

## The Economy of the Thirteen Colonies

**Overview:** This lesson is designed to help students understand how the land, climate, people, and resources of the Thirteen Colonies led to the Triangular Trade with Africa, Europe, and America, and the economic growth of the Thirteen Colonies.

**Objective and Standard:** The student will identify and locate geographic features associated with the development of the United States. **Benchmark:** Students will identify physical features and analyze their impact as either hindering or promoting settlement, establishment of cities and states, and economic development in the United States.

**Grade Level:** Seven

**Subjects:** United States History, Reading, and Geography

**Time:** Three-Four Days

**Prerequisites:** Prior to this lesson, students were asked to color and identify the following: thirteen colonies, major cities, bodies of water, and physical features.

**Materials:** Large chart paper, markers, sticky notes, physical maps, globes, student text (We will use *The American Journey*, by Applby, Brinkley, and McPherson, © 1998, Glencoe McGraw-Hill Publishing.), *The Era of Colonization & Settlement 1600s-1760s*, ©1997, J. Weston Walch Publisher. Specific materials are listed before each lesson.

Resources: Call to Freedom, Beginnings to 1877, by Stuckey, Salvucci, and Irvin, ©2003, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, also <http://www.proteacher.com/090021.shtml>.

### **Activity One: Small Group Research and Report: Land & Climate, Exports and Laborers**

Materials: Text material on the economy of each of the three colonial regions for the students to read in small groups. The material should include information on land, climate, exports, and laborers. Groups should also have access to globes and physiographic diagrams to examine physical features of the land and the distance of the Americas from Europe. Students can be given flow charts to fill out on the colonies, or create them in their notebook.

Time: One 40 minute class.

Purpose: Students will discover how land, climate, resources and laborers contributed to the economy of the colonies.

Preassessment: Anticipation Guide

Activity: Students will be split into groups of four or five. They will study physical maps and globes, and read about one of the following regions: the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies, or the Southern Colonies. Groups will become “experts” on their region and will search for information about crops, produce, livestock, growing seasons (climate), land (rich or

poor soil), industries, resources (rivers, timber, beaver) and laborers. All information will be recorded by the group on a flow chart and presented to the large group.

Note: Help students to understand the idea of a “colony” and its relationship to its home country. Resources were shipped back to Europe.

As presentations are made, students will fill out flow charts on each of the regions (Flow charts will have spaces for descriptions of land/climate, resources/crops, laborers, and industry/produce/cash crops.) After examining the flow charts, students will be asked to look again at the maps they created and answer the following reflection questions:

- What impact do you think the rivers had on the colonies? (borders, transportation, irrigation, etc.)
- What do the major cities on your maps have in common? (port cities) Why were the port cities important and successful?
- How will the climate of a colony impact its economy?
- What other geographical features do you think had an impact on the economies of the colonies?
- Explain how the economy of the different colonies was similar.

Closing: Think/Pair Share

Considering the additional information about the colonies that you have learned, where would you choose to settle? Why?

Assignment: On your Thirteen Colonies map, add symbols to represent goods exported from the colonies. Example: a ship might represent the ship building industry.

### **Activity Two: Mercantilism and the Navigational Acts**

Materials: Class set of p. 70-71, *The Colonial Economy*, The Era of Colonization & Settlement 1600s-1760s, ©1997, J. Weston Walch Publisher, by Katy Sammis, and student text with maps.

Time: one 40 minute class

Purpose: Students will evaluate how trade impacted the economy, and how each colony needed to develop a product that was valuable enough to send the long distance back to Europe. They will analyze the Navigational Acts and how they impacted the colonies.

The teacher will introduce the following terms: mercantilism, and Navigational Acts. Ask the students to trace the trade route from the colonies to England on maps, and discuss how the distance from Europe to the colonies might impact the economy.

Students will “popcorn” read the article *The Colonial Economy*.

In small groups (with an assigned time keeper, reporter, and recorder) students will answer the following questions which will be posted on a transparency:

- A. Discuss why certain goods would be shipped long distances (i.e. fur was portable, tobacco and cotton were not produced in England, rum was a concentrated form of sugar, timber was needed for shipping, furniture, etc.)
- B. How did Britain benefit from the Navigation Acts?
- C. How do you think the colonists felt about the Navigation Acts? Make a prediction about what disagreements on this issue might lead to.
- D. Do you feel that rules about trade should be defined by a government? Explain how this might affect trade and economy today.

Reporters will share their group’s opinions.

Assignment: Read Chapter 4, Lesson 1 (Life in the Colonies) using Insert Note Taking

Insert Note Taking is when students insert a sticky note on the text page indicating new information that they understand (+), and information they found confusing (?). When students are finished reading the text they record these new information pieces into two columns in their notebook. Students are invited to share both in class.

### **Activity Three: Triangular Trade**

Resources: Student Text, class set of the Colonist Letter assignment

Time: One 40 minute Class

Purpose: Help students to synthesize what they have learned about the triangular trade.

Invite students to share Insert Note Taking by recording information in a table on the overhead:

<u>(+) New Information I Understand</u>	<u>New Information that is Confusing (?)</u>
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Help students to note the following:

- how New England’s natural resources affected its economy
- how plantation owners in the southern colonies justified their use of enslaved Africans
- cultural diversity found in the Middle Colonies
- international vs. local economy

Discuss the assigned reading and the Triangular Trade map on p. 106 of their text.

Assignment: Colonist Letter (Final Assessment of the Lesson)

You will be cooperatively creating a colonist who has recently moved to America and is involved in mercantilism. Write a letter to a person in your country of origin that explains the following:

- A. Explain the reason you came to America.
- B. Share what business you are going into and why it is a good choice for the area you settled in (include important features from the Five Themes of Geography, and consider the Navigational Acts as well as international and local trade).
- C. Explain your involvement in the Triangular Trade and how you feel about it.
- D. Include a map of Triangular Trade as it pertains to imports and exports in your colony.
- E. Close your letter with an enthusiastic invitation to join the colony and the benefits of doing so.

**Differentiation:** I will have modified readings for an exchange student and struggling readers.

**Assessment:** I will use a rubric to evaluate the Colonist Letter as the final assessment.

**Credit:** Christine Sands, Middle School Social Studies and Language Arts Teacher, Immaculate Conception School, Columbia Heights, MN

**Assignment:** Colonist Letter (Final Assessment of the Lesson)

You will be cooperatively creating a colonist who has recently moved to America and is involved in mercantilism. Write a letter to a person in your country of origin that explains the following:

- F. Explain the reason you came to America.
- G. Share what business you are going into and why it is a good choice for the area you settled in (include important features from the Five Themes of Geography, and consider the Navigational Acts as well as international and local trade).
- H. Explain your involvement in the Triangular Trade and how you feel about it.
- I. Include a map of Triangular Trade as it pertains to imports and exports in your colony.
- J. Close your letter with an enthusiastic invitation to join the colony and the benefits of doing so.

## Anticipation Guide

Answer the questions below either true (T) or False (F).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The northern Colonies never used slaves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Since all of the Colonies were near the Atlantic coast, their exports were all the same.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Beaver skins, rum and timber were a popular trade items.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. New England has rich, fertile soil.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Mountains formed a natural border along the west side of the colonies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Most cities in the Thirteen Colonies were located near lakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Early colonists settled in America were all involved in farming.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The colonies could establish trade with whoever they wanted to, as long as they paid taxes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Whales were important to the colonial diet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. All of the cash crops that were produced were used for food.