary for the good and happy planting of vs, or any other in this land of Virginia, wee all
 of one minde & consent, haue most earnestly intreated, and vncessantly requested Iohn White, Go-
 uernour of the planters in Virginia, to passe into England, for the better and moze assured help, and
 setting for ward of the foresayd supplies: and knowing assuredly that he both can best, and wil la-
 bour and take paines in that behalte for vs all, and he not once, but of ten refusing it, for our sakes,
 and for the honour & maintenance of the action, hath at last, though much against his will, through
 our importunacie, yeilded to leaue his gouernement, and all his goods among vs, and himselve in
 all our behaltes to passe into England, of whole knowledge and fidelitie in handling this matter,
 as all others, we doe assure our selues by these presents, and will you to giue all credite thereunto,
 the 25 of August 1587.

Q10. This expedition landed in Virginia between the 22 and 25 July 1587.
 How long was it before they asked the Governor, John White, to return to
 England? Do you think that this is a short or a long time?

Q.11. Imagine you are one of the settlers and that you have been asked to
 write this letter. What would you say?

Q12. Draw a table with 2 columns (or use the one below) and fill in all the
 good things about the settlement and all the problems the settlers faced. Do
 you think the settlers gave up too easily or was life just too hard in the new
 colony?

<i>Good things about Roanoke</i>	<i>Problems faced by the settlers</i>

Source 1 Transcript

In the meane while you shall understand, that since Sir Richard Greenvils departure from us, as also before, we have discovered the maine to be the goodliest soyle under the cope of heaven, so abounding with sweete trees, that bring such sundry rich and pleasant gummes, grapes of such greatnesse, yet wilde, as France, Spaine nor Italie have no greater, so many lots of Apothocarie drugs, such severall kindes of flaxe & one kind like silke, the same gathered of a grasse, as common there, as grasse is here. And now within these few dayes we have found here Maiz or Guinie wheate, whole eare yeeldeth corne for bread 400 upon one eare, and the Cane maketh very good and perfect sugar, also Terra Samia, otherwise Terra figillata. Besides that, it is the goodliest and most pleasing Territorie of the world; for the continent is of an huge and unknowen greatnesse, and very well peopled and towned, though savagely, and the climate is wholesome, that wee had not one sicke since we touched land here. To conclude, of Virginia had but horses and kine in some reasonable proportion, I dare assure my selfe being inhabited with English, no realme in Christendome were comparable to it. For this already we finde, that what commodities soeuer Spaine, France, Italy, or the East partes doe yield unto us, in wines of all sortes, in oyles, in flaxe, in rocens, frakencence, corans, sugers, and such like, these parts doe abound with the growth of them all, but being Savages that possesse the land, they know no use of the same. And sundry other rich commodities that no parts of the world, be they West or East Indies, have here wee find great abundance of. The people naturally are most curteous, and very desirous to have clothes, but especially of course cloth rather than silke, course canvas they also like well of, but copper caryeth the price of all, so it be made red.

Simplified transcript

In the meantime, you will understand that since Sir Richard Grenville left we have discovered that the maine has wonderful soil, there are so many trees that we can get gum from, more wild grapes than France, Spain or Italy, lots of drugs you can use for medicine, several kinds of flax, and a kind of silk which you get from grass and is as common over here as grass is in England. In the past few days we have found maize or guinea wheat which can be used to make bread, cane that makes very good sugar, also *terra samia* or *terra figillata*. It is the best and most pleasing land in the world. The continent is of a huge and unknown size, there are lots of native people and the climate is so good that nobody has been ill since we arrived. I think that if Virginia had a reasonable amount of horses and cows and if it was inhabited by English people, no other country in Christendom could compare to it. We have found that whatever goods can be found in Spain, France, Italy or the East, such as wines, oils, flax, raisins, frankincense, currants, sugars, can be found here. The natives that possess the land don't know of their use. There are also lots of other goods here which can't be found in the East or West Indies. The people here are very polite and want to have clothes, especially those made of coarse cloth rather than silk. They also like coarse canvas but the thing they value most is copper.

