

Friends and Foes: The Powhatan Indians and the Jamestown Colony, 1609–1622

Characters

Narrator

George Dutton

Pocahontas

John Rolfe

Powhatan

William Brownfield

Setting

This reader's theater takes place in the colony at Jamestown between 1609 and 1619. This story is based on actual events.

Act I

Narrator: In August 1609, a ship comes to Jamestown. It brings 600 people from England. They arrive without food. The next month the colony's leader, Captain John Smith, has an accident.

George: I can't believe that John Smith is returning to England!

William: He needs to recuperate. It's in his best interest.

George: Well it certainly is not in ours. I don't know what will become of us without him.

Narrator: After John Smith leaves, Pocahontas comes for him. The colonists decide to tell her that John Smith is dead.

Pocahontas: Where is John Smith? My father, Powhatan, wants to see him.

George: He is dead.

Pocahontas: Oh, no! What happened?

George: He was killed in a gunpowder accident.

Narrator: Pocahontas returns to her father with the bad news.

Powhatan: Why did you not return with John Smith?

Pocahontas: Father, he is dead.

Powhatan: Dead! Well, no one else in that tribe has the courage or intelligence of a werowance. Now that John Smith is gone, I shall destroy the colony.

Pocahontas: Father, please don't do that. The colonists are my friends!

Powhatan: I lost my patience long ago with the pale men and their lies. The only one I had any respect for was John Smith. The rest are as treacherous as poisonous snakes, and we must rid our land of them.

Pocahontas: Then I will warn them!

Powhatan: No, you will not. I have arranged for you to live with another tribe. I forbid you to go to Jamestown ever again!

Narrator: Powhatan orders his braves to attack the colony. They kill 60 settlers.

George: I am so weary of these attacks. We barely dare leave our fort to hunt and fish.

William: Our relationship with the Indians has gone steadily downhill ever since Captain Smith left.

George: He got the Indians to provide us with enough food to get us through our first two winters. Now we face another winter with more people than ever and absolutely no way to feed them.

Poem: Trouble

Act 2

Narrator: That winter, 90 percent of the colonists die. By June 1610, only 60 remain.

George: I wish I'd never come here.

William: Between the Indian attacks and the lack of food, our lives are unbearable.

George: Look! I see sails on the horizon!