



Powhatan Indians and Basic Needs

Grade Levels:

First Grade: *1.3b*

Second Grade: *2.7a, 2.8, 2.10*

Fourth Grade: *VS.2e*

Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- List the four basic needs (air, water, shelter, and food).
- Describe how the Powhatan Indians met their basic needs using resources from the natural environment.

Essential Questions:

- Do all humans, past and present, have the same basic needs?
- How does the availability of resources affect one's ability to meet their basic needs?

Materials:

- Pocahontas' Basic Needs story
- Historical images: De Bry engravings

Procedure:

Opening/Engagement

At the beginning of the lesson, review the four basic needs: air, food, shelter, and water. Have students answer the following questions by sharing aloud with peers or writing/drawing their answer on paper.

- What is one basic need that you had today? How did you meet or fulfil that need?
- Do you think the Powhatan Indians who lived 400 years ago had the same basic needs that we have today?
- Predict: How did the Powhatan Indians meet their basic needs? What resources did they use?



Teach/Model

Read aloud from the story **Pocahontas' Basic Needs** while the students follow along. As you read, model “noticing” one of the ways that Pocahontas met a basic need. With the class, begin to compile a list of the resources that were used by Pocahontas and the Powhatan Indians to meet their basic needs.

For example, Pocahontas met the need for **shelter** by sleeping in a yehakin. The resources used to make the yehakin were **tree bark, grass mats and wood**.

Guided Practice

Continue to read the story aloud while students follow along. Instruct students to indicate each time they hear a basic need being met. Have students share their findings using your preferred method for class discussion. Continue adding resources to the class list.

Independent Practice

Provide students with copies De Bry engravings. Instruct students to carefully examine the images and look for ways that they see the Powhatan Indians meeting a basic need. Working independently, students should use a pencil to circle each basic need they see being met.

For example, a student may circle a **cornfield** because it meets the basic need of **food**.

Reflection/Assessment

Have students share examples of things they circled in the images. When appropriate, continue adding new resources to the class list.

Revisit the questions you asked in the Opening/Engagement portion of the lesson to clarify any misconceptions the students may have had at the beginning of the lesson.

- Do you think the Powhatan Indians who lived 400 years ago had the same basic needs that we have today?
- How did the Powhatan Indians meet their basic needs? What resources did they use?

Look at the list of resources compiled by the class. Discuss the following questions:

- Where did the Powhatan Indians get the resources they needed to meet their basic needs? (The natural environment) How is this the same or different from the way that we meet our basic needs today?
- What would happen to the Powhatan Indians if they couldn't find the resources they needed? How did the availability of natural resources affect their survival?



