

PERIOD 2: 1607–1754

Chapter 2 *The Thirteen Colonies and the British Empire, 1607–1754*

Chapter 3 *Colonial Society in the 18th Century*

In a period of almost 150 years during the 17th and 18th centuries, the British established 13 colonies along the Atlantic coast that provided a profitable trade and a home to a diverse group of people.

Overview From the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in North America to the start of a decisive war for European control of the continent, the colonies evolved. At first, they struggled for survival, but they became a society of permanent farms, plantations, towns, and cities. European settlers brought various cultures, economic plans, and ideas for governing to the Americas. In particular, with varying approaches, they all sought to dominate the native inhabitants. The British took pride in their tradition of free farmers working the land. The various colonies developed regional or sectional differences based on many influences including topography, natural resources, climate, and the background of their settlers. They largely viewed the American Indian as an obstacle to colonial growth. With their emphasis on agriculture came a demand for labor, and this led to a growing dependence on slavery and the Atlantic slave trade to power the economy. The start of the Seven Years' War signified the maturity of the British colonies and the influence of European conflicts in the power struggle for control in North America.

Alternate View Historians disagree on what date best marks the end of the colonial era. Some identify the conclusion of the Seven Years' War in 1763 or the start of the American Revolution in 1775 or the signing of a peace treaty in 1783. Historians who focus on cultural rather than political and military events might choose other dates for both the start and end of the period that emphasize the role of non-English residents, such as the Scotch-Irish, Germans, and enslaved Africans, in the colonies.

Key Concepts

2.1: Differences in imperial goals, cultures, and the North American environments that different empires confronted led Europeans to develop diverse patterns of colonization.

2.2: European colonization efforts in North America stimulated intercultural contact and intensified conflict between the various groups of colonizers and native peoples.

2.3: The increasing political, economic, and cultural exchanges within the "Atlantic World" had a profound impact on the development of colonial societies in North America.

Source: *AP U. S. History Curriculum Frameworks, 2014–2015*, The College Board

Middle Passage. Those Africans who survived the frightful voyage would be traded as slaves in the West Indies for a cargo of sugarcane. Third, completing the last side of the triangle, the ship would return to a New England port where the sugar would be sold to be used in making rum. Every time one type of cargo was traded for another, the slave-trading entrepreneur usually succeeded in making a substantial profit.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: HOW INFLUENTIAL WERE THE PURITANS?

To what extent did the Puritan founders of Massachusetts shape the development of an American culture? Although some early historians such as James Truslow Adams have minimized the Puritan role, more recent scholars generally agree that the Puritans made significant cultural and intellectual contributions. There is continuing disagreement, however, about whether the Puritan influence encouraged an individualistic spirit or just the opposite.

Some historians have concentrated their study on the writings and sermons of the Puritan clergy and other leaders. They have concluded that the leaders stressed conformity to a strict moral code and exhorted people to sacrifice their individuality for the common good. According to these historians, in other words, the Puritan influence tended to suppress the individualism that later came to characterize American culture.

Other historians believe that the opposite is true. They raise objections to the method of studying only sermons and the journals of leading Puritans such as John Winthrop. If one examines the writings and actions of ordinary colonists in Massachusetts society, say these historians, then one observes many instances of independent thought and action by individuals in Puritan society. According to their argument, American individualism began with the Puritan colonists.

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KEY MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–2 refer to the excerpt below.

“Be it therefore ordered and enacted. . . . That whatsoever person or persons within this Province. . . shall henceforth blaspheme God, that is, curse Him or shall deny our Savior Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, or shall deny the Holy Trinity . . . or the Godhead of any of the said Three persons of the Trinity or the Unity of the Godhead . . . shall be punished with death and confiscation or forfeiture of all his or her lands. . . . And whereas . . . that no person or persons whatsoever within this province, or the islands, ports, harbors, creeks, or havens thereunto belonging professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth be any way troubled, molested or discountenanced for or in respect of his or her religion nor in free exercise thereof within this province or the islands thereunto belonging nor any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other Religion against his or her consent.”

—The Maryland Act of Toleration, 1649

1. Which of the following religious groups were the authors of the Maryland Act of Toleration trying to protect?
 - (A) Jews
 - (B) Puritans
 - (C) Quakers
 - (D) Roman Catholics
2. Which of the following best summarizes the attitude toward religious beliefs expressed in this document?
 - (A) All individuals should be free to believe or not believe in God as they wished
 - (B) Religion was a personal matter that the government should not try to influence
 - (C) Christians should be able to practice their faith without fear of persecution
 - (D) The colony should be reserved for the one specific type of Christianity approved by the local government officials

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Questions 3–5 refer to the excerpt below.

