

The Colonial Period  
Unit 1 Documents

**Focus Question: Compare and contrast the development and characteristics of the colonial regions.**

**Do Before Reviewing the Documents:**

*Outside Information--Brainstorm the outside information relevant to the question. (Do this prior to evaluating the documents)*

Social	
Political	
Religious	
Intellectual	
Technological	
Economic	

**After Reviewing Documents**

*Thesis:*

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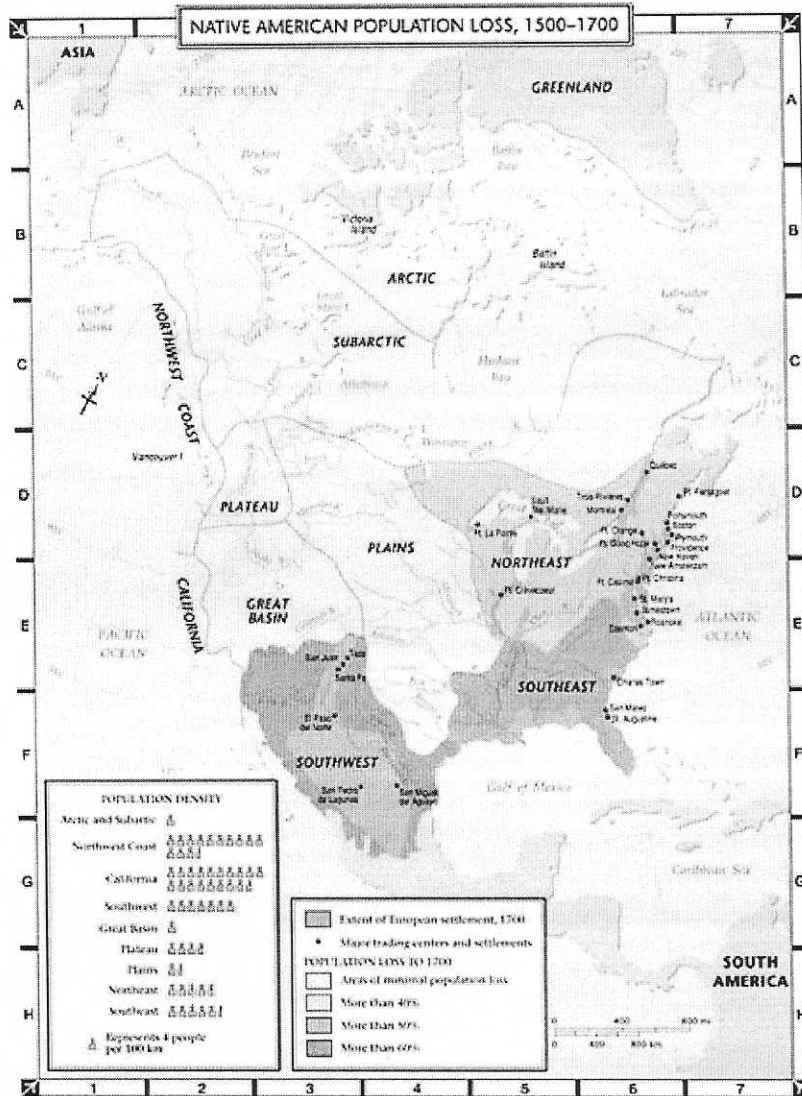
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Document 1: Population Changes of the Natives in the Americas



*Sourcing: Based on the information in this document, what would be the mapmaker's view on European exploration?*

*Close Reading: Which colonial region reflected the most profound impact on native population?*

*Corroboration: Does this map confirm or refute population information found in the previous readings?*

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**Document 2: The New Laws of the Indies, 1542**

*The Laws and ordinances newly made by His Majesty for the government of the Indies and good treatment and preservation of the Indians created a set of pro-Indian laws - so pro-Indian that they some had to be revoked in Mexico and in Peru due to settler opposition, where the viceroy was killed when he attempted to enforce them.*

*Sourcing: What was the intent of the Spanish government in producing this document?*

Whereas one of the most important things in which the Audiencias are to serve us is in taking very especial care of the good treatment of the Indians and preservation of them, We command that the said Audiencias enquire continually into the excesses or ill treatment which are or shall be done to them by governors or private persons; and how the ordinances and instructions which have been given to them, and are made for the good treatment of the said Indians have been observed. And if there had been any excesses, on the part of the said Governors, or should any be committed hereafter, to take care that such excesses are properly corrected, chastizing the guilty parties with all rigour conformably to justice. The Audiencias must not allow that in the suits between Indians, or with them, there be ordinary proceedings at law, nor dilatory expedients, as is wont to happen through the malice of some advocates and solicitors, but that they be determined summarily, observing their usages and customs, unless they be manifestly unjust; and that the said Audiencias take care that this be so observed by the other, inferior judges.

