

# Life in the Colonies

## Essential Question

How did geography affect the economic development of the three colonial regions?

## Reading Guide

### Content Vocabulary

subsistence farming (p. 89)	Tidewater (p. 94)
triangular trade (p. 90)	backcountry (p. 94)
Middle Passage (p. 91)	overseer (p. 94)
cash crop (p. 92)	slave code (p. 94)
surplus (p. 93)	

### Academic Vocabulary

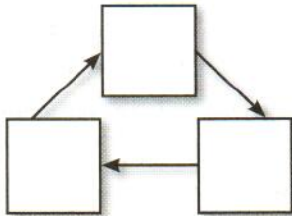
rely (p. 89)	principal (p. 93)
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### Key People and Events

Oludah Equiano (p. 91)

### Reading Strategy

**Taking Notes** As you read, use a diagram like the one below to describe the triangular trade route.

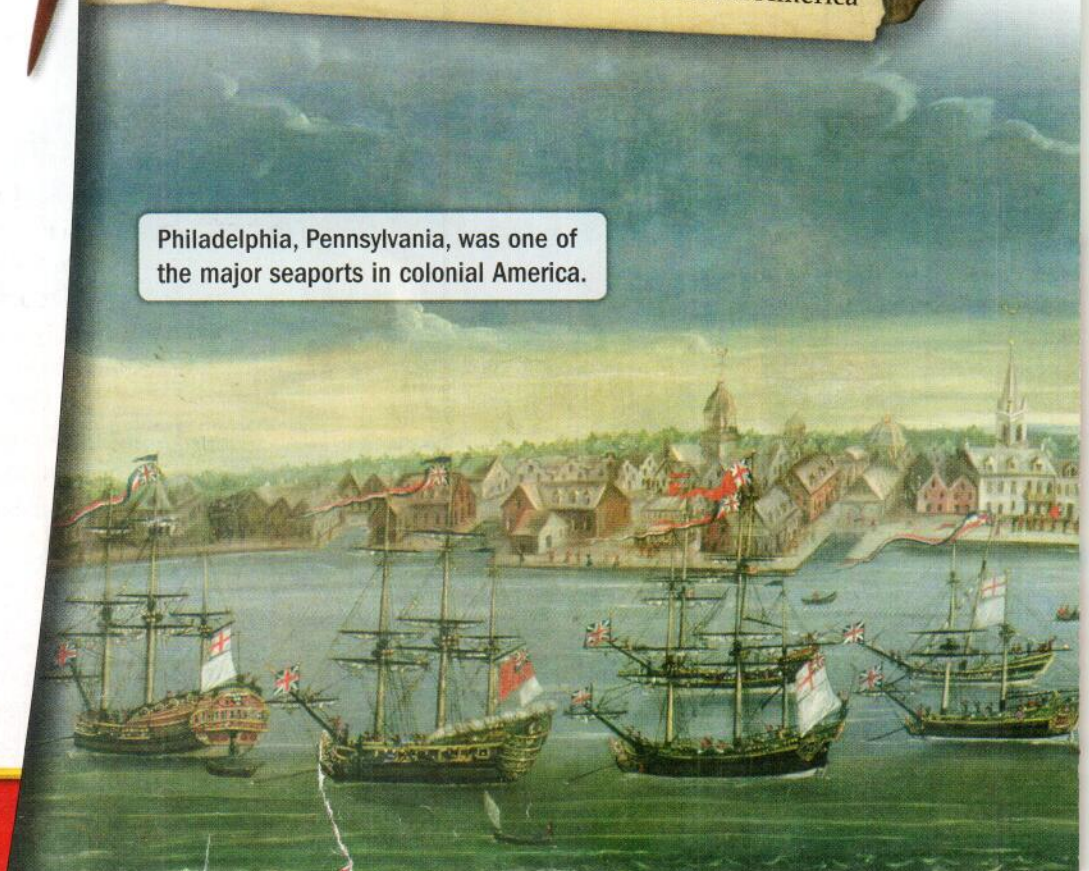


## American Diary

In 1760 Englishman Andrew Burnaby traveled in the American colonies, observing daily life. He could not imagine that these colonies would ever unite for they were as different from one another as "fire and water," and each colony was jealous of the other. "In short, such is the difference of character, of manners, of religion, of interest, of the different colonies, that I think, . . . were they left to themselves, there would soon be a civil war, from one end of the continent to the other."

