

History
UNFOLDING

COLONIAL AMERICA IN THE 18TH CENTURY



MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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Introduction

Images of Life in Colonial America

The 1600s in colonial American history were a time of exploration, chaotic conflict and a heroic struggle just to survive. As the British colonies of North America established themselves, it took some time for regular patterns of social life to appear. In addition, political conditions in England for much of the century meant that the colonists were often largely on their own.

By the early 1700s, however, the thirteen colonies of British North America had taken shape as rather distinct and different societies. Clearly, they were still British in many important ways. Yet subtle differences had developed, differences setting each colony apart from the mother country and apart from the other colonies. The full implications of these differences would not become clear until after the French and Indian War. But they were there, and they were slowly laying the ground for the emergence of a new nation on the world's stage.

This booklet looks at some of the basic features of life in colonial America in the 1700s. It does this through just 12 visual displays. These are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three visual displays to explore one broad topic in the overall story. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

Farmers and Planters

Colonial America was, above all, a society of farms, villages and small towns. The illustrations here focus on the nature of agriculture and rural life in the various regions of British North America.

Towns and Merchants

Though still quite small, a few key seaports were vital to the growth of colonial America. The illustrations in this lesson attempt to highlight some of the reasons for the importance of these commercial centers.

Family and Church

The family played an enormously important role in the lives of colonial Americans. And in some key respects, the family differed in form and function from the family life most students know today. As for religion, its role was also central, though it was changing as the upheaval known as the Great Awakening made clear.

Social Conflict and Political Life

Colonial society was anything but placid. Conflict between settlers and Native Americans was a constant. So also was social conflict between regions and classes. Finally, the colonies as a whole were always in a state of some degree of tension with British authorities across the sea. The illustrations here focus on all of these types of conflict.

Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

DIGITAL IMAGES The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand the crucial role of agriculture in the life of colonial America.
2. Students will better understand how geographical conditions shaped rural colonial life in the various British colonies.

Farmers and Planters

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

By the year 1700, colonial society in Britain's North American colonies was well established. Several important seaports dotted the Atlantic coast. But like this family, most colonists were still self-sufficient in nearly every way, growing their own food and making their own household goods. This was especially true in New England and in the mid-Atlantic colonies, or middle colonies. Fathers and sons were able to handle most of the farming chores. And women took time off from domestic production to help in the fields at harvest time.

Illustration 2

Subsistence agriculture was common in all the colonies. But larger-scale and more commercial farms, such as the one on the left here, were also appearing, especially in the middle colonies. Wheat was a key crop in the mid-Atlantic region, thanks in part to a high demand in Europe. In the South, the mild climate permitted the cultivation of many kinds of crops. But two in particular—tobacco and rice—led to the rise of large-scale plantations. As the illustration on the right suggests, tobacco production was highly labor intensive. But it was also very profitable and in great demand in Europe. Southerners were willing to invest in the complex plantation farms it required—if they could get a dependable labor force. At first, indentured servants from England provided most of the labor. But by 1700, the owners were relying more and more on African slaves.

Illustration 3

Not all planters in the southern colonies were wealthy or large-scale. But especially in Virginia and South Carolina, a rich and powerful plantation elite emerged. Uncooperative Indians and indentured servants could not meet its enormous need for cheap farm labor. And so, increasingly, the plantation owners turned to African slave labor. Of the 650,000 inhabitants of the southern colonies in 1750, about 250,000 (or nearly 40 percent) were slaves. Along with tobacco, rice and indigo were two other crops raised mainly with slaves labor. A slave society sharply divided by race and class arose, as this illustration suggests. It had enormous effects on the social values and on the nature of family life and personality in the regions where it was the dominant form of labor.

Lesson 1 – Farmers and Planters

Illustration 1



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. By 1700, the British colonies of North America were firmly settled and starting to grow rapidly. Towns, plantations and villages existed. But a large majority of American colonists lived as the people you see here. Can you explain?
2. Most colonial farmers spent most of their time in “subsistence” agriculture, as this family appears to be doing. Can you explain what this means?
3. What crop does the family appear to be harvesting? Can you guess in which part of the British colonies this farm was located? How can you tell?
4. From this illustration alone, what differences can you see between this farm and the typical farm in America today? What do these differences help you to understand about life in colonial America in the 1700s?