“These at the heads of James and York rivers . . . grew impatient at the many slaughters of their neighbors and rose for own defense, who choosing Mr. Bacon for their leader, sent oftentimes to the Governor, . . . beseeching a commission to go against the Indians at their own charge; which His Honor as often promised, but did not send. . . .

“During these protractations and people often slain, most or all the officers, civil and military, . . . met and concerted together, the danger of going without a commission on the one part and the continual murders of their neighbors on the other part. . . . This day lapsing and no commission come, they marched into the wilderness in quest of these Indians, after whom the Governor sent his proclamation, denouncing all rebels who should not return within a limited day; whereupon those of estates obeyed. But Mr. Bacon, with fifty-seven men, proceeded. . . . They fired and . . . slew 150 Indians.”

—Samuel Kercheval, Virginia author and lawyer, “On Bacon’s Rebellion in Virginia,” 1833

3. Based on the information in this excerpt, what is Samuel Kercheval’s point of view toward Bacon and his followers?
- (A) They were dangerous men who threatened colonial stability and prosperity
 - (B) They were frustrated men who were taking action because the government did not
 - (C) They were allies of the governor who carried out actions that he supported
 - (D) They were a primarily political movement that wanted Bacon to become governor
4. Bacon’s Rebellion was initiated by a group of farmers who felt most directly threatened by
- (A) an increase in royal taxes
 - (B) the power of large planters
 - (C) conflicts with American Indians
 - (D) the growth of the slave trade
5. Which of the following led the opposition to Bacon’s Rebellion?
- (A) leaders of the Church of England
 - (B) members of the Virginia House of Burgesses
 - (C) soldiers from the British army
 - (D) the colonial governor

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Maryland Act of Toleration, 1649

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Questions 6–8 refer to the excerpt below.

“As touching the quality of this country, three thinges there bee, which in fewe yeares may bring this Colony to perfection; the English plough, Vineyards, & Cattle. . . .

“All our riches for the present doe consiste in Tobacco, wherein one man by his owne laboour hath in one yeare, raised to himself to the value of 200 sterling; and another by the means of sixe seruants hath cleared at one crop a thousand pound english. These be true, yet indeed rare examples, yet possible to be done by others. Our principall wealth (I should haue said) consisteth in servants: but they are chargeable to be furnished with armes, apparel, & bedding, and for their transportation, and casuall both at sea, & for their first yeare commonly at lande also: but if they escape, they proove very hardy, and sound able men.”

—John Pory, Secretary of Virginia, Letter to Sir Dudley Carlton, 1619

6. What did Pory predict for the future of Virginia?
 - (A) it would approach “perfection” because of agricultural products
 - (B) it would prosper by selling “armes, apparel, & bedding”
 - (C) it would decline if its “riches” continued to “consiste in Tobacco”
 - (D) it would collapse unless it found laborers who were “very hardy”
7. Which of the following groups made up most of the servants referred to in the passage?
 - (A) American Indians
 - (B) Indentured servants from Europe
 - (C) Enslaved Africans
 - (D) Women whose husbands had escaped
8. The primary market for the Virginia tobacco crop during this period was
 - (A) Virginia
 - (B) England
 - (C) New England
 - (D) Africa

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

Briefly answer the questions in complete sentences. A thesis is not required.

Question 1. Answer a and b.

- a) Explain how ONE of the following supports this statement: "Puritan intolerance of dissent led to the founding of a number of new colonies."
 - Hartford
 - Portsmouth
 - Providence
- b) Identify an individual who founded one of these new colonies and briefly describe his or her basic idea that challenged Puritan principles.

Question 2 is based on the following excerpt.

"[This colony] was for the most part at first peopled by persons of low circumstances. . . . Nor was it hardly possible it should be otherwise; for 'tis not likely that any man of a plentiful estate should voluntarily abandon a happy certainty to roam after imaginary advantages in a New World. Besides which uncertainty, must have proposed to himself to encounter the infinite difficulties and dangers that attend a new settlement. These discouragements were sufficient to terrify any man that could live easy in England from going to provoke his fortune in a strange land."

