

SECTION  
4

# The Colonies Come of Age

## MAIN IDEA

Even though both Northern and Southern colonies prospered, many colonists began to question British authority.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Regional differences between Northern and Southern colonies have survived in the culture and politics of the modern United States.

## Terms & Names

- triangular trade
- middle passage
- Enlightenment
- Benjamin Franklin
- Great Awakening
- Jonathan Edwards
- French and Indian War
- William Pitt
- Pontiac
- Proclamation of 1763

## One American's Story

In 1773, Philip Vickers Fithian left his home in Princeton, New Jersey, for the unfamiliar world of Virginia. Fithian, a theology student, had agreed to tutor the children of Robert Carter III and his wife at their magnificent brick manor house. In Fithian's journal of his one-year stay there, he recalled an evening walk along the property.

### A PERSONAL VOICE PHILIP VICKERS FITHIAN

**"We stroll'd down the Pasture quite to the River, admiring the Pleasantness of the evening, & the delightful Prospect of the River, Hills, Huts on the Summits, low Bottoms, Trees of various Kinds, and Sizes, Cattle & Sheep feeding some near us, & others at a great distance on the green sides of the Hills."**

—*Journal & Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian*

Plantations, or large farms, like the Carters' played a dominant role in the South's economy, which had come to rely heavily on agriculture. The development of this plantation economy led to a largely rural society, in which enslaved Africans played an unwilling yet important role.



▲ The Shirley plantation house in Virginia is representative of many old Southern mansions. Built in 1723, it was the birthplace of Ann Hill Carter, the mother of Civil War general Robert E. Lee.

## A Plantation Economy Arises in the South

While there were cities in the South, on the whole the region developed as a rural society of self-sufficient plantations. Plantations sprang up along the rivers, making it possible for planters to ship their goods directly to the Northern colonies and Europe without the need for public dock facilities. Because plantation owners produced much of what they needed on their property, they did not often need shops, bakeries, and markets.

Plantations specialized in raising a single cash crop—one grown primarily for sale rather than for livestock feed. In Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, planters grew tobacco. Planters in South Carolina and Georgia harvested rice and later indigo (for blue dye) as cash crops.

**LIFE IN A DIVERSE SOUTHERN SOCIETY** In addition to English settlers, thousands of German immigrants as well as Scots and Scots-Irish settled in the South. Women in Southern society, as in the North, endured second-class citizenship. For the most part they could not vote, preach, or own property.

While small farmers made up the majority of the Southern population, prosperous plantation owners controlled much of the South's economy as well as its political and social institutions.

At the bottom of Southern society were enslaved Africans. In the 18th century, Southerners turned increasingly to slavery to fill the labor needs of their agricultural economy. By 1690, about 13,000 slaves were working in the Southern colonies. By 1750, the number of slaves had increased to more than 200,000. **A**

**THE MIDDLE PASSAGE** During the 17th century, Africans had become part of a transatlantic trading network described as the **triangular trade**. This term refers to a trading process in which goods and enslaved people were exchanged across the Atlantic Ocean. For example, merchants carrying rum and other goods from the New England colonies exchanged their merchandise for enslaved Africans. Africans were then transported to the West Indies where they were sold for sugar and molasses. These goods were then sold to rum producers in New England and the cycle began again.

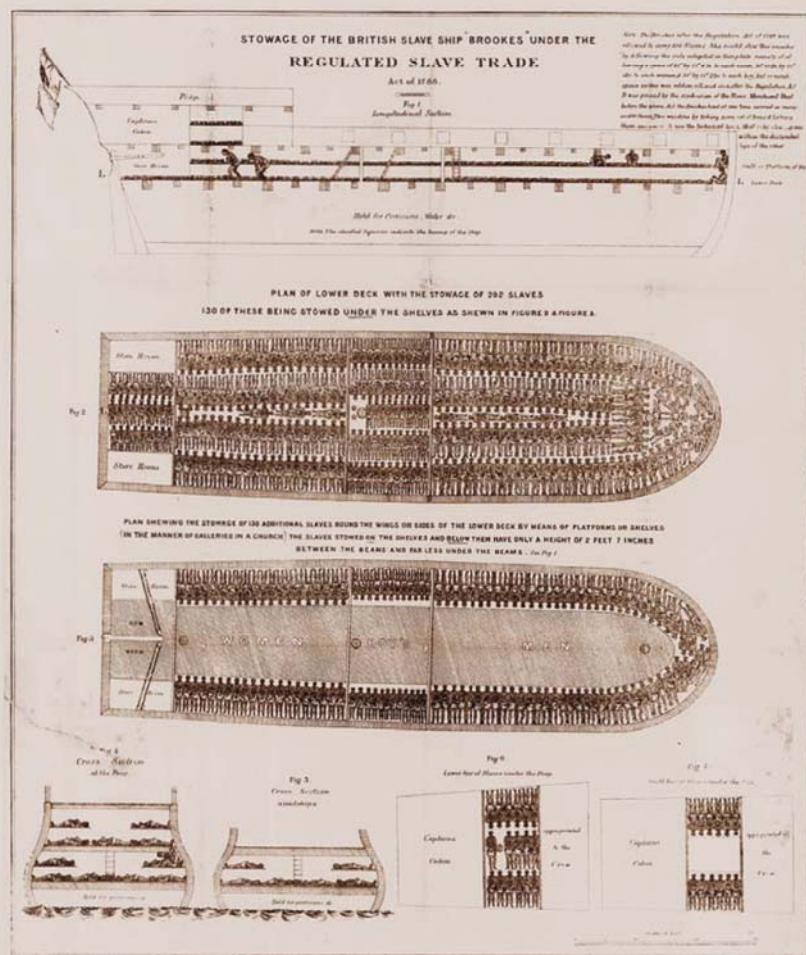
The voyage that brought Africans to the West Indies and later to North