Follow-up Activities

1. American colonists were famous for their “spirit of independence.” Some say this is due in good part to the fact that many were self-sufficient farmers like this family? Write an imaginative short story about this family. Make sure your story contains dialogue, not just between the husband and wife, but also between one or both of them and their young boy. What would they have discussed? What do you think would have been their common daily concerns? Focus your story why on a strong sense of independence would have been necessary to such a family.
2. Learn more about farm life in colonial New England. Then, pretend you are one of the individuals in this scene. It is later in the evening. Write a complete diary entry listing all the chores you performed on this day and other typical activities you took part in. Be sure to include such things as how early you got up, when you ate your meals (what did you have to eat?) and what the weather was like. Now also add some details about the other family members.

Lesson 1 – Farmers and Planters

Illustration 2



Both images Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustrations

1. By the 1700s, not all farms were as small as the previous one. Some were beginning to resemble the one shown here on left. How is this farm different from previous one? In what ways is it similar?
2. Historians generally divide the colonies into New England, the middle colonies and the southern colonies. What do you know about each of these regions in colonial America? In which region do you think this farm is located? Why?
3. On the right, three men are tending to one plant. This plant was the most important crop in the southern colonies. What is it and why was it so important?
4. As this illustration helps to show, tobacco was and still is a very labor-intensive crop to raise. What does this mean? What importance did the labor-intensive nature of tobacco have for the development of the southern colonies?
5. What other kinds of things can you learn about colonial life from these illustrations?

Follow-up Activities

1. Where do you think the farm on left was located? Learn more about colonial agriculture in the three main colonial regions: New England, the middle colonies and the southern colonies. Summarize in a brief talk to the class the main characteristics of farming in each of these three regions. How was farming similar in each? How was it different? Be sure to state where you think this farm is located, and explain why you came to this conclusion.
2. As you have already learned, tobacco was a heavily labor intensive crop. Read more about what it took to raise tobacco in the 1700s. Then, create a chart explaining all of the steps. To illustrate your chart, find and use other images like the one on the right, or draw some of your own. Also, be sure to include any interesting quotes you find during your reading, either from plantation owners, indentured servants or slaves or even from those who bought and used the tobacco.

Lesson 1 – Farmers and Planters

Illustration 3



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. Tobacco production was very profitable for the wealthy plantation elites who grew it. But growing and harvesting it took lots of labor. Plantation owners in Virginia and elsewhere in the South came to rely on one particular form of labor. From the illustration, can you explain what that form of labor was?
2. At first, many plantation owners tried using indentured servants for their field labor. But the plantation owners were not satisfied with this labor source. Can you explain who indentured servants were and what the owners' problems with them were? Also, why did Indian labor prove to be unsatisfactory?
3. The caption for this illustration is "A visit to the slave quarters." Who appears to be visiting the slave quarters here? What can you learn from this illustration alone about the differences between the plantation colonies in the South and the rural societies of the other colonial regions?

Follow-up Activities

1. What view of the relationships between slaves and their plantation owners does this illustration offer? Study the image closely, paying special attention to the 11 figures in the foreground. Write a brief essay about at least six of them in which you describe how they are drawn and explain what this adds to the illustration's overall view of slavery. In the last part of your essay, offer your own view of the illustration and of how accurate you think it is.
2. Many of the greatest leaders of American Revolution were slave owners from Virginia. In signing the Declaration of Independence, they agreed with the statement, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." Two of these leaders were George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. How did they feel about slavery? Learn more about one of these two men and his views on slavery. Pretend you are that man and write a diary entry as you think he would have about this illustration.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand why seaports were so important in the life of the colonies in spite of their small size and number.
2. Students will better appreciate the important cultural and social influence of colonial seaports.

Towns and Merchants

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

Most colonists lived on farms and small villages. But a few seaport towns were crucial to the growth of the colonies. In New England, the rocky soil and the weather forced many colonists to turn to fishing and to overseas trade—mainly with Europe and the West Indies. Until 1763, England tried only half-heartedly to regulate this trade. This was hard to do given the huge distance across the ocean and given the political upheavals of the 1600s that kept England distracted. Colonial merchants established their own complex patterns of trade. This illustration is of Philadelphia in 1777, then the largest seaport in the 13 colonies. Like other colonial towns, it became a dynamic political and cultural center and home to a growing and independent-minded commercial middle class.

