Weekly #2

**Document A: The Mayflower Compact, 1620**

**Background**

The Mayflower Compact was written by the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth after leaving England on the ship, the *Mayflower.* After escaping religious persecution in England, they knew that if their colony in New England was going to be successful, they needed to establish a form of government. The fact that the Pilgrims created a document, that they all signed (except for the women!), was revolutionary. It was a very early form of democracy.

**Primary Source**

In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten [written below], the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James [the King of England], having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith... a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of [the New World], combine ourselves together into a civil body politic [single group with a government], for our better ordering and preservation [survival].

[We also] constitute [establish] just and equal laws... for the general good of the Colony unto which we promise all due submission and obedience [loyalty]. We have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, King James of England.

**Document B: House of Burgesses Preamble, 1619**

**Background**

The Virginia House of Burgesses was created in 1619. Virginia was a royal colony, meaning the King of England got to appoint a governor who ruled the colony. The House of Burgesses was created to give the settlers in Virginia a say in how their colony was governed. White, males who owned land got to vote for representatives. The House of Burgesses was the first representative legislative [lawmaking] body in the British colonies.

The House of Burgesses met at least once a year so the elected members could discuss and solve issues with the governor. Despite the King of England’s attempts to dissolve the House of Burgesses, other colonies began creating representative bodies based on democracy. Eventually, the ideas in both the Mayflower Compact and the House of Burgesses would help influence the American Revolution. Below is an excerpt from the document that established the House of Burgesses.

**Primary Source**

To all People [of Virginia], to whom these Presents [words] shall come, be seen, or heard... know ye, that we, taking into our careful Consideration the present State of the said Colony of Virginia., and intending [meaning] to settle such a Form of Government there, as may be to the greatest Benefit and Comfort of the People...

[Our goal is to make sure] all Injustice [unfairness], Grievances [problems], and Oppression may be prevented and kept away from the said Colony... [We} have established such Supreme Councils, as may not only be assisting to the Governor for the time being, but also may provide, as well for a Remedy [solution] of all Inconveniences [issues], growing from time to time, as also for advancing of Increase, Strength, Stability, and Prosperity of [Virginia]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US History Weekly #2

**Directions:** Answer all three questions in **complete sentences.** Each response should be **at least 5 sentences.** Your responses must be typed (double-spaced, 12-point font)

Answer Questions 1 and 2 according to **Document A only**

1. **Explain** the **historical context** that led to the creation of the Mayflower Compact.
   1. Who created it?
   2. Why were the writers of the document in the New World in the first place?
   3. What was the document’s purpose?
2. How **reliable** is the Mayflower Compact for understanding early government in the British colonies? Think about who wrote the document and why

Answer Question 3 according to **both Document A and Document B**

1. **To what extent** did the Mayflower Compact and the **House of Burgesses** represent an early form of democracy in the British colonies?
   1. What is democracy?
   2. Did everyone on the *Mayflower* or in Virginia get a say in these early governments? Who was excluded and why?
   3. In what ways did the Mayflower Compact and the House of Burgesses represent democracy? In what ways was it limited in its attempt to achieve democracy?