—Robert Beverly, historian, *The History and Present State of Virginia*, 1705

2. Using the excerpt, answer a and b.

- a) Briefly explain the main point of the passage.
- b) Briefly explain BOTH whether you agree with the main point AND why you do or do not. Provide evidence from your knowledge of colonial history.

Question 3. Answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain which of William Penn's three purposes for his "Holy Experiment" in Pennsylvania—religious toleration, government based on liberal ideas, and personal profit—were not found in any of the other original English colonies.
- b) Briefly explain which of Penn's three purposes would prove to be the most difficult for him to fulfill.
- c) Briefly explain how one of the other 13 original colonies came close to Penn's purpose of religious toleration.

Question 4 is based on the following excerpts.

“As to the natives of this country, I find them entirely savage and wild, strangers to all decency, yea, uncivil and stupid as garden stakes, proficient in all wickedness and ungodliness, devilish men who serve nobody but the devil. . . . They have so much witchcraft, divination, sorcery, and wicked arts that they can hardly be held in by any bands or locks. They are as thievish and treacherous as they are tall, and in cruelty they are altogether inhuman.”

—Jonas Michaelius, pastor, Dutch Reformed Church, Letter to Reverend Andrianus Smoutius, 1628

“I confess I think no great good will be done till they [Indians] be more civilized. But why may not God begin with some few to awaken others by degrees? Nor do I expect any great good will be wrought by the English . . . because God is wont ordinarily to convert nations and peoples by some of their own countrymen who are nearest to them and can best speak, and, most of all, pity their brethren and countrymen.”

—John Eliot, Puritan “The Day-Breaking of the Gospel with the Indians,” 1646

4. Using the excerpts, answer a, b, and c.
 - a) Briefly explain the main point in passage 1.
 - b) Briefly explain the main point in passage 2.
 - c) Provide ONE piece of evidence from the colonial period that is not included in the passages and explain how it supports the interpretations in either passage.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTINUITY

Essay questions often ask students to focus on how a society has stayed the same or evolved over time. Which THREE of the questions or statements below would best be answered with an essay that emphasizes historical continuity and change over time?

1. How did the Massachusetts and the Chesapeake colonies differ?
2. Use examples from both New England and Virginia to show the development in colonial America of a pattern of resistance to authority.
3. Describe how attitudes toward equality evolved during the colonial era.
4. Between 1607 and 1754, did the colonies become more or less like England?
5. What caused the colonial economy to prosper?

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power for generations. The common people everywhere tended to defer to their "betters" and to depend upon the privileged few to make decisions for them.

Without question, colonial politics was restricted to participation by white males only. Even so, compared with other parts of the world, the English colonies showed tendencies toward democracy and self-government that made their political system unusual for the time.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS COLONIAL SOCIETY DEMOCRATIC?

Was colonial America "democratic" or not? The question is important for its own sake and also because it affects one's perspective on the American Revolution and on the subsequent evolution of democratic politics in the United States. Many historians have focused on the politics of colonial Massachusetts. Some have concluded that colonial Massachusetts was indeed democratic, at least for the times. By studying voting records and statistics, they determined that the vast majority of white male citizens could vote and were not restricted by property qualifications. According to these historians, class differences between an elite and the masses of people did not prevent the latter from participating fully in colonial politics.

Other historians question whether broad voting rights by themselves demonstrate the existence of real democracy. The true test of democratic practice, they argue, would be whether different groups in a colonial town felt free to debate political questions in a town meeting. In the records of such meetings, they found little evidence of true political conflict and debate. Instead, they found that the purpose of town meetings in colonial days was to reach a consensus and to avoid conflict and real choices. These historians believe that the nature of consensus-forming limited the degree of democracy.

A third historical perspective is based on studies of economic change in colonial Boston. According to this view, a fundamental shift from an agrarian to a maritime economy occurred in the 18th century. In the process, a new elite emerged to dominate Boston's finances, society, and politics. The power of this elite prevented colonial Massachusetts from being considered a true democracy.

The question remains: To what extent were Massachusetts and the other colonies democratic? Much of the answer depends on the definition of democracy.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the excerpt below.

“To understand political power . . . we must consider what estate all men are naturally in, and that it is a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions . . . within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man. . . .

“Whosoever therefore out of a state of nature unite into a community must be understood to give up all the power necessary to the ends for which they unite into society, to the majority of the community . . . And this is done by barely agreeing to unite into one political society. . . . And thus that which begins and actually constitutes any political society is nothing but the consent of any number of freemen capable of a majority to unite. . . . And this is that . . . which did or could give beginning to any lawful government in the world.”

