

A Pilgrim Child's Life

By Cindy Grigg

Rewritten as a short reader by Cindy Grigg

What was life like for Pilgrim children? At meals, they stood up to eat. Before breakfast the Bible was read. They had plates made of wood. These plates were called trenchers. One side of the trencher was flat. The other side was like a bowl. It could hold soup. Children had to share trenchers with a brother or sister. They did not have forks. Most food was eaten with the fingers. They used clam shells for spoons. Everyone drank from the same bowl. Most people wore a hat at the table. That was thought to be good manners.



Everyone worked. The smaller children could pick up wood for fires. They pulled weeds from the gardens. They picked berries and nuts. Older girls helped cook. They learned to spin yarn and weave it into cloth. They helped make soap and candles. They helped wash the clothes. Older boys learned how to cut down trees. They helped saw wood for building houses. They learned how to plant and reap crops. They helped fish and hunt for food. Water for washing, cooking, and drinking had to be carried from the brook that ran behind the houses.

Before they ate supper at night, the children would say their ABC's. They would be asked questions about the Bible. At bedtime, a parent read a chapter from the Bible. They made their own toys. They used pine cones, rags, or corn husks. They played a game like soccer. They used anything that would roll for a ball. They played a game like marbles they called "knickers." Pilgrim children worked hard. They also liked to play games just like you!

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Questions

1. At meals, Pilgrim children _____ to eat.

Name _____

Thursday, November 15



Date _____

_____ 2. What were wooden plates called?

- A. knickers
- B. trenchers
- C. fencers
- D. china

_____ 3. What was used for spoons?

- A. fingers
- B. trenchers
- C. cups
- D. clam shells

_____ 4. Which of these was a job for an older girl?

- A. helping cook
- B. sawing wood
- C. fishing and hunting
- D. picking nuts and berries