


The story of Thanksgiving





England around 1600 AD

Our story begins around 400 years ago in Britain where a group of people called the Puritans were unhappy with the Church of England.

England around 1600 AD

PURITAN DEMANDS

No stained glass windows

No ornaments

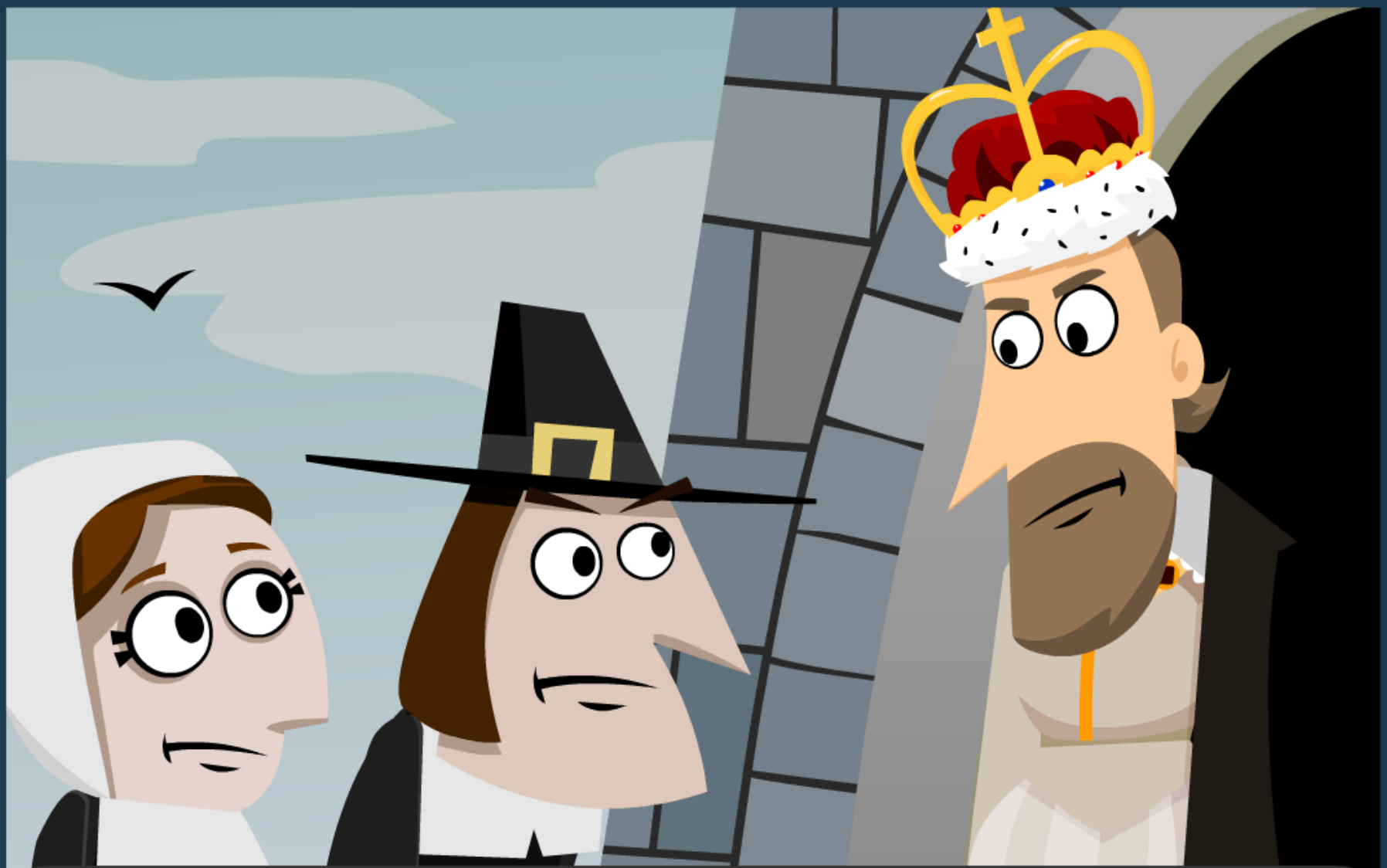
No paintings

No organ music

No celebrating saints' days

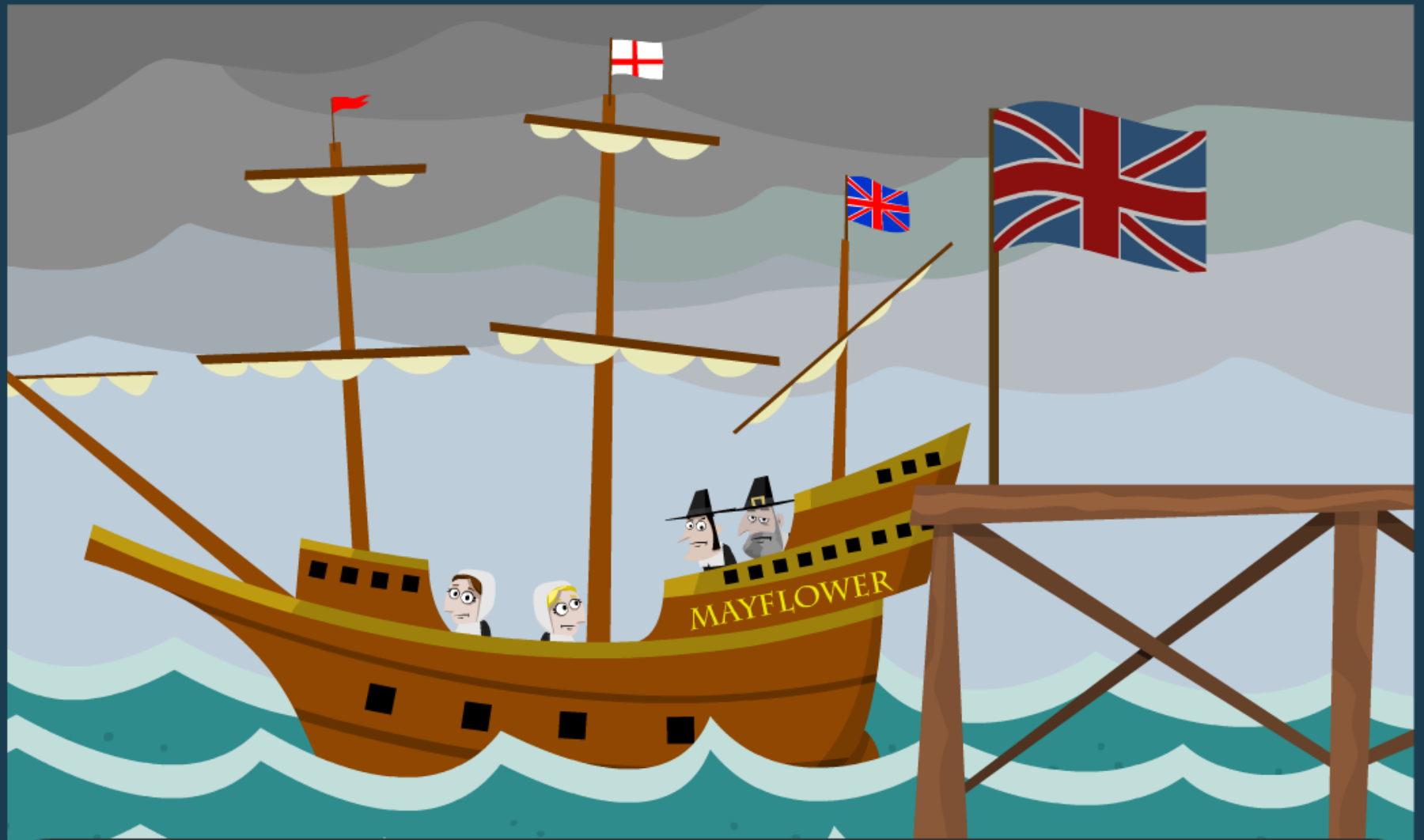
No kneeling while taking
Communion

They complained that the Church of England was too much like the Roman Catholic Church.



The King of England, James I, refused to change his Church so the Puritans planned to start a new life in a different country where they would be free to worship God their own way.





On 6 September 1620 some Puritans joined a group of colonists and set sail for America. They sailed from the English port of Plymouth on a ship called the *Mayflower*. They became known as the Pilgrim Fathers, and are often described as the founders of modern America.