America was known as the **middle passage**, after the middle leg of the transatlantic trade triangle. Extreme cruelty characterized this journey. In the ports of West Africa, European traders branded Africans for identification and packed them into the dark holds of large ships. On board a slave ship, Africans were beaten into submission and often fell victim to diseases that spread rapidly. Some committed suicide by jumping overboard. Nearly 13 percent of the Africans aboard each slave ship perished during the

**MAIN IDEA**

**Summarizing**

**A** Describe the social structure of Southern society.



◀ This plan and section of the British slave ship *Brookes* was published in London around 1790 by a leading British antislavery advocate named Thomas Clarkson. The image effectively conveys the degradation and inhumanity of the slave trade, which reduced human beings to the level of merchandise.

**MAIN IDEA****Making Inferences**

**B** If 13 percent of the enslaved Africans died on the journey to America, why did the merchants treat them so badly?

brutal trip to the New World. One enslaved African, Olaudah Equiano, recalled the inhumane conditions on his trip from West Africa to the West Indies in 1762 when he was 12 years old. **B**

**A PERSONAL VOICE** OLAUDAH EQUIANO

**“The closeness of the place and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died. . . .”**

—*The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*



Olaudah Equiano

**AFRICANS COPE IN THEIR NEW WORLD** Africans who survived the ocean voyage entered an extremely difficult life of bondage in North America. Probably 80 to 90 percent worked in the fields. The other 10 to 20 percent worked as domestic slaves or as artisans. Domestic slaves worked in the houses of their masters, cooking, cleaning, and helping to raise the master’s children. Artisans developed skills as carpenters, blacksmiths, and bricklayers and were sometimes loaned out to the master’s neighbors.

In the midst of the horrors of slavery, Africans developed a way of life based on their cultural heritage. They kept alive their musical, dance, and storytelling traditions. When a slave owner sold a parent to another plantation, other slaves stepped in to raise the children left behind.

Slaves also resisted their position of subservience. Throughout the colonies, planters reported slaves faking illness, breaking tools, and staging work slowdowns. A number of slaves tried to run away, even though escape attempts brought severe punishment. **C**

Some slaves even pushed their resistance to open revolt. One uprising, the Stono Rebellion, began on a September Sunday in 1739. That morning, about 20 slaves gathered at the Stono River just south of Charles Town (later Charleston), South Carolina. Wielding guns and other weapons, they killed several planter families and marched south, beating drums and inviting other slaves to join them in their plan to flee to Spanish-held Florida. Many slaves died in the fighting that followed. Those captured were executed. Despite the rebellion’s failure, it sent a chill through many Southern colonists and led to the tightening of harsh slave laws already in place.

**MAIN IDEA****Drawing Conclusions**

**C** How did enslaved Africans maintain their sense of self esteem?

## Commerce Grows in the North

The development of thriving commercial cities and diverse economic activities gradually made the North radically different from the South. Grinding wheat, harvesting fish, and sawing lumber became thriving industries. By the 1770s, the colonists had built one-third of all British ships and were producing more iron than England did. Many colonists prospered. In particular, the number of merchants grew. By the mid-1700s, merchants were one of the most powerful groups in the North. In contrast to the South, where Charles Town was the only major port, the North boasted Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

**COLONIAL CITIES AND TRADE** The expansion of trade caused port cities to grow. Philadelphia became the second largest port in the British empire, after London. Toward the end of the 1700s, Yankee traders were sailing around Cape Horn at the tip of South America to trade with Spanish missionaries as far away as California. There they exchanged manufactured goods for hides, tallow, wine, olive oil, and grain raised with the help of the Native American labor on the missions.

