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Establishing Colonies

Between 1600 and 1775, Europeans established colonies, or settlements ruled by their homelands, in North America. The English settled along the Atlantic coast and eventually took over Dutch and Swedish colonies established there. By 1732, thirteen English colonies stretched along the east coast of the present United States from New Hampshire to Georgia.

The French claimed the vast interior of North America. English attempts to settle west of the Appalachians led to conflict between France and Britain. The French and Indian War gave Britain control of all land east of the Mississippi River.

The colonial population grew rapidly due to a high birth rate and increased immigration. People came to America seeking religious freedom and economic opportunities. Slave traders also brought thousands of unwilling immigrants from Africa.

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**Did You Know?**

Swedish settlers introduced log cabins in America. They built these houses along the Delaware River in the 1640s.

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**Growth of Colonial Population**

![Graph showing the growth of the colonial population from 1650 to 1770.](image)

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**People**

- 1614: Pocahontas, daughter of Chief Powhatan, marries Jamestown colonist John Rolfe.
- 1626: Peter Minuit purchases Manhattan Island from local Indians.
- 1682: LaSalle claims Mississippi River Valley for France.

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**Events**

- 1607: Jamestown is founded.
- 1620: Pilgrims settle Plymouth Colony.
- 1754: French and Indian War begins at Fort Necessity.

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**Literature**

- 1640: The Bay Psalm Book is the first book written and published in the American colonies.
- 1733: Poor Richard's Almanac, by Ben Franklin, is published in Philadelphia.
Between 1850 and 1860, differences between the North and the South widened. The agricultural economy of the South was based on slave labor. Many Northerners viewed slavery as wrong. Abolitionists, or people who demanded an end to slavery, operated the Underground Railroad to help slaves escape. The Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act attempted to settle the issue of slavery in the West.

When Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860, Southerners feared he would end slavery. Eleven southern states seceded, or withdrew, from the Union and formed the Confederacy. An attack on Fort Sumter in April 1861 marked the beginning of the Civil War. The war ended when Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox in April 1865.

The bitter war between the North and the South left lasting problems. Much of the South was destroyed. More Americans lost their lives in the Civil War than in any other war in which the United States has fought.
Most of the fighting in the east took place in Virginia. Much of the fighting in the west took place in Tennessee and along the Mississippi River. The map legend indicates how Union strategy succeeded by dividing the Confederacy and blocking its ports.
Introducing the Activity

Inspired by the Spanish discovery of gold and silver in Mexico and Peru, other European powers became determined to plant colonies in the Americas. As with the very first migrants to the Americas, the opportunity for economic gain was the primary motivation for the settlers, although New England was also a draw for religious dissenters who saw the chance to build what they regarded as a more perfect society in America. European powers believed that land claimed by explorers who represented them was theirs to take and distribute as they chose, and they made large grants under various arrangements with groups of settlers.

Introduce the following:

- stockholders
- land grant
- New Amsterdam
- Plymouth Company
- London Company
- Virginia Company

Questions for Class Discussion

- Why were the Plymouth, London, and Virginia Companies established?
- What advantages did purchasing Manhattan Island give the Dutch?
- In 1664 the British took over the Dutch colonies. Why were these colonies valuable to the British?

Student Activity

Ask students to use the maps on page 18 to answer the questions.

Answers

   c. Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina
   d. New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia
2. a little more than 100 miles
3. about 37°
4. Popham Colony; Plymouth Company
5. Nobody knew very much about the land
6. New Amsterdam
7. Fort Orange; Albany
8. Hudson River valley, Delaware Bay
9. Wilmington; Delaware
10. Breuckelen
Settling the Atlantic Coast

Use the maps on page 18 to answer these questions:

1. Compare map a to the map of the United States on pages 64-65.
   a. List the current states that were owned in whole or in part by the Virginia Company in 1606.
   ____________________________
   b. List the states that were controlled in whole or in part by the Plymouth Company.
   ____________________________
   c. List the states that were controlled in whole or in part by London Company.
   ____________________________
   d. List the states that in whole or in part were open to both the Plymouth and London Companies.
   ____________________________

2. In 1587, Sir Walter Raleigh attempted to start a colony on Roanoke Island, but it failed. About how far was Roanoke Island from the first successful English colony at Jamestown?
   ____________________________

3. Find Jamestown and the parallel of 38° on map a. Now measure the distance between the parallels of 34° and 35°. This is the distance of 1°. Use this distance to estimate the latitude of Jamestown.
   ____________________________

4. What was the name of the colony at the mouth of the Kennebec River? ____________________________
   Which company controlled the land where it was located? ____________________________

5. King James I of England gave land grants by degrees of latitude. Why do you think the king used latitude rather than physical features to identify land grants in America?
   ____________________________

6. According to map b, what Dutch settlement, later called New York, was located on Manhattan Island?
   ____________________________

7. The Dutch established a fort in the Hudson River valley north of New Amsterdam to serve as a trading post with the Iroquois.
   What was the name of this fort? ____________________________
   What is the name of this place today? ____________________________

8. In what river valley did the Dutch establish colonies? ____________________________
   Along what bay did they have a colony? ____________________________

9. Fort Christina is shown on map b with its modern name in parentheses underneath.
   What is its modern name? ____________________________
   Look at the map on pages 64-65. What state is this city in today? ____________________________

10. The Dutch settlement directly across the East River from New Amsterdam later came to be called Brooklyn. What was the Dutch name for this settlement?
    ____________________________