

American Civilization



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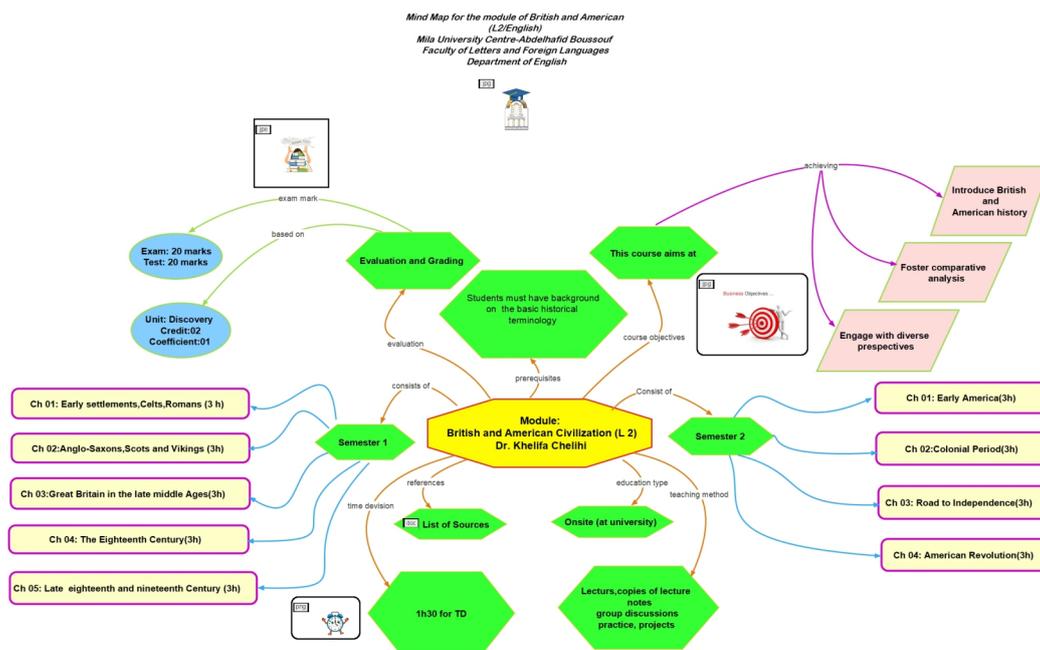
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Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the migration of early humans to North America.
2. Explore the Major Prehistoric Cultures of North America.
3. Analyze the Impact of Agriculture on Early American Societies.
4. Examine the Decline and Legacy of Early American Cultures.
5. Develop Critical Thinking and Historical Analysis Skills.
6. Learn why European powers like England, France, and Spain sought to colonize North America.
7. Examine how geography shaped the economies, cultures, and societies of the New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies.
8. Understand how the transition from indentured servitude to African slavery shaped colonial economies and societies.

I Mind-map



mindmap

II Pr-requisites

To be able to properly follow the lesson of American Early Cultures , the students must have some prior knowledge, likewise:

- Students should be familiar with regions like the Southwest and Midwest, and how the environment shaped different cultures.
- Learners should be familiar with one or more groups of Native American peoples.
- Students must know that the earliest peoples were hunters, gatherers, and nomads.
- Students must know how humans started farming, which allowed them to settle in one place and build villages.



pre

III Introduction

The history of *Early America* traces the complex journey of *human settlement, cultural development, and colonial expansion* on the *North American continent*. This lesson explores the origins of the first inhabitants who migrated from Asia via a land bridge during the Ice Age, forming rich and diverse Native American civilizations such as the *Anasazi, Hohokam, Adena, and Hopewell*. It then transitions to the age of European exploration, highlighting the Norse voyages and later expeditions by *Spanish, French, and British explorers*, whose quests for land, resources, and mythical treasures laid the foundation for colonization. The lesson concludes with *the establishment of the first permanent English colony at Jamestown and the rise of the 13 British colonies*, each shaped by distinct *geographical, economic, and cultural characteristics*. It also examines *the growing tensions between colonists and Native populations*, and the gradual *development of colonial self-governance* that would eventually inspire *American independence*.