<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1542newlawsindies.asp>

*Contextualization: What changes would have to occur for these new laws to work in the Spanish settlement?*

*Close Reading: What characteristics are the Spanish attempting to establish in their colonial region?*

**Document 3: Constitution of the Iroquois Nation, 1500(?)**

*Sourcing: Who was the intended audience for this document?*

75. The soil of the earth from one end of the land to the other is the property of the people who inhabit it. By birthright the Ongwehonweh (Original beings) are the owners of the soil which they own and occupy and none other may hold it. The same law has been held from the oldest times. The Great Creator has made us of the one blood and of the same soil he made us and as only different tongues constitute different nations he established different hunting grounds and territories and made boundary lines between them.

82. When the Confederate Council of the Five Nations has for its object the establishment of the Great Peace among the people of an outside nation and that nation refuses to accept the Great Peace, then by such refusal they bring a declaration of war upon themselves from the Five Nations. Then shall the Five Nations seek to establish the Great Peace by a conquest of the rebellious nation.

<http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/index.htm>

*Contextualization: Why would the natives be provoked to create a constitutional document?*

*Close Reading: What would be the characteristics of the Great Lakes region based on the reaction of the Iroquois Nation?*

*Corroboration: Do the actions of the Iroquois confirm or refute the statement made in this document?*

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**Document 4: John Cabot Voyages for England, 1497**

*John Cabot, a Venetian, was commissioned by Henry VII to find a passage to Asia for England. A fellow Venetian living in England at the time of Cabot's departure recorded the excitement surrounding his trip.*

The King promised that in the spring our countryman shall have ten ships, armed to his order, and to his request has conceded him all the prisoners, except such as are confined for high treason, to man his fleet. The King has also given him money wherewith to amuse himself till then, and his is now at Bristol with his wife, who is also Venetian, and with his sons. His name is Zuan Cabot, and his is styled the Great Admiral. Vast honor is paid him; he dresses in silk. And these English run after him like mad people, so that he can enlist as many of them as he pleases, and a number of our own rogues besides.

Source: American Spirit, 1998 (23)

*Contextualization: Why would so many English be excited at the chance to sail to unknown lands?*

*Close Reading: Based upon the document, what characteristics would be represented in an English settlement?*

**Document 5: Governor William Berkeley Reports (1671)**

*Sir William Berkeley, a polished Oxford graduate, courtier, and playwright, was appointed governor of Virginia in 1642, when only thirty-six years of age. In response to specific questions from London, he prepared the able report from which the following extract is taken.*

12. What commodities are there of the production, growth, and manufacture of your plantation [colony]; and particularly, what materials are there already growing, or may be produced for shipping in the same?

Answer. Commodities of the growth of our country we never had any but tobacco, which in this yet is considerable, that it yields His Majesty a great revenue. But of late we have begun to make silk, and so many mulberry trees are planted, and planting, that if we had skillful men from Naples or Sicily to teach us the art of making it perfectly, in less than half an age [generation] we should make as much silk in an year as England did yearly expend three score years since. But now we hear it is gown to a greater excess, and more common and vulgar usage. Now, for shipping, we have admirable masts and very good oaks; but for iron ore I dare not say there is sufficient to keep one iron mill going for seven years...

15. What number of planters, servants, and slaves; and how many parishes are there in your plantation?

Answer. We suppose, and I am very sure we do not much miscount, that there is in Virginia above forty thousand persons, men, women, and children, and of which there are two thousand black slaves, six thousand Christian servants [indentured] for a short time. The rest are born in the country or have come in to settle and seat, in bettering their condition in a growing country.

*Close Reading: Based on the documents, what are the aims of the English in the Virginia Colony?*

*Contextualization: Why would the company be concerned with the number of planters, slaves, and servants within the colony?*

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**Document 6: The Great Indian Uprising (1622)**

*Edward Waterhouse, a prominent Virginia official, sent home this firsthand report of the Indian attack in 1622. Among other grievances, the Indians resented the clearing of their forests and the seizure of their cornfields by the whites.*

*Sourcing: What is the goal of Waterhouse in producing this document?*

And by this means, that fatal Friday morning, there fell under the bloody and barbarous hands of that perfidious and inhumane people, contrary to all laws of God and man, and nature and nations, 347 men, women, and children, most by their own weapons. And not being content with taking away life alone, they fell after again upon the dead, making, as well as they could, a fresh murder, defacing, dragging, and mangling the dead carcasses into many pieces, and carrying away some parts in derision, with base and brutish triumph...