Illustration 2

Another key seaport was New York. Its original settlers came from Holland, which controlled the colony until 1664. New Amsterdam, as the Dutch called it, was even then a culturally diverse community, made up of Dutch, English, Swedish and other settlers, along with a growing population of African slaves. Shown here is a typical middle class Dutch family of the time. Shopkeepers, merchants, ship captains, lawyers and other members of this class dominated the colonial towns. Even they lived simply, as this image indicates. But during the 1700s, their wealth grew and helped to establish the American colonies as a settled and increasingly prosperous part of the British Empire.

Illustration 3

Overseas trade was central even to the southern colonies. In fact, merchants were vital to the South where plantation owners were mainly focused on producing cash crops to sell in world markets. Tobacco planters depended on merchants to sell their crops abroad. And as they awaited their profits, they often borrowed from those merchants in order to buy land, slaves and equipment. As a result, the planters often found themselves deep in debt. And since so much of its wealth was in land and slaves, the South heavily depended on England for the finished goods it needed. In other words, as with the other sections, the southern colonies were commercial societies in every respect.

Lesson 2—Towns and Merchants

Illustration 1



Both images Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Most of colonial America was rural. However, a few larger towns did exist and were actually very important to the growth of colonies. This is the largest city in the 13 colonies at time of the American Revolution. Can you name it?
2. Towns in colonial America were important mainly because overseas trade was important to the survival and development of all the colonies. What key products did the colonists trade abroad? What kinds of products did they buy from other countries?
3. Philadelphia is located at the junction of the Schuylkill River and the Delaware River. It lies about 100 miles inland from the coast, and yet it was a major port during colonial times. What aspects of the city's location made it an ideal port?
4. Colonial America was made up mainly of rural farmers, often living off their own production. Why do you suppose trade still was an important force in its development?

Follow-up Activities

1. Even a simple shipping notice like the one here can be a useful primary source document. What can you learn from this primary source document? That is, what kinds of things might this document alone tell you about life in colonial America? Make a list of all the things for which this document might be evidence. (Keep in mind that not all of your items have to do only with trade or shipping.) Now look over your list and check all the items on it that you could only have listed with the help of some other background knowledge about colonial America. Use the list in a discussion about how to use and interpret primary sources.
2. Read Benjamin Franklin's autobiography, paying special attention to the early scenes in which he describes his experiences as a young man going to live in Philadelphia. Write a report in which you explain all the ways his experiences in Philadelphia were like or unlike what a young person today would face moving to a big city. Share your report with the class.

Illustration 2



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. This family scene is in another important colonial port. This is a family of Dutch settlers, not English. From this, can you guess in what port city this family lived?
2. New York was not colonial America's largest port city, but it was a key commercial center. From what you know of its location and the geography of the region, can you explain why New York was a good location for such a seaport?
3. The family shown here is not wealthy. But for colonial times, it is not badly off either. How can you tell this?
4. Aside from being a ship captain or merchant, the head of this household might have worked in a wide variety of other occupations. What are some of them?
5. How do you think life would have differed for the Dutch boy in this scene as compared to the boy helping his father in the very first illustration for Lesson 1?

Follow-up Activities

1. The Dutch were only one of many groups of non-English immigrants who came to the American colonies of their own free will in the 1700s. (African slaves, of course, did not come voluntarily.) There were also Scots, Irish, Germans, French, and others. Learn more about one of these groups of non-English colonials. Create a map showing where this group mainly settled. Use your map in a brief talk to the class about this group and the ways it did and did not differ from other colonials.
2. **Small-group activity:** Learn more about life in New York City in the 1700s. Find and make photocopies of as many illustrations as you can of New York in the 1700s. Create a map of the city as it looked in the late 1700s. Use your map as the focal point of a bulletin board display called "The Big Apple in its Younger Days." To give a sense of perspective, include a map of present-day New York City in your display.

