

## Life in the American Colonies

### Lesson 1 Colonial Economy

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*How does geography influence the way people live?*

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How did the economic activity of the three regions reflect their geography?
2. Why were enslaved Africans brought to the colonies?

#### Terms to Know

**subsistence farming** producing just enough to meet immediate needs

**cash crop** a crop that can be sold easily in markets

**diversity** variety, such as of ethnic or national groups

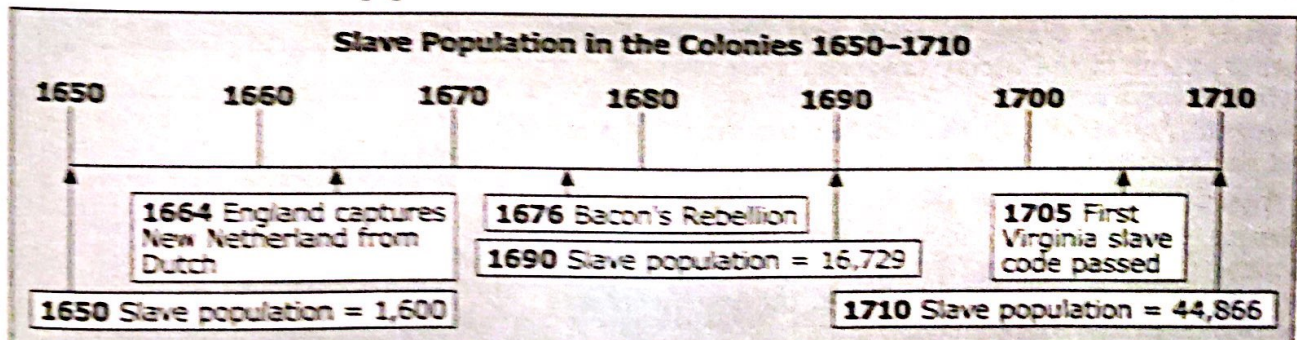
**triangular trade** trade route between three destinations, such as Britain, Africa, and America

**slave code** rules focusing on the behavior and punishment of enslaved people

### Where in the world?



### When did it happen?





## Making a Living in the Colonies

In Colonial America, most colonists were farmers or had a business linked to farming. For example, a farmer who grew wheat would need someone to mill (grind) the wheat into flour. In each region, the colonists learned how to best use the climate and land.

In New England, winters were long. The soil was poor and rocky. This made large-scale farming difficult for the colonists. Instead, farmers practiced **subsistence farming**. This means that they grew only enough crops to feed their families. They did not have crops to sell or trade. On these farms, the whole family worked—milking cows, planting and picking crops, and so forth.

New England also had many small businesses, like mills for grinding grain and sawing lumber. In large towns, blacksmiths, shoemakers, and others set up businesses.

Building ships and shipping were important industries in New England. The wood needed for shipbuilding came from forests in the region. Ships sailed from coastal cities to other colonies and to other parts of the world. Fishing and whaling were also important industries in New England.

In the Middle Colonies, the soil and climate were very good for farming. The soil was richer and the climate milder than in New England. Farmers were able to plant larger areas and grew more crops. In New York and Pennsylvania, farmers grew large amounts of wheat and other **cash crops**. These were crops that could be sold easily in the colonies and overseas. Farmers sent their wheat and livestock (like sheep and pigs) to New York City and Philadelphia to be shipped to other places. These cities became busy ports.

Like the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies also had industries. Some were home-based crafts like carpentry and flour making. Others were larger businesses like lumber (wood) mills and mining.

Many German, Dutch, Swedish, and other non-English settlers came to the Middle Colonies. They brought different ways of farming. They also brought cultural **diversity**, or variety, to the Middle Colonies. This diversity did not exist in New England.

The Southern Colonies also had rich soil and a warm climate. There was not much industry in the region. Most Southern colonists were farmers. They could plant large areas and produce large cash crops. London merchants helped them sell these crops.