IV Theme2: Colonial Period

1. Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the major groups of settlers in the British colonies and their reasons for migration.
- Compare and contrast the economic, social, and political structures of the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies.
- Analyze the relationship between European settlers and Native Americans.
- Explain how British political changes influenced colonial self-government.



Objectives

2. Warm up

1. What do you already know about the American colonies?
2. Why do you think European countries wanted to colonize North America?
3. How might colonization have affected the Indigenous peoples living there?

[cf. USA history]

3. Introduction

The Colonial Period of American (C.P.A.H) history* was a time of exploration, settlement, and transformation. Beginning in 1607 with the establishment of *Jamestown** and culminating in the years leading up to the American Revolution, this era saw the rise of European colonies in North America. Most settlers who came to the British colonies in the 1600s were English. Others came from The Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, France, and later from Scotland and Northern Ireland. Some left their homelands to escape war, political oppression, religious persecution, or a prison sentence. Some left as servants who expected to work their way to freedom. Black Africans were sold into slavery and arrived in shackles. By 1690, the population was 250,000. Less than 100 years later, it had climbed to 2.5 million.

*



Depiction of the first encounters between European settlers and Native Americans

4. Development of the 13 Colonies



American Colonies

European nations had different goals when colonizing North America. Spain focused on resource extraction and religious conversion, France sought trade relationships with Native Americans, and England aimed to establish permanent settlements. Economic motives, such as the search for gold and the establishment of cash crops like tobacco, played a significant role. Additionally, religious groups, including the Puritans and Quakers, sought freedom from persecution, leading to diverse colonial societies. The development of *the thirteen colonies* unfolded along distinct regional lines, each shaped by *unique economic, cultural, and social characteristics*.

*

*

*

🔍 Example

Like:

1. **New England Colonies** (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire):*

- **Puritan Values:** Dominated by Puritan religious ideals, communities like Boston and Salem emphasized strict moral codes and education. For example, Harvard College was founded in 1636 to train clergy.
- **Economy:** Small-scale farming (e.g., growing corn and wheat), fishing (e.g., cod fishing off the coast), and shipbuilding (e.g., shipyards in Boston) were key industries.
- **Governance:** Town meetings, such as those in Plymouth Colony, allowed for direct democratic participation among male landowners.

2. **Middle Colonies** (New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware):

- **Diversity and Tolerance:** Pennsylvania, founded by William Penn, became a haven for Quakers and other religious groups, while New York attracted Dutch, German, and Scottish immigrants.
- **Economy:** Known as the "breadbasket colonies," they produced wheat and other grains (e.g., in the fertile valleys of Pennsylvania). Cities like Philadelphia and New York City became major trade hubs.
- **Cultural Melting Pot:** The region's diversity was reflected in its newspapers, languages, and religious practices, such as the establishment of the first Lutheran church in America.

3. *Southern Colonies* (Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia):

- **Plantation Economy:** Cash crops like tobacco (e.g., in Virginia) and rice (e.g., in South Carolina) dominated the economy. Georgia, initially founded as a buffer colony, later adopted plantation agriculture.
- **Labor Systems:** The transition from indentured servitude to African slavery was stark. For example, by the late 1600s, Virginia's tobacco plantations relied heavily on enslaved labor, and South Carolina's rice plantations became dependent on enslaved Africans' expertise in rice cultivation.
- **Social Structure:** The plantation system created a hierarchical society, with wealthy landowners like Virginia's planter elite (e.g., the Byrd family) at the top.