Pocahontas' Basic Needs

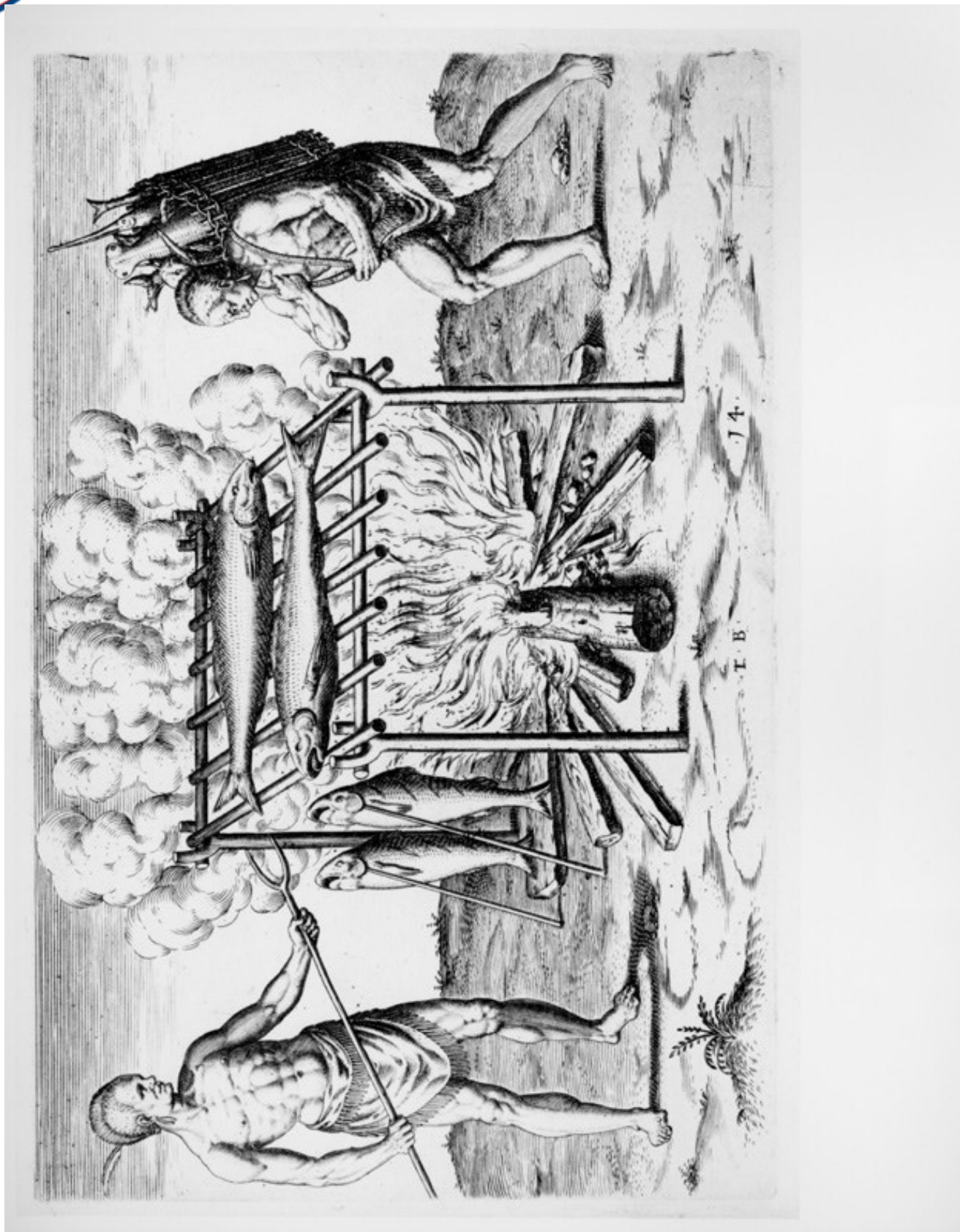
Directions: Pocahontas was a Powhatan Indian who lived over 400 years ago. Read the story and look for all the ways that Pocahontas met her basic needs. What resources did she use? Where did the resources come from?

The sun was just starting to rise as Pocahontas woke up. She opened her eyes and watched the morning light peek through small holes in the tree bark and grass mats that covered the outside of her family's wood-framed yehakin (home). She breathed in the chilly morning air and snuggled under her soft animal fur blankets for an extra moment. After getting up, Pocahontas quickly put on her deerskin dress and her copper, pearl and shell jewelry. She was also excited to wear the new necklace of shiny glass beads that had been traded by an English settler.

