

AP – United States History
Period #2 – Concept Outline

PERIOD 2: 1607—1754

Europeans and American Indians maneuvered and fought for dominance, control, and security in North America, and distinctive colonial and native societal emerged.

Key Concept 2.1: Europeans developed a variety of colonization and migration patterns, influenced by different goals, cultures, and the varied North American environments where they settled, and they competed with each other and American Indians for resources.

I. Spanish, French, Dutch, and British colonizers had different economic and imperial goals involving land and labor that shaped the social and political development of their colonies as well as their relationships with native populations.

- A.** Spanish efforts to extract wealth from the land led them to develop institutions based on subjugating native populations, converting them to Christianity, and incorporating them to Christianity, and incorporating them, along with enslaved and free Africans, into the Spanish colonial society.
- B.** French and Dutch colonial efforts involved relatively few Europeans and relied on trade alliances and intermarriage with American Indians to build economic and diplomatic relationships and acquire furs and other products for export to Europe.
- C.** English colonization efforts attracted a comparatively large number of male and female British migrants, as well as other European migrants, all of whom sought social mobility, economic prosperity, religious freedom, and improved living conditions. These colonists focused on agriculture and settled on land taken from Native Americans, from whom they lived separately.

II. In the 17th century, early British colonies developed along the Atlantic coast, with regional differences that reflected various environmental, economic, cultural, and demographic factors.

- A.** The Chesapeake and North Carolina colonies grew prosperous exporting tobacco – a labor-intensive product initially cultivated by white, mostly male indentured servants and later by enslaved Africans.
- B.** The New England colonies, initially settled by Puritans, developed around small towns with family farms and achieved a thriving mixed economy of agriculture and commerce.
- C.** The Middle colonies supported a flourishing export economy based on cereal crops and attracted a broad range of European migrants, leading to societies with greater cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity and tolerance.
- D.** The colonies of the southernmost Atlantic coast and the British West Indies used long growing seasons to develop plantation economies based on exporting staple crops. They depended on the labor of enslaved Africans, who often constituted the majority of the population in these areas and developed their own forms of cultural and religious autonomy.
- E.** Distance and Britain’s initially tax attention led to the colonies creating self-governing institutions that were unusually democratic for the era. The New England colonies based power in participatory town meetings, which in turn elected members to their colonial legislatures; in the Southern colonies, elite planters exercised local authority and also dominated the elected assemblies.

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III. Competition over resources between European rivals and American Indians encouraged industry and trade and led to conflict in the Americas.

- A.** An Atlantic economy developed in which goods, as well as enslaved Africans and American Indians, were exchanged between Europe, Africa, and the Americas through extensive trade networks. European colonial economies focused on acquiring, producing, and exporting commodities that were valued in Europe and gaining new sources of labor.
- B.** Continuing trade with Europeans increased the flow of goods in and out of American Indian communities, stimulating cultural and economic changes and spreading epidemic diseases that caused radical demographic shifts.
- C.** Interactions between European rivals and American Indian populations fostered both accommodation and conflict. French, Dutch, British, and Spanish colonies allied with and armed American Indian groups, who frequently sought alliances with Europeans against other Indian groups.
- D.** The goals and interests of European leaders and colonists at times diverged, leading to a growing mistrust on both sides of the Atlantic. Colonists, especially in British North America, expressed dissatisfaction over issues including territorial settlements, frontier defense, self-rule, and trade.
- E.** British conflicts with American Indians over land, resources, and political boundaries led to military confrontations, such as Metacom’s War (King Philip’s War) in New England.
- F.** American Indian resistance to Spanish colonizing efforts in North America, particularly after the Pueblo Revolt, led to Spanish accommodation of some aspects of American culture in the Southwest.

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Key Concept 2.2: The British colonies participated in political, social, cultural, and economic exchanges with Great Britain that encouraged both strong bonds with Britain and resistance to Britain’s control.

I. Transatlantic commercial, religious, philosophical, and political exchanges led residents of the British colonies to evolve in their political and cultural attitudes as they became increasingly tied to Britain and one another.

- A.** The presence of different European religious and ethnic groups contributed to a significant degree of pluralism and intellectual exchange, which were later enhanced by the first Great Awakening and the spread of European Enlightenment ideas.
- B.** The British colonies experienced a gradual Anglicization over time, developed autonomous political communities based on English models with influence from inter-colonial commercial ties, the emergence of a trans-Atlantic print culture, and the spread of Protestant evangelicalism.
- C.** The British government increasingly attempted to incorporate its North American colonies into a coherent, hierarchical, and imperial structure in order to pursue mercantilist economic aims, but conflicts with colonists and American Indians led to erratic enforcement of imperial policies.
- D.** Colonists’ resistance to imperial control drew on local experiences of self-government, evolving ideas of liberty, the political thought of Enlightenment, greater religious independence and diversity, and an ideology critical of perceived corruption in the imperial system.

II. Like other European empires in the Americas that participated in the Atlantic slave trade, the English colonies developed a system of slavery that reflected the specific economic, demographic, and geographic characteristics of those colonies.

- A.** All British colonies participated to varying degrees in the Atlantic slave trade due to abundance of land and a growing European demand for colonial goods, as well as a shortage of indentured servants. Small New England farms used relatively new enslaved laborers, all port cities held significant minorities of enslaved people, and the Chesapeake and the southernmost Atlantic coast had large numbers of enslaved workers, while the great majority of enslaved Africans were sent to the West Indies.
- B.** As chattel slavery became the dominant labor system in many southern colonies, new laws created a strict racial system that prohibited interracial relationships and defined the descendants of African American mothers as black and enslaved in perpetuity.
- C.** Africans developed both overt and covert means to resist the dehumanizing aspects of slavery and maintain their family and gender systems, culture, and religion.