Our hands, which before were tied with gentleness and fair usage, are now set at liberty by the treacherous violence of the savages...

*Close Reading: According to the document, what will be the answer to the Indian aggression?*

**Document 7: Persecutions of the Catholics (1656)**

*In 1654, the aggressive Protestant majority in Maryland passed a law that specifically "restrained" Roman Catholics from worshipping according to their faith.*

The English who inhabit Virginia had made an attack on the colonists, themselves Englishmen too; and safety being guaranteed on certain conditions, received indeed the governor of Maryland, with many others in surrender. But the conditions being treacherously violated, four of the captives, and three of them Catholics, were pierced with leaden balls. Rushing into our houses, they demanded for death the impostors, as they called them, intending inevitable slaughter to those who should be caught...

To their other miseries this inconvenience was added, that whatever comfort or aid this year, under name of stipend, from pious men in England, was destined for them, had been lost, the ship being intercepted in which it was carried. But nothing affects them more than that there is not a supply of wine which is sufficient to perform the sacred mysteries of the altar.

*Close Reading: According to the document, how were the Catholics in Maryland treated?*

*Contextualization: What occurred in Maryland to change the religious philosophy?*

**Document 8: Mayflower Compact (1620)**

We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

*Close Reading: What are the passengers of the Mayflower agreeing to in this document?*

*Contextualization: Would this be considered a revolutionary document for the time period?*



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**Document 9: John Winthrop's Concept of Liberty (1645)**

*Sourcing: Who is the intended audience of this document?*

The woman's own choice makes such a man her husband; yet being so chosen, he is her lord, and she is to be subject to him, yet in a way of liberty, not of bondage. And a true wife accounts her subjection her honor and freedom, and would not think her condition safe and free, but in her subjection to her husband's authority.

Such is the liberty of the church under the authority of Christ, her king and husband. His yoke is so easy and sweet to her as a bride's ornaments; and if through forwardness or wantonness, etc., she shake it off at any time, she is at no rest in her spirit until she take it up again. And whether her lord smiles upon her, and embraceth her in his arms, or whether he frowns, or rebukes, or smites her, she apprehends the sweetness of his love in all, and is refreshed, supported, and instructed by every such dispensation of his authority over her. On the other side, ye know who they are that complain of this yoke and say, let us break their bands, etc., we will not have this man rule over us.

*Close Reading: According to Winthrop, what "liberty" is awarded to women?*

*Corroboration: Is this document consistent with other sources detailing the rights of women in the colonies?*

**Document 10: The Blue Laws of Connecticut (1672)**

*Blue laws were statutes governing personal behavior and were found in Europe and the American colonies. Connecticut's blue laws became notorious for the strict nature of the laws.*

2. If any person within this colony shall blaspheme the name of God, the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, with direct, express, presumptuous, or high-handed blasphemy, or shall curse in the like manner, he shall be put to death. (Leviticus 24.15, 16.)
10. If any man steals a man or mankind and sells him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall be put to death. (Exodus 21.16)
14. If any child or children above sixteen years old, and of sufficient understanding, shall curse or smite their natural father or mother, he or they shall be put to death, unless it can be sufficiently testified that the parents have been very unchristianly negligent in the education of such children, or so provoked them by extreme and cruel correction that they have been forced thereunto to preserve themselves from death or maiming. (Exodus 21.17. Leviticus 20.9. Exodus 21.15.)

*Close Reading: What were the penalties for violating the laws?*

*Contextualization: What groups in particular are restricted by the laws presented in this document?*

*Corroboration: Are the strict laws here consistent with the law in other English colonies?*

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**Document 11: Early Settlers in Pennsylvania (1682)**

*Richard Townsend, a Quaker who had come from England with William Penn in the ship Welcome, recorded his recollections of the founding of the colony.*

