

Title of Unit: Everything is New in the New World

Vital theme of the unit: Every aspect of colonization in the New World brought unthinkable changes for British America. With the newness came many advantages and disadvantages relating to demographics, economics, labor, and life in general. All greatly affected the social and cultural patterns of a new nation.

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Grade level: Eighth

Number of lessons in the unit: Five

Time needed to complete unit: Two weeks

Curriculum standards addressed: 8.1.spi.2., 8.1.spi.4., 8.1.spi.7., 8.2.spi.4., 8.2.spi.6., 8.2.spi.8, 8.5.spi.7, 8.3.spi.1, 8.2.spi.4, 8.2.spi.7, 8.2.spi.9, 8.1.spi.5, 8.5.spi.3

Technology used: Internet

Unit introduction and overview of instructional plan:

An increased awareness of Colonial America will occur as students engage themselves in several groups and individual investigations involving a variety of sources while finding information relating to the following:

- Why the Americas attracted Europeans, and why they brought enslaved Africans to their colonies.
- How political, religious, and social institutions emerged in the English colonies.
- How the values and institutions of European economic life were transformed in the colonies, and how slavery reshaped European and African life in the Americas.

Background knowledge of the thirteen colonies, natural resources, and economics will be the basis of their understanding. They will do extensive research using different sources (including primary and secondary), maps, charts, music, literature, and art. Activities include role playing, journaling, and working together in small groups. Comparing life in early Colonial America and the changes it faced to similar situations in modern-day America will be done in order for a true understanding of the importance of history to take place.

“Everything is New in the New World”

It has long been said that everything has a beginning. Many origins are taken for granted, such as ice cream, language, traditions, television, and the list goes on; they have just always been here -- just like the United States of America. Or have they? Public education teaches the young that Columbus sailed the Ocean Blue, Americans came for religious reasons, the Founding Fathers wanted a government different than what King George and the British Parliament had to offer, the Indians helped the Pilgrims with Thanksgiving dinner, and slavery was the reason for the Civil War. Fallacies upon fallacies are passed from generation of Americans to generations. American educators must take on the task of teaching the Beginning's truths. They must raise questions in the inquisitive minds of all ages that appear before them daily. Why did the Europeans really want to come here? Why did the Africans want to leave their homelands, or did they have a choice? What was life like for the both of them in their mother countries? Once here in the New World, how did life here compare to what they both were used to? What happened when all these new ethnic groups all got together? How did slavery begin here? What did the West Indies have to do with America's beginnings? One might begin to understand the true beginnings of America when answering these questions.

Daniel J. Boorstin, author of *The Americans: The Colonial Experience*, began his book with this quote by Jared Eliot: “It may be said, That in a Sort, they began the World a New.” In every sort, every aspect of who we are as Americans, the colonial peoples embarked upon a unique American experience. Their languages, friendships,

experiences, skills, and beliefs were not new to them as Europeans, but what they encountered once landing on the face of the New World put all those into different perspectives. Boorstin regards the colonists as beginning a new civilization that was “born less out of plans and purposes than out of the unsettlement which the New World brought to the ways of the Old.” Early colonial people muddled their way through learning from one experience after another. Although they did have a set plan to follow from their experiences in England, the colonists were able to successfully make changes in their plans. They knew what it was like to work hard, plan, fail, and start over. These qualities were many years later seen by a Frenchman named Alexis de Toqueville who in 1831 came to America to study the prison system. While doing so, he began an overall American observation, and recorded them in many notebooks. What impressed him about the fifty-five year old country he was visiting was its dedication to education, its intellectual stamina, and hard work ethics. He wrote how the peasant class in his own country had become lazy and how the French would not even recognize its own rivers and canals as the Americans made use of every resource available. What he saw was truly American and what made this a great nation. It is why educators must teach students the real reasons of how it all began.