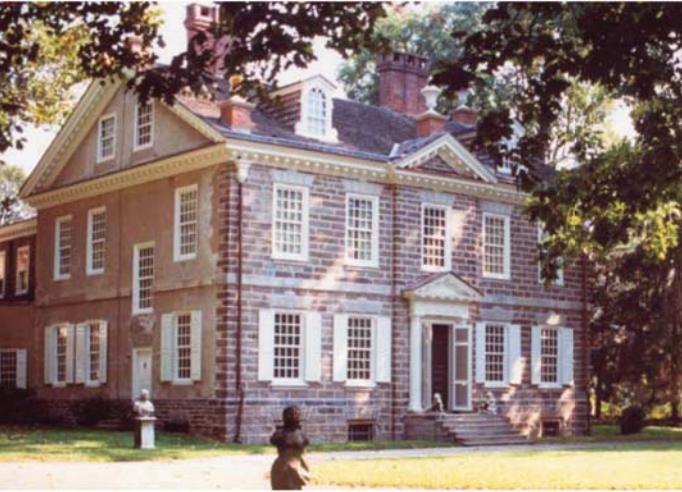
**Vocabulary**

**tallow:** fat from livestock used to make candles and soap

## Daily Urban Life in Colonial Times

By the mid-18th century, colonial cities were prosperous and growing. Brick rowhouses were replacing the wooden structures of the 17th century, while large mansions and churches, built of brick or stone, were rising everywhere.

English colonists had brought with them a preference for houses (as opposed to apartments, which were the norm in the cities of other European countries). As in Britain, the size of the house indicated the social position of its occupant.



▲ In contemporary Philadelphia, Elfreth's Alley preserves the scale and appearance of a mid-18th-century city street. Narrow rowhouses like these were occupied by artisans and shopkeepers. A neighborhood like this could have commercial and residential uses. Many people lived above the shops where they worked.

◀ The house known as Cliveden, also in Philadelphia, was completed in 1767. In contrast to the artisan or lower-middle-class housing of Elfreth's Alley, this large freestanding mansion shows the kind of building that the rich could afford.

The Northern colonies attracted a variety of immigrants. During the 18th century, about 463,000 Europeans migrated to America. Before 1700, most immigrants came as indentured servants from England, but by 1755, over one-half of all European immigrants were from other countries. They included large numbers of Germans and Scots-Irish. Other ethnic groups included the Dutch in New York, Scandinavians in Delaware, and Jews in such cities as Newport and Philadelphia.

**FARMING IN THE NORTH** Unlike Southern plantations, a farm in New England and the middle colonies typically produced several cash crops rather than a single one. Because growing wheat and corn did not require as much labor as did growing tobacco and rice, Northerners had less need to rely on slave labor. However, slavery did exist in New England and was extensive throughout the middle colonies, as was racial prejudice against blacks—free or enslaved. As in the South, women in the North had extensive work responsibilities but few legal or social rights.

## The Enlightenment

During the 1700s, the Enlightenment, an intellectual movement that began in Europe, and the Great Awakening, a colonial religious movement, influenced people's thinking throughout the thirteen colonies.

**EUROPEAN IDEAS INSPIRE THE COLONISTS** During the Renaissance in Europe, scientists had begun looking beyond religious beliefs and traditional assumptions for answers about how the world worked. Careful observation and reason, or rational thought, led to the discovery of some of the natural laws and principles governing the world and human behavior. The work of Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, and Sir Isaac Newton established that the earth

revolved around the sun and not vice versa. This observation, which challenged the traditional assumption that the earth was the center of the universe, was at first fiercely resisted. It was thought to contradict the Bible and other religious teachings. The early scientists also concluded that the world is governed by fixed mathematical laws rather than solely by the will of God. These ideas about nature led to a movement called the **Enlightenment**, in which philosophers valued reason and scientific methods.

Enlightenment ideas spread from Europe to the colonies, where people such as **Benjamin Franklin** embraced the notion of obtaining truth through experimentation and reason. For example, Franklin's most famous experiment—flying a kite in a thunderstorm—demonstrated that lightning is a form of electrical power.

Enlightenment ideas spread quickly through the colonies by means of books and pamphlets. Literacy was particularly high in New England because the Puritans had long supported public education, partly to make it possible for everyone to read the Bible. However, Enlightenment views were disturbing to some people. The Enlightenment suggested that people could use science and logic—rather than the pronouncements of church authorities—to arrive at truths. As the English poet John Donne had written, “[The] new philosophy calls all in doubt.”

