

Hello, fellow teacher!

Below is your reading passage; I hope it serves you well.

Print it out and it's ready to use. Or, if you want to differentiate for struggling students, use the highlight feature on the PDF to annotate what you want the kiddos to focus on.

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Warmest Wishes,
Joan

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The American Revolution In 3 Days



Modified Reading Passages
& Activities

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New England Colonies



The New England colonies consisted of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut. These were the northernmost English colonies in America. The main motivation for the Puritans settling Massachusetts was religious freedom. Ironically, Connecticut was settled by exiles from Massachusetts because they wanted freedom from the Puritan religion.

Geography

Settlers in New England found their geography to be similar to their old home in England. The climate was temperate, consisting of long, cold winters and short, warm summers.

The land was shaped by glaciers back in the ice age. Large glaciers cut through the mountains pushing rocks and soil south. The northern colonies struggle with land that has a thin layer of rocky soil. The poor soil quality and short growing season was not conducive to many crops.

The area did enjoy other natural resources. There were harbors that allow large ships to dock. There are many capes, bays, lakes and rivers. The Appalachian Mountains are part of New England. Finally, the area was covered in woods boasting large and plentiful trees.

Economy

The geography of an area, particularly in the past, dictated the economy. The New England colonies could not sustain plantations; only small farms existed that were not viable as a foundational market. Instead New Englanders took advantage of the abundant wood to become master ship builders. Their natural harbors allowed intercontinental trade.

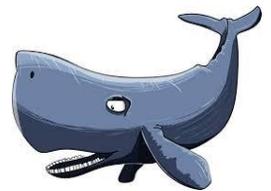
The vast array of water sources provided fishermen with cod, mackerel, herring, halibut, hake, bass and sturgeon. The most profitable fishing was whaling, which provided oil for lamps.

Some New England shipbuilders became wealthy through the slave trade. They would sell tools, gunpowder and rum in West Africa, buy slaves and sell them to the West Indies in exchange for molasses and sugar. This 3-way trading among continents became known as the triangular trade route.

Government

As with the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, the New England colonies practiced a democratic form of government. Ultimately, the British King had control over its colonies, but local decisions were made through consensus of elected settlers.

The first example of democratic or representative government is the Mayflower Compact. As the Pilgrims were approaching land in America they wrote and signed an agreement that decisions would be made together. The ship was called the Mayflower, hence the name of the agreement.





Life in the New England Colonies

Massachusetts was settled by a group of people called Puritans. These were men and women who wanted to "purify" the Anglican form of Christianity. They were persecuted back in England and as a result decided to create a colony in America. Between 1630 and 1640 over 20,000 Puritans came to America.

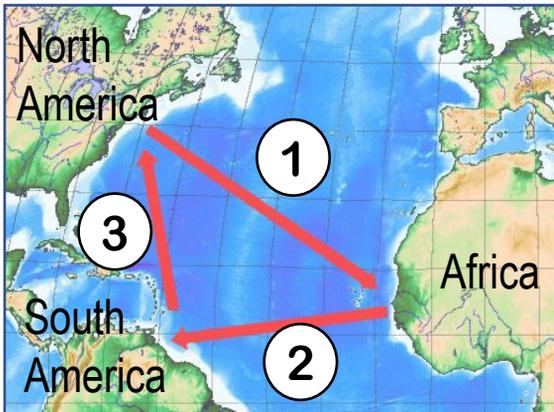
Religion was the basis of life in Massachusetts. Attendance at church was mandatory. Many of the rules they made for the colony were based upon their religious beliefs.

Some settlers who arrived in Massachusetts wanted to separate church and state. They did not want the Puritan religion to dictate all aspects of life. This was not received well by the Puritans; they were intolerant of any beliefs that deviated from their own.

Roger Williams founded Rhode Island as a colony that accepted different religions. Refugees from Massachusetts settled there. Education was an important part of the culture. New England boasted the only public school in the colonies. They were usually one-room schoolhouses. The motivation for educating young people was so that they could read the bible. The first American university, Harvard University, was established in Massachusetts in 1636.



Triangular Trade Route



Based on the reading place the correct number for each product. For example, if the colonist bought it from the Caribbean it would be 3.

___ slaves

___ gun powder

___ sugar

___ molasses

___ rum

___ tools

Create a one-sentence summary about the New England Colonies for each topic.
Geography

Economy

Government

Religion