### Explaining

1. Why did New England farmers practice subsistence farming?

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### Mark the Text

2. Underline in the text two small businesses and two important industries in New England.



### Contrasting

3. How did farms in the Middle Colonies differ from those in the New England Colonies?

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### Defining

4. What are *cash crops*?

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## Life in the American Colonies

### Lesson 1 Colonial Economy, *Continued*

#### ? Contrasting

5. How were plantations in the Southern Colonies different from small farms?

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#### ✓ Reading Check

6. Why was agriculture so important to the economy of the Southern Colonies?

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#### Ab Mark the Text

7. Circle in the text two examples of important cash crops grown in the Southern Colonies.

#### Ab Defining

8. What was the Middle Passage?

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Large farms, called plantations, were often located along rivers. This made it easier to ship crops to market by boat. Most large plantations were near the coast. Each plantation was like a small village. It could provide almost everything a person needed to live and work. Some plantations even had a school and a church.

In the hills and forests of the Southern Colonies, smaller farms grew corn and tobacco. There were many more small farms than there were plantations. Even so, the plantation owners had more money and more power. They controlled the economy and politics in the Southern Colonies.

Tobacco was the main crop in Maryland and Virginia. Many workers were needed for growing tobacco and preparing it for sale. It cost a lot of money to hire workers, so Southern farmers began using enslaved Africans.

The main cash crop in South Carolina and Georgia was rice. Most Europeans did not know how to grow rice. They relied on the knowledge of enslaved Africans who had lived in the rice growing regions of West Africa. Growing and harvesting rice was hard work. Many workers were needed, so rice growers also used slave labor. Rice was very popular in Europe. Its price kept rising. Farmers made more money from growing rice than from growing tobacco.

### The Growth of Slavery

There was slavery in West Africa before the Europeans came to the Americas. Some West African kingdoms enslaved people that they defeated in wars. Many were forced to work in mines or farm fields.

The growth of plantations in the Southern colonies led to an increased demand for enslaved African laborers. West African slave traders brought their captives to the Atlantic coast. There, European merchants bought or traded for the slaves. Loaded onto European ships, the enslaved Africans sailed for the Americas, where they were sold.

Finally, the ships returned to Europe, now filled with trade goods. This three-sided route (shaped like a triangle) was called the **triangular trade**. The second, or middle, part across the ocean from West Africa was called the "Middle Passage."

Many Africans died during the Middle Passage. Conditions on the ships were terrible. The slavers chained the enslaved Africans together. They could hardly sit or stand. They had little food or water. If they became sick or died, the slavers threw them into the sea. If they refused to eat, the slavers whipped them.



# Life in the American Colonies

## Lesson 1 Colonial Economy, *Continued*

When the slave ships reached American ports, plantation owners bought the survivors. Slave owners often split up families by selling a husband, wife, or child to another slave owner. Many colonies had **slave codes**. These were rules about the behavior and punishment of enslaved people.

On the plantations, some enslaved Africans worked in the houses, but most worked in the fields. A few learned trades, like weaving. Sometimes they set up shops and shared the money they made with the slaveholders. In this way, some earned enough money to buy their freedom.

In the colonies, there were also people who did not like slavery. They believed no human had the right to own another. Puritans, Quakers, and Mennonites were among those with this point of view.

### Check for Understanding

Why were New England farmers unable to grow cash crops?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why were enslaved Africans brought to the colonies?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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### Vocabulary

9. What is a set of rules that says how enslaved people should behave and be punished?

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### Reading Check

10. What role did enslaved Africans play in the economy of the Southern Colonies?

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### FOLDABLES

11. Use a two-tab Foldable and place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write the title *Farming in the Colonies* on the anchor tab. Label the two tabs *Geography* and *Labor Force*. Recall and describe how the land and the work force affected farming in the colonies. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.