The Enlightenment also had a profound effect on political thought in the colonies. Colonial leaders such as Thomas Jefferson reasoned that human beings are born with natural rights that governments must respect. Enlightenment principles eventually would lead many colonists to question the authority of the British monarchy. **D**

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Effects

**D** What effects did the Enlightenment have on political thought in the colonies?

## The Great Awakening

By the early 1700s, the Puritans had lost some of their influence. Under the new Massachusetts charter of 1691, Puritans were required to practice religious tolerance and could no longer limit voting privileges to members of their own church. Furthermore, as Puritan merchants prospered, they developed a taste for fine houses, stylish clothes, and good food and wine. As a result, their interest in maintaining the strict Puritan code declined. A series of religious revivals aimed at restoring the intensity and dedication of the early Puritan church swept through the colonies. These came to be known collectively as the **Great Awakening**.

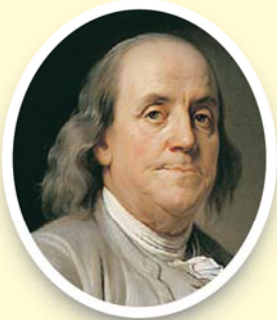
#### Vocabulary

**revival:** a time of reawakened interest in religion

The British minister **George Whitefield** was a major force behind the Great Awakening. In his seven journeys to the American colonies between 1738 and 1769, Whitefield preached dramatic sermons that brought many listeners to tears. ▶



## KEY PLAYERS

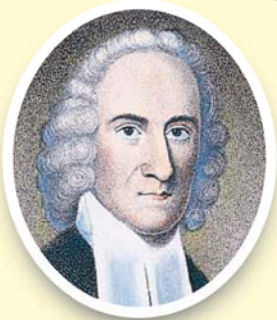


**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**  
1706–1790

A true student of the Enlightenment, Benjamin Franklin devised an orderly method to develop moral perfection in himself. In his autobiography, he records how he decided on a list of virtues he thought he should have. Then, every night, he reviewed whether his behavior lived up to those standards and recorded his faults in a notebook.

Originally, he concentrated on only 12 virtues until a Quaker friend told him he was too proud. Franklin promptly added a 13th virtue to the list—the virtue of humility, which he felt he never quite achieved.

Franklin took great pleasure in seeing his character improve. He wrote: “I was surpris’d to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish.”



**JONATHAN EDWARDS**  
1703–1758

Unlike Benjamin Franklin, Jonathan Edwards did not believe that humans had the power to perfect themselves. Descended from a long line of Puritan ministers, he believed that “however you may have reformed your life in many things,” all were sinners who were destined for hell unless they had a “great change of heart.”

Edwards was a brilliant thinker who entered Yale College when he was only 13. His preaching was one of the driving forces of the Great Awakening. Ironically, when the religious revival died down, Edwards’s own congregation rejected him for being too strict about doctrine. Edwards moved to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1751, where he lived most of his remaining years as a missionary to a Native American settlement.

**RELIGIOUS REVIVALS** Among those clergy who sought to revive the fervor of the original Puritan vision was **Jonathan Edwards**, of Northampton, Massachusetts. One of the most learned religious scholars of his time, Edwards preached that it was not enough for people simply to come to church. In order to be saved, they must feel their sinfulness and feel God’s love for them. In his most famous sermon, delivered in 1741, Edwards vividly described God’s mercy toward sinners.

### A PERSONAL VOICE

JONATHAN EDWARDS

“The God that holds you over the pit of Hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors [hates] you, and is dreadfully provoked: His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire . . . and yet it is nothing but His hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment.”

—“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”

While the Great Awakening, which lasted throughout the 1730s and 1750s, restored many colonists’ Christian religious faith, the movement also challenged the authority of established churches. Preachers traveled from village to village,

attracting thousands to outdoor revival meetings, giving impassioned sermons, and stirring people to rededicate themselves to God. Some colonists abandoned their old Puritan or Anglican congregations, while independent denominations, such as the Baptists and Methodists, gained new members.

**EFFECTS OF THE GREAT AWAKENING AND ENLIGHTENMENT** Although the Great Awakening emphasized emotionalism and the Enlightenment emphasized reason, the two movements had similar consequences. Both caused people to question traditional authority. Moreover, both stressed the importance of the individual: the Enlightenment by emphasizing human reason, and the Great Awakening by de-emphasizing the role of church authority. Because these movements helped lead the colonists to question Britain’s authority over their lives, they were important in creating the intellectual and social atmosphere that eventually led to the American Revolution. **E**

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Effects

**E** What effects did the Great Awakening have on organized religion in the colonies?

## The French and Indian War

### Background

Hats made from beaver skin were popular in Europe beginning in the late 16th century. Because of the demand for beaver, the fur trade was enormously successful.