—from *Travels Through the Middle Settlements in North America*

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was one of the major seaports in colonial America.



# The New England Colonies

**Main Idea** The economies of the New England Colonies focused on shipbuilding, fishing, and trade.

**History and You** Do people in your community manufacture products that are sold to other countries? Read to learn about how the economies of New England developed.

Although Burnaby believed the colonies would never unite, they continued to grow. The number of people living in the colonies rose from about 250,000 in 1700 to approximately 2.5 million by the mid-1770s. The population of African Americans increased at an even faster rate—from about 28,000 to more than 500,000.

Immigration was important to this growth. Between 1607 and 1775, almost a million people—an estimated 690,000 Europeans and 278,000 Africans—came to the colonies. By 1775, about 2,500 Jewish immigrants lived in the colonies. Most people lived in the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Charles Town, Savannah, and Newport, where they were allowed to worship as they pleased.

There was another reason for the growing population. Colonial women tended to marry early and have large families. In addition,

America—especially New England—turned out to be a very healthy place to live.

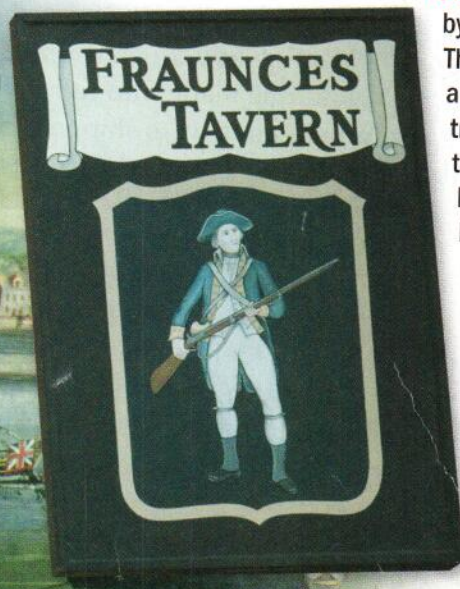
Most people in New England lived in well-organized towns. The meetinghouse stood in the center of the town. This building was used for both church services and town meetings. The meetinghouse faced a piece of land called the *green* or *common*. Here cows grazed and the citizen army trained. Farmers lived in the town and worked in fields on its outskirts.

Farming was the main economic activity in all of the colonies. New England farms were smaller than those farther south. Long winters and thin, rocky soil made large-scale farming difficult. Farmers in New England practiced **subsistence farming**. This means that they generally produced just enough to meet their families' needs, with little left over to sell or exchange. Most Northern farmers **relied**, or depended, on their children for labor. Everyone in the family worked—spinning yarn, preserving fruit, milking cows, fencing in fields, and sowing and harvesting grain.

## Commerce in New England

New England also had a large number of small businesses. Some people used the water-power from the streams on their land to run mills for grinding grain or sawing lumber.

## Primary Source **Travel in Colonial America**



**On the Road** In colonial America, people traveled by land in a stagecoach, on horseback, or on foot. There were only a few roads, and they were unpaved and bumpy. Philip Mackenzie, a young colonial traveler, described a typical trip from Philadelphia to New York: "The Stage Wagon leaves Philadelphia Monday morning at Eight o'clock and [reaches] New York Tuesday afternoon late. We spent the Night at some Inn on the Road."

—from "Young Mackenzie Sees the World" in *The Way Our People Lived: An Intimate American History*

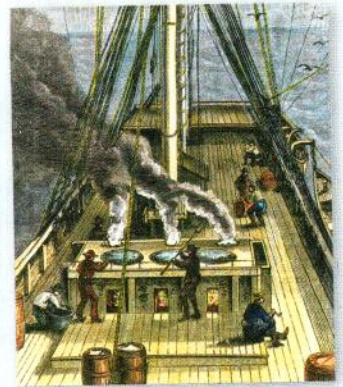
## Critical Thinking

**Making Connections** How do you think geographic distance affected the unity of the American colonies?

## Primary Source Whaling in New England

**American Whaling** English colonists observed Native Americans hunting whales along the coast and took up the practice themselves. In the 1600s, whalers hunted right whales for their oil and bone. When the number of right whales began to decline in the early 1700s, the whalers started using ships to hunt the more profitable sperm whales that lived in the deep water.

