



Day 18 Colonization Unit  
70 Minutes

The Quakers

### **The Birth of the Quaker Faith: Belief, Persecution, and the Holy Experiment**

**Grade Levels:** 5–9

**Time:** 60–75 minutes

**Unit:** Colonial Religion / Mid-Atlantic Colonies

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## **Lesson Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- Explain how the Quaker faith began and why it was considered radical
- Compare Quaker beliefs with Puritan and Church of England practices
- Describe persecution of Quakers, including the Boston Martyrs
- Explain William Penn’s “Holy Experiment”
- Demonstrate understanding through an **online Super Cloze Series** and selected reading-comprehension tasks

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## **Materials**

- PowerPoint: *The Birth of the Quaker Faith*
- Article: *The Birth of the Quaker Faith* (from your site)
- **Online Super Cloze Series: Quaker Beliefs & History**
- Reading Comprehension Activities (teacher choice), including:

- Student devices (Chromebooks, tablets, or laptops)

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## Lesson Structure Overview

- **PowerPoint with Guided Instruction:** 20 minutes
- **Article Reading + Comprehension (Differentiated):** 20–25 minutes
- **Online Super Cloze Series (Culminating Activity):** 20–25 minutes
- **Wrap-Up / Reflection:** 5 minutes

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## Part 1: PowerPoint With Teacher Script (20 Minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/13colonies/plans/quakers.pptx>

### Slide 1 – The Birth of the Quaker Faith

#### Teacher Script:

“Today we’re learning about the Quakers, also called the Religious Society of Friends. They believed in peace, equality, and a personal relationship with God. In the 1600s, these ideas were shocking and even dangerous.”

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### Slide 2 – George Fox and the Beginnings of Quakerism

#### Teacher Script:

“George Fox founded the Quaker faith in England. He believed God could speak directly to individuals. He called these moments ‘openings,’ and they convinced him that people did not need ministers to communicate with God.”

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### Slide 3 – Persecution of Early Quakers

#### Teacher Script:

“Because of these beliefs, Fox and his followers were persecuted. Fox was imprisoned, and Quakers were harassed and bullied. The name ‘Quaker’ began as an insult, suggesting they trembled during prayer.”

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## Slide 4 – Quaker Beliefs vs. Puritan Beliefs

### Teacher Script:

“Quakers rejected strict church hierarchies. They believed women and men were spiritually equal and rejected mandatory church attendance. Puritan leaders saw these ideas as a threat to order and authority.”

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## Slide 5 – Other Core Quaker Beliefs

### Teacher Script:

“Quakers were pacifists, meaning they refused to fight in wars. They rejected religious taxes and ceremonies and often refused to swear oaths, believing honesty should be practiced at all times.”

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## Slide 6 – The Boston Martyrs

### Teacher Script:

“When Quakers arrived in Puritan New England, they faced harsh punishment. In 1660, Mary Dyer and two other Quakers were executed for defying Puritan laws. They are remembered as the Boston Martyrs.”

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## Slide 7 – William Penn and the Holy Experiment

### Teacher Script:

“William Penn was a Quaker who believed deeply in religious freedom. When the king owed his family money, Penn received a huge land grant in America. This land became Pennsylvania.”

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## Slide 8 – Pennsylvania: A Refuge for the Persecuted

### Teacher Script:

“Penn called his colony a ‘Holy Experiment.’ It welcomed Quakers and other persecuted groups, including Jews and Mennonites. Religious freedom was protected by law.”

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## Slide 9 – Quakers and Native Americans

### Teacher Script:

“Quakers believed in fairness. They purchased land from Native Americans instead of taking it and worked to maintain peaceful relationships.”

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## Slide 10 – Quaker Legacy

**Teacher Script:**

“Over time, Quakers focused on service and reform. They opposed slavery, helped enslaved people escape on the Underground Railroad, and became leaders in social justice.”

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## Part 2: Article Reading & Differentiated Comprehension (20–25 Minutes)

Students read the **Quaker article** from your site, then complete **one** comprehension option selected by the teacher.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/13-colonies/people-of-the-13-colonies/who-were-the-quakers>

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### Reading Comprehension Options

#### Option A – General Comprehension (Grades 6-9)

- [Who were the Quakers? Printable Reading Comprehension - Lexile 1200](#)
- [Who were the Quakers? Online Reading Comprehension - Lexile 1200](#)

#### Option B – Compare & Contrast Reading Comprehension (Grades 4-5)

- [Compare Quaker beliefs with Puritan beliefs](#) - Lexile 820

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#### Option C – Write About it (Grades 4-8)

- This short-answer essay question asks students to write a short essay about the differences between the Puritans and Quakers. It should be at least 75 words. Their responses are automatically graded by the system using a pre-set rubric that assigns a score from **1 to 100**.

Describe the differences between The Quaker Faith and the Puritans in Colonial America.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/13-colonies/13-colonies-literacy-and-comprehension-activities/short-answer-auto-grade-describe-the-differences-between-puritans-and-quakers>

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# Part 3: Online Super Cloze Series – Culminating Activity (20–25 Minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/13-colonies/13-colonies-literacy-and-comprehension-activities/the-quakers-super-cloze-series>

This interactive Cloze Reading Activity is designed to reinforce key historical concepts about the Quakers, through an engaging, differentiated format. Students complete fill-in-the-blank passages using drag-and-drop vocabulary, with features like limited dictionary hints, read-aloud, and three progressive difficulty levels. Built-in scoring, printable reports, and customization options make it ideal for independent practice, centers, or blended learning environments.

## Wrap-Up Reflection (5 Minutes)

**Discussion or Exit Question:**

- “Which Quaker belief was the most radical for the time, and why?”
- OR
- “Why do you think William Penn’s colony succeeded where others failed?”