

The American Colonies

Complete Unit Guide Packet

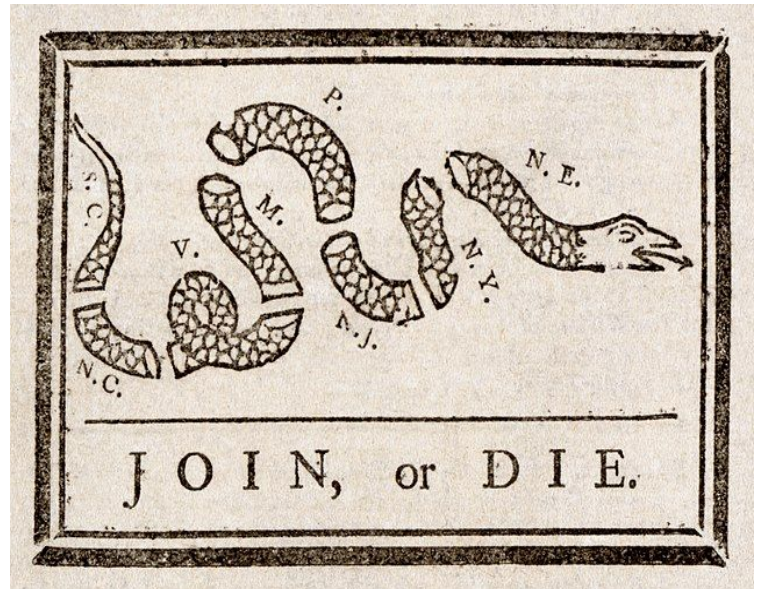
Overview

The [American Colonies](#) were a group of British colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America founded in the 17th and 18th centuries. The first English colony was founded at [Jamestown](#), Virginia, in 1607 by investors looking to make money. The Pilgrims, founders of [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts, arrived in 1620. These and many of the people who settled in the New World came to escape religious persecution. The Colonies came to be generally broken up into three regions: New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies.

Between 1625 and 1775, the population of the Colonies grew from roughly 2,000 to 2.4 million, displacing many American Indians. This population included people, overwhelmingly from Africa, who were enslaved.

[Slavery](#) remained legal in all the colonies prior to the Revolutionary War.

In the 18th century, the British government operated its colonies under a policy of [mercantilism](#), in which the central government administered its colonies for the economic benefit of the mother country. The 13 American Colonies had a high degree of self-governance and active local elections, and they resisted demands for more control. [The French and Indian War](#) led to growing tensions between Britain and the Colonies. In the 1750s, the colonies began collaborating with one another instead of dealing directly with Britain. These inter-colonial activities cultivated a sense of shared American identity and led to calls for protection of their rights, especially the principle of “no taxation without representation”. Grievances with the British government led to the American Revolution, in which the colonies collaborated in forming the [Continental Congress](#). The colonists fought the Revolutionary War in 1775 with the aid of France and win their independence in 1783.



Essential Questions

- What would make you leave your home to start a new life in a new location?
- How did explorations and settlements of the English differ from those of the Spanish?
- How were the lives American Indians affected by European colonization?
- How did the New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies differ from one another?
- In what ways did geography affect the development of colonial America?
- What led to the introduction of African slavery in the American Colonies?
- How did democracy take root in the American Colonies?
- What aspects of American government today can be traced back to Colonial America?

Vocabulary

Directions: Write the definition for each word in the column next to it **in your own words**.

Joint Stock Company	
Virginia Company	
House of Burgesses	
Indentured Servant	
Bacon's Rebellion	
Mayflower Compact	
Direct Democracy	
Puritans	
Quakers	
Middle Passage	
Great Awakening	

Geography of the American Colonies

Directions: Use the map of the 13 British Colonies to answer the questions below.

Which are the New England Colonies?

Which are the Middle Colonies?

Which are the Southern Colonies?

What were some of the largest cities in the American Colonies?

Why do you think the colonies grew larger in area as you go South?



People to Know

Directions: Use the bank of names below to identify the appropriate category for each person. For each person, identify the Colonial region he or she was from and the significant contributions that person made in history.