It all began a half century before Columbus’ voyage into the Caribbean. According to Dr. Lorri Glover during a 2005 Summer Teachers Institute at the East Tennessee Historical Society in Knoxville, the beginnings started before the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when the big question for many European countries was “Why go West to go East?” Europeans went to China for wealth, but many Muslim countries were in the way on the eastern route. Spain’s Queen Isabella’s and King Ferdinand’s

marriage helped further Christianity into the Muslim world . At this time peoples all over the world began to cross from one place to another. During the 1500's Portugal was importing slaves, gold and ivory. They were already colonizing places in and around Africa; therefore, slavery began and natives were being seen as barbaric. There were financial, religious, and nationalistic reasons for Portugal's explorations. England had its claims; however, Spain was the great trading power. Glover reported that although Columbus' exploration united the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, it also led to the greatest demographic catastrophe in the world, with eighty-five to ninety percent of the native population being wiped out within seventy-five years due mostly to disease. This was especially true in the New World.

Kirk Ankeney and other editors of *Bring History Alive!* believe that the North American continent and Caribbean connection must be taught first in order for a full understanding of the era. First, teaching the connection is important because colonial development was part of an "international theatre" with the West Indies and early America being closely tied. It is important for educators to not only trace the Triangle Trade route of goods, but also of slaves. For generations many students have been left with the impression that all slaves were loaded on boats in Africa and came straight to America.

Students must also understand the risks, hardships, conflicts, and successes of the intermingling that occurred among the Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans during different time periods. According to the *Historical Statistics of the United States*, Sources 1 and 2 of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, another demographic disaster occurred in colonial America. The ten years between 1640 and 1650 saw a seventy-eight percent

increase in the white population and a 170 percent increase in its black population in the Chesapeake Bay colonies. In Maryland there was a 647% white increase and a 1350% increase for blacks for the same decade. Statistics were similar in the Massachusetts Bay colony. This accounts for an average 214% increase in colonial population compared to twenty-three percent in England. With this great influx of people came many other new experiences for the colonists.

The economics of a nation is based on three basic principles: What goods and services must be produced? How will these be produced? For whom will they be produced? Eighth grade students explore these concepts in United States History and when comparing the different colonial regions. They then can understand what made the colonists different not only from their mother countries but from each other. Geography helped in these differences for it plays such an important part in the history of an area. Depending upon the natural resources, climate, and soil conditions, regional economic developments were different for the colonists. In the New England colonies, colonists took the timber, speculated the land, drove out the Indians, and had poor farming practices which exhausted the land. Ecologist and historian William Cronon discusses these dilemmas in his book *Changes in the Land*. They were industrialists who turned to commercialism in order to market commodities to become self-sufficient and productive. Cronon states that “land was a capital thing” in order to produce more wealth. Then there was the problem of what to do with the Indians. Different types of laborers, indentured and bought slaves, were needed. Native Americans and slaves were not simply victims but were intricately involved in the creation of a colonial society and a new, hybrid culture.

All of these issues over time shaped the North into a different civilization than that of the South. A look into the basics of these issues will help understand what came almost a hundred later between the two regions.

Geography might have been different in the South; however, the same basic economic questions had to be answered. When it came to answering the “how,” one must look very deep into the institution of slavery. It was not a new concept of just the South as some might think; however, it was highly depended upon in the plantation system of the South. Dr. Glover stated “the slave trade in the Caribbean Islands was the most important part of the British empire, not Jamestown.” In Virginia, 1619, slaves were the base of the labor system. In 1650 there were approximately 300 slaves there and 20,000 in Barbados. (South Carolina began as a colony of Barbados.) Hence, studying the colonization period must include the study of the Caribbean area.

A look into the mother countries of slaves and the lives they left behind will help students understand their culture. Comparing this life with that of their own will help students understand the dilemmas slaves faced, especially where family is concerned. The beginnings of African American culture in the South began during the early colonial period and are still prevalent today.

As students study the web of relationships among the peoples of the Beginning of America, they will see their mother country in a different light. By knowing the “why” makes for a better appreciation of the “how”. Boorstin believes that since the beginning, Americans were not so much ideological as they were practical.. In his words, “Was not the New World a living denial of the old sharp distinction between the world as it was and the world as it might be or ought to be?,” the “ought to be” is still strived for today.

Annotated Bibliography

Ankeney, Kirk. *Bring History Alive! A Source for Teaching United States History*. Los Angeles: University of California, 1996.

Ankeney and other editors take approximately 1,200 teacher submitted ideas and create a resource book for other teachers to use when teaching American History. Activities are by grade level and eras along with two different types of essays.

