

KEY - American Colonies Study Guide

1. What were the three earliest settlements in the New World? Which were successful? Which failed?

The first settlement was at Roanoke, but it failed because all of its settlers disappeared mysteriously. The second settlement was Jamestown, and it was successful after a very hard season. The third settlement was Plymouth, and it was successful thanks to the help of the neighboring Native Americans.

2. How and why was Roanoke settled? What challenges did the settlers face there?

The Colony of Roanoke was the first English settlement in the New World. Sir Walter Raleigh led it in 1585. His group started Roanoke in hopes that it would become the first English settlement. At first, the settlers relied on the natives for food and planted no crops of their own. The natives were happy to help at first, but the colonists treated them poorly. So, the natives stopped helping them, and the colonists ran out of food. Sir Walter Raleigh tried to set up another settlement in Roanoke in 1587. This time he taught the colonists how to plant crops, and things were better than they were in the first colony.

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3. Why is it sometimes called the “Lost Colony of Roanoke”?

The settlers of Roanoke were found to have mysteriously disappeared when an English ship returned to Roanoke. The English ship found an empty settlement. One word was carved on the door of the colony: Croatoan. Had they been killed by natives? Did they leave to go somewhere else in the New World? The mystery of where the colonists disappeared to has never been solved.

4. How and why was Jamestown settled? What challenges did the settlers face there?

The Virginia Company founded Jamestown in hopes of finding gold or a passageway to China or India. The land that the settlers chose was mosquito-infested because it was a marsh, so many settlers contracted diseases and died. The ground was not great for farming. Native American tribes nearby were not always friendly. There was also the constant threat of attacks from the Spanish. Additionally, the men who sailed over with the company had not planned on doing any manual labor, so they did not want to work to plant their own food or build their own homes.

5. Who was John Smith?

John Smith stepped up as a leader of Jamestown. Smith grew his own food. He made positive relationships with the Powhatan Native Americans nearby. He knew that the help of the natives was very important. Smith became frustrated with the laziness of the men in the colony. He decided that anyone who didn't work would not be allowed to eat. Smith's rule was very motivating to the colonists. They began planting their own crops and building more homes.

6. What was the Starving Time?

At first, the colonists struggled to find enough food to eat in Jamestown. On top of that, their leader John Smith got injured. He had to leave Jamestown to return to England. The colonists were left on their own. They had to figure out how to survive. The winter of 1609-1610 was very difficult. It became called the Starving Time. The colonists became desperate for food. They ate horses, cats, and even dogs. They also boiled down leather boots and belts to eat. Soon, there was almost nothing to eat. Only sixty of the original five hundred colonists survived the winter.

7. How and why was Plymouth settled? What challenges did the settlers face there?

Pilgrims looking for religious freedom started Plymouth. The Pilgrims did not know how to farm the land where they settled, but fortunately, the Native Americans nearby were willing to help them establish their crops.

8. Why and how were the colonies divided into regions?

Regions were based mostly on geographic location, meaning colonies that were located near each other. They were grouped this way because colonies that were located near each other shared geographical and climate features that made them similar. The people who lived in these colonies had similar lifestyles because they had similar surroundings.

9. What was it like in the New England Colonies region?

What motivated the people who settled in this region?

People looking for freedom

What types of people settled in this region?

Mostly Puritans; Ministers were very important within the towns

What was the climate and geography like in this region?

Warm summers, long and cold winters; growing season only lasts five months. Rocky, sandy soil not ideal for farming; covered in forests and hills with plenty of trees; long coastlines with many harbors and fish

What was the economy like in this region?

Subsistence farming, fishing and whaling industry, shipbuilding industry

What key cities were located in this region?

Plymouth, Boston, Providence, Newport

Which colonies were included in this region?

Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire

How and why was each colony in this region founded?

Massachusetts was founded by William Bradford when he settled at Plymouth. Bradford led a group of Pilgrims hoping to find religious freedom. Thomas Hooker left Massachusetts to found Connecticut for more religious freedom.

Roger Williams established Rhode Island to make it a place of religious freedom also. It was one of the most tolerant colonies. New Hampshire was colonized by businessman John Mason for the purpose of trade and expanding business.

