Paths to Virginia

Read how hopes, labor needs, and laws shaped migration.

5.C.1.4 "Explain the personal, economic, and political forces driving labor migration to Virginia, including immigration, indentured servitude, and the enslavement of Africans."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one personal hope, circle one economic need, and write P beside two choices by colonial leaders. These marks will help you explain why different groups came to Virginia.

Who Worked in Virginia?

1. In the 1600s, Virginia's tobacco farms needed many workers. Growing and preparing tobacco took long hours, and landowners wanted more people to do the work. Some people immigrated from England and other places in Europe, hoping to earn money or gain land. They chose to cross the ocean, though the trip was risky. Their personal hopes met an economic need for labor in the colony.

2. Many Europeans could not afford a ship ticket. Some signed contracts to work for a set number of years in return for passage to Virginia. These workers were called indentured servants. They hoped to build a new life after their contracts ended, but their work was hard and their freedom was limited during service. Colonial leaders also offered land to people who paid to bring new workers to Virginia.

3. Africans were also brought to Virginia to work, but many were kidnapped and forced across the ocean. They did not choose this journey or receive a work contract with an end date. As plantation owners sought labor for profit, Virginia's leaders passed laws that made slavery last a lifetime and pass from mother to child. These political choices supported an economy built in part on the forced labor of enslaved Africans.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did a personal hope and Virginia's need for workers together lead some Europeans to immigrate?

2. How did the cost of travel lead some Europeans to become indentured servants? What did they hope for after their contracts ended?

3. How did a choice by colonial leaders encourage people to bring workers to Virginia?

4. How did the demand for plantation labor and Virginia's laws shape the lives of enslaved Africans?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label explaining how personal hopes, economic needs, and choices by colonial leaders shaped labor migration to Virginia. Compare the choices available to European immigrants, indentured servants, and enslaved Africans.

ANSWER KEY

Paths to Virginia

GRADE 5 · 5.C.1.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one personal hope, circle one economic need, and write P beside two choices by colonial leaders. These marks will help you explain why different groups came to Virginia. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did a personal hope and Virginia's need for workers together lead some Europeans to immigrate?	**Some Europeans hoped to earn money or gain land, while Virginia's tobacco farms needed workers.**
2	How did the cost of travel lead some Europeans to become indentured servants? What did they hope for after their contracts ended?	**They worked for a set number of years in return for passage because they could not afford a ship ticket. They hoped to build a new life afterward.**
3	How did a choice by colonial leaders encourage people to bring workers to Virginia?	**Colonial leaders offered land to people who paid to bring new workers to Virginia.**
4	How did the demand for plantation labor and Virginia's laws shape the lives of enslaved Africans?	**Plantation owners wanted labor for profit, and Africans were forced across the ocean to work. Virginia's laws made slavery last a lifetime and pass from mother to child.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Some Europeans chose to immigrate to Virginia because they hoped to earn money or gain land. Others signed contracts to work for years because they could not pay for passage, hoping for a new life afterward. Tobacco growers needed workers, and colonial leaders offered land to people who paid to bring workers. Enslaved Africans were forced across the ocean without a choice, and Virginia's laws made their enslavement last a lifetime and pass from mother to child.

Accept varied wording that connects personal hopes, economic demand, and colonial decisions to migration. Responses must distinguish chosen immigration and time-limited indentured service from the forced migration and lifelong enslavement of Africans.