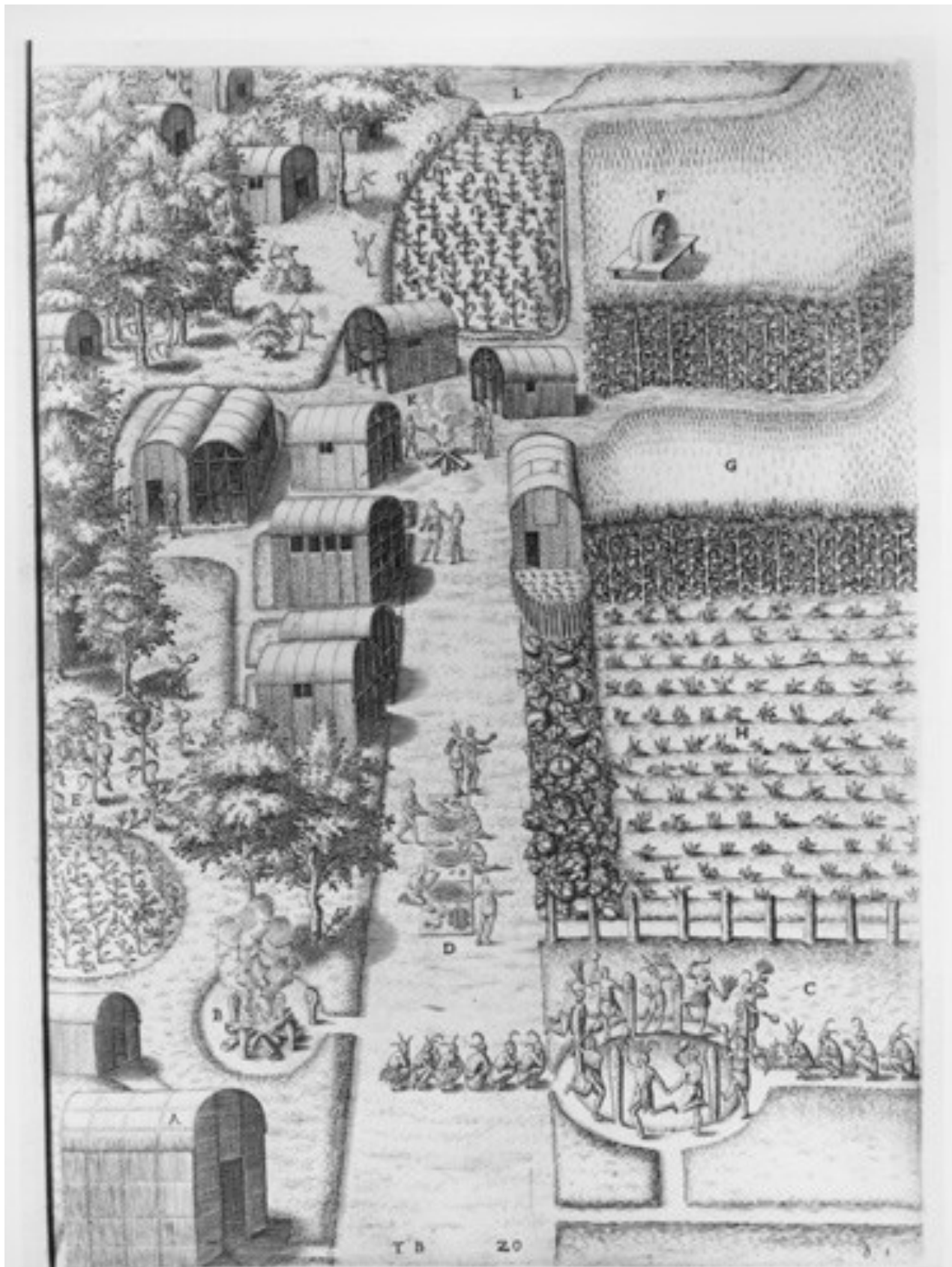
Pocahontas sat by the fire and nibbled on a piece of dried turkey meat before starting her morning chores. First, she walked to the nearby stream to bathe and collect cool, clean water for drinking and cooking. On the way, she greeted the men and boys who were leaving the village to go hunting and fishing. She hoped they would return home with fresh meat for the family cook-pot. Next, she walked to her family's garden and helped the other women gather ripe corn, beans and squash. After a lunch of boiled deer meat and corn cakes, Pocahontas went down to the river to gather long grasses and river reeds. It started to rain, so she returned home. She sat inside her warm, dry yehakin and used the grasses to weave new mats for the walls of her family's home.