# Life in the American Colonies

## Lesson 2 Colonial Government

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*How do new ideas change the way people live?*

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *Why are protected rights and representative government important principles?*
2. *How did the colonists react to England's economic policies?*

### Terms to Know

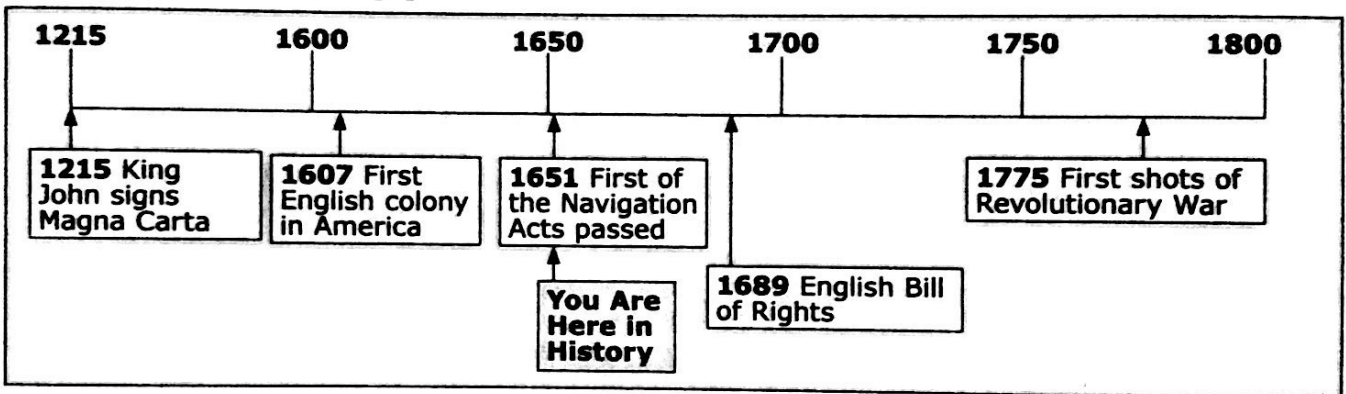
**representative government** a system by which people elect delegates to make laws and conduct government

**mercantilism** an economic theory whose goal is building a state's wealth and power by increasing exports and accumulating precious metals in return

**export** to sell to other countries

**import** to bring in from foreign markets

### When did it happen?



### What do you know?

Before you read, decide whether the following statements are true or false. Write a T or an F before each one. After you read, look at your answers again. Were they right or wrong?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. English colonists in America believed the government should respect their rights.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. English colonists in America believed the king should make all the laws.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The king of England controlled all the English colonies in America.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Everyone in the colonies could vote.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. England forced the colonists to sell their raw materials to England.



## Life in the American Colonies

### Lesson 2 Colonial Government, *Continued*

#### English Principles of Government

English colonists brought their ideas about government with them. Two beliefs were especially important to the English system of government. The first was in protected rights (rights that are protected by law), such as the right to a trial by jury. The second belief was in **representative government**. This is a system where voters elect people to make laws and run the government. Colonists believed that their lawmakers should represent the common people. Later, these two beliefs became important parts of the U.S. Constitution.

The colonists believed that government must respect the rights of the people it governs. Laws made sure these rights were protected.

The idea of protected rights began with the Magna Carta. Its name means *Great Charter*. King John signed this document on June 15, 1215. The Magna Carta protected the English people from unfair treatment by the government and unfair punishment. Even kings and queens had to follow the law.

Besides protected rights, the colonists believed in representative government. In a representative government, the citizens choose people to make laws and run the government. These people represent (act or speak for) the wishes of those who elected, or chose, them.

In England, these representatives gathered in the Parliament. It was made up of two parts, or houses: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The House of Commons included commoners (everyday people). Most of these were property owners and merchants. The people in the House of Lords were members of the aristocracy—dukes, earls, barons, and so forth. Together, as Parliament, these two houses had the power to make laws.

Parliament was a model for the lawmaking branches of government in America. Like Parliament, the U.S. Congress has two houses: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

In the mid-1600s, King James II and Parliament struggled for control of the government. At last, in 1688, Parliament removed King James II from power. William and Mary became king and queen. The English call this peaceful change the Glorious Revolution. William and Mary promised to rule by the laws agreed upon in Parliament. From then on, no king or queen had more power than Parliament.

#### FOLDABLES



#### Defining

1. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line under the title "English Principles of Government." Write *Colonists Brought Ideas* on the anchor tab. Label the two tabs *protected rights* and *representative government*. On the tabs, explain each idea. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.