[John Smith](#)

[John Winthrop](#)

[Metacom](#)

[Pocahontas](#)

[Powhatan](#)

[Roger Williams](#)

[William Penn](#)

[Anne Hutchinson](#)

[Jonathan Edwards](#)

American Indians	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:
Important Colonial Figures	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:
	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:	Name: Region: Contributions:

Timeline of the American Colonies

Directions: Research [each event](#) from the [Colonial Era](#) on the [timeline](#). Then, place the year in the first column and then describe the impact of each event in the last column.

Year	Event	Impact
	Virginia Company founds Jamestown	
	1st Enslaved Africans Brought to Virginia	
	Pilgrims found Plymouth Colony	
	Dutch Buy Manhattan from American Indians	
	Puritans found Massachusetts Bay Colony	
	King Philip’s War Begins	
	Bacon’s Rebellion	
	William Penn granted charter for Pennsylvania	
	Salem Witch Trials	
	France Establishes New Orleans	
	Georgia Founded by James Oglethorpe	
	French and Indian War Begins	

Describe how the relationship between European colonists and American Indians changed over this time period.

Which event(s) had the biggest impact on the Colonies move towards seeing independence?

Key Concepts

Directions: After [reading](#) about the [13 Colonies](#), either takes notes on the required topics or answer the questions in complete sentences.

	Colonies	Geography	Social Aspects	Economic Activities
New England Colonies				
Middle Colonies				
Southern Colonies				

What did John Winthrop mean when he said that [Massachusetts Bay Colony](#) “shall be as a city upon a hill”?

“For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.”
- John Winthrop, 1630

“Bacon had got over the [James] River with his Forces, and hastening away into the woods, went directly and fell upon the Indians and killed some of them [who] were our best Friends....Bacon’s people would not make any distinction of Friendly Indians and Indian Enemies, for at that time it was impossible to distinguish one nation from another, they being deformed with paint of many colors. So, the common cry of the Vulgar was, away with these distinctions, we will have war with all Indians...we will spare none.”

The King’s Royal Commissioners Narrative, presented to the King in Oct. 1677.

[Bacon’s Rebellion](#) was an armed rebellion in 1676 by 300-400 Virginian settlers led by Nathaniel Bacon against Governor William Berkeley.

Why were Bacon and his forces rebelling?

How did their actions make matters worse for the settlers of Jamestown?

Which colonies were founded by people from other colonies?

Why do you think Georgia was founded so much later than the other colonies?

Colony Name	Founded	Founded by	Become Colony
Virginia	1607	London Company	1624
Massachusetts	1620	Puritans	1691
New Hampshire	1623	John Wheelwright	1679
Maryland	1634	Lord Baltimore	N/A
Connecticut	c. 1635	Thomas Hooker	N/A
Rhode Island	1636	Roger Williams	N/A
Delaware	1638	Peter Minuit and New Sweden Company	N/A
North Carolina	1653	Virginians	1729
South Carolina	1663	Eight Nobles with a Royal Charter from Charles II	1729
New Jersey	1664	Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret	1702
New York	1664	Duke of York	1685
Pennsylvania	1682	William Penn	N/A
Georgia	1732	James Edward Oglethorpe	1752

This is a **letter** written by **William Penn** to the “King of the Indians” after he was granted a royal charter by King Charles II.

What is the tone of Penn's letter?