The journey across the Atlantic Ocean was very difficult. The ship was overcrowded and the pilgrims had to live in cold, dirty and dark conditions.



To make matters worse the Atlantic voyage was hampered by fierce storms and the *Mayflower* was blown off course.



Plymouth

Newfoundland

Plimoth

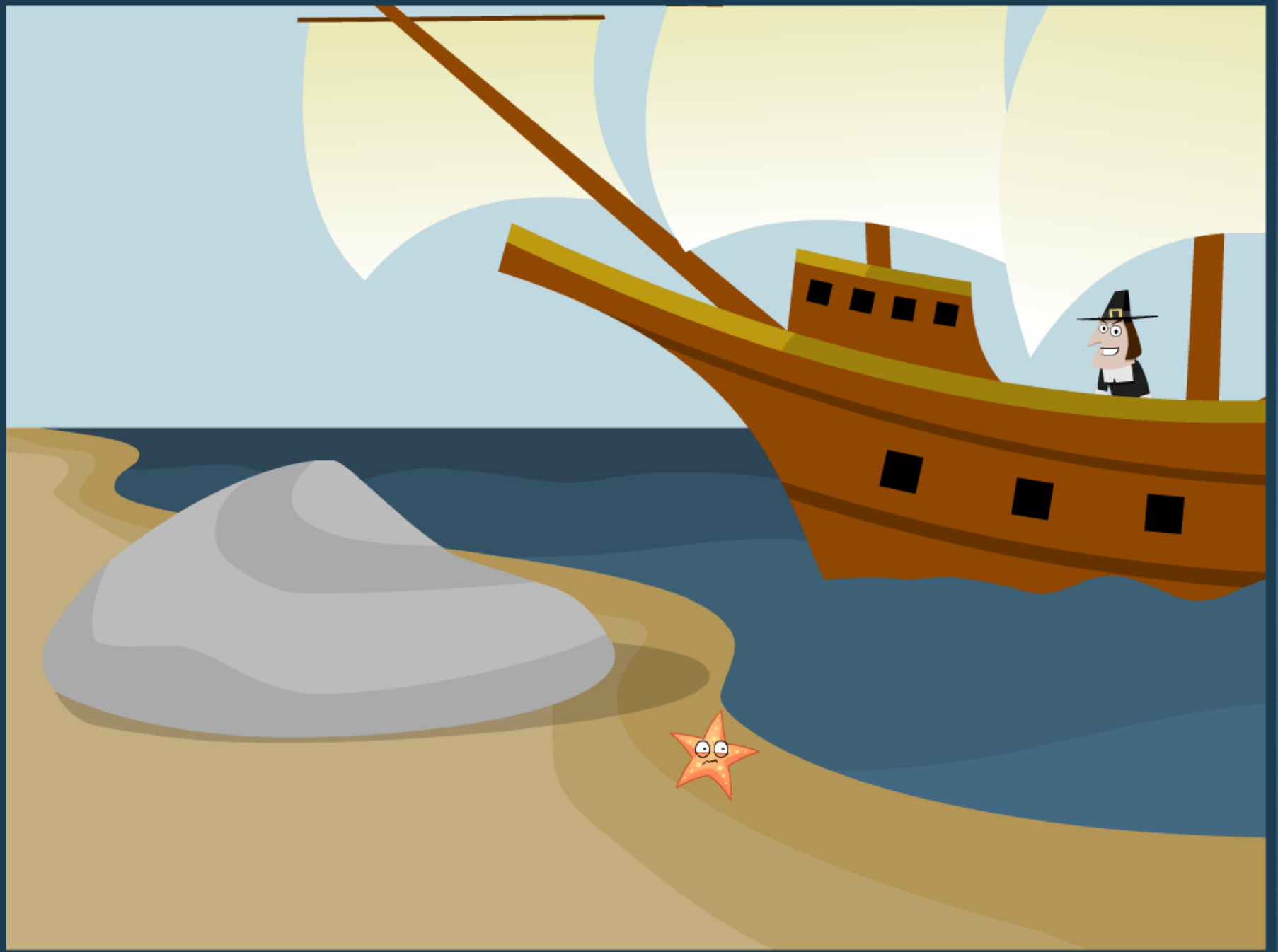
Cape Cod