Source 2 Transcript

Insomuch as foorthwith Ensenore wane this resolution of him, that out of hand he should goe about, and withal, to cause his men to set up weares foorthwith for us; both which he at that present went in hande withal, and did so labour the expedition of it, that in the end of the April he had sowed a good quantitie of ground, so much as had bene sufficient, to have fed our whole company (God blessing the growth) and that by the belly, for a whole yere: besides that he gave us a certaine plot of ground for our selves to sowe. All of which put us in marvellous comfort, if we passe from April untill the beginning of July, (which was to have bene the beginning of their harvest,) that then a newe supply out of England or els our owne store would well enough maintaine us: All our feare was of the two moneths betwixt, in which meane space if the Savages would not helpe us with Cassavi and Chyna, and that our weares should faile us, (as often they did,) we might very well starve, notwithstanding the growing corne....

Simplified transcript

Ensenore persuaded Pemisapan that he should help us. He told his men to set up wires [fishing lines] for us and at the end of April he sowed enough land to feed our company for a whole year. He also gave us some land to sow ourselves. All of this was enough that if we could survive from April to the beginning of July (which was the beginning of the harvest) then a new supply from England or own store would be enough to keep us. All we were afraid of was the two months in between. In this time, if the Amerindians would not help us with Cassava or Chyna or if the wires failed (as they often did) we might very well starve despite the growing corn.

Source 3 Transcript

May it please you, her Majesties subjects of England, we your friends and countrey-men, the planters in Virginia, doe by these presents let you and every of you to understand, that for the present and speedy supply of certaine our knowen and apparent lackes and needes, most requisite and necessary for the good and happy planting of us, or any other in this land of Virginia, wee all of one minde & content, have most earnestly intreated and incessantly requested John White, Governor of the planters of Virginia, to passé into England, for the better and more assured help, and setting forward of the foresayd supplies; and knowing assuredly that he both can best, and wil labour and take paines in that behalfe for us all, and he not once, but often refusing it, for our sake, and for the honour & maintenance of the action, hath at last, though much against his will, through our importunacie, yeeled to leave his governement, and all his goods among us, and himselfe in all our behalves to passé into England, of whose knowledge and fidelitie in handling this matter, as all others, we do assure ourselves by these presents, and will give you to give all credite thereunto, the 25 August 1587.

Simplified transcript

May it please you, her Majesty's subjects of England, that we your friends and countrymen, the planters in Virginia, want to let you know that because of our urgent need for certain supplies, we have all asked John White, the Governor of the planters of Virginia, to return to England to get help and send supplies. We know that he will work hard and take great care to do this on behalf of us. He has refused to go many times but for our sake, and for the honour and maintenance of the settlement, he has at last agreed to leave his government and all his goods to return to England. We know and trust that he will handle this matter as he does all others and we ask you to credit him with the same, 25 August 1587.

More information

- ? The first two sources used in this case study are parts of letters written by Ralph Lane. When Sir Richard Grenville left Virginia after setting up the colony, Lane was put in charge. Lane had been an equerry at Queen Elizabeth's court and had been serving in Ireland before he went to America. When he returned to England he took up several military postings before being appointed Muster-master-general in Ireland. He remained in Ireland until his death in 1603.
- ? Sir Richard Grenville led the expedition to Virginia. He was the cousin of Walter Raleigh and was serving as High Sheriff of Cornwall before he went to America. When he returned to England, Grenville was part of the council given the job of defeating the Armada. He then took up service in the Azores, fighting the Spanish. In 1591 he was wounded in a battle and died from his wounds.
- ? Walter Raleigh was already a favourite courtier of Elizabeth I when he decided to send expeditions to America. His aim was to find gold and other minerals and to establish trading routes. This would make him very rich. However, the Queen would not let Raleigh go personally so he had to send people on his behalf.
- ? The first trip to what would become known as Virginia was made in 1584. When the company returned they brought back very good reports of the land and the riches it could bring. They also brought back 2 Amerindians called Manteo and Wanchese and examples of what they had found, including pearls and animal skins.
- ? There is a lot of interest in the expedition and a second trip is proposed. This time, the aim will be to establish a permanent settlement in America. Ships carry over 100 settlers leave England in April 1585, landing at Roanoke in July the same year. At first, everything seems to go well. The settlers receive a lot of help from the Algonquin Indians who show them how to catch fish and farm the land. But as food supplies became short in winter the settlers started to steal from the Amerindians and fights started to break out. By summer, the situation had become desperate. The settlers had no food and were having to rely on shellfish. When Sir Francis Drake called at the colony and offered supplies or a passage back to England, the settlers decided to return home.
- ? Shortly after the settlers leave, a number of ships carrying extra supplies turn up. They find Roanoke deserted. The leader of the company, Richard Grenville, decides to leave 15 men there to maintain the land for England (and his cousin). Nobody knows what happened to these 15 men.
- ? In 1587, Raleigh organises another expedition. This time women and children are allowed to make the voyage. The settlers receive some help from the Amerindians but there is little trust on either side. After only a few weeks, the settlers ask the Governor, John White, to return to England and ask for more supplies. White does not really want to leave but is eventually persuaded. He leaves behind his daughter and grand-daughter. The child, called Virginia, was the first child born to settlers in America.

