



Guide to Captain John Smith's 1612 Map of the Chesapeake Bay



During his time in the Chesapeake region from 1607 – 1609, Captain John Smith made several voyages of exploration on the Bay's main stem and its tidal tributaries. In 1612, Smith worked with an engraver in England to make this incredible map of the Chesapeake Bay. Seven main features of the map are identified in the image above. Go to the following page to learn more information about these important details.



Captain John Smith used notes and sketches from his 1608 voyages to create the first accurate map of the Chesapeake Bay. Published in 1612, this map served as a guide for thousands of Europeans seeking a fresh start in the “New World.” Below is a guide to this incredible map.



1. POWHATAN'S COURT

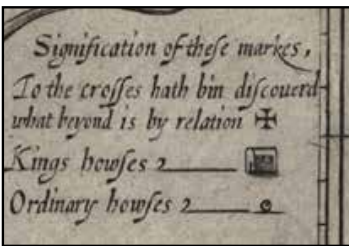
Powhatan was a powerful chief that ruled over 30 tribes in Virginia. In 1607, John Smith was captured by Indians while exploring and brought before the great leader.

This drawing shows Smith's version of how Powhatan's longhouse looked while he was a prisoner there.



2. WHERE IS MARYLAND ON THIS MAP?

Captain John Smith's map was published in 1612. The colony of Maryland did not exist until 1632. When Smith visited the Chesapeake, “Virginia” stretched all the way from present-day North Carolina to New England!



3. MAP KEY

The crosses on Smith's map are used to show how far he traveled up each river. The image of the long house is used to show towns where Indian chiefs lived. All other Indian towns are shown as a small circle with a dot in the middle.



5. COAT OF ARMS

John Smith earned this coat of arms and the title of “Captain” while a soldier in Hungary. Look closely and you'll see the heads of three men he cut off in battle!



4. THE SUSQUEHANNOCKS

At the head of the Bay, John Smith met with sixty members of the Susquehannock nation. He was very impressed by how tall some of the warriors were, and had this image of the largest member of the tribe drawn on his map.

Smith described this Indian as “the goodliest man we ever beheld”. He is wearing a bear skin on his shoulders and holding a bow and arrow. The artist copied this image from a painting made by English artist John White in 1585.

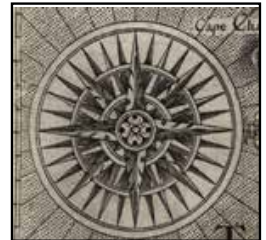


6. SCALE

The scale is used to show distances on the map. The unit of distance that Smith used is called a “league”, which is equal to about three miles.

7. COMPASS ROSE

The compass rose is used to show which direction the map is facing. On Smith's map, north is set to the right of the page.





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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS: Use information from the reading to answer each of the following questions in a complete sentence.

1. How is the direction of this map different than a modern map of the Chesapeake?

2. Smith included images of Native Americans on his map. What tribes did they represent?

3. What states are labelled on Smith's map? How does that differ from a map we might use today?

4. What ways does Smith's map show direction and scale?
