

Introduction

What was life like in America, about 400 years ago? How did people survive? What were the towns and cities like? Who was in charge? What did people do for a living? Did kids go to school, or did they have a ton of chores to do all day long? More importantly, did anybody ever have any fun?

If you lived in England during the 17th century, these certainly would be some of the questions you'd be asking. And with good reason...word about town is that America is the place to be! Yes, life in the Colonies is good, according to most sources...a young man or woman can really make a new and better life for themselves as long as they are willing to work hard and abide by English law. Why, the possibilities are endless!



And yet...the decision to remain in England or make the journey to America is a difficult one. The risks are great, and there are no guarantees for success. You learn that a ship is preparing to leave London for the colonies in just a few weeks. What luck! There seems to be room on board for a few more passengers. What will you do? Are you willing to leave family and friends behind to live among strangers? Should you leave the comfort and protection of Mother England for a life of uncertainty in the wilds of America? Too many questions, too little time. The clock is ticking, and you must soon decide...

Task

All students will complete this project working in groups of three. Your group will use the internet, as well as more traditional resources, to write and then perform a dramatization based on the topic. In addition, each member of the group will create an individual project to be used as props in the final presentation.

The Thirteen Colonies were designated into three regions based on geographic, political, and cultural characteristics. They are as follows:

- New England
- Middle
- Southern



Each one of you will be responsible for researching one of the regions and sharing that information with the rest of the group. Every student will craft a unique visual aid that reflects your new learning. Then, your whole group will collaborate on the final product...a 5 minute skit that attempts to answer the questions posed in the third paragraph of the "Introduction" page.

Process

In order to successfully complete your task, continue in the following manner:

Part I

- Begin your initial research by reading "Chapter 1, Creating a Nation" found on pages 102 - 108 in the HUSH history textbook or pages 28-37, 42-49, 54-57 and 62-64 in the AP US History textbook, *The American Pageant*.
- Meet in your group to assign research topics (i.e. one student chooses New England, one chooses the Middle Colonies, and one chooses the South.)
- Use the suggested sources and links to gather information that will be helpful in completing your assigned task. Take good notes and keep track of your sources. You will each turn in two pages of typed research notes (do not just copy from a web site) when the final project is turned in.
- Refer to the "Essential Questions" (see chart below) for guidance as you conduct your research.
- When all research has been completed, meet with your group and discuss your findings. Teach the others in your group everything you've learned about your specific topic. Based on your discussion, select one of the three regions to feature in your presentation.

Part II

- Decide which group member will create each of the required props:
 - Broadside
 - Tri-fold travel brochure
 - Persuasive letter

Part III

- Together with your group, write a script, assume roles, and rehearse, rehearse, rehearse! Remember, you must incorporate all of your props in your skit for full credit.
- Perform your skit for your classmates.

Essential Questions

NEW ENGLAND

As the "expert" on life in New England, consider the following:

- How did the geography of the region affect the culture?
- Why was New England referred to as the "fish locker?"
- To what degree did New Englanders value religion? Education? Community life?
- How did the triangular trade route affect the economy?



MIDDLE

As the "expert" on life in the Middle Colonies, consider the following:

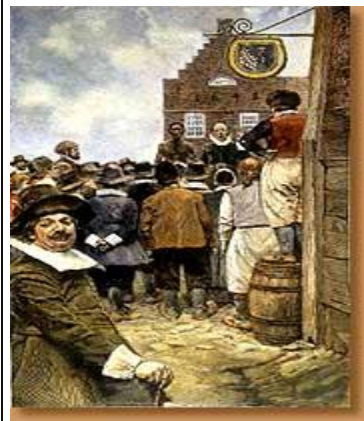
- How did the geography of the region affect the culture?
- Why were the Middle Colonies referred to as the "bread basket?"
- To what extent did diversity affect the overall culture?
- What was life like on the frontier?

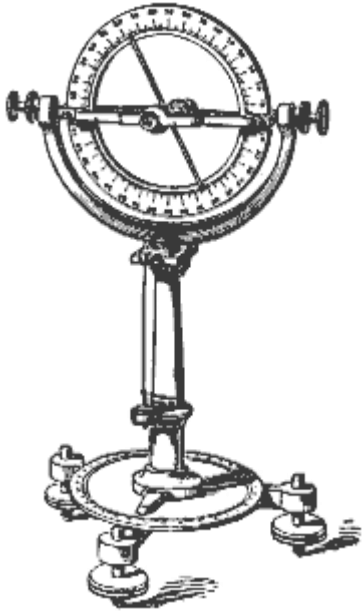


SOUTHERN

As the "expert" on life in the Southern colonies, consider the following:

- How did the geography of the region affect the culture?
- Why were the Southern Colonies referred to as the "tobacco pouch?"
- How did life on the Tidewater differ from life in the Back Country?
- How did the Southern economy differ from that of its northern neighbors?





Additional Resources

If you need more information on life in Colonial America, why not check out some of the following?

- Books (available in the Harbor College Library)
- Mr. Groven's web page has all of the following live links:

Try "navigating" to these helpful web sites...

<http://www.history.com/topics/thirteen-colonies>

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/colonialtimes.htm>

http://www.ducksters.com/history/colonial_america/thirteen_colonies.php

http://www.historyisfun.org/pdf/colonial-life/Colonial_Life.pdf

<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/>

<http://www.jcs-group.com/oldwest/homepage.html>

<http://www.usahistory.info/>