Illustration 3



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. Overseas trade played a key role even in the southern colonies. In fact, overseas trade may even have been more important there, at least to the large plantation owners. This illustration suggests why. Can you explain?
2. Southern planters sold tobacco and purchased many “finished goods” from Britain. What are “finished goods”? What kinds of finished goods would southern planters have needed to purchase from British and other European merchants?
3. The southern planters also depended on overseas trade for their labor supply. Can you explain?
4. Planters were often deep in debt as a result of the tobacco trade. Why do you think that was so? How do you think this constant indebtedness might have affected the attitudes of these planters toward Great Britain and the outside world generally?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** The British Navigation Acts were trade regulations. The most important ones had to do with whose ships could carry goods between the colonies and Great Britain and which products had to go through Great Britain before being sold elsewhere. The Acts were an example of mercantilism, an economic system common in Europe in the 1700s. Read about the Navigation Acts and mercantilism. Based on what you learn, organize a debate in front of the class in which half of your group criticizes the Navigation Acts and the other half defends them.
2. Read more about colonial Virginia and the merchants who sold Virginia tobacco overseas and supplied Virginia planters with the goods they needed from England. Pretend it is 1740 and you have spent the past few weeks in Virginia collecting tobacco shipments from various planters. You still have several weeks longer to stay in the colonies. Write a long letter home about your experiences. Include mention of the scene shown here.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand the crucial role of the family and the local community in the lives of people in colonial America.
2. Students will understand how deeply felt religious views were changing in colonial America in the 1700s.

Family and Church

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

The key to social life in colonial America was the family. Many activities now performed outside the home were done in the home in colonial days. The young were largely educated in the home, and usually trained in any work skills they would need. The family was the only real support for the individual. Even in a poor, New England home like the one on the left, young and old, male and female depended on one another for all the basics of life. Young couples could not easily move out on their own, and when they did it was usually on land provided by a parent. The elderly had to count on their children for help in old age. Existence in general was not easy, even for middle class families such as the one on the right.

Illustration 2

For both men and women, the home was basically a production unit, not simply a place to eat, sleep and relax. Men and women had different roles in colonial society. Yet in the home, both worked to produce food, clothing, shelter and household goods. Fathers and sons worked the fields or hunted, while mothers and daughters spun yarn from wool, knit sweaters and stockings, made candles and soap, stored food and churned milk into butter and cheese. This illustration of a quilting bee suggests the strong support women often gave one another as well as the close connection generally between home and community social life.

Illustration 3

Religion was absolutely central in the lives of colonial Americans. But as the colonies prospered, ministers feared their members were losing the strong spiritual awareness of the first settlers. This led in the 1730s and '40s to a great religious revival known as the Great Awakening. In part, this was an effort to get back to old time religion. But it also changed things in unexpected ways. Traveling preachers like George Whitefield, shown here, often seemed to threaten the authority of local ministers. Splits developed between so-called "New Light" supporters of the revival and "Old Light" traditionalists who saw the revivals as a threat to order and settled religious practice. The Awakening may also have led colonists to look beyond their own local communities and see themselves as part of a larger colonial society. In this way, the Great Awakening may well have paved the way for the political awakening to come.

Lesson 3—Family and Church

Illustration 1



Both images Stock Montage, Inc.



Discussing the Illustrations

1. Much more so than today, daily life in colonial America centered on the family. The illustration on the left shows a family in front of the hearth in a Puritan New England home. What aspects of colonial family life do you see illustrated here?
2. In particular, what does the illustration suggest about the relationships of younger and older family members in colonial households? What do you think life would be like for children growing up in this home?
3. How would you describe the similarities and the differences between the two households and families shown here?
4. The artists who drew these scenes chose to portray the families as sitting by the fireplace. Why do you think the artists chose this particular setting? What else can you learn about colonial families from these two scenes?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Read more about colonial families. Based on what you learn write a one-act play involving one or both of the families in the above illustrations. Have each member of your group assume the role of one of the people in these scenes. Create a realistic dialogue in which you attempt to re-enact what you think these families might be talking about here. Design a set modeled after these scenes, or perform your play for the class.
2. Learn more about the impact of sickness and disease on families in colonial New England. What types of diseases were most common? What types of diseases were most deadly to infants, small children and older people? How high did death rates go? What impact did the threat of disease have on the way people thought about and planned their families? Give a brief talk to the class on your findings.