### MAIN IDEA

### Contrasting

**F** How was the French colony in North America unlike the British colonies?

As the French empire in North America expanded, it collided with the growing British empire. During the late 17th and first half of the 18th centuries, France and Great Britain had fought three inconclusive wars. Each war had begun in Europe but spread to their overseas colonies. In 1754, after six relatively peaceful years, the French–British conflict reignited. This conflict is known as the **French and Indian War**.

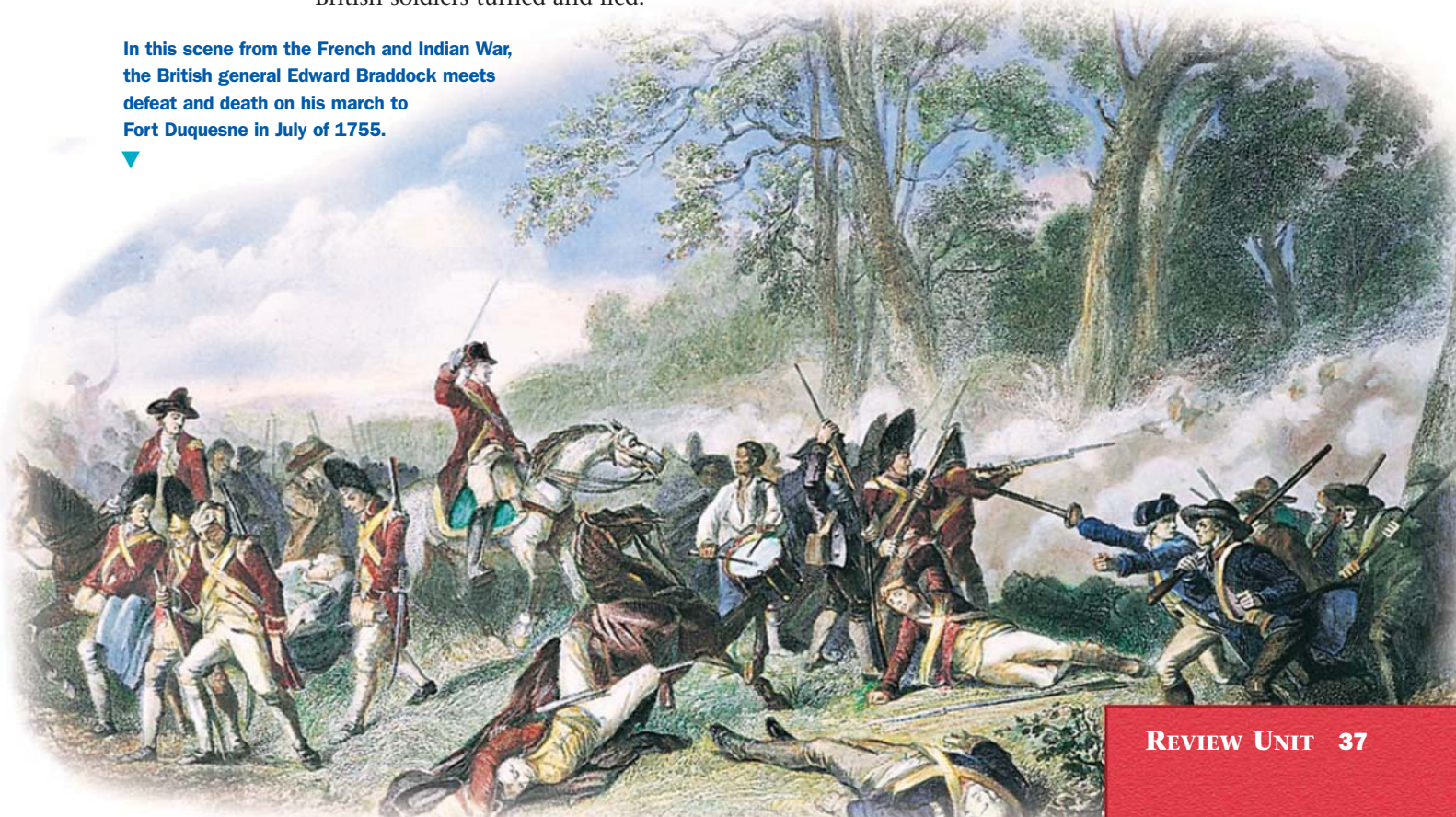
**RIVALRY FOR AN EMPIRE** From the start the French colony in North America, called New France, differed from the British colonies. Typical French colonists were young, single men who engaged in the fur trade and Catholic priests who sought to convert Native Americans. The French were more interested in exploiting their territories than in settling them. However, they usually enjoyed better relations with Native Americans, in part because they needed the local people as partners in the fur trade. In fact, several military alliances developed out of the French–Native American trade relationship. **F**

**WAR ERUPTS** One major area of contention between France and Great Britain was the rich Ohio River valley just west of Pennsylvania and Virginia. In 1754, the French built Fort Duquesne in the region despite the fact that the Virginia government had already granted 200,000 acres of land in the Ohio country to a group of wealthy planters. In response, the Virginia governor sent militia, a group of ordinary citizens who performed military duties, to evict the French. This was the opening of the French and Indian War, the fourth war between Great Britain and France for control of North America.