- ? White's return to America is held up for many reasons but mainly because of the threat posed by the Spanish. He does not return until 1590 by which time the settlement has disappeared. Historians still don't know what happened to these settlers.
- ? Neither attempt to establish a colony was particularly well-planned. The ships and settlers arrived too late in the year to cultivate the land properly and the settlers relied on the help of the native Americans and on outside supplies too much. The settlers also didn't treat the Amerindians very well – holding them prisoner, treating them as “Savages”, abusing the help they received and fighting with them.

Why did the settlement fail?



The early attempts at settlement in Virginia were disastrous. The first colony was abandoned only nine months after the settlers arrived and nobody knows what happened to the men and women who tried to establish a settlement in 1587. These early settlers did face many problems: they didn't know how to farm the land, they had to share the land and resources with the native Americans and they had to rely on Amerindian help and supplies from England. But the failure was not just because of bad luck. Other reasons have to be considered.

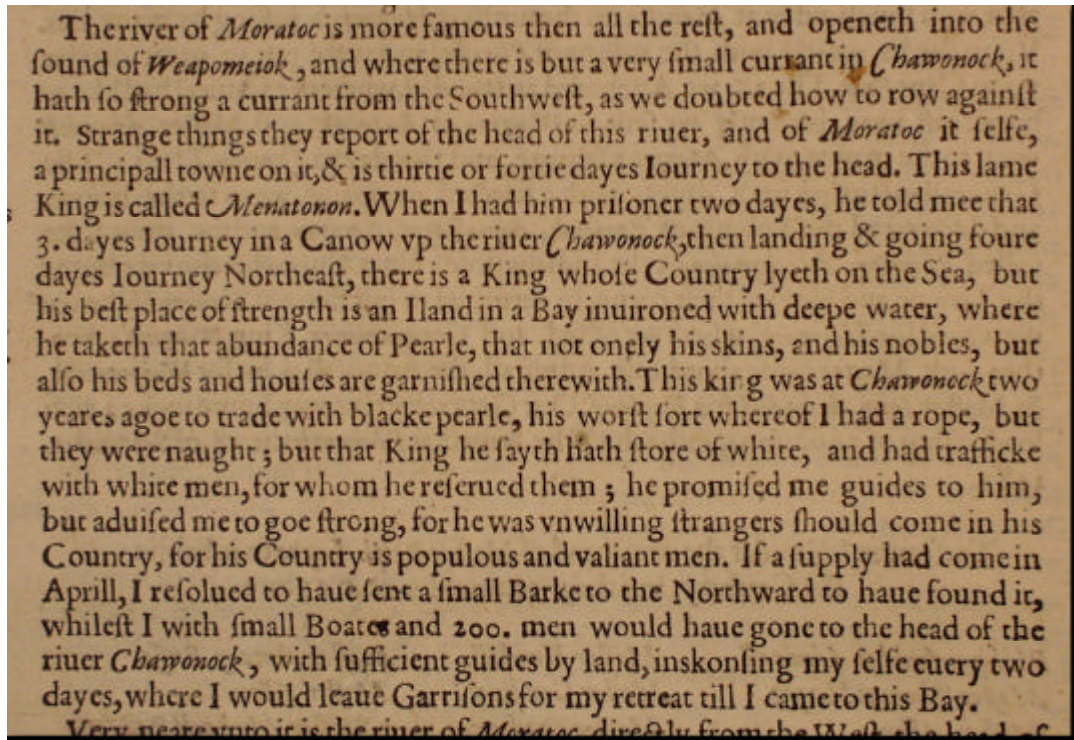
You can investigate some of these reasons by studying the sources below. Don't forget that you can record your answers and thoughts on the worksheet.

