

American Colonies:

Characteristics of the Three Regions

The map below shows three main regions of the American Colonies in the 1700s. Look at the map, and read the information about the characteristics of each region (climate, natural resources, religion, and economy). Then, complete the activity on page 2.



NEW ENGLAND COLONIES

- Cold winters and rocky soil make farming difficult, but the coastline provides shipping and fishing opportunities.
- Puritans escaping religious persecution in England are the dominant religious group. They follow strict rules and are intolerant of other religions.
- Fishing (especially for codfish), whaling, trapping, shipbuilding, and logging are important to the economy.

MIDDLE COLONIES

- Warm summers and rolling hills make farming large amounts of barley, wheat, oats, and rye possible.
- Tolerant religious policies attract a diversity of immigrants, including Quakers, Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, and Presbyterians from across Europe.
- Farming, logging, shipbuilding, and textile production allow development of cities like Philadelphia where craftsmen thrive.

SOUTHERN COLONIES

- Temperate winters and excellent soil make the growing season longer than in any other region, but hot summers lead to outbreaks of malaria and yellow fever.
- Settlers come for farming opportunities, rather than to escape religious persecution. They live on remote plantations, so religious conformity is not as dominant a factor.
- Farming provides cash crops such as rice, indigo, tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton. These crops are grown on large plantations where enslaved people work the land.

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Read each statement describing a colonial region. Review the information on page 1 to determine which region the statement is describing.

Place **NE** in the blank for New England Colonies, **M** for Middle Colonies, and **S** for Southern Colonies.

1. ____ This region included New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.
2. ____ This region included Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.
3. ____ This region included New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.
4. ____ The large amounts of barley, wheat, oats, and rye grown in this region made it the “breadbasket” of the colonies.
5. ____ Particularly cold winters reduced the spread of disease in this region.
6. ____ Many different religious communities and nationalities settled in this tolerant region.
7. ____ Particularly hot summers led to outbreaks of malaria and yellow fever in this region.
8. ____ The Puritan leadership restricted celebration of holidays in this region.
9. ____ Farming, logging, shipbuilding, and textile production allowed for the development of cities like Philadelphia in this region.
10. ____ Settlers who came to this region were not escaping religious persecution in England. They came to find land for farming and economic opportunities.
11. ____ The economy of this region relied on fishing, whaling, trapping, shipbuilding, and logging.
12. ____ The economy of this region relied on cash crops like tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton.
13. ____ Soil was generally rocky and frozen in the winter, making farming more difficult in this region.
14. ____ During the 1700s, Charleston, South Carolina, became a central port for the American slave trade in this region.
15. ____ Religious leaders were very powerful in this region, and there were severe consequences for people who spoke out against the rules of the church-centered community or failed to attend church.
16. ____ Quakers, Catholics, Jews, Lutherans, and Presbyterians from many different countries across Europe settled in this region to escape persecution in their homelands.

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Creative Writing: Write a journal entry assuming the identity of a colonial settler starting a new life in one of the three regions. What do you like about the region? What are your struggles? What economic opportunities have you found?