Boorstin, Daniel J. *The Americans: The Colonial Experience*. New York: Vintage Books, 1958.

Boorstin provides an in-depth look into the lives of the early settlers of the different colonies. This book examines the institutions that developed during this time period and the colonial ideas about everything from medicine to spelling. Other areas of life described and defined were education, astronomy, philosophy, farming, military, plantation life, and the press.

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2003.

Cronon offers evidence of how the New England colonists interacted with the land upon settling there. He explains how geography played an important in making New Englanders who they became, and how they influenced the land and encountered the Indians in the meantime.

Glover, Lori. "Truths and Fallacies of Colonial America." Lecture given on June 20, 2005, at Teachers' Summer Institute, East Tennessee Historical Society, Knoxville, TN.

Unit: Experiencing “New” in the New World

Lesson One Title: Demographic Disaster?

Grade Level: Eighth

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How diverse was the immigrants in the formation of the European colonies?

Lesson Time: One to two class periods

Curriculum Standards Addressed: 8.1.spi.2., 8.1.spi.7., 8.1.spi.5., 8.5.spi.3

Technology used and how: Internet for research

Materials: computer, library, bulletin board paper or poster board, markers, copies of “The Evidence” population statistics

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies:

Compare the growth of the European colonies in the two countries following their foundings.

1. Students will research via the Internet and other available sources the new groups that either arrived during the late 16th and 17th centuries voluntarily or involuntarily in the New World.
2. Using findings from each student, make a class chart of the statistics found as the research is discussed among students. This chart will show the number and types of ethnic/religious groups that came to the New World.
3. Engage students in a discussion of how the colonies changed as their population grew. Use “The Evidence” population charts for the different regions.
4. Form cooperative groups of students with each group assigned a group from the chart.
5. Each group will make a hypothesis as to why its assigned group left its homeland.
6. Research to prove hypothesis.
7. Allow class time for each group to report its findings and tell it its hypothesis was correct or not.
8. NOTE: Primary and secondary sources are to be used in this investigation process with comments to these made during presentations.
9. After homework assignment, engage students in a group discussion to compare ideas.

Supporting Assignments/Homework: Have students write a comparative essay of how the influx of so many different cultures in modern America compares to that of colonial times. What are the similarities and differences? Advantages and disadvantages? Could this be good for the times students live in today?

Assessment:

- Give a participation grade for contributing to class chart.
- Assess student's participation in group participation by using a rubric for such.
- Using a rubric, assess the student's comparative essay for validity of concepts learned during research of colonies.

Unit: Experiencing “New” in the New World

Lesson Two Title: Social and Cultural Change in British America

Grade Level: Eighth

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: What different ideas of family life existed among such diverse groups as the New England Puritans, the Virginia aristocracy, the frontier farmers, the Quakers, the Iroquois, the French in Quebec, the Indians of the Southwest, the Spanish in Santa Fe, and others?

Lesson Time: Two class periods

Curriculum Standards Addressed: 8.5.spi.7, 8.3.spi.1

Technology used and how: Internet for research

Materials: computer, library, textbooks, bulletin board paper, markers

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies:

Draw evidence from a variety of primary and/or secondary sources to investigate different patterns of family life in colonial North America.

1. Small groups of no more than three will research via the Internet and other available sources the following as they relate to the different groups listed in essential question:
 - How would you account for the similarities and differences?
 - To what extent are the families patriarchal?
 - How were young children treated?
 - Were the boys treated differently than girls?
 - What was it like to be a teenager in these different societies?
 - What role did economic interests play in the development of family life and its relationship to the community?
 - To what extent did the family roles, values, and structure change during the colonial period?
2. Have a sheet of bulletin board paper for groups to write the answers to the above question. Write each question at the top of the paper. Then have a representative from each group write the answer his/her group developed.
3. Display all the questions for the class to see and discuss all answers allowing groups to explain their answers.

Supporting Assignments/Homework: In their journals, have students discuss their personal families compared to early American families discussed in class.

Assessment: Observe students as they work in small groups, and assess students in how well they apply what was learned during classroom discuss to their journal writing assignment.

Unit: Experiencing “New” in the New World

Lesson Three Title: Economic Life and the Development of Labor Systems in the English Colonies

Grade Level: Eighth

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How did the values and institutions of European economic life take root in the colonies?