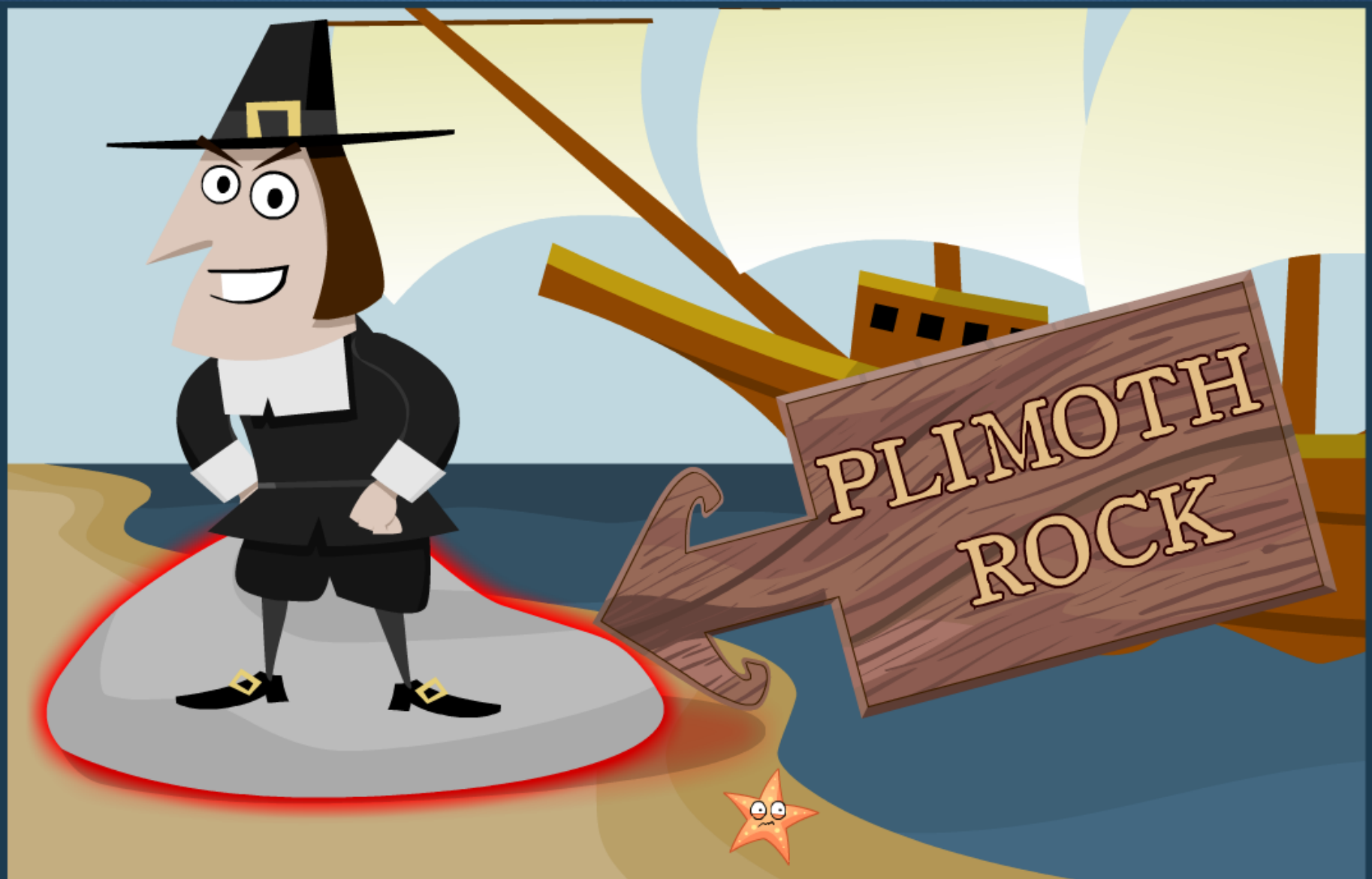
Virginia

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

- Intended route
- - - Actual route







After 65 days at sea, the *Mayflower* landed at Cape Cod. It took another month before a suitable site for the colony was found. They named the place Plimoth after the port from which they had left England.