Maine was colonized by Ferdinando Gorges for the same reasons. However, it was never able to successfully become its own colony so it was part of Massachusetts until it later became a state.

10. What was it like in the Middle Colonies region?

- What motivated the people who settled in this region?

Religious freedom or making money

- What types of people settled in this region?

Very diverse – Germany, Netherlands, Ireland, and England;
Quakers, Protestants, Jews, and Catholics

- What was the climate and geography like in this region?

Warm and rainy; enough warm weather for a good farming season

Fertile soil for farming; flat land with plenty of rivers

- What was the economy like in this region?

Agriculture - produced a great deal of wheat;

Manufacturing – textiles and paper

- What key cities were located in this region?

New York City, Philadelphia

- Which colonies were included in this region?

New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware

- How and why was each colony in this region founded?

New York and New Jersey were founded in the 1600s by the Dutch. England claimed the land for itself in 1664 and renamed it New York and New Jersey. These colonies were taken over by the British in hopes of making a profit off the land.

Quaker William Penn founded Pennsylvania in order to have a place to worship freely as he wished, so he allowed much religious freedom for his people.

Delaware was originally founded by the Dutch then claimed by the British in 1664. England hoped to make a profit off the land and its resources.

11. What was it like in the Southern Colonies region?

- What motivated the people who settled in this region?
Making money off the land
- What types of people settled in this region?
Most were wealthy Englishmen who came and bought plantations; most were Anglicans (Church of England) but some in Maryland were Catholics
- What was the climate and geography like in this region?
Mild winters; Hot summers; Seven or eight month long growing season
Rich, fertile soil ideal for farming
- What was the economy like in this region?
Agriculture – Tobacco was the main cash crop in Maryland and Virginia; cotton, rice, and indigo was the main cash crop in South Carolina
- What key cities were located in this region?
Jamestown, Charles Town (Charleston), Savannah, Williamsburg
- Which colonies were included in this region?
Maryland, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia
- How and why was each colony in this region founded?
Maryland was settled by Catholics looking for religious freedom and were led by Lord Baltimore.
The Carolinas were founded by the 8 Proprietors from England who hoped to make money off the fertile land. The colony later split into two colonies: North and South Carolina based on differences in the quality of land.
Georgia was founded by James Oglethorpe as a refuge for British people who were in debt so they could work to pay off their creditors.

16. What religions were practiced in the colonies?

The majority of the colonists from England were Christians. This means they believed in God and Jesus Christ. However, there were different groups of Christians that had different ways of going about their religion and worship. There were Anglicans, Puritans, Separatists, Pilgrims, Catholics, and Quakers. Each group believed they should live life in different ways.

17. What was the House of Burgesses?

In 1619, the House of Burgesses was created to be the first legislative assembly, meaning the people in charge of making laws. The members of the House would be selected by fellow colonists. This was BIG news back then! It was not common for government leaders to be chosen by the people. The House of Burgesses was the first representative government body in the colonies.

18. What was the Mayflower Compact?

The Pilgrims sailed to the New World on the *Mayflower* ship. Before stepping off the ship, the passengers came up with a plan for governing themselves. This plan was called the Mayflower Compact. This document laid out the plan for the Pilgrims to rule themselves. They planned to make decisions based on a majority vote of townsmen.

19. Why was slavery needed in the colonies?

Early settlements were centered around farming and plantations. Farmers and plantation owners needed people to work their fields. Most settlers who came to the New World in the beginning were wealthy "gentlemen." The early settlers were not interested in doing manual labor, like working on the fields. Colonists tried enslaving Native Americans to work their fields. However, Native Americans knew the land well, so they ran away often. Life as an indentured servant working the fields

23. What were the Triangular Trade routes?

The Triangular Trade was a system of trade patterns. The routes connected Great Britain, Africa, the New World, and the West Indies. Goods were traded back and forth between each of these areas.

24. What goods were traded along the routes?

Molasses, sugar, rum, meat, flour, lumber, fish, spices, whale oil, iron goods, tools, cloth, tobacco, slaves, gold, and tea were some of the goods that were traded along the routes.

25. What was the Middle Passage?

Slaves were taken from Africa to the West Indies where they were sold and treated as if they were goods, not people. This part of the Triangular Trade was called the Middle Passage.