Traces of Settlement

Read how English and French colonies shaped life in North America.

6.C.3.6.B "Describe the impact of English and French settlement of North America on cultural characteristics such as language, customs, and principles of self-government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show how settlement affected language or customs, and circle details that show who held political power in each colony.

Two Colonial Legacies

1 When English settlers built communities along the Atlantic coast in the 1600s, they brought English words and customs with them. In Virginia, court records and laws were written in English. Families might gather for Protestant church services, while neighbors met at markets to trade goods. English settlement did not erase the languages and traditions of Native peoples, but it made English common in many colonial towns. Over time, English became a major language in much of what is now the United States.

2 English settlers also carried ideas about taking part in government, though power was far from equal. In Virginia, property-owning white men chose representatives for the House of Burgesses, which helped make local laws. Women, enslaved people, and most men without property could not vote. The English king still claimed authority over the colony, so the assembly did not control everything. Even with these limits, elected colonial assemblies helped shape later ideas about representative government in the United States.

3 French settlers established communities along the St. Lawrence River, including Québec, and brought French speech and Catholic customs. French was used in trade, church life, and many records. In New France, the king of France appointed a governor, and settlers did not choose a lawmaking assembly like Virginia's. French settlers also traded with Native nations, learning from them as well as changing their lives. Today, French is widely spoken in Québec, and French place names and Catholic traditions remain visible in parts of North America.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did English and French settlement each affect the languages spoken in North America?

2. How did the House of Burgesses give some Virginia colonists a role in government, and who was left out?

3. How did settlers' role in government differ between Virginia and New France?

4. What French customs spread through settlement, and what evidence of them remains today?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine two objects for a museum display, one from an English colony and one from New France. In four sentences, describe the objects, explain how each shows an effect on language or customs, and compare who could take part in government in the two colonies.

ANSWER KEY

Traces of Settlement

GRADE 6 · 6.C.3.6.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that show how settlement affected language or customs, and circle details that show who held political power in each colony. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did English and French settlement each affect the languages spoken in North America?	**English became common in many colonial towns and a major language in much of the United States. French remains widely spoken in Québec.**
2	How did the House of Burgesses give some Virginia colonists a role in government, and who was left out?	**Property-owning white men chose representatives who helped make local laws. Women, enslaved people, and most men without property could not vote.**
3	How did settlers' role in government differ between Virginia and New France?	**Some Virginia settlers elected representatives to a lawmaking assembly. In New France, the king appointed a governor, and settlers did not elect a similar assembly.**
4	What French customs spread through settlement, and what evidence of them remains today?	**French settlers brought Catholic customs and used French in church life. Catholic traditions and French place names remain visible in parts of North America.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My English colony object is an English-language schoolbook, showing how English became common in many towns and remains widely used today. My New France object is a French prayer book, showing the Catholic customs settlers brought and the French language still spoken in Québec. A property-owning white man in Virginia could vote for a representative, but women and many other people could not. In New France, the king appointed the governor instead of allowing settlers to elect a lawmaking assembly like Virginia's.

Accept other plausible imagined objects if the student connects each to a passage-supported effect on language or customs. The comparison should distinguish Virginia's limited voting for representatives from the appointed governor in New France.