

Colonies Take Shape

Trace how purposes, geography, and labor shaped regional economies.

7.2c "European nations established colonies in North America for economic, religious, and political reasons. Differences in climate, physical features, access to water..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three reasons Europeans established colonies in paragraph 1. In paragraphs 2 and 3, circle each geographic or labor factor and draw a line to the economy it supported.

Why Colonial Regions Differed

- ① European nations crossed the Atlantic for several reasons. Merchants and rulers hoped colonies would supply valuable goods and create new markets. Some English Protestants sought places where they could practice their religion with greater freedom. Governments also wanted land, power, and ports that could strengthen their nations. Colonies were not built for only one purpose. Economic hopes, religious goals, and political competition often worked together when Europeans decided where and how to settle in North America.
- ② In New England, rocky soil and a short growing season made large plantations difficult. Forests, a long coastline, and good harbors supported shipbuilding, fishing, trade, and small farms. Many towns were near the coast or rivers, so people could move goods by water. Families often worked small farms and businesses, while enslaved labor existed but was less central to the regional economy than it was in the South. This geography encouraged communities connected to Atlantic commerce.
- ③ The Middle Colonies had fertile soil, a moderate climate, and wide rivers such as the Hudson and Delaware. Farmers grew large amounts of wheat and other grains, which were shipped from busy ports. This region became known for exporting grain. In the Southern Colonies, a warm climate, long growing season, and fertile coastal plains favored tobacco, rice, and indigo. Large plantations depended heavily on the forced labor of enslaved Africans. These crops brought profits, but slavery created an unequal social system.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Give one economic reason and one political reason that European nations established colonies.

2 How did New England's physical geography support trade and shipbuilding instead of large plantations? Use two details from the passage.

3 Compare the Middle and Southern Colonies. How did geography lead each region to produce different goods?

4 How did the source of labor on Southern plantations affect both the economy and society?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent a colony located beside a navigable river with fertile soil and a long growing season. In four or five sentences, explain one reason Europeans establish it, how at least two geographic features shape its economy, and how its labor source affects society.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three reasons Europeans established colonies in paragraph 1. In paragraphs 2 and 3, circle each geographic or labor factor and draw a line to the economy it supported. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Give one economic reason and one political reason that European nations established colonies.	Economic reason: to supply valuable goods or create new markets. Political reason: to gain land, power, or ports that strengthened the nation.
2	How did New England's physical geography support trade and shipbuilding instead of large plantations? Use two details from the passage.	Rocky soil and a short growing season made large plantations difficult. Forests supplied wood, and the coastline and good harbors supported shipbuilding and trade.
3	Compare the Middle and Southern Colonies. How did geography lead each region to produce different goods?	The Middle Colonies had fertile soil, a moderate climate, and rivers that supported grain farming and shipping. The Southern Colonies had a warm climate, long growing season, and fertile coastal plains that supported tobacco, rice, and indigo.
4	How did the source of labor on Southern plantations affect both the economy and society?	Plantations used the forced labor of enslaved Africans to grow profitable crops. Slavery also created an unequal social system.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

European leaders establish Riverbend Colony to gain wealth from crops. Its fertile soil and long growing season support tobacco farms. Its navigable river carries tobacco to a port for trade. Plantation owners rely on enslaved African labor. This labor system creates a society with unequal power and freedom.

Accept equivalent economic, religious, or political motives when they fit the invented colony. The response should connect the river, soil, and growing season to an economy and accurately explain a social effect of the chosen labor source.