Illustration 2



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. This quilting bee suggests several things about life in colonial homes and communities. It shows one small part of the role women played in the family and in the home in colonial America. How would you describe the role of women in the colonial home, and how do you think this drawing helps to illustrate that role?
2. One historian says this about the illustration: “The scene points to the fact that a woman’s role in the home was perhaps more as a producer than as a consumer or housekeeper.” Can you explain this statement? Do you agree with it? What other types of productive activity did women perform in the home?
3. The quilting bee scene also helps to show how the colonial family and the larger community depended on one another in many ways. Can you explain how the illustration shows this? In what other ways did the community help individual families directly in colonial times? How does this differ from community-family interactions today?

Follow-up Activities

1. Learn more about the role of men and women in the home in colonial America. Create a list of the tasks typically performed by men and those typically performed by women. Suppose a women’s rights advocate from today could go back in time to the group of women shown above and talk to them. What might she say to the group? What might members of the group say to her? Create an imaginary dialogue, but bring in the information on your lists as part of the dialogue you create. Do not feel that your dialogue has to come out in favor of any one side or point of view in its overall message.
2. Read more about the role of women in colonial times. Then, pretend you are a woman from that era. In a brief talk to the class, describe your life, your family, where you lived and what it was like to live in colonial America. Invent three or four believable and important episodes of your life and focus on those in your talk.

Lesson 3—Family and Church

Illustration 3



Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustration

1. Religion was the most important aspect of life for many people in the colonies. This was perhaps most so in New England. Can you explain why this was so, especially for people in the New England colonies?
2. As life improved in the colonies, many said that the harsher, stricter aspects of religious beliefs and practices were softening or becoming less strict. Why might that have been so?
3. In the 1730s, a big religious movement or revival reacted against this softening of religious practice and tried to change it. George Whitefield, a famous preacher in this revival, is shown here giving a sermon in an open field. What name is commonly used for the revival Whitefield and others led?
4. Some say the Great Awakening split communities apart. Others say it gave people a sense of belonging to a larger colony-wide society, not just their own small villages. What do you know about the Great Awakening and its impact on colonial America?

Follow-up Activities

1. Learn more about George Whitefield or Jonathan Edwards. Now read the short account of the Great Awakening in *The Oxford History of the American People: Prehistory to 1789*, by Samuel Eliott Morrison (Penguin USA, 1994, pp. 150–53). Your teacher or librarian should be able to help you find this book. Now, pretend you are the figure you have researched. Write a long diary entry commenting on Morrison’s view of the Great Awakening.
2. The Great Awakening often split local co-religionists into revivalists and traditionalists, or “New Lights” and “Old Lights” as they came to be known. Learn more about the Great Awakening and the New Lights/Old Lights splits to which it often led. Write a report that describes these divisions and what led people to join one side or the other. Also in your report, try to decide what the results of that split were, and how it affected the attitudes of colonial Americans in these decades just before the American Revolution.

OBJECTIVE

1. Students will better understand the various kinds of social and political conflict that were typical in colonial America in the 1700s.

Social Conflict and Political Life

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

This illustration is of the first meeting of the House of Burgesses, the elected colonial assembly of Virginia in 1619. It helps to make a key point about colonial political life. The idea of representative government is as old as the colonies themselves. By the 1700s, most governors were appointed by the British crown. And they chose their own counsels. But the lower houses of most colonial assemblies were made up of elected representatives. Moreover, town meetings in many local communities gave thousands of citizens experience in self government. By the late 1700s, the idea of liberty and government based on the consent of the governed was not radical. It was well established tradition.

Illustration 2

Social and political tensions of all sorts existed from the start in colonial America. For example, tensions between settlers and Indians often, as in King Philip's War in the 1675, led to warfare. On the right is a scene from King Philip's War, named for a local New England Indian chief. The war ended in utter devastation for the Indians of the area. Tensions between colonists in frontier regions and those in more settled areas were another theme of colonial life. Often they involved small farmers opposing the power of richer planters and merchants. In Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia, the champion of the frontier region was Nathaniel Bacon, shown here confronting Virginia Governor Berkeley.

Illustration 3

Finally, there were growing tensions between colonists and officials back in England. This tension emerged in full after the French and Indian War. Colonists felt a surge of pride for their role in helping British forces in that conflict, a spirit expressed here by a bold looking George Washington at his moment of triumph after capturing Fort Duquesne from the French. The key British victory over the French took place with the capture of Quebec in 1759. On the right is a famous painting of the death of the British General Wolfe as his forces were succeeding in that battle. Victory in the war left the British temporarily in control of all of North America east of the Mississippi. But it also gave the colonists a boost in self confidence and a determination to take charge of their own destiny.