—John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 1690

1. Which of the following did Locke see as the original limit on human freedom?
 - (A) Royal law
 - (B) Constitutional law
 - (C) Church law
 - (D) Law of nature
2. Locke believed that political society was based on
 - (A) agreement of a majority
 - (B) traditional community values
 - (C) royal authority
 - (D) unanimous consent
3. Which of the following groups in the colonies in the late 17th century would be most critical of Locke’s ideas?
 - (A) Slave owners
 - (B) Church leaders
 - (C) Merchants
 - (D) Women

Questions 4–6 refer to the excerpt below.

“[Lawyer for the prosecution:] Gentlemen of the jury; the information now before the Court, and to which the Defendant Zenger has pleaded not guilty, is an information for printing and publishing a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, in which His Excellency the Governor of this Province . . . is greatly and unjustly scandalized as a person that has no regard to law nor justice. . . . Indeed Sir, as Mr. Hamilton [Zenger’s attorney] has confessed the printing and publishing these libels, I think the jury must find a verdict for the King; for supposing they were true, the law says that they are not the less libelous for that; nay, indeed the law says their being true is an aggravation of the crime.

“[Mr. Hamilton:] Not so . . . I hope it is not our bare printing and publishing a paper that will make it libel. You will have something more to do before you make my client a libeler; for the words themselves must be libelous, that is false . . . or else we are not guilty.”

—James Alexander, lawyer for J. Peter Zenger,
The Trial of John Peter Zenger, 1736

4. Which of the following was the primary reason for charging Peter Zenger with libel?
 - (A) Zenger printed false statements
 - (B) The prosecutor disliked Zenger because he was Dutch
 - (C) The prosecutor wanted to defend the royal government
 - (D) Zenger criticized the king
5. Andrew Hamilton, Zenger’s lawyer, argued that any printed statement could not be libel if it was
 - (A) anonymously published
 - (B) based on sworn testimony
 - (C) from the clergy
 - (D) true
6. Which of the following was a long-term effect of the jury’s decision in the Zenger case?
 - (A) Zenger became a colonial leader
 - (B) The colonial press became more willing to criticize the British
 - (C) Restrictions on the press increased
 - (D) New York became the center of anti-British sentiments

Questions 7–

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Questions 7–10 refer to the excerpt below.

“For a nation thus abused to arise unanimously and to resist their prince, even to dethroning him, is not criminal but a reasonable way of vindicating their liberties and just rights; it is making use of the means, and the only means, which God has put into their power for mutual and self-defense. . . .

“To conclude, let us all learn to be free and to be loyal. . . . But let us remember . . . government is sacred and not to be trifled with. It is our happiness to live under the government of a prince who is satisfied with ruling according to law. . . . Let us prize our freedom but not use our liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. There are men who strike at liberty under the term licentiousness. There are others who aim at popularity under the disguise of patriotism. Be aware of both. Extremes are dangerous.”

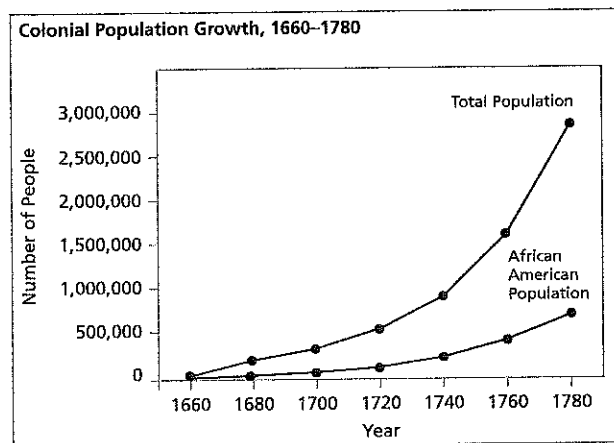
—Jonathan Mayhew, church minister, “On Unlimited Submission to Rulers,” 1750

7. According to Mayhew, the power of the people to oppose the government comes from
 - (A) the king
 - (B) the church
 - (C) nature
 - (D) God
8. Which of the following must be maintained by the people, according to Mayhew?
 - (A) Government
 - (B) Royal authority
 - (C) Right to vote
 - (D) Colonies
9. Mayhew considers the greatest threat to liberty is
 - (A) hidden anger
 - (B) religious faith
 - (C) radical positions
 - (D) trust in authority
10. What was the context in which Mayhew was writing?
 - (A) democratic practices were slowly increasing
 - (B) opposition to British rule of the colonies was increasing
 - (C) the Great Awakening was making authorities stronger
 - (D) restrictions on voting were becoming tighter

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

Briefly answer the questions in complete sentences. A thesis is not required.

