

Colonial Work Patterns

How land, climate, and trade shaped colonial economies

5.9.A "explain the economic patterns of early European colonies; and"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each phrase that tells what people produced, traded, or did for work. Circle the land, climate, or water feature that helped create that economic pattern.

Three Colonial Economies

- ① When English settlers built colonies along North America's Atlantic coast, the land and climate shaped their work. In New England, rocky soil and long winters made large farms difficult. Colonists used nearby forests for lumber, caught fish in the Atlantic, built ships, and traded goods. Families often worked small farms and businesses. Coastal towns grew around harbors where ships could carry products to other places.
- ② The Middle Colonies, including Pennsylvania and New York, had fertile soil and a milder climate. Farmers raised wheat and other grains to sell. Rivers and ports helped move grain, furs, and imported goods. Cities such as Philadelphia became busy trade centers. This region combined farming with trade and crafts, so it had more kinds of work than a colony depending on one major crop.
- ③ Farther south, a warm climate and a long growing season supported tobacco, rice, and indigo. Large plantations produced these cash crops for sale in Britain and other markets. Plantation owners relied heavily on the forced labor of enslaved Africans. Because these crops needed much land and labor, Southern Colonies developed fewer large towns and focused more on exporting farm products.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did New England’s land and climate affect the work people did there?

2 Compare the main economic work in the Middle Colonies with the main economic work in the Southern Colonies.

3 Why did harbors, rivers, and ports matter to the economies of New England and the Middle Colonies?

4 Explain how the need for land and labor shaped the Southern Colonies’ economy and towns.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Complete the chart to show a cause-and-effect economic pattern for each colonial region. Use a different land, climate, or water detail and explain how it led to the region’s main work or products.

REGION	LAND, CLIMATE, OR WATER DETAIL	MAIN WORK OR PRODUCT	HOW THE DETAIL SHAPED THE ECONOMY

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each phrase that tells what people produced, traded, or did for work. Circle the land, climate, or water feature that helped create that economic pattern. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did New England's land and climate affect the work people did there?	Rocky soil and long winters made large farms difficult, so people used forests for lumber, caught fish, built ships, and traded goods.
2	Compare the main economic work in the Middle Colonies with the main economic work in the Southern Colonies.	The Middle Colonies combined grain farming, trade, and crafts. The Southern Colonies focused on plantation cash crops such as tobacco, rice, and indigo for export.
3	Why did harbors, rivers, and ports matter to the economies of New England and the Middle Colonies?	They helped ships and traders move goods to other places. They supported trade and helped coastal towns and cities grow.
4	Explain how the need for land and labor shaped the Southern Colonies' economy and towns.	Cash crops needed much land and labor, so large plantations relied heavily on enslaved Africans. The region focused on exporting farm products and developed fewer large towns.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

REGION	LAND, CLIMATE, OR WATER DETAIL	MAIN WORK OR PRODUCT	HOW THE DETAIL SHAPED THE ECONOMY
New England	Rocky soil and long winters	Fishing, lumber, shipbuilding, and trade	Large farms were difficult, so people used forests, the ocean, and harbors.
Middle Colonies	Fertile soil, rivers, and ports	Grain farming, trade, and crafts	Good farmland grew grain, while waterways moved goods for trade.
Southern Colonies	Warm climate and long growing season	Tobacco, rice, and indigo plantations	The climate supported cash crops that needed large amounts of land and labor.

Accept equivalent descriptions of each region's economic pattern when the student connects it to a geographic feature or trade route. For the chart, each row should accurately link a regional condition to work, products, or trade.