Lesson 4—Social Conflict and Political Life

Illustration 1



Stock Montage, Inc.

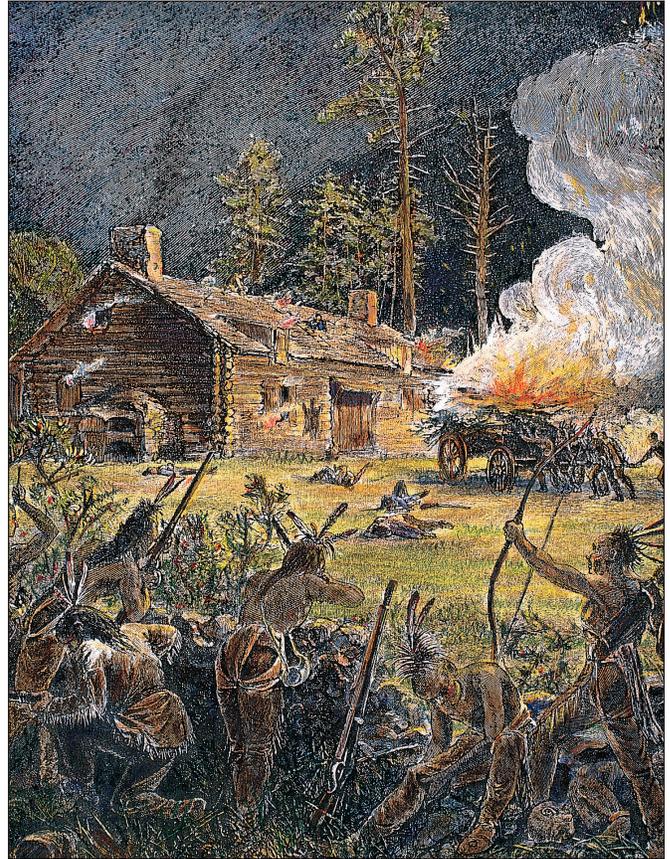
Discussing the Illustration

1. In addition to religion, another very important part of life for colonial Americans was politics. From the start, colonial Americans began to get used to governing themselves in many ways. This illustration of the first meeting of the House of Burgesses is an example of this. What was the House of Burgesses and how is it proof of early experience in self-government in the colonies?
2. Some people would say the Mayflower Compact was another example of the early roots of the idea of self-government in America. Can you explain?
3. Another example of colonial experience with self-government had to do with town meetings typical in many communities, especially in New England. Can you explain how these meetings were examples of self-government?
4. For the most part, British officials allowed these forms of self-government to develop. Why do you think they did that?

Follow-up Activities

1. Just about every colony in the 1700s had an elected colonial assembly of some sort as part of the colony's government. Choose one state and learn more about its colonial assembly in the 1700s. Summarize what you learn in a brief talk to the class. In your talk, explain how the assembly was chosen and what restrictions existed on who could vote. Describe also the key powers of the assembly, the governor and any other key governing body in the colony. List the key social and political issues the assembly dealt with in the 1700s. And finally, describe the way the assembly got along with officials in England.
2. In the midst of the French and Indian War, in 1754, seven colonial governments sent representatives to Albany, New York, to meet and try to work out a plan with the Iroquois Indians to more effectively fight the French. This was where Benjamin Franklin offered his famous Albany Plan. Learn more about these events. Write an article for a colonial newspaper summarizing the events at Albany and their importance.

Illustration 2



Both images Stock Montage, Inc.