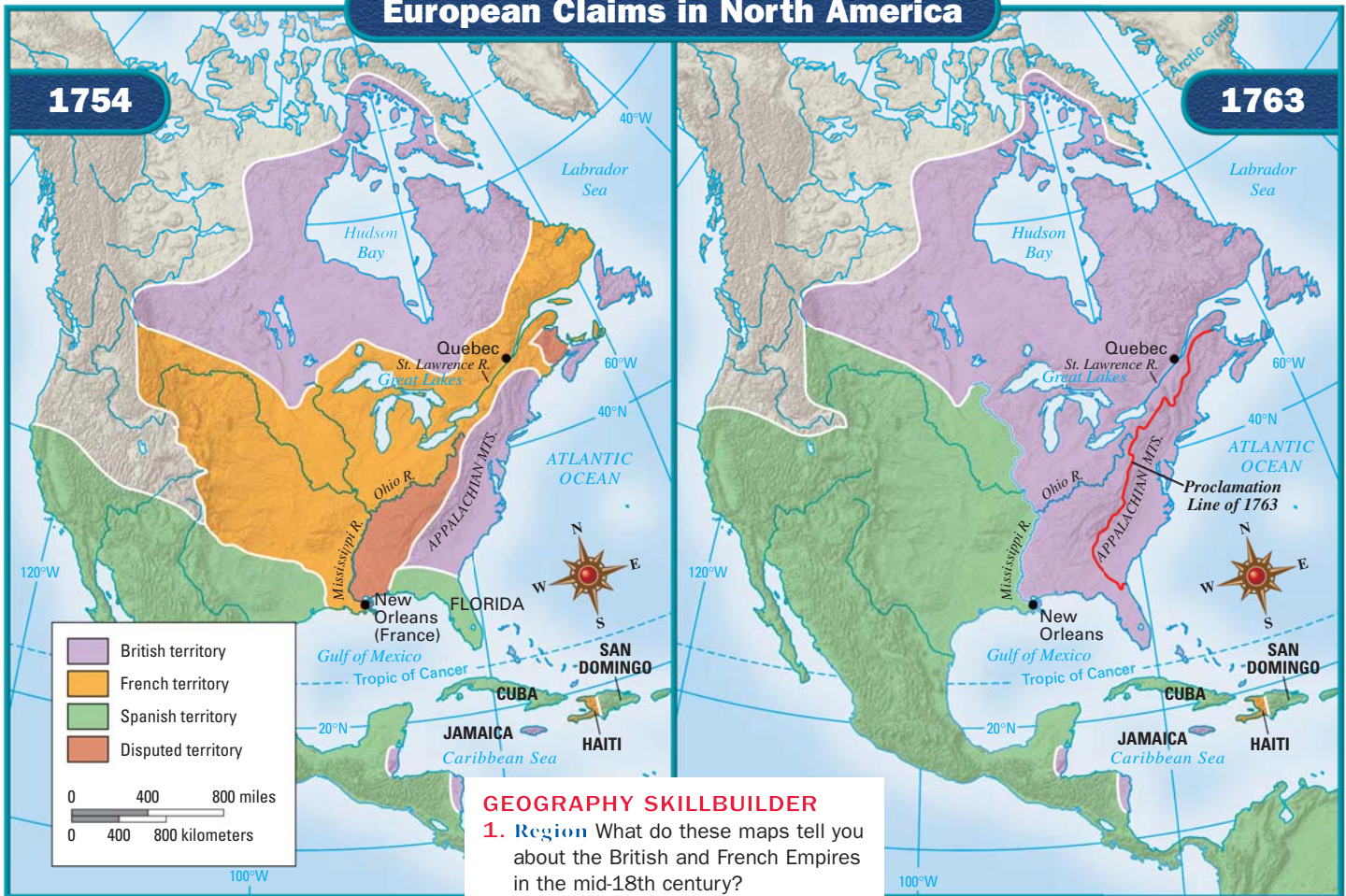
In the first battle of the war, the French delivered a crushing defeat to the outnumbered Virginians and their leader, an ambitious 22-year-old officer named George Washington.