Let's investigate!

Read Source 1

An account by Ralph Lane describing how he found out about an Amerindian settlement near the River Chawonock

From Captain John Smith, *General History of Virginia*, London, 1624, p.6



The river of *Moratoc* is more famous then all the rest, and openeth into the found of *Weapomeiok*, and where there is but a very small currant in *Chawonock*, it hath so strong a currant from the Southwest, as we doubted how to row against it. Strange things they report of the head of this riuer, and of *Moratoc* it selfe, a principall towne on it, & is thirtie or fortie dayes Iourney to the head. This lame King is called *Menatonon*. When I had him prisoner two dayes, he told mee that 3. dayes Iourney in a Canow vp the riuer *Chawonock*, then landing & going foure dayes Iourney Northeast, there is a King whose Country lyeth on the Sea, but his best place of strength is an Iland in a Bay inuironed with deepe water, where he taketh that abundance of Pearle, that not onely his skins, and his nobles, but also his beds and houes are garnished therewith. This king was at *Chawonock* two yeares agoe to trade with blacke pearle, his worst fort whereof I had a rope, but they were naught; but that King he sayth hath store of white, and had trafficke with white men, for whom he referued them; he promised me guides to him, but aduised me to goe strong, for he was vnwilling strangers should come in his Country, for his Country is populous and valiant men. If a supply had come in Aprill, I resolued to haue sent a small Barke to the Northward to haue found it, whilest I with small Boates and 200. men would haue gone to the head of the riuer *Chawonock*, with sufficient guides by land, inskonling my selfe euery two dayes, where I would leaue Garrisons for my retreat till I came to this Bay.

Very neere unto it is the riuer of *Moratoc*, diuidently from the West, the head of

Q1. How does Lane get the information about the Amerindian settlement near the River Chawonock?

Q2. Is this a sensible way of getting information? How do you think it is seen by the Amerindians?

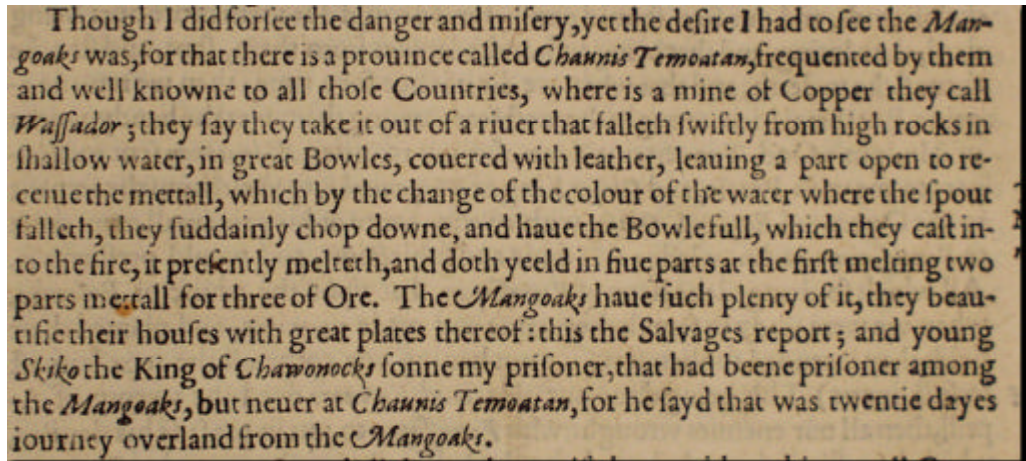
Q3. Why does Lane want to visit the settlement?

Q4. The trip does not go ahead. Why? What would you have done?

Read Source 2

A description of a copper mine by Ralph Lane.