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Political conflict, often bloody, was a fact of life in the colonies. One form of it had to do with warfare between settlers and Indians—as in the scene on the right from King Philip's War in 1675. Who was King Philip?
2. King Philip's War broke out mainly because the settlers were moving onto Indian lands, although there were other causes for it. A great deal of colonial-Indian fighting had to do with land. Could the colonies have been settled as they were without such conflict? How could it have been avoided?
3. Another kind of political conflict in the colonies was that between farmers in frontier regions and colonial officials in the settled areas—for example, Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia in 1676. On the left here, rebel leader Nathaniel Bacon confronts Governor Berkeley of Virginia. What do you know about Bacon's Rebellion? Could it also be labeled a rebellion by the poor against the rich, as much as of frontier counties against the Tidewater region? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Throughout the history of colonial America, conflict between the colonists and Native Americans was almost a constant. But so was cooperation and trade between the settlers and the Indians. For example, the colonists carried on a long-standing pattern of trade for furs with the Iroquois and other tribes in New York and nearby regions. Another extensive trading network existed in South Carolina and other southern colonies for deerskins. Learn more about these two trading networks. Create a map showing all the tribes involved and the nature of their involvement. Present your map and your findings to the class.
2. Read more about Nathaniel Bacon. Some see him as a rebel acting for the people against a small, wealthy clique of politicians supporting Governor Berkeley; others see him as little more than a spoiled, power-hungry rich landowner himself. With which view do you agree? Write an essay titled, "Nathaniel Bacon: Man of the People or Troublemaking Aristocrat?"

Illustration 3



Stock Montage, Inc.



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Another form of political conflict in America was that between Great Britain and its colonies. But Britain and the colonies fought together in a major war from 1754 to 1763. What was the American name for the war, and who did the colonists fight against in it?
2. Early in the war, a young American soldier and his troops captured Fort Duquesne from the French. That young soldier, who later became world famous, is shown on the left holding the flag. Who is he?
3. On the right is a famous painting of the death of British General James Wolfe in the battle for Quebec in 1759. This moment was actually one of triumph for the British. Can you explain why?
4. Some say the contacts between the American and British soldiers in this war sowed seeds of anti-British sentiment in the colonies. From your history reading, can you explain why that was so? In what other ways did the French and Indian War lead to growing conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies?

Follow-up Activities

1. The illustration on the left shows George Washington at Fort Duquesne in 1758. What did Washington learn from the battle he fought there? Read more about the battle and Washington's future military career. It is now 1781. You are General Washington. The scene is Yorktown. An aide shows you this illustration. Write a long diary entry describing the memories this picture evokes and the thoughts you think Washington might have had about it in 1781.
2. **Small-group activity:** As a group, read about and discuss the French and Indian War. Then create two maps of North America—one showing the continent before the war and one showing it after the war. Use the maps as part of a thorough presentation to the class explaining the military, economic, social, and political impact of the war on the colonies. Make sure each member of your group does an equal amount of the research and an equal amount of the speaking to the class.

Image Close-ups

Farmers and Planters

Illustration 1



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Farmers and Planters

Illustration 2



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Farmers and Planters
Illustration 3



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Towns and Merchants

Illustration 1



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Towns and Merchants

Illustration 2



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Illustration 3



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Family and Church Illustration 1



Both images Stock Montage, Inc.