Abundant wood from New England's forests allowed Americans to build excellent whaling vessels. ▶



◀ Whale oil lamps



◀ Oarsmen rowed boats within range, and whalers hurled harpoons with an attached line into the whale. Once the animal exhausted itself, it was killed and towed ashore. Whale bone was used to make corsets, collars, and other products.



### Critical Thinking

**Determining Cause and Effect** What factors led to the development of a large whaling industry in New England?

Women made cloth, garments, candles, and soap for their families. They sometimes made enough of these products to sell or trade. Large towns attracted skilled craftspeople. These people were blacksmiths, shoemakers, furniture makers, gunsmiths, metalsmiths, and printers.

Shipbuilding was an important industry in New England. The lumber for building ships came from the nearby forests. Lumber was transported down rivers to the shipyards in coastal towns.

The region also relied on fishing. New Englanders fished for many types of seafood: cod, halibut, crabs, oysters, and lobsters. Some New Englanders ventured far out to sea to hunt whales for oil and whalebone.

### Colonial Trade

Northern coastal cities were the center of the shipping trade. They linked the Northern Colonies with the Southern Colonies. They also linked America to other parts of the world. New England ships sailed south along the Atlantic coast. They traded with the colo-

nies and with islands in the West Indies. Ships also traveled across the Atlantic Ocean, carrying fish, furs, and fruit to trade for manufactured goods in both England and Europe.

These colonial merchant ships followed many different trading routes. Some went directly to England and back. Others followed routes that came to be called the **triangular trade** because the routes formed a triangle.

On one leg of the route, ships brought sugar and molasses from the West Indies to New England. In New England, the molasses would be made into rum. Next, the rum and other goods were shipped to West Africa and traded for enslaved Africans.

Slavery was widely practiced throughout West Africa. Many West African kingdoms enslaved those they defeated in war. Some of the enslaved people were then sold to Arab slave traders. Others were forced to work in gold mines or farm fields. With the arrival of the Europeans, enslaved Africans also began to be shipped to America in exchange for goods.

## The Middle Passage

For enslaved Africans, the voyage to America usually began with a march to a European fort on the West African coast. Tied together with ropes around their necks and hands, they were traded to Europeans, branded, and forced aboard a ship.

The cruelty continued when enslaved Africans were shipped to the West Indies. This part of the voyage was known as the **Middle Passage**. **Olaudah Equiano**, a young African, was forced onto a ship to America. He later described the journey:

### PRIMARY SOURCE

"We were all put under deck. . . The closeness . . . the heat . . . added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. . . The shrieks . . . the groans of the dying, rendered [made] the whole a scene of horror."

—from *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*

Chained together for more than a month, prisoners such as Equiano could hardly sit or stand. They were given little food or water. Africans who died or became sick were thrown overboard. Those who refused to eat were whipped.

Africans who survived the Middle Passage faced another terror when they reached American ports—the slave market. Examined and prodded by plantation owners, most Africans were sold to work as laborers. Historians estimate that about 12 million Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas between the late 1400s and mid-1800s.

With its part in the triangular trade and its shipbuilding and fishing industries, New England flourished. Its population grew, and towns and cities developed.

**Reading Check** **Explaining** Where was the shipping center in America, and where did its trade extend?

# Economics & History



**Triangular Trade** During the colonial era, the desire for enslaved Africans to work plantations in the Americas led to a changed pattern of trade. Trade among Britain, Africa, and the American colonies formed a triangle. The trade in enslaved people formed one leg of the triangle—the terrible Middle Passage. Merchants sold British manufactured goods in Africa, bought enslaved Africans, and carried them to the West Indies to work on plantations. Plantation products, such as sugar, went to Europe, completing the triangle.

### Critical Thinking

**Making Connections** What goods were exported from the colonies in the Americas? Where did these goods go? Why was this trade pattern triangular rather than direct?

## The Middle Colonies

**Main Idea** The economies of the Middle Colonies depended on the sale of cash crops, such as wheat and corn.

**History and You** Have you ever visited a farm? What types of crops or animals were raised there? Read to learn about the effects farming had on the Middle Colonies.

With more fertile soil and a milder climate than New England's, the farms in the Middle Colonies produced bigger harvests. In New York and Pennsylvania, farmers grew large quantities of wheat and other **cash crops**. These crops were used by the farmers' families, but they also were sold in colonial markets and overseas.