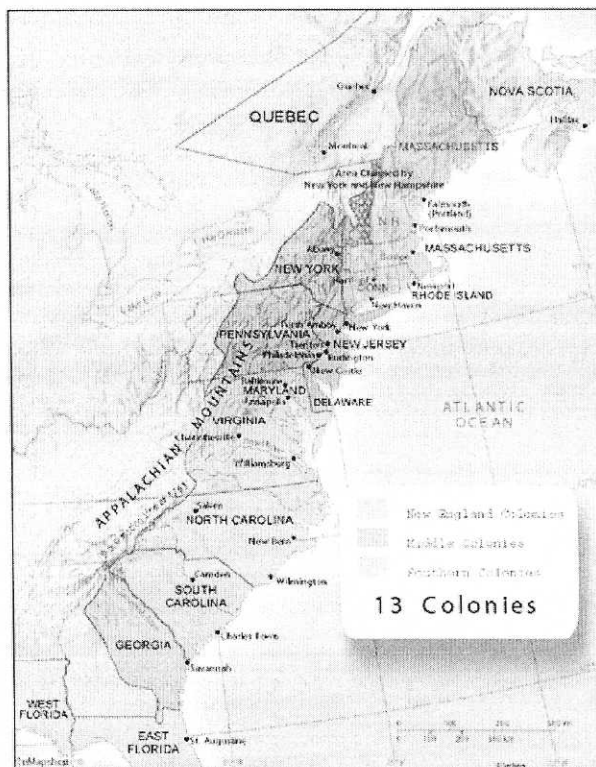
And, as our worthy Proprietor [Penn] treated the Indians with extraordinary humanity, they became very civil and loving to us, and brought in abundance of venison. As in other countries the Indians were exasperated by hard treatment, which had been the foundation of much bloodshed, so the contrary treatment here hath produced their love and affection.

About a year after our arrival, there came in about twenty families from high and low Germany, of religious, good people; who settled about six miles from Philadelphia, and called the place Germantown. The country continually increasing, people began to spread themselves further back...  
*Close Reading: What is the Quaker philosophy toward the Indians?*

*Corroboration: Does this document extend, confirm, or refute previous sources?*

*Contextualization: What will be the consequences of western expansion in conjunction with this philosophy?*

**Document 12:**



*Close Reading: What will be the consequences of increased immigration to the English colonies?*

*Contextualization: How did geography contribute to the characteristics of each region?*

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**Document 13: Servitude in New England, 1639**

*In the following selection, John Winter of Richmond Island, Maine, defends his wife against charges that she had cruelly beaten Priscilla, their servant. This selection not informs us about the kinds of work that servants performed and the conditions under which they labored, but also suggests how a shortage of labor in New England made it difficult to regulate servants' lives.*

*Sourcing: What could be said of the author writing this letter?*

You write me of some yll reports is given of my Wyfe for beateinge the maid; yf a faire waye will not do yt, beateinge must, sometimes, uppon such Idlle girrells as she is. Yf you think yt fitte for my wyfe to do all the worke & the maide sitt still, she must forbear her hands to strike, for then the worke wll ly undonn. She hath bin now 2 years 1/2 in the house, & I do not thinke she hath risen 20 times before my Wyfe hath bin up to Call her, and many tymes light the fire before she Comes out of her bed. She hath twize [runaway]...in the woodes, which we have bin faine to send all our Company to seeke. We Cann hardly keep her within doores after we a gonn to beed, except we Carry the key of the doore to beed with us. She never Could melke Cow nor goat since she Came hither.... She Cannot be trusted to serve a few piggs, but my wyfe most Commonly must be with her.

*Close reading: what message is given in regards to social hierarchy in this document?*

**Document 14: Virginia Slave Laws, 1662**

*Black slavery took root in the American colonies slowly. Historians now know that small numbers of Africans lived in Virginia before 1619, the year a Dutch ship sold some twenty blacks (probably from the West Indies) to the colonists. But it was not until the 1680s that black slavery became the dominant labor system on plantations there. As late as 1640, there were probably only 150 blacks in Virginia and in 1650, 300. But by 1680, the number had risen to 3,000 and by 1704, to 10,000.*

December 1662

Whereas some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishman upon a Negro woman should be slave or free, be it therefore enacted and declared by this present Grand Assembly, that all children born in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother; and that if any Christian shall commit fornication with a Negro man or woman, he or she so offending shall pay double the fines imposed by the former act.

September 1667

Whereas some doubts have risen whether children that are slaves by birth, and by the charity and piety of their owners made partakers of the blessed sacrament of baptism, should by virtue of their baptism be made free, it is enacted and declared by this Grand Assembly, and the authority thereof, that the conferring of baptism does not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom; that diverse masters, freed from this doubt may more carefully endeavor the propagation of Christianity by permitting children, through slaves, or those of greater growth if capable, to be admitted to that sacrament.