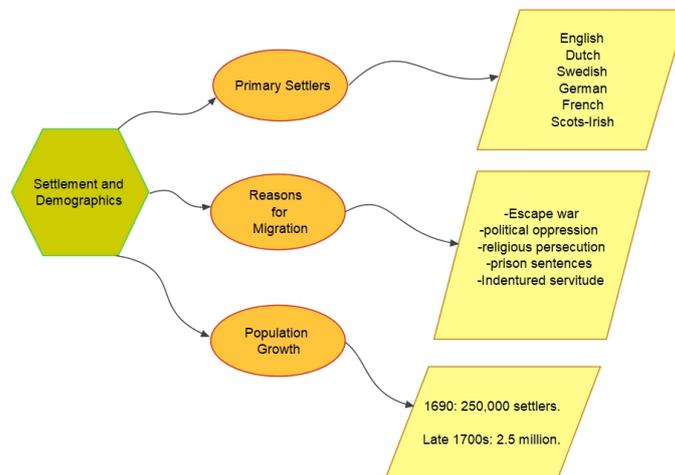
Note

These regional differences, rooted in **geography**, **economy**, and **culture**, not only shaped the colonies' development but also **set the stage for future conflicts and divisions in American history**.

5. Settlement and Demographics

Most settlers who came to the British colonies in the 1600s were **English**. Others came from The **Netherlands**, **Sweden**, **Germany**, **France**, and later from **Scotland and Northern Ireland**. Some left their homelands to escape war, political oppression, religious persecution, or a prison sentence. Some left as servants who expected to work their way to freedom. **Black Africans** were sold into slavery and arrived in shackles.

By 1690, the population was 250,000. Less than **100 years later**, it had climbed to **2.5 million**.



colonial population

6. Colonial Society & Culture

Life in the colonies varied depending on location and social class. Families played a central role, with men typically working in agriculture or trade while women managed households. Education was highly valued in New England, leading to the establishment of institutions such as Harvard in 1636. Religion influenced governance and daily life, particularly in Puritan communities, where strict moral codes shaped society. The colonies also saw growing consumer culture, with imported goods playing an increasing role in daily life.

*



A Puritan church gathering in New England

Example: Examples of colonial cultural life

- The rise of print culture, including the publication of newspapers and almanacs, with Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanack (1732) being a prime example.
- Flourishing colonial music, art, and literature, with early American painters like John Singleton Copley gaining recognition.
- Social stratification, where wealthy landowners in the South lived in grand plantation homes while poorer farmers and laborers struggled for economic stability.

Extra

Slavery played an integral role in colonial society, especially in the Southern Colonies. The harsh conditions on plantations led to the development of distinct African American cultures, including the blending of African traditions with Christian practices. Enslaved people created rich oral histories, spirituals, and folk traditions that would persist through generations.

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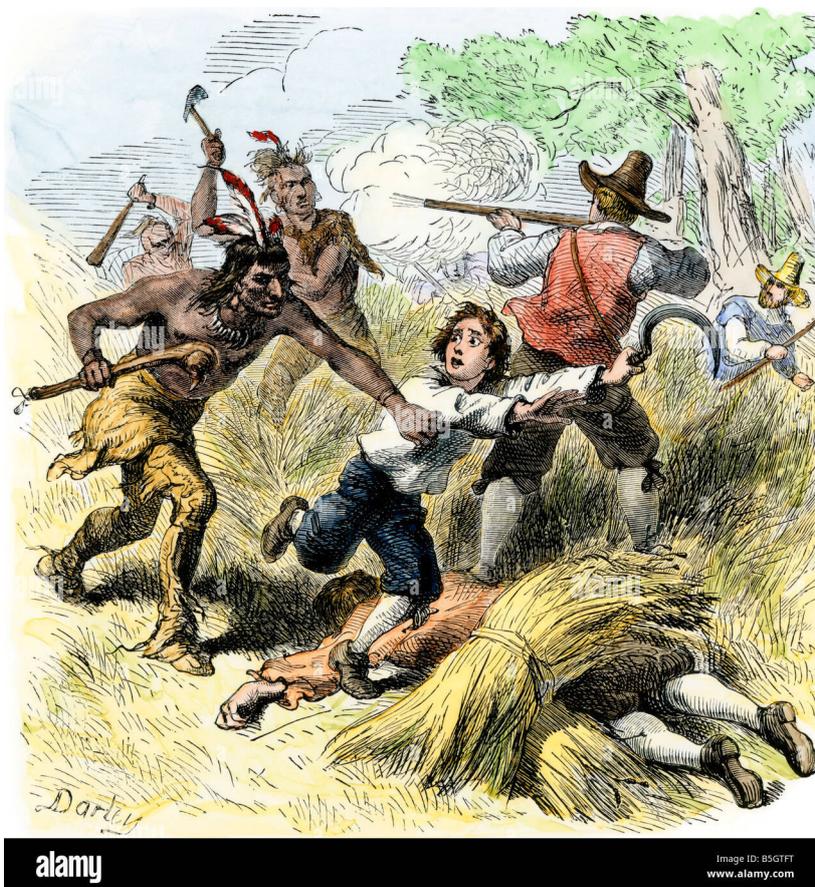
7. Relations with Native Americans

