Virginia history is full of trailblazers, people who blaze trails through history with new ideas and courageous actions. Englishmen like Captain John Smith and Captain Christopher Newport explored and mapped unfamiliar lands. Powhatan Indians like Pocahontas were challenged to adapt to the presence and spread of English settlers. Africans like Njinga, Queen of Ndongo, had to master European languages and cultures to maintain power. Can you follow in the steps of these trailblazers?

DID YOU KNOW that in 1607 it took the English 144 days to travel over six-thousand miles from London to Jamestown in the three ships?

FIND a map of the voyage to Virginia in the gallery. Why did the English travel so far south to get to Virginia?

LOOK for a portrait of Pocahontas to see what she really looked like! Why is she portrayed wearing English clothes?

VIEW the film “The Crossing” and find the name of the captain of the Susan Constant on the voyage to Virginia in 1607.

FIND a statue of Queen Njinga, who ruled the Kingdom of Ndongo in west Central Africa. What features of this statue show that she was a queen?

VIEW the film “From Africa to Virginia” to learn more about Queen Njinga!

FIND the images of Pocahontas made through the centuries. Why does she continue to fascinate us today?
LOOK FOR Captain John Smith's Map of Virginia. Smith was not only a leader and a soldier, but also helped make one of the first maps of Virginia. Which way is north on this map? Can you find Jamestown?

USE the astrolabe inside the recreated Susan Constant in the gallery to find the North Star. Why was it important for sailors to be able to find the North Star while at sea?

DID YOU KNOW? Swords with an "S" shaped hilt were symbols of power in Africa!

DID YOU KNOW? Pocahontas' father, Wahunsonacock, was called Powhatan by the English and was the paramount chief to over thirty tribes in the tidewater region of Virginia when the English arrived in 1607.

FIND the reproduction of Powhatan's mantle! What do you think the circles might represent?

In the early seventeenth century, three cultures came together at Jamestown, Virginia. The Powhatan Indians, the English and the Africans all had to adapt to new cultures and environments and faced many challenges. Out of their experiences and sacrifices, a new nation was formed. Head outside to learn more about these people and the way they blazed a trail through history!