Farmers sent cargoes of wheat and livestock to New York City and Philadelphia for shipment. These cities became busy ports. By the 1760s New York City, with 18,000 people, and Philadelphia, with 24,000 people, were the largest cities in the American colonies.

## Industries of the Middle Colonies

Like the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies also had industries. Some were home-based crafts such as carpentry and flour making. Others were larger businesses, such as lumbering, mining, and small-scale manufacturing. One iron mill in northern New Jersey employed several hundred workers. Many of these workers were from Germany. Other, smaller ironworks operated in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

## German Immigrants

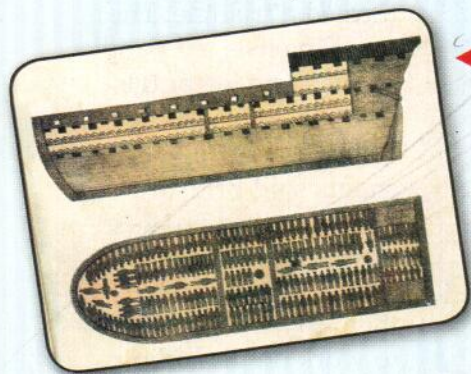
Nearly 100,000 German immigrants came to America in the colonial era. Most settled in Pennsylvania. They successfully farmed the land using European agricultural methods.

The Germans, Dutch, Swedish, and other non-English immigrants gave the Middle Colonies a cultural diversity, or variety, not found in New England. This diversity created a tolerance for the many cultural differences.

**Reading Check** **Explaining** What are cash crops?

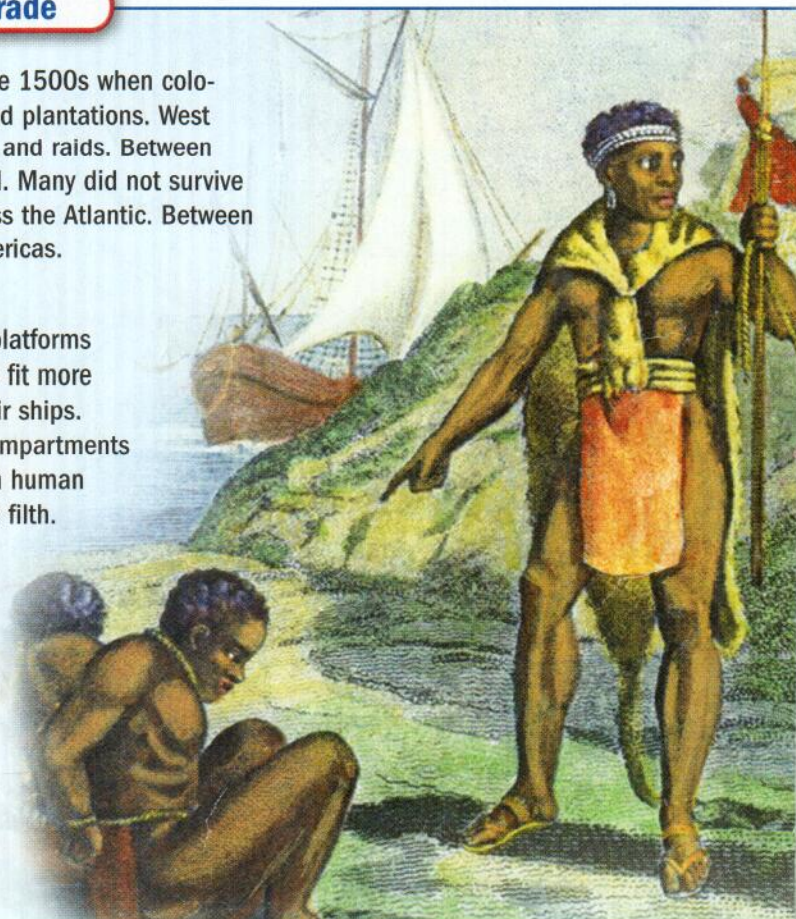
## Primary Source The African Slave Trade

**A Terrible Trade** The transatlantic slave trade began in the 1500s when colonists needed a large labor force to work in their mines and plantations. West African slave traders sold captives acquired through wars and raids. Between 1520 and 1860, nearly 12 million Africans were enslaved. Many did not survive the march to the coastal trading sites or the voyage across the Atlantic. Between 9 and 10 million people faced a life of slavery in the Americas.



