

What happens in Smith (part 2)

What has happened in Smith's narrative between the end of Monday's reading and the beginning of the handout: The president orders Smith to go exploring. While the expedition is being prepared, Powhatan has become more and more aggressive in trying to obtain weapons from the Fort, by ambush if not by trade. By a combination of negotiation and force, Smith gets them to stop; Pocahontas comes with gifts to make apologies. A second ship has landed with more gentlemen, a larger proportion of laborers, several refiners and to gold Smith. Smith leaves to go exploring. On his return, the colonists have been brought again to "misery" by the latest president's excessive consumption is an interest in building "an unnecessary building for his pleasure." Smith is elected president, but as he substitutes a friend in his place and embarks on a second voyage of discovery.

The handout begins: on this voyage of discovery, Smith meets: the Massawomeks (97), the Tockwoghs (98), the Sasquesahanocks (Susquehannahs, 99). The English and the Tockwoghs observe each others' religious ritual. Smith goes next up the Patuxent (now site of a naval air station) and the Rappahanock, where they meet an Indian acquaintance named Mosco; he joins them. An exchange of hostages with the Rappahanocks goes sour and a fight ensues. Further upriver, the party is ambushed from land. Mosco helps to question a captive about geography, politics, and their reasons for the ambush. The English are attacked again the next day by men in boats; the captive speaks on their behalf to these attackers, the Mannahocks, and peace is made. The Rappahannocks believe Smith has conquered the Mannahocks and also want to make peace; Smith sets conditions which they accept. A gift of three women accompanies the treaty, and Smith distributes them to his allies. Mosco changes his name. Smith sails up another river (106); an attack follows by the Nansamunds and Chesapeakes; the English prepare to destroy the canoes they have captured and burn the island where their attackers live. Under this threat, peace is offered along with 400 baskets of corn. Back in Jamestown, things continue to go badly, with further turmoil, illness, death, and mismanagement. Smith now takes up his appointment as president.

Back to the course pack: Smith takes up his appointment as president. Another "supply" of new colonists has arrived, including Jamestown's first women and workmen to produce specific commodities. The ship from home also brings new orders: the mission of the colony is now to find either gold, a passage to the Pacific, or an earlier group of colonists "lost" in North Carolina in the 1580s. A coronation of Powhatan (by Newport) is planned, formally making him in English eyes a vassal of the English crown. Smith volunteers to go bring Powhatan to Jamestown; while waiting for him, he is entertained with a dance. (A man Powhatan had allowed to be sent to England is here returned.) Powhatan will agree only to meet Newport halfway. After the coronation, Newport's voyage of discovery is less successful than Smith's. President Smith sets all the colonists to work, and imposes penalties for swearing. Trading for

food continues, but with friction among the colonists as well as with the Indians who control local food supplies. A profitable private trade by colonists with the ship and the Indians drains the colony of weapons and tools. Smith sends a letter with Newport addressed to the English authorities over the colony, who have threatened to cut the colony off if it does not show some signs of profit. He complains about the new initiatives imposed on the colony, and laments the inadequacy of their supplies. He asks for skilled workers to be sent as colonists, and for the investors to be patient. As winter approaches, the Nansamunds renege on their promise of corn, and little is to be had near Jamestown. Smith sets out to confront Powhatan, who has offered corn in return for an English building and other goods.

Powhatan feasts Smith, and they begin to negotiate in speeches which are quoted at length. Some of Smith's Dutch builders supply Powhatan with information. Powhatan plots to ambush Smith, with the help of the Dutchmen; Pocahontas warns him. The appearance of friendship preserved, Smith leaves with supplies of corn. He seeks more corn from Opechancanough, Powhatan's brother, who offers trade and hospitality but plans ambush. Speeches and negotiations ensue; Smith insists, with threats, on receiving supplies. Powhatan continues manuevering to take Smith at an advantage. The Dutch builders are now altogether on his side. Smith extracts more supplies from the neighbouring towns; one man poisons them, but not fatally. Smith refuses to seek revenge; but he does continuing trying to ambush Powhatan and get his very large stocks of corn. The Dutchmen have advised Powhatan to steal away, and Smith is not able to surprise him. Smith defends his "temporizing" with the Indians, and defends Virginia against comparison with the vastly more profitable Spanish colonies.