

## Summer Camp: Mayflower - Go West (Settlers)



Hunger, persecution, lack of perspective was for centuries a reason to leave the known Europe and seek the new happiness in the land of unlimited opportunities.

Settlers - with the somewhat more exciting name "Mayflower - Go West" forms an exciting theme for a Jungschar camp or Semesterprogramm. Here are some ideas including theatre and spiritual concept of a conducted summer camp.

### Possible history

The reasons for emigrating could hardly be more different: There were Anabaptists who were persecuted here in many places, gold miners who were looking for their fortune, criminals who wanted some freedom again, businessmen who wanted to implement their business idea in America and simply impoverished farmers who placed hopes in a new life in America. They set out as a large community and embarked on the ocean crossing by ship. Unfortunately, one Anabaptist was arrested while still boarding the ship, despite his camouflage - when the ship filled with emigrants was already 50 meters away from the shore, the Anabaptist tried to get himself onto the ship as well by jumping into the cold water - to the astonishment of the visitors, along with all his clothes and suitcases.

To the astonishment of all the children, the very same Anabaptist then swam into the next port - America and was joyfully welcomed back into the community.

Instead of staying on the coast, the group decided to go further inland, despite the knowledge that there was danger from Indian tribes. Eventually, a beautiful place was discovered and the settler community decided to settle there. They quickly found themselves at home in the newly founded village, but the peace would not last forever. One morning, they discovered a letter attached with Indian arrows in the center of the village. The settlers were told to leave the newly found land, it belonged to the sacred Indian land. "To arms and to battle" was the motto for many. However, deep input from our village chaplain indicated to the village leaders that fighting would not have been Jesus' answer. So, despite opposition from within their own ranks, the village leaders decided not to fight and to choose a peaceful path if possible.

Nonetheless, during the night, a group of the older Jungle children set out to attack the Indians. But instead of attacking them, they were surrounded and captured. Incensed at the lack of agreement, the remaining settlers received a message and were invited to meet with the Indians. At first the Indians proved unwilling to release the captured settlers. It was only when the settlers tried to give the Indians a gift that a prisoner was released every now and then. Finally the settlers sacrificed all their belongings, so that all the settlers were free again. Freed, they then walked back to the village

together.

With no belongings, however, the settlers faced a new problem: what should they eat? Everything they had was now in the hands of the Indians. Although one desperate farmer had dug up a tuber that evening and eaten it, his shouting the next morning did not indicate that this tuber was actually supposed to be edible. It was only after the tubers had been boiled in water for a few minutes that they tasted quite good, whether for breakfast with jam, for lunch with various cheeses, or for dinner cut into long sticks and bathed in hot oil. This miracle tuber - it was then called potato - saved the settlers' lives.

But with their bellies full, the settlers realized something else: What good is it if they have the potato here, but back home in Europe, some of the people are starving. The village leaders therefore decided to break off the settlement and go back to Europe and preach the potato there in full joy and with a full stomach. And so the motley community of settlers went back to Europe and made known the strength of the potato throughout the land.

Some parts of this camp story probably happened in this way or in a similar way. However, the ideas can be freely added to and adapted. On the [blog](#), the camp can be relived, including photos.

The Spiritual Concept and the Theatre Handbook are available as downloadable files.

## Evaluation of the camp theme

The camp theme is free from any existing story and therefore there is no limit to creativity. What is particularly exciting is that a great many characters can be incorporated. Also good is that many parallels can be drawn directly into the life of faith, and so values of the Bible itself can be witnessed.

## Theatre concept and GK

[Theatre concept Mayflower](#)

[Mayflower Spiritual Concept](#)

## Source reference

**Title image, theatre concept and spiritual concept:** Provided by the Jungschar Stami, Goldbrunnen and Kirche Bild, St. Gallen