#### Explaining

2. In a representative government, whom do the lawmakers represent?

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#### Reading Check

3. How did the Magna Carta influence government in the colonies?

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## Life in the American Colonies

### Lesson 2 Colonial Government, *Continued*

#### Identifying

4. In the colonies, whose wishes did the upper house usually represent?
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#### Drawing Conclusions

5. Why might a decision by the upper house upset the lower house?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Finding Examples

6. Name two exports from the colonies.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Explaining

7. If a colonist bought cloth from France, what happened to it under the rules of the Navigation Acts?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

In 1689, an important document set clear limits on a ruler's power. This was the English Bill of Rights. It limited the ruler's ability to set aside Parliament's laws. Rulers could no longer require taxes without Parliament's say-so. The bill said that members of Parliament would be freely elected. It gave citizens the right to a fair trial by jury. It banned cruel and unusual punishment.

How did these ideas of government work in the colonies? Some of the thirteen colonies were owned by an individual or group. They were called proprietary colonies. These colonies set up most of their own rules. Pennsylvania was a proprietary colony. Other colonies, like Massachusetts, had been started by a company with permission of the English king. They were called charter colonies.

In time, some colonies in America became royal colonies. This put them under direct English control. Virginia was a royal colony. In every royal colony, Parliament appointed (chose) a governor and a council. This was called the upper house. The colonists chose an assembly, called the lower house. The upper house usually did what the king and Parliament told them to do. Often this went against the wishes of the lower house.

Not everyone in the colonies had a voice in government. Only white men who owned property could vote. Even so, a large share of the population did take part in government in some way. In towns, people often met to talk about local issues. In time, town meetings turned into local governments. What they learned was useful when the colonies became independent.

### English Economic Policies

In the early 1600s, many European nations followed an idea called **mercantilism**. Mercantilism is a system for building wealth and power by building supplies of gold and silver. To do this, a country must **export**, or sell, to other countries more than it **imports**, or buys, from them. A country must also set up colonies. Colonies have two purposes. They provide raw materials and are a market for exports.

The English followed this system of mercantilism. The American colonies provided raw materials. These raw materials might be crops such as tobacco and rice. They might be natural resources, too, like lumber and fur. The colonies also bought English-made goods such as tools, clothing, and furniture.



## Life in the American Colonies

### Lesson 2 Colonial Government, *Continued*

In the 1650s, the English passed laws to control Colonial trade. These were the Navigation Acts. They forced colonists to sell their raw materials to England. Also, if a colonist bought goods from a country in Europe, those goods went to England first. Here they were taxed, then shipped to the colony. In addition, all ships carrying trade goods had to be built in England or the colonies. The crews on these ships had to be English.

The colonists welcomed the trade laws at first. The laws made sure that the colonists had a place to sell their raw materials. Later, the colonists felt the laws limited their rights. They wanted to make their own products to sell. Also, they wanted to sell their products to countries other than England. Many colonial merchants began smuggling—shipping goods without paying taxes or getting permission from the English government. Later, controls on trade would cause problems between the colonies and England.

#### Check for Understanding

How do people benefit from a limited government?

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Why did colonists begin smuggling goods into and out of the colonies?

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#### Explaining

8. How did the trade laws help the colonists?

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#### Reading Check

9. What was the purpose of the Navigation Acts?

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#### FOLDABLES

10. Use a two-tab Foldable and place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write the title *Colonial Government* on the anchor tab. Label the two tabs—*British Actions* and *Colonial Reactions*. Write one thing that you remember about each. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.

# Life in the American Colonies

## Lesson 3 Culture and Society

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*How do new ideas change the way people live?*

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What was life like for people living in the thirteen colonies?*
2. *What values and beliefs were important to the American colonists?*