Relations between European settlers and Native Americans were complex, ranging from trade partnerships to violent conflicts. Early cooperation existed, as Indigenous people helped settlers adapt to the new environment. However, tensions grew as settlers encroached on Native lands, leading to conflicts such as:

*

Example

- **The Pequot War (1636-1638):*** A conflict in New England where English settlers, allied with the Narragansett and Mohegan tribes, fought against the Pequot people, leading to the near destruction of the Pequot tribe.
- **King Philip's War (1675-1676):*** One of the deadliest conflicts in colonial history, in which the Wampanoag leader Metacom (King Philip) led an uprising against English settlers. The war resulted in widespread destruction and the near elimination of Indigenous resistance in New England.
- **The Yamasee War (1715-1717):** A significant but less well-known war in the Carolinas, where the Yamasee and other tribes fought against English settlers over trade disputes and land encroachments.
- **The French and Indian War (1754-1763):** A broader conflict between Britain and France, with various Native American tribes allying with either side. The war ended with British victory, leading to significant Native land losses and the Proclamation of 1763, which attempted (unsuccessfully) to limit colonial expansion westward.



An illustration of King Philip's War

8. Conclusion

The Colonial Period of American history was a transformative era marked by exploration, settlement, and the establishment of diverse societies. European colonization, driven by economic, religious, and political motives, led to the development of distinct regional cultures and economies across the thirteen colonies. While European settlers gained new opportunities, Indigenous peoples faced displacement and violence, and enslaved Africans endured unimaginable hardships. The legacy of this period continues to shape modern American society, influencing its democratic institutions, cultural diversity, and ongoing struggles with racial inequality. Understanding the complexities of the colonial era is essential for comprehending the roots of contemporary American identity and the challenges that persist today.

V Exercice

[solution n°1 p.25]

The War (1675-1676) was a violent conflict between Native Americans and New England settlers.

VI Exercice

[solution n°2 p.25]

The colony of Pennsylvania was founded by as a haven for Quakers.

VII Exercice

[solution n°3 p.25]

The Compact was an agreement made by the Pilgrims to establish self-government in Plymouth Colony.

VIII Exercise

[solution n°4 p.25]

Which colony was founded by the Pilgrims in 1620?

- Jamestown
- Rhode Island
- Plymouth
- New York

IX Exercice

[solution n°5 p.25]

Which of the following best describes the Middle Colonies?

- A society dominated by Puritan values and small farming
- An economy focused on plantation agriculture and enslaved labor
- A diverse society with religious tolerance and strong trade networks
- A colony primarily focused on fur trading and military alliances

X Exercice

[solution n°6 p.25]

What was the outcome of the French and Indian War?