From Captain John Smith, *General History of Virginia*, London, 1624, p.7



Though I did foresee the danger and misery, yet the desire I had to see the *Mangoaks* was, for that there is a prouince called *Chaunis Temoatan*, frequented by them and well knowne to all those Countries, where is a mine of Copper they call *Wassador*; they say they take it out of a riuer that falleth swiftly from high rocks in shallow water, in great Bowles, couered with leather, leauing a part open to receiue the mettall, which by the change of the colour of the water where the spout falleth, they suddainly chop downe, and haue the Bowle full, which they cast into the fire, it presently melteth, and doth yeeld in five parts at the first melting two parts mettall for three of Ore. The *Mangoaks* haue such plenty of it, they beautifie their houses with great plates thereof: this the Salvages report; and young *Stiko* the King of *Chawonocks* sonne my prisoner, that had benee prisoner among the *Mangoaks*, but neuer at *Chaunis Temoatan*, for he sayd that was twentie dayes journey overland from the *Mangoaks*.

Q 5. Where does Lane want to go and what does he want to see?

Q6. Why do you think he would be interested in going to see it? Does it tell you anything about why people wanted to establish a settlement in America?

Q7. Food supplies were short and there was no way of knowing if a relief ship was on its way. Would you make the trip to Chaunis Temoatan or would you stay in Roanoke? Why?

Read Source 3

Part of Lane's report to Raleigh where he describes a foiled attack on the settlement by Pemisapan, the local Amerindian chief.

From Richard Hakluyt, *The Third and Last Volume of the Voyages, Navigations, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, London, 1600, p.261-2

Tarraquine and Andacon two principall men about Pemisapan, and very lustie fellowes, with

with twentie more appointed to them had the charge of my person to see an order taken for the same, which they ment should in this fort have bene executed. In the dead time of the night they would haue beset my house, and put fire in the reedes that the same was couered with: meaning (as it was likely) that my selfe would haue come running out of a sudden amazed in my spirit with out armes, vpon the instant wher of they would haue knocked out my byaines.

The same order was giuen to certaine of his fellowes, for M. Heriots: so for all the rest of our better fort, all our houses at one instant being set on fire as afoze is saide, and that as well for them of the fort, as for vs at the towne. Now to the ende that we might be the fewer in number together, and so bee the more easily dealt withall (for in deed tenne of vs without armes prepared, were a tertout to a hundred of the best fort of them,) they agreed and did immediatly put it in practife, that they should not for any copper sell vs any victuals whatsoeuer: besides that in the night they should sende to haue our weares robbed, and also to cause them to bee broken, and once being broken neuer to be repaired againe by them. By this meanes the King stood assured, that I must bee enforced for lacke of sustenance there, to disband my company into sundry places to liue vpon shell fish, for the Sauages themselves doe, going to Hatorask, Croatoan, and other places, fishing and hunting, while their grounds be in sowing, and their corne growing: which failed not his expectation. For the famine grew so extreme among vs, our weares failing vs of fish, that I was enforced to sende Captaine Scafford with 20, with him to Croatoan my Lord Admirals Island to serue two turnes in one, that is to say, to feede himselfe and his company, and also to keepe watch if any shipping came vpon the coast to warne vs of the same. I sent M. Pridiox with the pinnesse to Hatorask, and ten with him, with the prouost Marshal to liue there, and also to wait for shipping: also I sent euery weeke 16, or 20, of the rest of the company to the maine ouer against vs, to liue of Casada and oysters.

Q8. This is a very visual account of how Pemisapan planned to attack the settlers. Imagine you are a documentary maker and you want to use this incident in a film you are making about the Roanoke settlement. Use the table below to make a list of all the key features of the proposed attack and then use the other column to record how you would show it on film. The first line has been filled in for you.

Key Feature	How I would show it on film
Tarraquine, Andacon and 20 men wait for dark to begin their attack.	Show the men of the fort settling down for the night. Some go to their houses, some stay on watch. In the trees outside the forest show the Amerindians waiting for night to fall and the settlers to go to sleep

Q9. Make a list of all the reasons given in the sources for the failure of the settlement. Which do you think is the most important? If you have also looked at the other Case Study in this section you may like to use that information as well to help you answer the question.

