The morning was sunny and cold as Ben’s mom drove to their mystery
destination. They followed signs to a place called Plimoth Plantation and pulled
into the parking lot.

“Plimoth Plantation is a living museum. The settlement that the Pilgrims
started in 1620 has been rebuilt here,” explained Ben’s mom as they walked
toward the Visitor Center.

As they walked past a sign telling them that they were now entering the
seventeenth century, the paved pathway ended. A simple dirt track led them to a
wooden fort. Ben ran up the stairs and looked out. It truly looked like another
time. Little wooden houses with thatched roofs were lined up along a dirt road
that ran down the hill toward the ocean. There were gardens behind the houses
and farm animals in crude pens.

Men and women in old-fashioned clothes were going about their daily tasks.
These were the “interpreters,” actors who had learned all about the food, clothing,
activities, ideas, and beliefs of the Pilgrims. Each interpreter had taken on the
identity of a real person who had lived in the settlement in 1627. They had even
learned to speak the way people from England would have spoken at that time.

Ben hurried down to the village and entered the first house he came to. As
his eyes got used to the dim light, he saw a large black kettle suspended over a
glowing fire in a stone hearth. A woman was bending over it, cooking something.
Braided onions and herbs hung from the wooden beams.

Later that day, Ben noticed that his jacket smelled smoky, like the inside of
a Pilgrim house, and the aroma pleased him. The smell of wood smoke would
always bring back fond memories of his journey to the past.