Freedom for Whom?

Religious rules in three colonial communities

SS24.6.5a "Summarize efforts to limit religious freedom in the colonies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each rule or action that limited religious practice and circle the people it affected, so you can summarize who faced each limit.

Who Could Worship Freely?

1. In the 1600s, many Puritan leaders in Massachusetts Bay wanted their colony to follow their religious rules. Quakers, who worshiped differently and challenged those leaders, were not welcome. Colonial officials passed laws that fined Quakers, sent some away, and punished people who helped them return. Four Quakers were executed in Boston between 1659 and 1661 after returning despite banishment. These harsh actions were meant to keep Quaker beliefs from spreading. Not every colonist agreed with the punishments, but the laws made it dangerous to practice a different faith in public.

2. In colonial Virginia, the Church of England was the official church. Residents paid taxes to support it, even if they worshiped in another way. The government also required many ministers outside that church to get permission before preaching. In the 1700s, some Baptist preachers were jailed for preaching without approval. Such rules gave the official church an advantage and made it harder for other groups to meet openly. Some people kept gathering anyway. Taxes and permits, not just banishment, could limit a person's choice of how to worship.

3. Maryland offers a different kind of limit. In 1649, its assembly passed a law that protected the worship of Christians who believed in the Trinity, a Christian teaching about God. This protection did not include everyone. The law set severe penalties for people who denied that teaching and did not protect people who practiced non-Christian religions. Later, after Protestants took control of Maryland's government, Catholics also lost political rights and faced restrictions on public worship. Even a law called toleration could leave many people without religious freedom.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Summarize how Massachusetts Bay officials tried to stop Quakers from practicing their faith.

2. Summarize two ways Virginia's rules made worship harder for people outside the official church.

3. How did Maryland's 1649 law protect some people while limiting religious freedom for others?

4. What pattern do you notice across the three colonies? Summarize who made religious rules and who faced limits.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence newspaper editorial for colonial readers. Summarize one colony's limit on religious practice, explain whom it affects, propose a change, and explain how your change would expand freedom.

ANSWER KEY

Freedom for Whom?

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.5a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each rule or action that limited religious practice and circle the people it affected, so you can summarize who faced each limit. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Summarize how Massachusetts Bay officials tried to stop Quakers from practicing their faith.	**Officials fined and banished Quakers and punished people who helped them return. Four Quakers who returned were executed.**
2	Summarize two ways Virginia's rules made worship harder for people outside the official church.	**Residents had to pay taxes that supported the Church of England, and many other ministers needed permission to preach. Some Baptist preachers were jailed for preaching without approval.**
3	How did Maryland's 1649 law protect some people while limiting religious freedom for others?	**It protected worship for Christians who believed in the Trinity, but it set severe penalties for denying that teaching and did not protect non-Christian religions.**
4	What pattern do you notice across the three colonies? Summarize who made religious rules and who faced limits.	**Colonial leaders made rules favoring certain Christian beliefs or an official church. People whose beliefs differed, such as Quakers in Massachusetts Bay and Baptists in Virginia, faced limits or punishment.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Virginia makes residents pay taxes to support the Church of England, even if they worship elsewhere. This rule places a cost on people whose beliefs differ from the official church. The colony should stop using taxes to support any one church. Then people could choose how to worship without paying for a church they do not attend.

Accept accurate summaries in students' own words. For the editorial, the proposed change may vary, but it should address a limit described in the passage and explain how the change would expand religious freedom.