Source 1 Transcript

The river of *Moratoc* is more famous than all the rest, and openeth into the sound of *Weapomeiok*, and where there is but a very small current in *Chawonock*, it hath so strong a current from the Southwest, as we doubted how to row against it. Strange things they report of the head of this river, and of *Moratoc* it selfe, a principall towne on it, & it is thirtie or fortie dayes Journey to the head. This lame King is called *Menatonon*. When I had him prisoner two dayes, hee told mee that 3 dayes Journey in a Canow up the river *Chawonock*, then landing & going foure days Journey Northeast, there is a King whose Country lyeth on the Sea, but his best place of strength is an Iland in a Bay invironed with deepe water where he taketh that abundance of Pearle, that not onely his skins, and his nobles, but also his beds and houses are garnished therewith. This king was at *Chawonock* two yeares agoe to trade with blacke pearle, his worst sort whereof I had a rope, but they were naught; but that King he sayth hath store of white, and had trafficke with white men, for whom he reserved them; he promised me guides to him, but advised me to goe strong, for he was unwilling strangers should come in his Country, for his Country is populous and valiant men. If a supply had come in Aprill, I resolved to have sent a small Barke to the Northward to have found it, whilst I with small Boates and 200 men would have gone to the head of the river *Chawonock*, with sufficient guides by land, inskonsing my selfe every two dayes, where I would leave Garrisons for my retreat till I came to this Bay.

Simplified transcript

The river of *Moratoc* is more famous than all the rest. It opens into the sound of the *Weapomeiok* and although there is a very small current in the *Chawonock*, it has such a strong current from the south-west that we didn't think we could row against it. There are reports of strange things at the head of this river and of the main town on it, *Moratoc*. It takes about 30 or 40 days to reach the head of the river. There is a lame King called *Menatonon*. When I held him prisoner for 2 days, he told me if I travelled for 3 days in a canoe up the River *Chawonock*, then landed and travelled for 4 days North-east I would find a King whose country lies on the sea. His stronghold is an island that is surrounded by deep water. There are so many pearls in this bay that not only himself but his nobles and his beds and houses are garnished with. This King came to *Chawonock* two years ago to trade his black pearls. I have a rope of these but they are not very good. However, the King says that he has a lot of white pearls which he has saved to trade with white men. *Menatonon* said he would give guides to help me find this King but he advised me to go well-armed. The King does not like strangers and his Country is full of brave men. If extra supplies had arrived in April, I had decided to send a small Barke North to find this country whilst I would have gone with small boats and 200 men to the head of the *Chawonock*. I would have stopped every 2 days to build garrisons for our return.

Source 2 Transcript

Though I did foresee the danger and misery, yet the desire I had to see the *Mangoaks* was, for that there is a province called *Chaunis Temoatan*, frequented by them and well knowne to all those Countries, where there is a mine of Copper they called *Wassador*; they say they take it out of a river that falleth swiftly from high rocks in shallow water, in great Bowles, covered with leather, leaving a part open to receive the mettall, which by the change of the colour of the water where the spout falleth, they suddainly chop downe, and have the Bowlefull, which they cast into the fire, it presently melteth, and doth yeeld in five parts at the first melting two parts mettall for three of Ore. The *Mangoaks* have such plenty of it, they beautifie their houses with great plates thereof:

Simplified transcript

Although I knew it might be dangerous, I still wanted to see the *Mangoaks* because they know a province called *Chaunis Temoatan* where there is a well known copper mine. They call copper *Wassador*. They say that they take it from a waterfall. They use large bowls which are covered in leather. They leave part of the bowl open to catch the metal. They know where to catch it because the water changes colour. When they have collected a bowlful they cast it into the fire to melt. It gives two parts metal to three parts Ore. The *Mangoaks* have so much copper that they use it to decorate their houses.

Source 3 Transcript

Tarraquine and Andacon two principall men about Pemisapan, and very lustie fellows, with twentie more appointed to them had the charge of my person to see an order taken for the same, which they ment should in this fort bene executed. In the dead of the night they would have beset my house, and put fire in the reedes that the same was covered with; meaning (as it was likely) that my selfe would have come running out of a sudden amazed in my shirt without armes, upon the instant whereof they would have knocked out my braines.