### Terms to Know

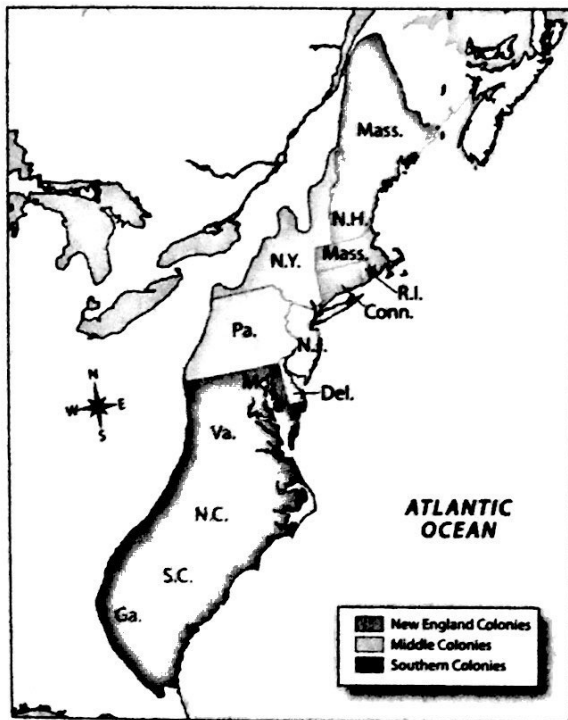
**Immigration** the permanent movement of people into one country from other countries

**epidemic** an illness that affects a large number of people

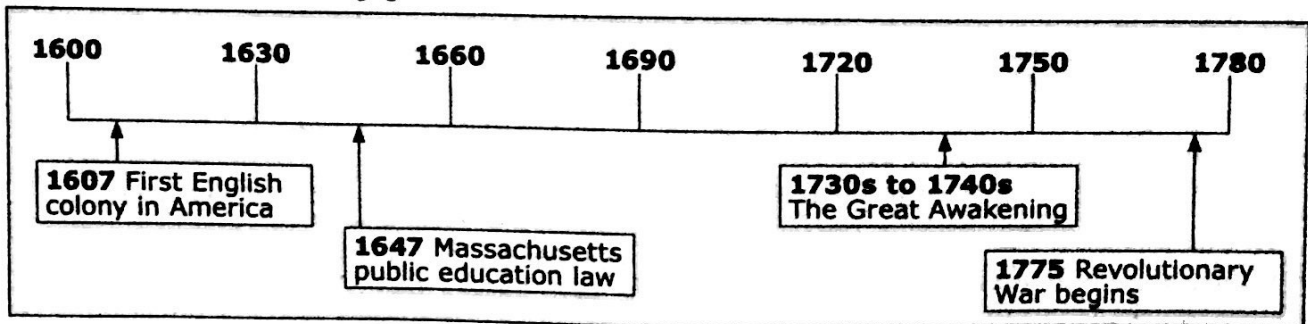
**apprentice** a young person who learns a trade from a skilled craftsman

**civic virtue** the democratic ideas, practices, and values that are at the heart of citizenship in a free society

### Where in the world?



### When did it happen?



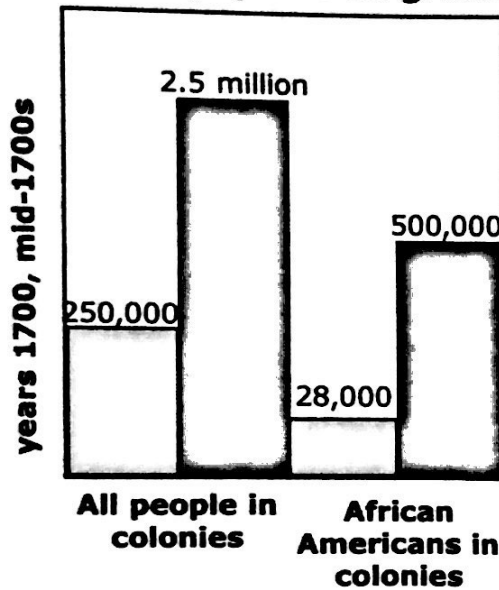


## Lesson 3 Culture and Society, *Continued*

### Life in the Colonies

In 1700, there were about 250,000 people living in the colonies. By the mid-1770s, there were about 2.5 million colonists. The number of African Americans grew from 28,000 to more than 500,000. **Immigration** was important to this growth. Immigration occurs when people move permanently to one country from another.

Colonial population growth



There was another reason for the growing number of people in the colonies: large families. Colonial women often married young and had many children. Also, America was a very healthy place to live, especially New England.

Still, there were more threats to life than today. Many women died in childbirth. There were outbreaks of smallpox and other serious diseases. Some outbreaks killed large numbers of people. This is called an **epidemic**.