Question 1 is based on the following graph.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*

1. Using the graph, answer a, b, and c.
 - a) Briefly explain the role slavery played in the population growth of this period.
 - b) Briefly describe the sources of immigrants other than from Africa during this period.
 - c) Briefly explain the impact of the non-African immigration on ONE of the following sections of the colonies.
 - New England
 - Middle Colonies
 - Southern Colonies

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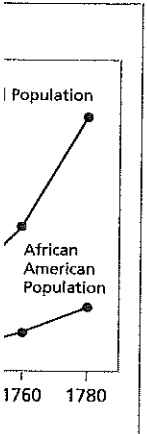
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Question 2. Answer a and b.

- a) By the mid-18th century the economy of the 13 colonies was growing within strong limitations. Briefly explain the role of TWO of the following in the colonial economy:
 - agriculture
 - monetary system
 - transportation
- b) Briefly explain the impact of British mercantilism on the colonial economy.

Question 3 is based on the excerpts below.

“The design of erecting a college in this province is a matter of such grand and general importance that I have frequently made it the topic of my serious meditation. . . .

“It is, in the first place, observable that, unless its constitution and government be such as will admit persons of all Protestant denominations upon a perfect parity as to privileges, it will itself be greatly prejudiced and prove a nursery of animosity, dissension and disorder . . .

“Should our college, therefore, unhappily through our own bad policy fall into the hands of any one religious sect in the province; establish its religion in the college . . . it is easy to see that Christians of all other denominations among us, will, from the same principles, rather conspire to oppose and oppress it.”

—William Livingston, Presbyterian, 1753

“Colleges are religious societies of a superior nature to all others. . . . colleges are societies of ministers for training up persons for the work of the ministry . . . all their religious instruction, worship, and ordinances are carried on within their own jurisdiction by their own officers and under their own regulations . . . And we know that religion, and the religion of these churches in particular, both as to doctrine and discipline, was the main design of the founders of this college, . . . and this design their successors are bound in duty to pursue. And, indeed, religion is a matter of so great consequences and importance that the knowledge of the arts and sciences, how excellent soever in themselves, are comparatively worth but little without it.”

—Thomas Clap, president of Yale University, 1754

- 3. Using the excerpts, answer a, b, and c.
 - a) Briefly explain the main point in passage 1.
 - b) Briefly explain the main point in passage 2.
 - c) Briefly explain another implication of this debate in the mid-18th century colonies beyond the immediate question of the governance of colleges.

Question 4. Answer a and b.

- a) Briefly explain the advances made in TWO of the following areas during the mid-18th century in the colonies.
- architecture
 - painting
 - literature
- b) Briefly explain what groups in the colonies were generally unable to share in the growing pursuit of the arts and science.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: QUESTIONS ABOUT PERIODIZATION

Historians divide the flow of past events into periods that share common traits. They identify key dates that mark turning points. The choice of those traits and turning points reflects a historian's point of view. Which THREE of the following essay questions asks for an answer that emphasizes periodization?

1. Compare and contrast the ideas and influence of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.
2. How did the 1730s mark an important shift in colonial religious history?
3. The years from 1607 to 1733 can be called the Era of English Settlement. Explain whether you think this label fits the era.
4. Describe the trend in ethnic diversity in the English colonies between 1607 and 1775.
5. The Massachusetts school law of 1647 marked the beginning of a new era in American education.

PERIOD 2 Review: 1607–1754

Long-Essay Questions

Directions: Write an essay to respond to one of each pair of questions. Cite relevant historical evidence in support of your generalizations and present your arguments clearly and logically.

Choose ONE of the following two long-essay questions.

1. Compare and contrast the role of religion in the founding of the Spanish colonies in the 16th century with that of the English colonies in the 17th century.
2. Analyze why freedom of religion was important in the founding of some of the English colonies while being denied in others.

Choose ONE of the following two long-essay questions.

3. Analyze the impact of geography and the environment on the development of at least two different regions of the English colonies along the Atlantic coast in the 17th and 18th centuries.
4. Analyze the influence of TWO of the following on the development of a democratic society in the English colonies during the period from 1607 to 1745.
 - Bacon's Rebellion
 - Enlightenment
 - Great Awakening
 - Zenger case