- The British lost control of their colonies
- France gained new territories in North America
- The war resulted in Native American sovereignty
- Britain won and attempted to limit colonial expansion westward

XI Exercice

[solution n°7 p.26]

How did geography influence the economic and social structures of the different colonial regions?

XII Exercice

[solution n°8 p.26]

What were the benefits and drawbacks of colonization for different groups, including European settlers, Indigenous peoples, and enslaved Africans?

XIII Conclusion

The early history of America, from its prehistoric roots to the colonial era, laid the groundwork for the nation's development. Indigenous cultures demonstrated remarkable adaptability and innovation, while European colonization introduced new social, economic, and political structures. These periods also brought profound challenges, including displacement, conflict, and the establishment of slavery. Understanding this history helps us appreciate the complexities of America's past and its enduring impact on modern society.

XIV Quiz:

Write an essay of 800–1000 words addressing the following prompt: Describe the development of early American societies from the first human migrations to the establishment of the British colonies. In your essay, discuss:

- The migration and cultures of the first Native Americans (e.g., Anasazi, Hohokam, Adena, Hopewell).
- The motivations and impacts of European exploration (Norse, Spanish, French, British).
- The founding and characteristics of the Jamestown colony and later colonial regions (New England, Middle, Southern Colonies).
- Differences in geography, economy, society, and colonial governance across the three regions.
- The evolving relationships between Native Americans and European settlers.

Exercises solution

> **Solution n° 1**

Exercice p. 15

The **King Philip's War** (1675-1676) was a violent conflict between Native Americans and New England settlers.

> **Solution n° 2**

Exercice p. 16

The colony of Pennsylvania was founded by **William Penn** as a haven for Quakers.

> **Solution n° 3**

Exercice p. 17

The **Mayflower Compact** was an agreement made by the Pilgrims to establish self-government in Plymouth Colony.

> **Solution n° 4**

Exercice p. 18

Which colony was founded by the Pilgrims in 1620?

- Jamestown
- Rhode Island
- Plymouth
- New York

> **Solution n° 5**

Exercice p. 19

Which of the following best describes the Middle Colonies?

- A society dominated by Puritan values and small farming
- An economy focused on plantation agriculture and enslaved labor
- A diverse society with religious tolerance and strong trade networks
- A colony primarily focused on fur trading and military alliances

> **Solution n°6**

Exercice p. 20

What was the outcome of the French and Indian War?

- The British lost control of their colonies
- France gained new territories in North America
- The war resulted in Native American sovereignty
- Britain won and attempted to limit colonial expansion westward

> **Solution n°7**

Exercice p. 21

How did geography influence the economic and social structures of the different colonial regions?

Geography played a crucial role in shaping colonial economies. The New England Colonies had rocky soil and a cold climate, leading to small-scale farming, fishing, and trade. The Middle Colonies had fertile land and a moderate climate, promoting agriculture and commerce. The Southern Colonies had a warm climate and fertile soil, making plantation farming, particularly tobacco and rice cultivation, the dominant economic activity.

> **Solution n°8**

Exercice p. 22

What were the benefits and drawbacks of colonization for different groups, including European settlers, Indigenous peoples, and enslaved Africans?

European settlers benefited from land, economic opportunities, and religious freedom, but also faced hardships such as disease and conflicts. Indigenous peoples suffered displacement, violence, and cultural loss. Enslaved Africans faced forced labor, brutal conditions, and loss of freedom, but also created resilient cultural traditions.

Glossary

Jamestown

The first permanent English settlement in North America, established in 1607 in present-day Virginia.

King Philip's War (1675-1676)

A violent conflict between Native Americans, led by the Wampanoag leader Metacom (King Philip), and English settlers in New England. It resulted in widespread destruction and the near elimination of Indigenous resistance in the region.

Pequot War (1636-1638)

A conflict in New England where English settlers, allied with the Narragansett and Mohegan tribes, fought against the Pequot people, leading to the near destruction of the Pequot tribe.

Abbreviation

USA: United States Of America

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Reading Colonial North America

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