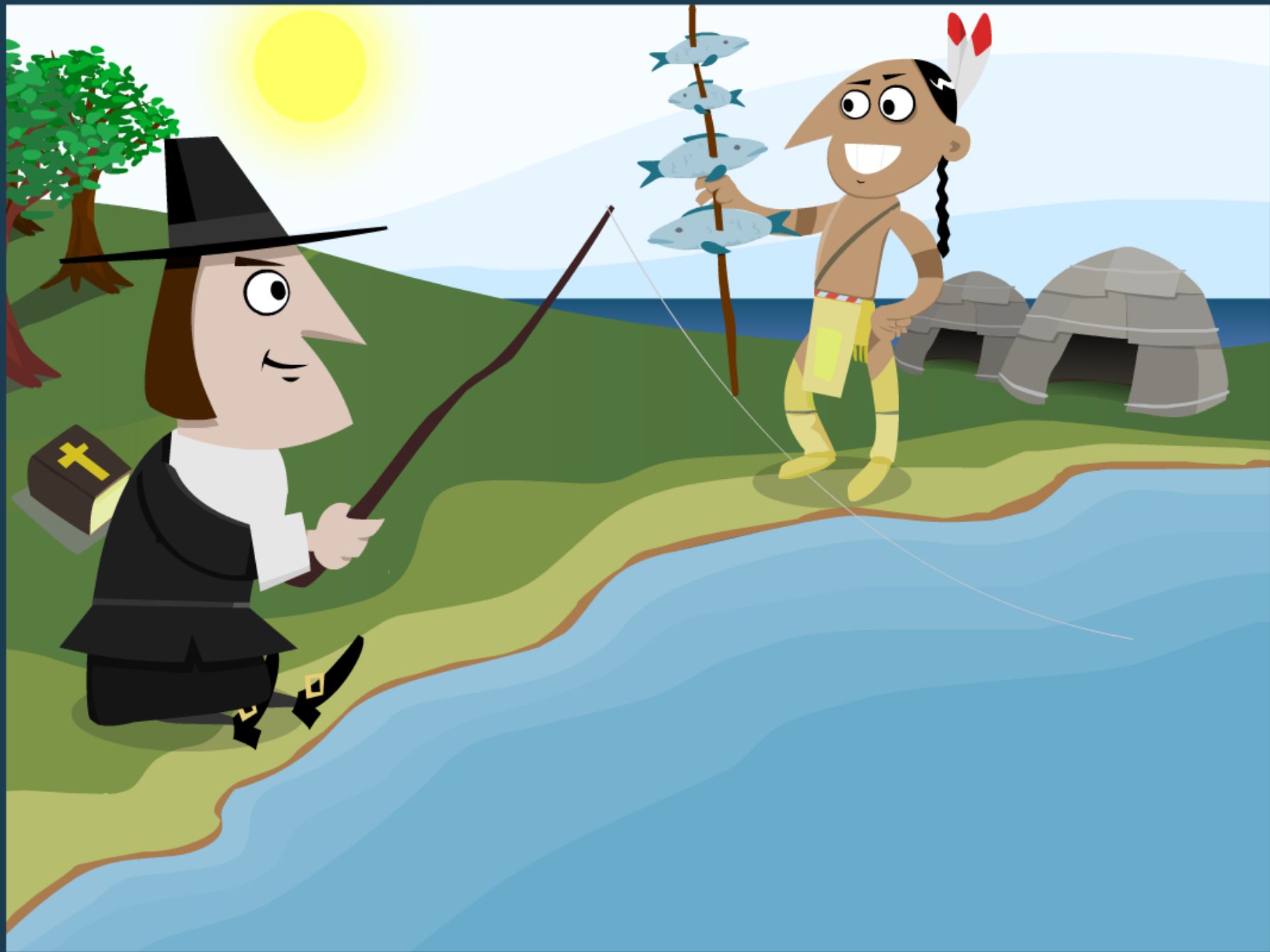




It was winter and bitterly cold when the Pilgrim Fathers arrived in America. There was very little food or shelter and as they were already weak from their long sea voyage nearly half of the pilgrims died during their first North American winter.



The following spring a Native American called Squanto befriended the pilgrims and taught them how to farm, fish and hunt in the new land.





Squanto also helped the pilgrims to make peace with the local Wampanoag tribe and their chief - Massasoit.