The American spirit of independence began in these early years. Settlers left their home countries far behind. In America, they faced new challenges. The old ways of doing things no longer worked, so people began doing things in a different way—their own way.

The family was the basis of colonial society. Men were the official heads of the family. They ran the farm or business. They represented the family in the community. Sons might work on the family farm or in the family business. A young man might also become an **apprentice**—a person trained by a skilled craftsman.

#### Identifying

1. List two reasons why the population of the colonies was growing.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Making Connections

2. What reasons do people have for moving to a new country today?

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Making Inferences

3. How would an epidemic affect population numbers?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### Explaining

4. How could a young man learn to be a blacksmith?

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Life in the American Colonies**

**Lesson 3 Culture and Society, Continued**

**Reading Check**

5. What was the role of the family in colonial life?

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**Determining Cause and Effect**

6. Why was there such a high level of literacy in New England?

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**Listing**

7. List three different groups that might run a school.

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**Reading Check**

8. In what ways did the Great Awakening influence religion in the colonies?

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Women ran their homes and cared for the children. On farms, many worked in the fields with their husbands. A young, unmarried woman might work as a maid or cook for a wealthy family. A widow (a woman whose husband has died) might sew, teach, or nurse for a living. Widows and unmarried women also could run businesses and own property.

Even children worked. By the time they were four or five years old, they often had jobs. Even so, they did have time to play. Their games and toys were simple.

**American Beliefs**

Life in the colonies was built upon a strong, two-part foundation: the spirit of independence and the family.

Americans valued education. Parents often taught their children to read and write at home.

In New England and Pennsylvania, people set up schools. In 1647, Massachusetts passed a public education law. It said that communities with 50 or more homes must have a school. The result of this was a high level of literacy (the ability to read and write) in New England. By 1750, about 85 percent of the men and half of the women could read.

In the Middle Colonies, most schools were private. Widows and unmarried women ran many of them. Religious groups, such as Quakers, ran others.

Another kind of school was run by craftspeople. In these schools, apprentices learned a skill. Colleges in the colonies had a special purpose: to train ministers (people who lead religious worship).

Religion shaped much of colonial life. In the 1730s and 1740s, ministers were asking people to renew their faith—to return to the strong faith of earlier days. This renewal of religious faith was called the Great Awakening.

The Great Awakening inspired many new types of churches. These churches stressed personal faith rather than church ceremonies. The most important effect of the Great Awakening was greater religious freedom. More colonists began to choose their own faith. The older, more established churches lost power within the colonies.

The Great Awakening also broke down walls between the colonies. From north to south, the colonists were united by this revival of faith. This helped to spread other ideas—political ideas. In time, the colonies would also share the ideas of revolution and independence.



**Life in the American Colonies****Lesson 3 Culture and Society, Continued**

By the mid-1700s, another movement spread from Europe to the colonies—the Enlightenment. With it came the idea that knowledge, reason, and science could improve society. In the colonies, interest in science grew. People, like Benjamin Franklin, began to study nature, do experiments, and write about their findings. The Enlightenment also brought ideas about freedom of thought and expression, equality, and popular government.

Freedom of the press became important. Newspapers carried news about politics. Often the government did not like what the newspapers wrote and told them not to publish the information. The publishers fought this censorship. Their battle helped a free press to grow in the United States.

How should a citizen think, feel, and act in a free society? This is a question that colonists were beginning to think about. They began to wonder what **civic** (public or community) **virtues** (values) would be important to a free and democratic society.

**Check for Understanding**

How did respect for education influence colonial life in New England?

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Which of the following values and beliefs were important to the colonists?

- a. free press
- b. religious freedom
- c. immigration
- d. education
- e. workers' rights

**? Contrasting**

9. How was the Enlightenment different from the Great Awakening?

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**? Critical Thinking**

10. Why is censorship an important issue in a free society?

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**FOLDABLES**

11. Use a one-tab Foldable and place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write the title *Beliefs That Shaped America* on the anchor tab. Create a memory map by drawing five small arrows from the title to the tab and writing five words or phrases that you remember about the values and beliefs that influenced the colonies. Use the back to list other information.