◀ Captains added platforms between decks to fit more captives onto their ships. Crowded slave compartments were covered with human waste, blood, and filth.

African slave traders set up road and river routes to move the captives to the coast. At the coastal trading sites, slaves were confined in wooden pens. ▶



# The Southern Colonies and Slavery

**Main Idea** Slavery played a role in the economic success of the Southern Colonies.

**History and You** Think about the types of resources that are needed to manage a large farm. Read to learn about how the economies of the Southern Colonies developed as a result of the physical features of the land and enslaved Africans.

**R**ich soil and a warm climate made the Southern Colonies well suited to certain kinds of farming. Southern farmers could cultivate large areas of land and produce harvests of cash crops. Most settlers in the Southern Colonies made their living from farming, and little commerce or industry developed. For the most part, London merchants rather than local merchants managed Southern trade.

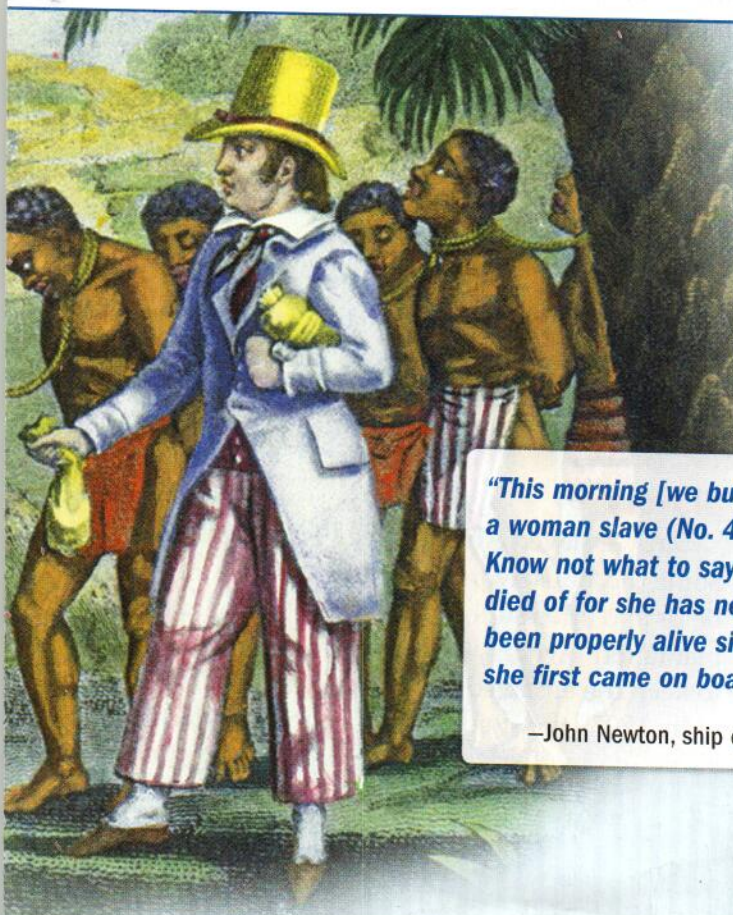
## Tobacco and Rice

Tobacco was the **principal**, or most important, cash crop of Maryland and Virginia.

Most tobacco was sold in Europe, where the demand for it was strong. Growing tobacco and preparing it for sale required a good deal of labor. At first, planters used indentured servants to work in the fields. When indentured servants became scarce and expensive, Southern planters began using enslaved Africans instead.

Slaveholders with large farms grew wealthy from their tobacco crop. Sometimes, however, a **surplus**, or extra amounts, of tobacco on the market caused prices to fall. As a result, the growers' profits also fell. In time, some tobacco planters switched to growing other crops, such as corn and wheat.

The main cash crop in South Carolina and Georgia was rice. In low-lying areas along the coast, planters built dams to create rice fields, called paddies. These fields were flooded when the rice was young and drained when the rice was ready to harvest. Work in the rice paddies was extremely strenuous. It involved standing knee-deep in the mud all day with no protection from the blazing sun or biting insects.



