



Subject: Social Studies

Grade Level: Elementary School

DI Strategy: RAFT

My America RAFT

This RAFT activity was used in my fifth grade social studies class after reading two books in the My America series, “Our Strange New Land” and “The Starving Time”. My students absolutely loved this activity and were excited to get started and “become” their assigned character. When designing the RAFT assignment, I created 4 roles with 4 different audiences. Some of the audiences made the assignment more difficult and open-ended, while others could be completed by using specific examples directly from the book. This allowed me to differentiate the activity to meet my students’ needs.

Based on their previous writings, I “assigned” students to certain roles based on their ability. We were “conveniently” working in groups on the day prior to the introduction of the project, and these groups were leveled by ability. I did this so that when I came around with the choices, I could show specific choices to different groups of kids. I explained this to the kids by saying I wanted the different characters in the book to be equally represented. It still gave the students the opportunity to pick the character they were most interested in, while challenging them and meeting their individual needs. I also noticed that due to the explanation and requirements of the projects, kids were actually drawn to the project options that would be most appropriate for them.

I liked their creativity, discussions, and many avenues to success. It was interesting to see how they explained their actions and decisions from the role of a main character in the story. This was definitely a successful activity and enhanced their writing skills.

Below you will find the RAFT assignment and grading requirements that were given to the students.



RAFT Writing Assignment

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Chief Powhatan	Your fellow Algonquin Indians	Presentation to give at a tribal meeting	How you feel about the settlers trying to take over your land

Objective:

Your task is to write a speech you will present, as if you were Chief Powhatan, to your fellow Algonquin Indians. Present the speech at your next tribal meeting describing your feelings concerning the settlers who have invaded your land.

Must Haves:

Your presentation MUST:

- Be written as a speech
 - Includes: a greeting, an introduction of yourself as Chief Powhatan, and a closing statement
- Be at least five paragraphs in length
- Provide at least FOUR reasons why you disagree with the settlers taking over your land
- Include correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Possible Topics To Include:

- These settlers are becoming rich on land that was once yours. How do you feel about that?
- Why the land is so important to you.
- John Smith
- Trade with the settlers
- Check your textbook for other ideas!

****Before you begin the assignment check the back of this sheet for the rubric. Good Luck!!!****



RAFT Writing Rubric

Chief Powhatan

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Actual Points Earned</u>
You write 5 well-developed paragraphs demonstrating your role as <u>Chief Powhatan</u> .	5	
Your speech includes a greeting, an introduction of yourself as Chief Powhatan, and a closing statement.	3	
Include at least <u>4</u> reasons why you disagree with the settlers taking over your land.	4	
Neatness: Report is written in your best handwriting or typed.	1	
Spelling, grammar and punctuation 2 errors = -1 point		
Prewriting is completed and handed in with your final copy	1	
TOTAL	14	

**This rubric *MUST* be turned in with your writing!
You will lose five points if the rubric is not turned in!
Each day the project is late; you will lose one point from your final score!**



RAFT Writing Assignment

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
John Bridger	Elizabeth	Speech	Defending your actions and attitudes during the colonization of Jamestown

Objective:

Your task is to write a speech you will present, as if you were John Bridger, to Elizabeth. Present the speech to Elizabeth, describing your feelings, actions, and attitude during the colonization of Jamestown.

Must Haves:

Your presentation MUST:

- Be written as a speech
 - Includes: a greeting, an introduction of yourself, and a closing statement
- Be at least five paragraphs in length
- Provide at least FIVE reasons why you acted the way you did during the colonization of Jamestown.
- Include correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Possible Topics To Include:

- Why you did not help your father build the house.
- Why you did not meet Mary at night as you promised.
- Why your family stole the fish and corn stew from the Barker's house and how it made you feel.
- Why you gave the blue ribbon from Mary to your mother.

****Before you begin the assignment check the back of this sheet for the rubric. Good Luck!!!****



RAFT Writing Rubric

John Bridger

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Actual Points Earned</u>
You write 5 well-developed paragraphs demonstrating your role as <u>John Bridger</u> .	5	
Greeting, Introduction of yourself, and a closing statement	2	
Included at least <u>5</u> specific examples and/or details.	5	
Neatness: Report is written in your best handwriting or typed.	1	
Spelling, grammar and punctuation 2 errors = -1 point		
Prewriting is completed and handed in with your final copy	1	
TOTAL	14	

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RAFT Writing Assignment

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
John Smith	Jamestown Settlers	Speech	Create a list of 7-10 rules and the importance of each for the colony's success.

Objective:

Your task is to create and share a list of 7-10 rules the settlers should follow. Each rule should have a rationale (reason) why you believe it is important for the colonists to follow.

Must Haves:

Your letter MUST:

- You must have an introduction of yourself as John Smith and a closing statement
- Have at least 7-10 rules
- A rationale (reason) for each rule
- Include correct spelling, grammar and punctuation

Possible Topics To Include:

- Who will work and what jobs they will have
- The importance of working together
- Plans for ensuring the colony's success
- How to trade with the Indians
- Check your textbook for other ideas!

****Before you begin the assignment check the back of this sheet for the rubric. Good Luck!!!****



RAFT Writing Rubric

John Smith

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Actual Points Earned</u>
You have an introductory and concluding paragraph explaining your role as the leader of Jamestown.	2	
You created a list of 7-10 rules for the Jamestown colony. Each rule has a well written rationale for its creation.	10	
Neatness: Report is written in your best handwriting or typed.	1	
Spelling, grammar and punctuation 2 errors = -1 point		
Prewriting is completed and handed in with your final copy	1	
TOTAL	14	

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RAFT Writing Assignment

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Mary Dobson	John Bridger	Letter	Your disappointment with his actions and behavior toward you and others

Objective:

Your task is to write a letter to John Bridger explaining your thoughts, feelings, and ideas of his treatment and attitude towards you and others in the colony.

Must Haves:

Your presentation **MUST**:

- Be at least five paragraphs in length
- Be written in letter format
- Include correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Possible Topics To Include:

- How you felt about him not meeting you at the well
- Your feelings about seeing his mother wearing the blue ribbon
- Your thoughts about him stealing the Barker's food

****Before you begin the assignment check the back of this sheet for the rubric. Good Luck!!!****



RAFT Writing Rubric

Mary Dobson

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Possible Points</u>	<u>Actual Points Earned</u>
You wrote 5 well-developed paragraphs demonstrating your role as <u>Mary Dobson</u> .	5	
Letter Format: Includes address, date, greeting, closing and signature	2	
Included at least <u>5</u> specific examples and/or details explaining your ideas, feelings, thoughts, etc. to John Bridger.	5	
Neatness: Report is written in your best handwriting or typed.	1	
Spelling, grammar and punctuation 2 errors = -1 point		
Prewriting is completed and handed in with your final copy	1	
TOTAL	14	

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