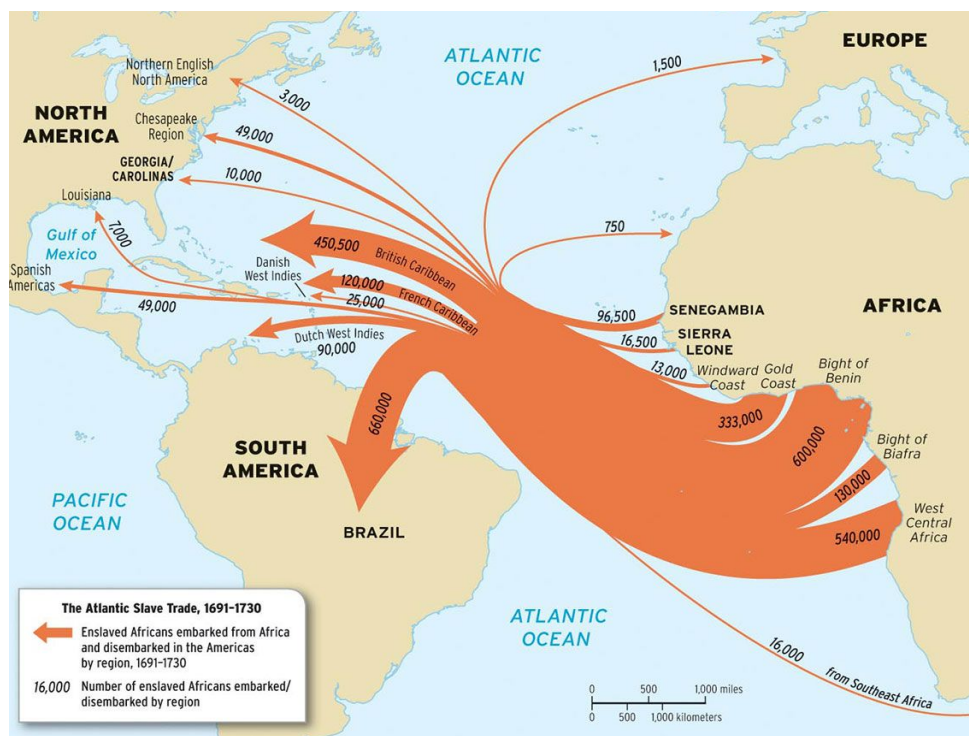
How was this different from other colonies at the time?

“The king of the Country where I live hath given unto me a great Province, but I desire to enjoy it with your Love and Consent, that we may all always live together as Neighbors and friends... Now I would have you well to observe, that I am very sensible of the unkindness and injustice that hath been too much exercised towards you by the people of these parts of the world, who have sought themselves, to make great advantages by you, rather than be examples of goodness unto you ... But I am not such a man, as is well known in my own Country. I have great love and regard towards you, and I desire to gain your love & friendship by a kind, just, and peaceable life... The People I send are of the same mind & shall in all things behave themselves accordingly.”
– William Penn, 1681

The Slave Trade

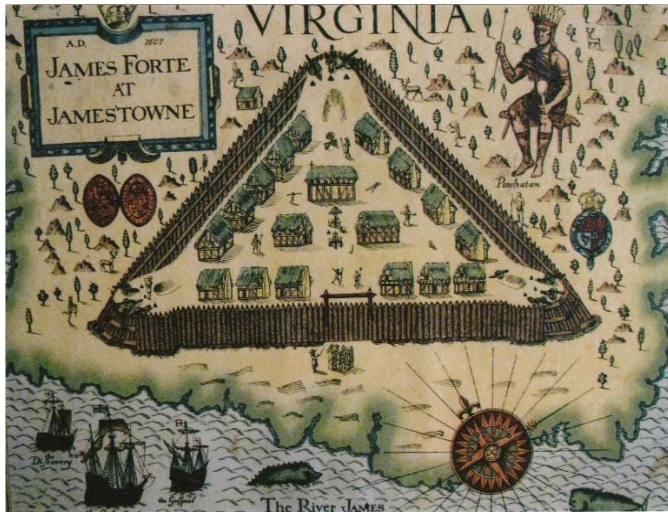
The **Middle Passage** was the stage of the triangular trade in which millions of Africans were forcibly transported to the New World as part of the Atlantic slave trade.

Where were most enslaved people brought to? Why there?



Visual Literacy

Directions: Use the included images and captions to answer each of question.



Drawing of James [Fort at Jamestown Colony](#) in 1607.

What else is seen in the drawing outside of the Fort?

Why do you think the fort was built in this shape?



In this drawing from John Smith's "[General History of Virginia](#)", he shows, "King Powhatan commands C. Smith to be slain, his daughter Pocahontas begs his life..."

Some historians believe Smith is exaggerating this story. What do you believe and why?

