

puritan laws and character commonlit answers key

Puritan laws and character commonlit answers key play a significant role in understanding the historical context and social dynamics of the Puritan era in colonial America. The Puritans, a group of English Reformed Protestants in the late 16th and 17th centuries, sought to purify the Church of England from what they considered remnants of Roman Catholicism. Their strict moral code and laws greatly influenced the development of American society, and their values can still be traced in various aspects of modern life. In this article, we will delve into the nature of Puritan laws, the character traits common to Puritan society, and how these elements are represented in educational resources like CommonLit.

Understanding Puritan Laws

Puritan laws were characterized by strict moral codes, religious observance, and community governance. The Puritans believed that civil and religious authority were intertwined, and their laws reflected their desire to cultivate a society that adhered closely to their interpretation of the Bible.

The Basis of Puritan Laws

1. **Biblical Foundation:** Puritan laws were primarily based on their interpretation of the Bible. They believed that the Scriptures provided a complete guide to life, and every aspect of society should reflect biblical principles.
2. **Moral Conduct:** Puritan laws emphasized moral behavior, prohibiting acts they deemed sinful or immoral, such as adultery, blasphemy, and drunkenness.
3. **Community Involvement:** The Puritans believed in a covenant community, where individuals were accountable to one another. Laws were enforced collectively, with the community often serving as a moral watchdog.

Major Puritan Laws

Puritan laws encompassed various aspects of daily life. Some of the key laws included:

- **Sabbath Laws:** The Puritans strictly observed the Sabbath, prohibiting any work or recreational activities on Sundays. This was a day dedicated to worship and reflection.
- **Worship Regulations:** Public worship was mandatory, and attendance was enforced. Failure to attend church services could lead to fines or other penalties.
- **Moral Conduct Laws:** Laws were established to govern personal behavior, including prohibitions

against lying, cheating, and theft. Punishments for violations could be severe, including public shaming, fines, or even execution for the most serious offenses.

- Education Laws: The Puritans placed a high value on education, believing that individuals needed to be literate to read the Bible. Laws were enacted to ensure children received an education, often leading to the establishment of schools.

- Family Laws: The family unit was considered the cornerstone of society. Laws regulated marriage, parenting, and community responsibilities, emphasizing the need for strong familial ties.

Character Traits of the Puritans

The Puritan character is often associated with several key traits that shaped their society and influenced their cultural legacy. Understanding these traits provides insight into their motivations and the ways in which they established their communities.

Key Character Traits

1. Piety: Puritans were deeply religious, and their lives revolved around their faith. Piety was not only a personal endeavor but a communal expectation.
2. Discipline: The Puritans believed in self-control and discipline. This was reflected in their laws and societal expectations, which encouraged individuals to resist temptation and adhere to a strict moral code.
3. Work Ethic: Hard work was highly valued among the Puritans. They believed that diligence in labor was a reflection of one's faith and commitment to God.
4. Community Orientation: The Puritans emphasized the importance of community. They believed in mutual accountability and support, which fostered a sense of belonging and shared responsibility.
5. Simplicity: Puritans embraced a lifestyle of simplicity and frugality. They believed that materialism could lead to moral decay, so they valued modest living and eschewed extravagance.

Puritanism in Literature and Education

The influence of Puritan laws and character traits extends into literature and educational resources, such as CommonLit, which offers various texts that explore themes related to Puritanism.

CommonLit provides educators and students with access to a range of literary works that examine the Puritan experience, including the moral dilemmas faced by individuals, the challenges of community life, and the conflict between personal desires and societal expectations. Some key texts that may be found on CommonLit include:

- The Crucible by Arthur Miller: A play that dramatizes the Salem witch trials, reflecting the

consequences of mass hysteria and the impact of rigid societal norms.

- Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God by Jonathan Edwards: A famous sermon that illustrates the Puritan belief in predestination and the need for repentance.

- The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne: A novel that explores themes of sin, guilt, and societal judgment, highlighting the Puritanical approach to morality.

CommonLit Answers Key: An Overview

When engaging with texts related to Puritan laws and character traits on CommonLit, students often seek answers to comprehension questions that assess their understanding of the material. While specific answer keys may vary depending on the text and the questions posed, several common themes and points are typically highlighted in the answers.

Common Themes in Responses

1. Identification of Key Ideas: Students are often required to identify the main ideas presented in the text, such as the consequences of breaking Puritan laws or the significance of community values.
2. Character Analysis: Many questions focus on character motivations and traits, encouraging students to analyze how Puritan values shape individual behavior and societal norms.
3. Textual Evidence: Responses frequently call for textual evidence to support claims. Students should be prepared to cite specific passages that illustrate the themes of morality, community, and individual struggle.
4. Thematic Connections: Questions may prompt students to connect the Puritan experience to broader themes, such as the tension between individuality and conformity, or the impact of religious belief on societal structure.
5. Historical Context: Understanding the historical context of Puritanism is often crucial for answering questions. Students should be familiar with the socio-political climate of the time and how it influenced Puritan laws and practices.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of Puritan laws and character traits reveals a society deeply committed to its religious beliefs and moral codes. These elements not only shaped the daily lives of the Puritans but also laid the groundwork for many aspects of modern American culture. Through educational resources like CommonLit, students can engage with the complexities of Puritan society, gaining insights into the historical significance of their laws and the character traits that defined them. Understanding these themes is crucial for comprehending the development of American identity and the ongoing influence of Puritan ideals in contemporary society.

Frequently Asked Questions

What were some key characteristics of Puritan laws?

Puritan laws emphasized moral conduct, religious conformity, and community accountability, often enforcing strict penalties for sins and behaviors deemed immoral.

How did Puritan laws impact daily life in Puritan communities?

Puritan laws regulated various aspects of daily life, including dress codes, Sabbath observance, and moral behavior, creating a society that prioritized religious values and communal harmony.

What role did the church play in enforcing Puritan laws?

The church was central to enforcing Puritan laws, as religious leaders interpreted the laws and held significant authority over community members, often leading to public shaming or punishment for transgressions.

What were some punishments for violating Puritan laws?

Punishments for violating Puritan laws could include fines, public whippings, imprisonment, and in extreme cases, banishment from the community or execution for severe offenses like witchcraft.

How did Puritan laws reflect the values of Puritan society?

Puritan laws reflected the values of hard work, piety, and a strong sense of community, aiming to create a 'city upon a hill' that exemplified moral living and religious devotion.

What were common criticisms of Puritan laws at the time?

Common criticisms included the excessive severity of punishments, the lack of personal freedoms, and the oppressive nature of the laws that stifled individual expression and dissent.

In what ways did Puritan laws influence modern American legal systems?

Puritan laws laid early foundations for American legal systems by introducing ideas of community standards, moral legislation, and the importance of civic responsibility, although they have evolved significantly since then.

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