Comparison of Jamestown and Plymouth

17th Century Settlement
Motivations for Jamestown Colonization

- Economic prosperity
- Single men hoped to make fortunes in Virginia and return to England
- Previous explores brought home tales of vast amounts of gold and other valuable resources
- English patriotism
- Adventurers wanted to stake English claim to prevent Spanish from taking over all of North America.
Motivations for Plymouth Colonization

- Religious freedom
- Puritans persecuted for rebelling against the Church of England
- Felt Church of England had not completed the work of the Reformation and was still too close to Roman Catholicism
Founding of Jamestown Colony

- Founded 1607
- Funded by London Company, a private enterprise
- Charter granted by King James, but not funded
- Company recruited people with promises that gold could be found by those who made trip
- King made decisions on government of colony
- Once arriving in the Virginia territory colonists opened sealed box with assignments to governing council
Founding of Plymouth Colony

- Founded in 1620
- Received funding from London Company
- Treasure of London Company was an associate of one of the settlers
- Separatists granted land in Virginia, but chose instead to settle in Plymouth
- Signed Mayflower Compact to appease non-Separatists on board who were rumored to be uneasy about settling somewhere other than Virginia
Early Difficulties in Jamestown

- Laziness of colonists
- There were no expectations that manual labor would be required
- Depended on natives for food
- Disease and starvation killed 80% of the colonists in the first year
- Failed attempts to befriend natives led to confrontations
Early Difficulties in Plymouth

- Mayflower arrives on December 21, during the harsh winter many die
- Early attempts at growing crops fail
Factors of Jamestown Success

- Captain John Smith takes control of government
- “No work, no eat” policy
- Firm leadership gives direction during difficult early colonization
- Growing of tobacco made the land of the colony valuable
- Population growth tied to the value of the land
Factors of Plymouth Success

• Strength of Mayflower Compact
• William Bradford and Miles Standish provide leadership
• Pilgrims taught to grow corn from natives
• Initial cooperation of natives and Pilgrims allows for the growth of the colonies' community