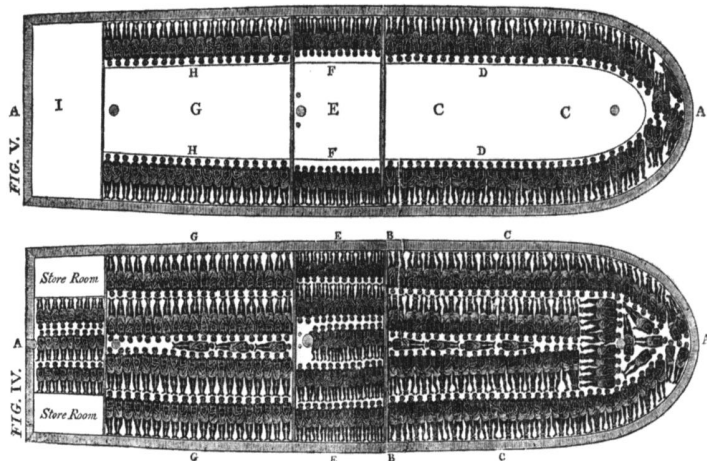


Diagram of a slave ship from the [Atlantic slave trade](#). (From an [Abstract of Evidence delivered before the House of Commons in 1790.](#))

How long do you estimate the voyage across the Atlantic took in this ship?

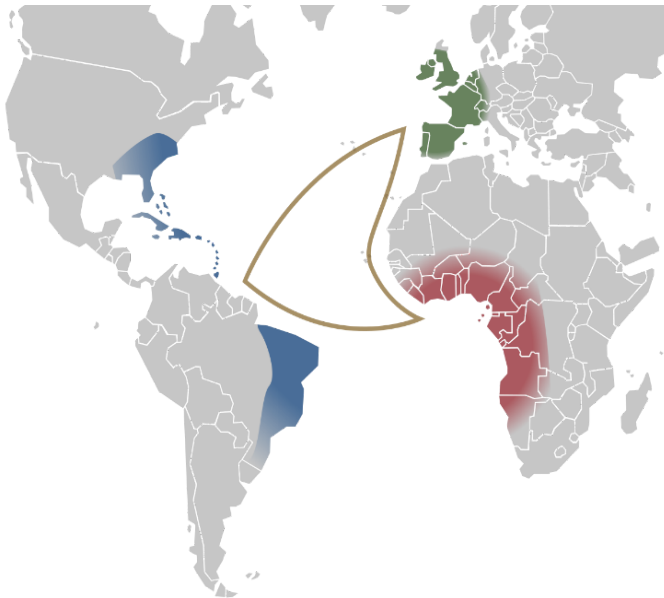
Based on the sketch, how would you describe the conditions aboard this ship?



The **first Thanksgiving** was a harvest celebration held by the pilgrims of Plymouth colony in the 17th century. Many myths surround the first Thanksgiving.

Based on your knowledge of history, what do you believe is accurate and inaccurate about this image?

The Triangle of Trade



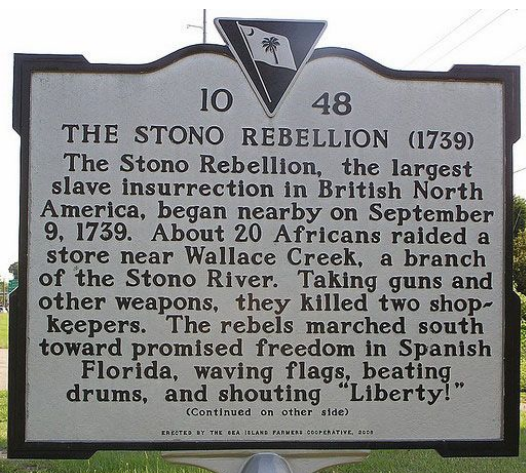
In the **Triangle of Trade**, ships departed Europe for African markets with manufactured goods. These were traded for purchased or kidnapped Africans, who were transported across the Atlantic as slaves. The enslaved were then sold or traded for raw materials, which would be transported back to Europe.

Describe the impact this trade network had on:

(a) Europe:

(b) Africa:

(c) The Americas:



The **Stono Rebellion** (sometimes called Cato's Rebellion) was a slave uprising in the colony of South Carolina. It was the largest slave uprising in the British mainland colonies, with 25 white people and 35 to 50 black people killed.

What was the goal of those rebelling at Stono?

What impact do you think the rebellion had?