September 1668

Whereas it has been questioned whether servants running away may be punished with corporal punishment by their master or magistrate, since the act already made gives the master satisfaction by prolonging their time by service, it is declared and enacted by this Assembly that moderate corporal punishment inflicted by master or magistrate upon a runaway servant shall not deprive the master of the satisfaction allowed by the law, the one being as necessary to reclaim them from persisting in that idle course as the other is just to repair the damages sustained by the master.



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October 1669

Whereas the only law in force for the punishment of refractory servants resisting their master, mistress, or overseer cannot be inflicted upon Negroes, nor the obstinacy of many of them be suppressed by other than violent means, be it enacted and declared by this Grand Assembly if any slave resists his master (or other by his master's order correcting him) and by the extremity of the correction should chance to die, that his death shall not be accounted a felony, but the master (or that other person appointed by the master to punish him) be acquitted from molestation, since it cannot be presumed that premeditated malice (which alone makes murder a felony) should induce any man to destroy his own estate.

*Close reading: what are the beliefs of the law makers in regard to the black population as shown in this document?*

*Contextualization: what events were occurring in the colonies to cause these laws to exist?*

**Document 15: Responding to Advice From Her Father About How to Behave as a Wife, 1742: Eliza Lucas**

*This letter was written in 1742 in response to her father's concern that Eliza would try to run her husband's affairs. Fortunately, her husband, Charles Pinckney, the speaker of the South Carolina Assembly, did not try to force Eliza to retreat to her "proper province."*

*Sourcing: Is this letter a believable source to show the expected relationship between men and women?*

I am greatly obliged to you for your very good advice in my present happy relation. I think it entirely reasonable, and 'tis with great truth that I assure you 'tis not more my duty than my inclination to follow it; for making it the business of my life to please a man of Mr. Pinckney's merit even in trifles, I esteem a pleasing task; and I am well assured the acting out of my proper province and invading his, would be an inexcusable breach of prudence; as his superiour understanding, (without any other consideration,) would point him to dictate, and leave me nothing but the easy task of obeying.

*Corroboration: what other document could be used to support or refute the letter of Eliza Lucas in regard to gender roles in the colonies?*

**Document 16: Fear of Slave Revolts, 1744: Daniel Horsmanden**

*In 1741, New York City executed 34 people for conspiring to burn down the city. Thirteen African American men were burned at the stake and another 17 black men, two white men, and two white women were hanged. An additional 70 blacks and seven whites were banished from the city.*

*Sourcing: Based on this account, who is Daniel Horsmanden?*

Monday, April 6 [1741]

About ten o'clock in the morning, there was an alarm of a fire at the house of serjeant Burns, opposite fort Garden....

Towards noon a fire broke out in the roof of Mrs. Hilton's house...on the East side of captain Sarly's house....Upon view, it was plain that the fire must have been purposely laid.... There was a cry among the people, the Spanish Negroes; the Spanish Negroes; take up the Spanish Negroes. The occasion of this was the two fires...happening so closely together....and it being known that Sarly had purchased a Spanish Negro, some time before brought into his port, among several others....and that they afterwards pretending to have been free men in their country, began to grumble at their hard usage, of being sold as slaves. This probably gave rise to the suspicion, that this Negro, out of revenge, had been the instrument of these two fires; and he behaving insolently upon some people's asking him questions concerning them...it was told to a magistrate who was near, and he ordered him to jail, and also gave direction to constables to commit all the rest of that cargo [of Africans], in order for their safe custody and examination....

While the justices were proceeding to examination, about four o'clock there was another alarm of fire.... While the people were extinguishing the fire at this storehouse, and had almost mastered it, there was another cry of fire, which diverted the people attending the storehouse to the new alarm...but a man who had been on the top of the house assisting in extinguishing the fire, saw a Negro leap out at the end window of one of them...which occasioned him to cry out...that the Negroes were rising....

*Close reading: what caused the slave revolt?*

*Contextualization: Was this event common for the time period?*

**Document 17: The Lawes Resolutions of Womens Rights, 1632**

*Sourcing: Who do you think wrote this? Who is the audience?*

In this consolidation which we call wedlock is a locking together. It is true, that man and wife are one person, but understand in what manner. When a small brooke or little river incorporaeth with Rhodanus, Humber, or the Thames, the poor rivulet looseth her name....A woman as soon as she is married, is called *covert*...that is, "veiled"; as it were clouded and overshadowed; she had lost her streame. I may more truly, farre away, say to a married woman, Her new self is her superior; her companion; her master...

*Close reading: What is the purpose of marriage for women?*

*Corroboration: Do other documents support, extend, or refute the message of this document?*