*"This morning [we buried] a woman slave (No. 47). Know not what to say she died of for she has not been properly alive since she first came on board."*

—John Newton, ship captain



◀ During the voyage, slaves were chained together in pairs—right leg to left leg. Crew members used whips and iron collars to punish the captives.

**African Slave Trade 1450–1870**

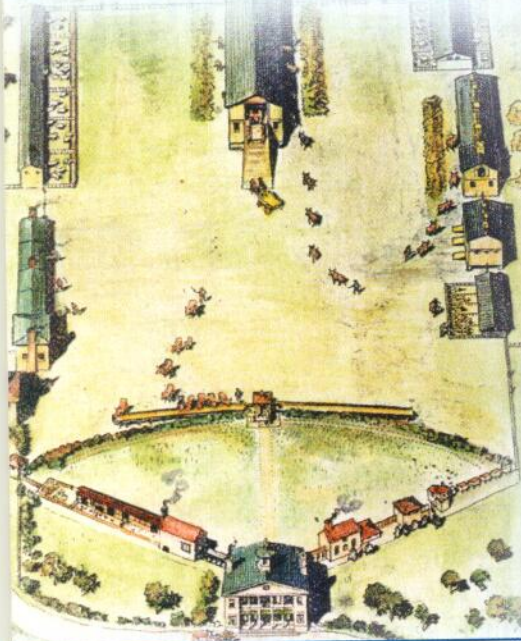
Destination	Total
British America/United States	427,000
Mexico and Central America	224,000
West Indies	4,040,000
Spanish South America	522,000
Guianas	531,000
Brazil	3,647,000
Europe	175,000

## Critical Thinking

**Explaining** What did enslaved Africans experience on the journey from their homes to the Americas?

## Primary Source Plantation Life

**Plantations—Large and Small** Owners of small plantations—those of a few hundred acres—usually owned fewer than 50 slaves. Wealthy planters, in contrast, typically required 200 or more slaves to work their vast estates, which covered several thousand acres.



◀ Plantations often included a Big House, where the owner and his family lived, as well as slaves' cabins, stables, livestock pens, gardens, a kitchen, a sick house, and workshops for blacksmiths, weavers, and tanners.



*"I rose at 5 o'clock this morning and . . . ate milk for breakfast. I said my prayers. Jenny and Eugene [two house slaves] were whipped. I danced my dance [physical exercises]. I read law in the morning and Italian in the afternoon. . . . I walked about the plantation."*

—Virginia plantation owner, 1709

▼ Most slaves worked in the fields from dawn to sunset. The landowner or a hired worker supervised the enslaved Africans.

### Critical Thinking

**Theorizing** What problems do you think a Southern plantation owner commonly faced in the 1700s?

Because rice harvesting required so much strenuous work, rice growers relied on slave labor. Rice proved to be an even more profitable crop than tobacco. As rice became popular in Europe, its price rose steadily. By the 1750s, South Carolina and Georgia had the fastest-growing economies in the colonies.

### Tidewater and Backcountry

Most of the large Southern plantations were located in the **Tidewater**, a region of flat, low-lying plains along the seacoast. Plantations, or large farms, were often located on rivers so crops could be shipped to market by boat.

Each plantation was a self-contained community with fields stretching out around a cluster of buildings. The planter's wife supervised the main house and the household servants. A plantation included slave cabins, barns, and stables, as well as buildings that were used for carpenter and blacksmith shops, storerooms, and kitchens. A large plantation might also have its own chapel and school.

West of the Tidewater lay a region of hills and forests climbing up toward the Appalachian Mountains. This region was known as the **backcountry** and was settled in part by hardy newcomers to the colonies. The backcountry settlers grew corn and tobacco on small farms. They usually worked alone or with their families. Some of these families had one or two enslaved Africans to help them with their work.

In the Southern Colonies, the independent small farmers of the backcountry greatly outnumbered the large plantation owners. The plantation owners, however, were much wealthier and had more influence. They controlled the economic and political life of the region.

### Slavery

Most enslaved Africans lived on plantations. Some did housework, but most worked in the fields and often suffered great cruelty. The large plantation owners hired **overseers**, or bosses, to keep the enslaved Africans working hard.

In 1705, the colony of Virginia created a **slave code**. These were strict rules that

governed the behavior and punishment of enslaved Africans and helped define the relationship between enslaved people and free people. Many other colonies soon followed with their own slave codes.

