Who Profits From Trade?

Trace how trade rules directed colonial wealth toward England.

8.C.1.1.B "Explain how the British policy of mercantilism sought to increase England's prosperity through restrictive trade practices, such as the Navigation Acts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two trade restrictions in the passage. Circle one way each restriction could bring money to England, then give each matching pair the same number.

A Barrel of Tobacco

1 At a Virginia dock in the late 1600s, a planter packs tobacco into barrels for a buyer overseas. Choosing a ship is not simply a matter of finding the lowest price. England governs the colony and wants colonial trade to build wealth at home. This idea is called mercantilism: colonies provide raw materials and buy finished goods, while the ruling country tries to keep trade profits for itself. England's leaders therefore make rules that steer ships and goods through English hands instead of leaving merchants free to trade anywhere.

2 The Navigation Acts turn that goal into trade rules. Under these laws, much trade involving the English colonies must use English or colonial ships rather than foreign ships. Tobacco is among the colonial products directed to England before sale to buyers in other countries. A French merchant who wants Virginia tobacco cannot simply take a cargo straight from Virginia to France. English merchants gain a chance to handle the tobacco, and English ports can collect customs duties. Shipping and handling work can also bring income to people in England.

3 The rules also shape what colonies buy. Many goods made in Europe must pass through England before reaching colonial customers, giving English merchants another chance to earn money. Colonists may face higher prices or fewer trading partners when they cannot choose the shortest or cheapest route. Some colonial shipowners still benefit because colonial ships are allowed in much of this trade. The policy's main purpose, however, is to make England more prosperous by controlling where colonial goods travel, who carries them, and who earns from their sale.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could the rule about which ships carried colonial trade help England grow wealthier?

2. Why might England require Virginia tobacco to pass through England before reaching a buyer in France?

3. How could sending European goods through England before they reached the colonies benefit English merchants?

4. How could a trade rule that helped England earn money also make trade harder for colonists?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine Parliament proposes a new rule requiring colonial rice exports to travel on English-owned ships. Write a four-sentence petition from an English shipowner that explains two ways the rule might benefit England and acknowledges one possible cost to colonists.

ANSWER KEY

Who Profits From Trade?

GRADE 8 · 8.C.1.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two trade restrictions in the passage. Circle one way each restriction could bring money to England, then give each matching pair the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could the rule about which ships carried colonial trade help England grow wealthier?	**It could bring shipping and handling income to people in England instead of foreign competitors.**
2	Why might England require Virginia tobacco to pass through England before reaching a buyer in France?	**The route gives English merchants a chance to handle the tobacco and English ports a chance to collect customs duties.**
3	How could sending European goods through England before they reached the colonies benefit English merchants?	**English merchants could earn money by handling goods on their way to colonial customers.**
4	How could a trade rule that helped England earn money also make trade harder for colonists?	**Restricting routes or trading partners could keep colonists from choosing a cheaper option, leaving them with higher prices or fewer choices.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I ask Parliament to require colonial rice exports to travel on English-owned ships. Freight fees would go to English shipowners instead of foreign competitors. Greater demand for our ships could support English shipyards and jobs. Colonial farmers might pay more for shipping if they cannot choose a cheaper carrier.

Accept other passage-supported links between restricted trade and English income. For the petition, look for two distinct benefits to England and one plausible cost to colonists, without treating the proposed rice rule as a historical law.