Lesson Time: Two class periods

Curriculum Standards Addressed: 8.2.spi.9, 8.2.spi.4, 8.2.spi.6

Technology used and how: Internet for research

Materials: computer, library, textbooks, journals, *Brer Rabbit* folktales, African heritage art, music, and literature

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies:

Students will describe the influence of African heritage on slave life in the colonies. (NOTE: This activity could be done on an individual or partner basis. Also, include Computer Lab, Music, and Art teachers to help in research with students.)

1. Have students gather African heritage art, music, and literature, and stories like *Brer Rabbit* folktales.
2. Research for information relating to how the enslaved Africans drew upon their heritage in art, music, childrearing activities, and values in order to cope with slavery while developing a strong culture in an unfamiliar land.
3. Instruct students to find at least one piece of art and describe in detail what they believe is the underlying message.
4. Have them decode one African slave song as to what it really meant.
5. Have them give their interpretation of *Brer Rabbit's* stories.

Supporting Assignments/Homework: Have students do one of the following: write folktales/stories about slavery, draw a picture about slavery, or write a song/poem about slavery.

Assessment: Assess student's assignment

Unit: Everything is New in the New World

Lesson Four Title: Economic Life and the Development of Labor Systems in the English Colonies

Grade Level: Eighth

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How did the values and institutions of European economic life take root in the colonies?

Lesson Time: Three to four class periods

Curriculum Standards Addressed: 8.2.spi.7, 8.2.spi.9

Technology used and how: Internet for research

Materials: Computer, textbooks, and the following historical fictions books:

Field, Rachel. *Calico Bush*. Yearling Publishing, 1999.

Mott, Michael. *Master Entrick*. Yearling Publishing, 1986.

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies:

- Analyze how climate, land fertility, water resources, and access to markets affected economic growth in different regions. Have students prepare written statements regarding each aspect.
- Research the reasons for the passage of the Navigation Acts and their relation to mercantilism.
- Investigate the hardships of indentured servitude by drawing evidence from historical fiction such as *Calico Bush* by Rachel Field and *Master Entrick* by Michael Mott.
- Examine laws enacted in Virginia and Maryland that helped institutionalize slavery. *What rights were taken away from enslaved Africans? What restrictions were placed on white-black relations? How slavery was made perpetual and hereditary?*
- Assume the identity of different individuals such as a London merchant, and English artisan, a West Indian sugar planter, a New England shipbuilder, a Cape Cod fisherman, a Chesapeake tobacco planter, and a Pennsylvania wheat farmer, and role-play a discussion on the merits of mercantilism. *What people benefit from the British mercantile system? What were the advantages and disadvantages of mercantilism for the mother country? For the colonists?*

Supporting Assignments/Homework: Students should answer the above questions after extensive gathering of information during research.

Assessment: Assess student's assignment for content knowledge

Unit: Everything is New in the New World

Lesson Five Title: African Life Under Slavery

Grade Level: Eighth

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How did the values and institutions of European economic life take root in the colonies?

Lesson Time: Three to four class periods

Curriculum Standards Addressed: 8.2.spi.7, 8.2.spi.9, 8.2.spi.4, 8.2.spi.6

Technology used and how: Internet for research

Materials: Computer, textbooks, blank map

Activity description(s) and overview of instructional strategies:

- Using textbooks, other resource books, and the Internet, have students describe the variety of measures used to resist slavery and discuss their effectiveness. Have students create a Venn diagram or other comparison/contrast chart to answer the following question: *How did forms of resistance vary depending on the region and the slave's gender or age?*
- Investigate slave rebellions in colonial America such as New York, 1712 and 1740, and the Stono Rebellion in South Carolina in 1739. Have students create a cause and effect chart showing the causes and the results of these rebellions.
- Describe the "middle passage" by drawing evidence from primary sources such as *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vasa, Written by Himself*.
- Explain how slavery differed in colonial America from that practiced in West Africa and other parts of the world in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Using a blank map, have students locate and label major slave trading ports in Africa, the Caribbean, America, Europe, etc. Then have them prepare a page for each port for their explanations.

Supporting Assignments/Homework: Students should answer the above questions after extensive gathering of information during research.

Assessment: Assess student's assignment for content knowledge.