Some codes did not allow slaves to leave the plantation without the slaveholder's written permission. Some made it illegal to teach enslaved people to read or write. Many of the codes made it illegal for enslaved people to move about freely or assemble in large groups. The codes usually allowed slaves to be whipped for minor offenses and hanged or burned to death for serious crimes. Slaves who ran away were punished severely when caught.

### African Traditions

Enslaved Africans had strong family ties. Often, however, their families were torn apart when a slaveholder sold family members to other slaveholders. Slaves turned to their African roots as a source of strength. They developed a culture that drew on the languages, customs, and traditions of their homelands in West Africa.

Some enslaved Africans learned trades such as carpentry, blacksmithing, or weaving. Skilled workers could sometimes set up shops, sharing their profits with the slaveholders. Some slaves were able to buy their freedom and joined the small population of free African Americans.

### Criticism of Slavery

The majority of white Southerners were not slaveholders. Slavery, however, played an important role in the economic success of the Southern Colonies. That success came to be built on the idea that one human being could own another. Some colonists did not believe in slavery. There was less support for slavery in the Northern Colonies. For example, many Puritans refused to own enslaved people. In Pennsylvania, Quakers and Mennonites condemned slavery. Eventually the debate over slavery would erupt in a bloody war, setting the North against the South.

 **Reading Check** **Describing** What was the purpose of slave codes?

## Section 1 Review

**History ONLINE**  
Study Central™ To review this section, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).

### Vocabulary

1. Define the following terms by using each one in a sentence:  
subsistence farming, rely, triangular trade, Middle Passage, cash crop, principal, surplus, Tidewater, backcountry, overseer, slave code.

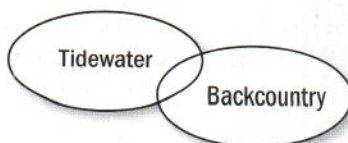
### Main Ideas

2. **Discussing** How did the coastal location of the New England colonies affect their prosperity?
3. **Explaining** Why were the Middle Colonies able to grow large quantities of crops?

4. **Identifying** How did cash crops affect the development of slavery?

### Critical Thinking

5. **Comparing and Contrasting** Use a Venn diagram like the one below to compare and contrast characteristics of the Tidewater and the backcountry in Southern Colonies.



6. **Expository Writing** As a New England farmer, write a letter to relatives in Europe describing your family's daily life.

### Answer the Essential Question

7. **Essential Question** How did geography affect the economic development of the three colonial regions?



# TIME NOTEBOOK

## What were people's lives like in the past?

These two pages will give you some clues to everyday life in the United States as you step back in time with TIME Notebook.

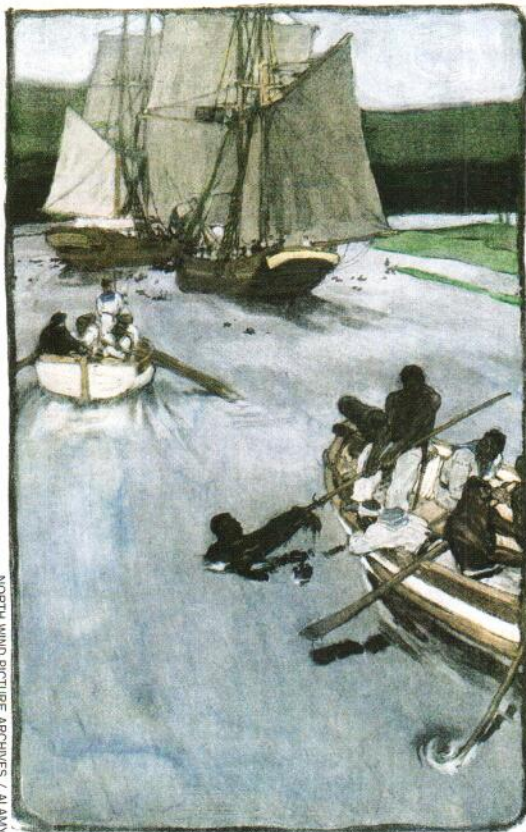
### American Notes

#### FROM PRINCE TO ENSLAVEMENT TO LANDOWNER

In the 1700s, a formerly enslaved African, **VENTURE SMITH**, wrote about his life in a book titled *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture*. Here is an excerpt of his story.

