Early British Colonies

BEFORE YOU READ
In the last section, you learned how the Spanish claimed an empire in the Americas.
In this section, you will learn how the British came to North America and founded their own colonies.

AS YOU READ
Use this diagram to take notes. The notes will help you keep track of the colonies founded by the British in North America.

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<th>COLONY</th>
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<td>New Netherland</td>
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The English Settle
at Jamestown (pages 21–23)

What happened at Jamestown?
In 1607, English settlers sent by the Virginia Company, led by John Smith, founded the colony of Jamestown in Virginia. The Virginia Company was one of a number of joint-stock companies—groups of investors who pooled their wealth in support of a colony they hoped would yield a profit.

Many colonists wanted to get rich quick by finding gold or furs. But Smith forced them to farm. He also got help from the native Powhatan people. After Smith returned to England, the colonists almost starved. They were saved when more colonists and supplies arrived from England.

Then the colonists discovered they could sell tobacco in Europe for a big profit. They hired indentured servants to work on tobacco plantations. These workers traveled to America from
Europe. They received food and a place to live. In exchange, they agreed to work on a plantation.

The Jamestown colony grew and needed more land for farming. The English settlers took Powhatan land, and the Powhatan fought back.

The settlers also fought among themselves. Poor farmers complained about being taxed and governed without being able to vote. But their rebellion failed.

1. What were two problems Jamestown faced?

Puritans Create a “New England” (pages 24–26)

Why did the Puritans come to America?

The Puritans were a religious group that wanted to purify the Church of England by removing some of the practices that were more like the Catholic Church. They had been punished in England. In 1620, a small group of Puritans came to North America and founded the colony of Plymouth.

In 1630, Puritans started the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Unlike the settlers in Jamestown, the Puritans were well prepared with people and supplies. John Winthrop was their first governor.

Puritans controlled the colony. They did not like dissent, or the expression of other points of view. Dissenters like Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson both had to leave Massachusetts. They settled in what is now Rhode Island.

Native Americans helped the Puritans at first. As the colony grew, however, settlers began to take their lands. Native Americans died of European diseases. And the settlers wanted the Native Americans to accept Puritan laws and religion.

In 1675, King Philip’s War began. A chief the English called King Philip led an alliance of Native Americans against the settlers. The brutal war lasted over a year, until the English finally won.

2. What did the Puritans want to find in America?

Settlement of the Middle Colonies (pages 26–28)

How were New Netherland and Pennsylvania alike?

Dutch settlers founded the colony of New Netherland in 1621. The capital of New Netherland was New Amsterdam. To encourage settlers to come and stay, the colony practiced religious tolerance and welcomed all ethnic groups and religions.

The Dutch had friendly relations with the Native Americans. In 1664, England took over the colony and renamed it New York.

The colony of Pennsylvania was founded by William Penn. Penn was a Quaker. The ideals of this religious group were equality, cooperation, and religious tolerance. Pennsylvania gave land to all adult men and had a representative assembly. Penn also treated Native Americans fairly.

3. What two things did New Netherland and Pennsylvania have in common?

England and Its Colonies Prosper (pages 28–30)

How did the colonies thrive?

Trade was the main reason England wanted colonies. The theory of mercantilism said that a nation becomes rich and powerful two ways: (1) by getting gold and silver, and (2) by selling more goods than it buys.

England’s American colonies provided raw materials to England. They also bought goods made in England. Under this system, both England and its colonies gained wealth. In 1651, England’s Parliament passed the Navigation Acts. Their purpose was to control trade with the colonies.

By 1732, there were 13 English colonies. Governors appointed by the king headed most colonial governments. Only white men who owned land could vote. Colonial assemblies had the right to raise taxes and make laws.

4. How did England benefit from its colonies?