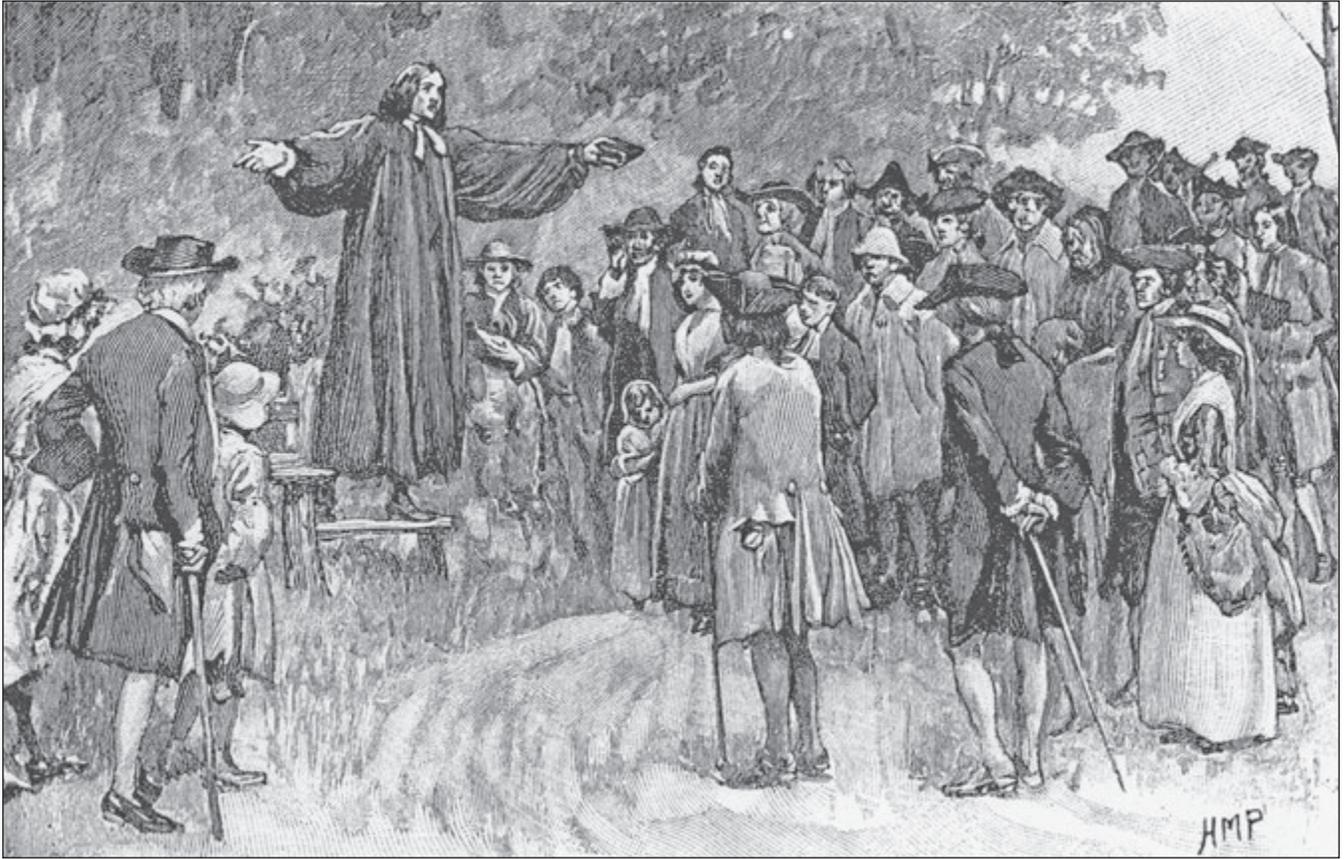
Family and Church Illustration 2



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Family and Church

Illustration 3



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Social Conflict and Political Life

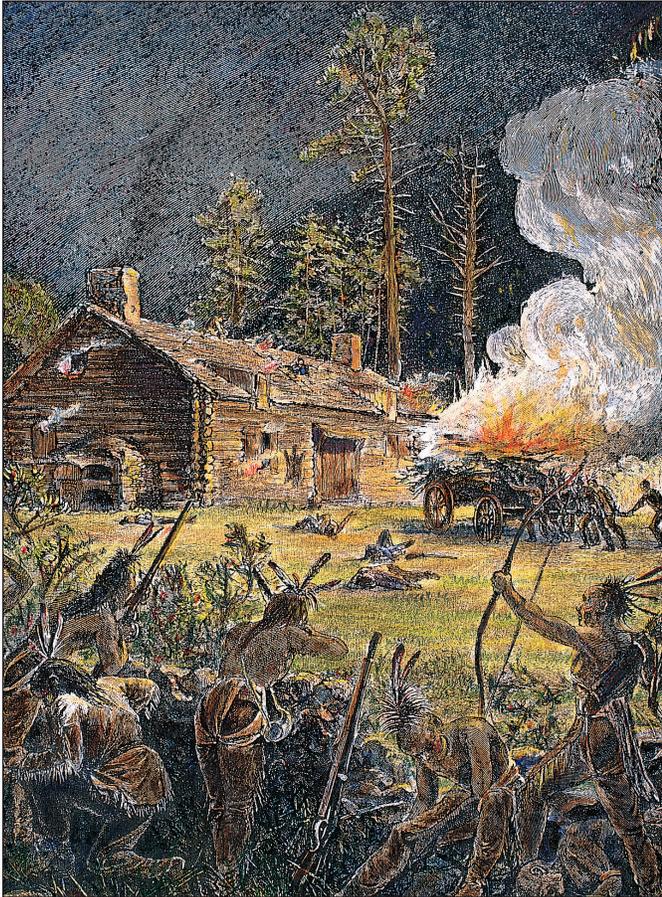
Illustration 1



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Social Conflict and Political Life

Illustration 2



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Social Conflict and Political Life

Illustration 3



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