A year after his defeat, Washington again headed into battle, this time as an aide to the British general Edward Braddock. Braddock's first task was to relaunch an attack on Fort Duquesne. As Braddock and nearly 1,500 soldiers neared the fort, French soldiers and their Native American allies ambushed them. The startled British soldiers turned and fled.

In this scene from the French and Indian War, the British general Edward Braddock meets defeat and death on his march to Fort Duquesne in July of 1755.



## European Claims in North America



The weakness of the British army surprised Washington, who showed great courage. As Washington tried to rally the troops, two horses were shot from under him and four bullets pierced his coat—yet he escaped unharmed. Many other colonists began to question the competence of the British army, which suffered defeat after defeat during 1755 and 1756.

**BRITAIN DEFEATS AN OLD ENEMY** Angered by French victories, Britain's King George II selected new leaders to run his government in 1757. One of these was **William Pitt** the elder, an energetic, self-confident politician. Under Pitt, the British and colonial troops finally began winning battles. These successes earned Britain the support of the powerful Iroquois, giving Britain some Native American allies to counterbalance those of France.

In September 1759, the war took a dramatic and decisive turn on the Plains of Abraham just outside Quebec. Under cover of night, British troops scaled the high cliffs that protected the city and defeated the French in a surprise attack. The British triumph at Quebec brought them victory in the war.

The war officially ended in 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Great Britain claimed Canada and virtually all of North America east of the Mississippi River. Britain also took Florida from Spain, which had allied itself with France. The treaty permitted Spain to keep possession of its lands west of the Mississippi and the city of New Orleans, which it had gained from France in 1762. France retained control of only a few islands and small colonies near Newfoundland, in the West Indies, and elsewhere.



**MAIN IDEA**

**Making Inferences**

**G** How did Great Britain's victory over France affect Native Americans?

**CHANGES FOR NATIVE AMERICANS** Others who lost ground in the war were the Native Americans, who found the victorious British harder to bargain with than the French had been. Native Americans resented the growing number of British settlers crossing the Appalachian Mountains and feared the settlers would soon drive away the game they depended on for survival. In the spring of 1763, the Ottawa leader Pontiac recognized that the French loss was a loss for Native Americans. **G**

**A PERSONAL VOICE PONTIAC**

**“When I go to see the English commander and say to him that some of our comrades are dead, instead of bewailing their death, as our French brothers do, he laughs at me and at you. If I ask for anything for our sick, he refuses with the reply that he has no use for us. For all this you can well see that they are seeking our ruin. Therefore, my brothers, we must all swear their destruction and wait no longer.”**

—quoted in *Red and White*

Led by **Pontiac**, Native Americans captured eight British forts in the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes area and laid siege to another. In response, British officers deliberately presented blankets contaminated with smallpox to two Delaware chiefs during peace negotiations, and the virus spread rapidly among the Native Americans. Weakened by disease and tired of fighting, most Native American groups negotiated treaties with the British by the summer of 1766.

To avoid further costly conflicts with Native Americans, the British government prohibited colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains. The **Proclamation of 1763** established a Proclamation Line along the Appalachians, which the colonists were not allowed to cross. However, the colonists, eager to expand westward from the increasingly crowded Atlantic seaboard, ignored the proclamation and continued to stream onto Native American lands.

**SECTION 4**

**ASSESSMENT**

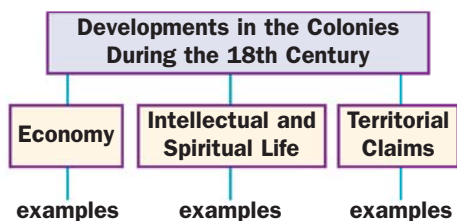
**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- triangular trade
- Benjamin Franklin
- French and Indian War
- Pontiac
- middle passage
- Great Awakening
- William Pitt
- Proclamation of 1763
- Enlightenment
- Jonathan Edwards

**MAIN IDEA**

**2. TAKING NOTES**

Re-create the tree diagram below. Fill in the diagram to show developments that took place in the colonies during the 18th century.



Which events or developments helped prepare the colonies for independence?

**CRITICAL THINKING**

**3. ANALYZING CAUSES**

Why did the plantation system come to play such an important role in the Southern economy?

**4. SUMMARIZING**

How did the Enlightenment affect the colonies?

**5. ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES**

Read the following quotation, written in 1774 by the African-American poet, Phillis Wheatley. How does the quotation express both religious belief and Enlightenment thought? “For in every human breast God has implanted a principle, which we call love of freedom.”