"I was born in Dukandarra, in Guinea [in Africa], about the year 1729. . . . My father's name was Saungm Furro, Prince of the tribe of Dukandarra."

At 6, Venture Smith was kidnapped by an enemy tribe and later sold to the crew of a slave ship. He wrote, "I was bought on board by one Robert Mumford . . . for four gallons of rum, and a piece of calico, and called Venture, on account of his having purchased me with his own private venture [property]. Thus I came by my name. All the slaves that were bought for that vessel's cargo were two hundred and sixty."



NORTH WIND PICTURE ARCHIVES / ALAMY

Venture was brought to Connecticut—where he was sold several times. When he was about 35 he was able to purchase his freedom for "seventy-one pounds, two shillings." He earned this money doing odd jobs, such as "cleaning . . . minks, raising potatoes and carrots, and by fishing in the night."

After years of more work—including sailing on a whaler—he was able to buy the freedom of his wife and children. In his book, Venture wrote, "My freedom is a privilege which nothing else can equal. Notwithstanding all the losses I have suffered . . . by the injustice of knaves. . . . I am now possessed of more than one hundred acres of land, and three habitable dwelling houses."

### VERBATIM

#### WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

“Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1755

“I wish for nothing more than to attain a small degree of knowledge in the military art.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON, in 1755, agreeing to fight with the British army and for King George II in the French and Indian War

“Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me.”

JOHN NEWTON, former slave trader who realized the error of his ways during a violent storm in 1748 that nearly sank his ship. Later he wrote hymns, including “Amazing Grace,” and became an abolitionist.

### BOOM!

Bustling sea trade helped the populations of these port towns grow by leaps and bounds.

	1710	1730	1760
Boston	9,000	13,000	15,600
New York	5,700	8,600	18,000
Philadelphia	6,500	11,500	23,750
Charleston	3,000	4,500	8,000



BOSTON HARBOR IN 1750

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY / ALAMY

**MANNERS**

**Oh, Behave!**

George Washington, sometime before the age of 16, copied by hand a list of rules from a book called *Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation: a Book of Etiquette*. It contains over 100 different things NOT to do in polite society. We have listed four of these tips below . . . and for fun we have added a fake. Can you spot the phony rule?



NORTH WIND PICTURE ARCHIVES / ALAMY

- Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.
- When in company, put not your radio on too loudly as it might congest the ears of others with noise.
- In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.
- If you cough, sneeze, sigh, or yawn, do it not loud but privately; and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.
- When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even, without putting one on the other or crossing them.

Answer: The second item is the fake—the radio had not been invented yet!

**COLONIAL GAMES**

**Play Quoits**

Do you feel left out of the fun when all your friends play quoits—the hot game of the 1700s? Just remember that quoits is a lot like horseshoes—only in this game you toss rings made of rope. Here is how to play one version:



JACK CAREY / ALAMY

- 1) Put two sets of four stakes in the ground—the sets should be 18 feet apart.
- 2) Standing next to one set, take turns with another player tossing two rings at the other set, while trying to loop them around the stakes.
- 3) Scoring:
  - a. 2 points if your two rings land closer to a stake than either of your opponent's.
  - b. 4 points if your ring goes around a stake—this is a “ringer.”
  - c. 3 points if your “ringer” lands on top of your opponent's ring.
- 4) Once a loop touches the ground, it's “dead.” Even if it bounces up over a stake, it does not count.
- 5) After tossing their rings from one set, players start a new round by tossing from the other set.
- 6) The first player to score 21 points wins.

**NUMBERS**

**UNITED STATES AT THE TIME**

**25** Percent of enslaved people who did not survive crossing the Atlantic from Africa to the Americas

**0** Number of American political cartoons before Benjamin Franklin's first one appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1754; Franklin wanted the colonies to join together to defend themselves against a threat by the French and Native Americans



CORBIS

**3 to 10** About the number of years indentured servants had to work in the 1700s to pay back the person who paid for their passage to the Americas

**2** Number of tines, or points, on that new thing called the fork, which has just appeared on a table near you; talk is there will soon be three or four tines

**CRITICAL THINKING**

**Comparing and Contrasting** How are George Washington's etiquette rules similar to and different from today's rules of good manners?

**Hypothesizing** Does sea trade today affect cities in the same way it did in the 1700s? Explain your answer.