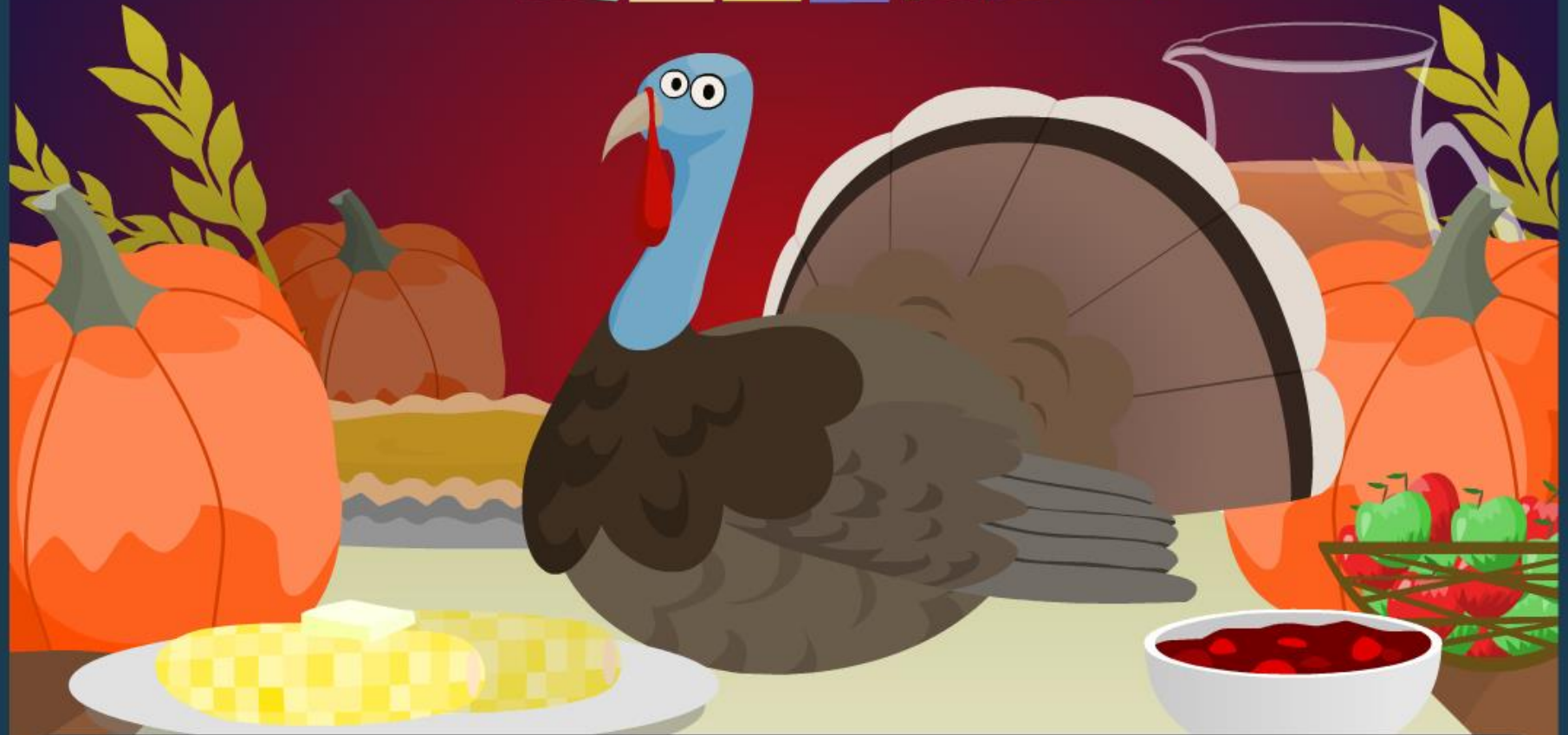


The harvest of 1621 produced plenty of food so a feast was planned to celebrate and give thanks to God. The Pilgrim Fathers invited the Wampanoag tribe to show how grateful they were for their help.



The pilgrims and the Wampanoag shared food, played games and celebrated together. The feast probably included food such as onion, corn, cabbage, squash, venison, fish and duck. The celebration lasted for three days and is now known as the First Thanksgiving.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Americans celebrate the First Thanksgiving each year on the fourth Thursday of November with a national holiday and a hearty meal that usually includes a roasted turkey and perhaps some pumpkin pie.

THE END