**6. ANALYZING ISSUES**

In what ways was slavery a brutal system? Support your statement with examples from the text.

**Think About:**

- how people were taken from Africa
- the working conditions of enslaved people
- the attitudes toward enslaved people

# Colonial Courtship

The concept of dating among teenagers was nonexistent in colonial times. Young people were considered either children or adults, and as important as marriage was in the colonies, sweethearts were older than one might suspect. The practices of courtship and marriage varied among the different communities.

## ▼ FRONTIER OR BACKCOUNTRY PEOPLE

Andrew Jackson, depicted with his wife in the painting below, “stole” his wife (she was willing) from her family. Jackson was following a custom of the backcountry people, who lived along the western edge of the colonies.

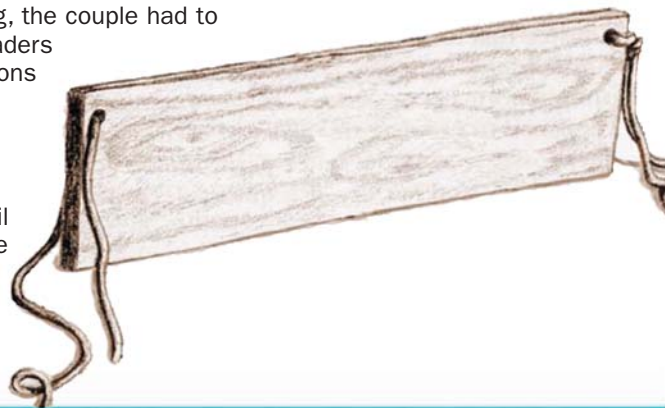
These colonists, mostly Scots-Irish, based their marriages on the old custom of “abduction”—stealing the bride—often with her consent. Even regular marriages began with the groom and his friends coming to “steal” the bride. Much drinking and dancing accompanied these wild and hilarious weddings.



## PURITANS

For Puritans, marriage was a civil contract, not a religious or sacred union. Although adults strictly supervised a couple’s courting, parents allowed two unusual practices. One was the use of a courting stick, a long tube into which the couple could whisper while the family was in another room. The other was the practice of “bundling”: a young man spent the night in the same bed as his sweetheart, with a large bundling board (shown below) between them.

Before marrying, the couple had to allow for Puritan leaders to voice any objections to the marriage at the meeting house. Passing that, the couple would marry in a very simple civil ceremony and share a quiet dinner.



# DATA

## FILE

### WHO MARRIED?

#### Puritans:

- 98% of males and 94% of females married
- Grooms were usually a few years older than brides
- Discouraged marriages between first cousins

#### Virginians:

- 25% of males never married; most females married
- Grooms nearly 10 years older than brides
- Allowed first-cousin marriages

#### Quakers:

- 16% of women single at age 50
- forbade first-cousin marriages

#### Frontier People:

- Almost all women and most men married
- Ages of bride and groom about the same
- Youngest group to marry

### Average Age at Marriage

| Group            | Males | Females |
|------------------|-------|---------|
| Puritan          | 26    | 23      |
| Virginians       | 26    | 19      |
| Quakers          |       |         |
| in Delaware      | 31    | 29      |
| in Penn. & N.J.  | 26    | 22      |
| Philadelphians   | 26    | 23      |
| Frontier People  | 21    | 19      |
| Modern Americans | 25    | 24      |

### Who Could Divorce?

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| <b>Puritans:</b>   | Yes |
| <b>Virginians:</b> | No  |
| <b>Quakers:</b>    | No  |

Source: David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed*



### THE SOUTH ▲

Many African slaves married in a “jumping the broomstick” ceremony, in which the bride and groom jumped over a broomstick to seal their union. Although there is disagreement among African-American scholars, some suggest that the above painting depicts a slave wedding on a South Carolina plantation in the late 1700s.



### ◀ QUAKERS

Quaker couples intent on marrying needed the consent not only of the parents but also of the whole Quaker community. Quakers who wanted to marry had to go through a 16-step courtship phase before they could wed. Quaker women, however, were known to reject men at the last minute.

### VIRGINIA ►

In Virginia, marriage was a sacred union. Since the marriage often involved a union of properties, and love was not necessary, parents were heavily involved in the negotiations. In this illustration from a dance manual (right), a young upper-class couple work to improve their social graces by practicing an elaborate dance step.



### THINKING CRITICALLY

#### CONNECT TO HISTORY

**1. Interpreting Data** What was a common characteristic of courtship among Puritans, Quakers, and Virginians?



SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R22

#### CONNECT TO TODAY

**2. Synthesizing** Research modern courtship practices by interviewing your parents or relatives. Write a brief paper comparing and contrasting modern-day and colonial courtship practices.



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