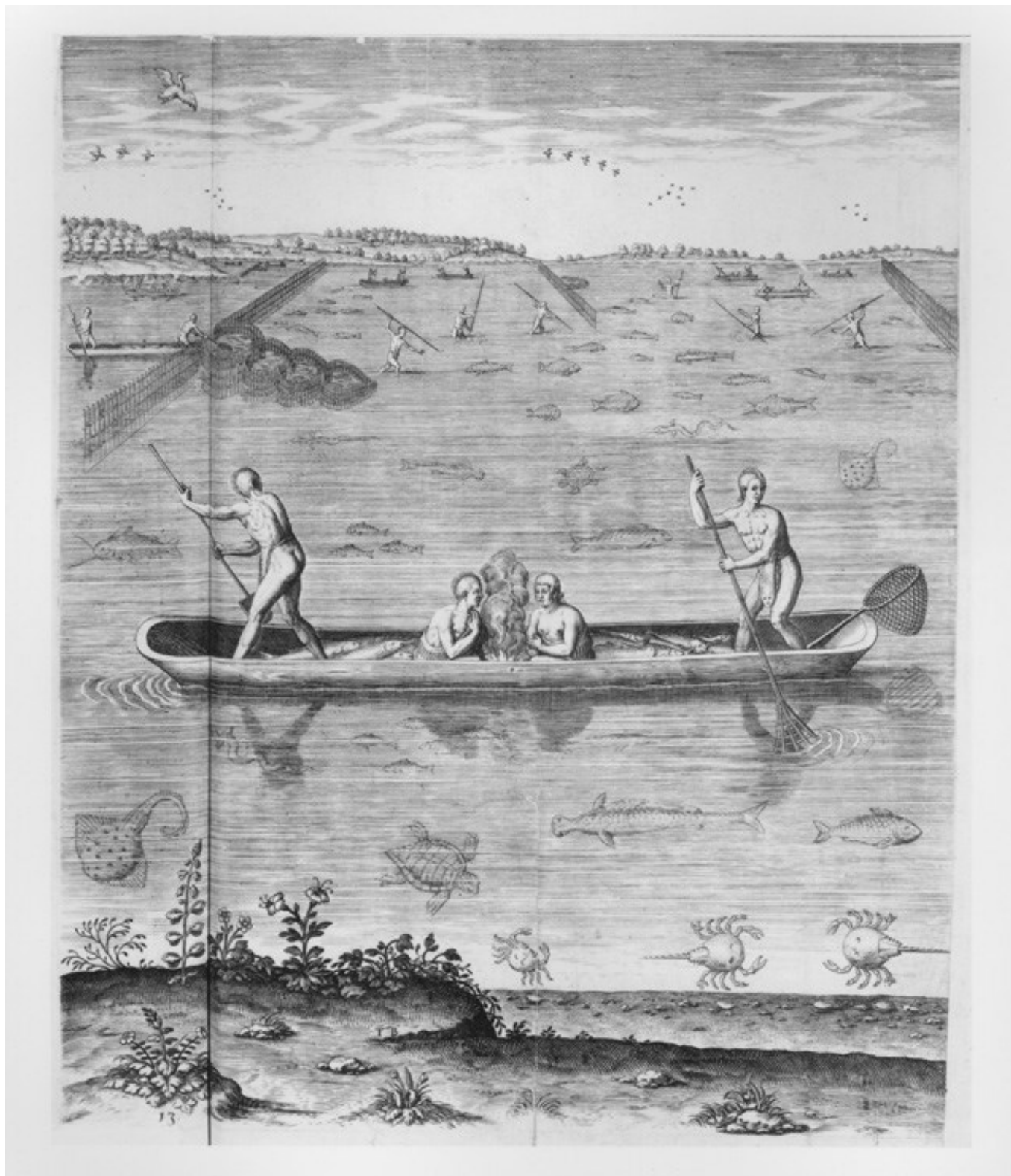
Engraving "Their sitting at meate" by De Bry (printed 1590) based on watercolor by White. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



Engraving "The brovyllinge of their fish over the flame" by De Bry (printed 1590) based on watercolor by White. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



Engraving "The Tovvne of Secota" by De Bry (printed 1590) based on watercolor by White. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



Engraving "Their manner of fishyng in Virginia" by De Bry (printed 1590) based on watercolor by White. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.