The same order was given to certaine of his fellows, for M. Heriots: so for all the rest of our better sort, all our houses at one instant being set on fire as afore is said, and that as well for them of the fort, as for us at the towne. Now to the ende that we might be fewer in number together, and so bee the more easily dealt withal (for in deed tenne of us without our armes prepared, were a terrour to a hundred of the best sort of them,) they agreed and did immediatly put it in practice, that they should not for any copper sell us any victuals whatsoever: besides that in the night they should sende to have our weares robbed, and also to cause them to bee broken, and once being broken never to be repaired againe by them. By this means the King stood assured, that I must bee enforced for lacke of sustenance there, to disband my company into sundry places to live upon shell fish, for so the Savages themselves doe, going to Hatorask, Croatoan, and other places, fishing and hunting, while their grounds be in sowing, and their corne growing: which failed not his expectation. For the famine grew to extreme among us, our weares failing us of fish, that I enforced to sende Captaine Stafford with 20 with him to Croatoan my Lord Admirals lland to serve two turnes in one, that is to say, to feede himsele and his company, and also to keepe watch if any shipping came upon the coast to warne us of the same. I sent M. Pridiox with the pinnesse to Hatorask, and ten with him, with the Provost Marshal to live there, and also to wait for shipping: also I sent every weeke 16 or 20 of the rest of the company to the maine over against us, to live of Casada and oysters.

Simplified transcript

Tarraquine and Andacon, two of Pemisapan's men, along with 20 others were given orders to attack me in this fort. It was planned that in the dead of the night they would set fire to the reeds that made up my thatched roof. I would then have come running out of my house dressed only in my night shirt and they would have attacked me and knocked out my brains.

The same order was given to other men to attack Mr Heriot and all the officers and set all the houses in the fort and in the town alight. The aim of this plan was to reduce our numbers so that they could deal with us more easily (ten of us even unarmed are a match to a hundred of them). They agreed not to trade any supplies for copper with us; besides this, they also planned to break into our encampment at night and break all our fishing wires never to repair them again for us. The King thought that by these actions we would be so short of food that I would be forced to break my company up into small groups, sending them to different places to live on shellfish as the savages

themselves do, going to Hatorask, Croatoan and other places, fishing and hunting while their fields are sown and the corn is growing. This is what happened. We grew so hungry, our wives failing to catch any fish, that I was forced to send Captain Stafford and 20 men to Croatoan. This was to do two things, to feed himself and his men and also to look out for any ships along the coast. I sent Mr Pridiox, the Provost Marshall and 10 men with the pinnace to Hatorask to live there and wait for shipping. I also sent 16 or 20 men of the rest of the company over the maine to live off Casada and oysters.

More information

- ? The extracts used in this case study are parts of a report written by Ralph Lane. When Sir Richard Grenville left Virginia after setting up the colony, Lane was put in charge. Lane had been an equerry at Queen Elizabeth's court and had been serving in Ireland before he went to America.
- ? Lane ran the settlement on military lines. This was not very successful. Little attempt was made at establishing a permanent settlement. An emphasis was placed on trade and exploiting the natural reserves of the country (eg copper, pearls, skins etc) rather than on farming.
- ? This may have been partly due to the expectations of the sponsors of the expedition. Sir Walter Raleigh and the other funders of the expedition had invested a lot of money and would want to see something in return.
- ? The settlers relied heavily on Amerindian help. At first, this was given freely but the two groups soon came into conflict with each other. As can be seen from the sources, Lane and his men did not treat the Amerindians very well. They thought nothing of holding key Amerindians prisoner whilst they interrogated them, called them 'savages', got them to do work the settlers could have done for themselves and attacked their villages for the slightest reasons.
- ? As food supplies began to run scarce during winter, the Amerindians started to refuse to help the settlers. They stopped giving them food and helping them fish. Some of the Amerindians, led by a Chief called Pemisapan, also attacked the settlers resulting in a number of deaths (including that of Pemisapan).
- ? The settlers were eventually rescued by Sir Francis Drake. He had stopped at Roanoke to check on the settlement and offered to provide further supplies to the settlers. However, after a storm destroyed most of these supplies, the settlers decided to return to England and they all left aboard Drake's ships.
- ? A second major attempt was made to establish a colony in 1587. This time women and children also made the voyage. However, this too was not successful. The Governor, John White, was persuaded to go to England to get more supplies but his return was delayed when war broke out with Spain. By the time he did get back to America in 1590, the settlers had vanished. Nobody knows what happened to these settlers.
- ? Some of the extracts used in this case study are recorded in a book written by Captain John Smith. He was in charge of the first permanent settlement that was established at Jamestown in 1607.
- ? These settlers also faced great hardships when they first arrived. Within the first seven months, two-thirds had died from starvation, disease and attacks from native Americans. However, John Smith was eventually able to persuade the local chief, Powhatan, to trade with the settlers and the colony survived.