**Background**

The Pilgrims arrived on the east coast of North America, far north of their intended destination. The Pilgrims had intended to settle on land that was under the charter given to the Virginia Company and thus was subject to the rule of the British government. Instead they were in about to settle on uncolonized land and as winter began. They faced starvation, as they did not have enough supplies nor the tools and seeds to plant when spring arrived, as they had planned on trading with others in Virginia. With no government established in this region, they faced anarchy. Their leader wrote that he was already seeing signs that the group was breaking up into faction that might fight over the little they had.

**The Document**

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| **The Mayflower Compact**In the name of God, Amen. We . . . the loyal Subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James . . . . Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and honor of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the Northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant, and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the 11 of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini 1620. |

**John Carver                                                      Edward Tilley                                            Degory Priest**

**William Bradford                                                      John Tilley                                            Thomas Williams**

**Edward Winslow                                               Francis Cooke                                         Gilbert Winslow**

**William Brewster                                               Thomas Rogers                                     Edmund Margesson**

**Isaac Allerton                                                     Thomas Tinker                                            Peter Brown**

**Myles Standish                                                 John Rigsdale                                         Richard Britteridge**

**John Alden                                                        Edward Fuller                                           George Soule**

**Samuel Fuller                                                     John Turner                                             Richard Clarke**

**Christopher Martin                                             Francis Eaton                                          Richard Gardiner**

**William Mullins                                                 James Chilton                                           John Allerton**

**William White                                                    John Crackstone                                    Thomas English**

**Richard Warren                                                   John Billington                                           Edward Doty**

**John Howland                                                    Moses Fletcher                                         Edward Leister**

**Stephen Hopkins                                                                                                                   John Goodman**