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## Exploring Primary Sources— Colonial America

**This sample includes the following:**

- Teacher's Guide Cover** (1 page)
- Teacher's Guide Table of Contents** (1 page)
- How to Use This Resource** (5 pages)
- Card Lesson Plan** (4 pages)
- Card** (2 pages)
- Document Lesson Plan** (6 pages)
- Document** (1 page)

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EXPLORING  
PRIMARY  
SOURCES

# Colonial America

Teacher's Guide





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# How to Use This Resource

## Lesson Plans

The learning outcomes are the focus throughout each lesson.

For digital-only reproducibles, digital filenames are provided.

Page references and digital filenames make lesson preparation easy.

The guiding questions help support development of inquiry by focusing on the primary source being studied.

Essential questions provide inquiry anchors for students as they investigate enduring understandings.

American Indian House  
**Bark House at Plymouth**

**Learning Outcomes**

- Students will describe how the geography and natural resources available in an area influenced the types of homes American Indians built.
- Students will define how the cultures of American Indian tribes affected how they lived.

**Materials**

- copies of American Indian House primary source card (bark.pdf)
- copies of Wampanoag Houses (page 41; bkwampanoag1.pdf)
- copies of Eastern Tribes During the Colonial Era (tribes.pdf)
- copies of the Colonial Era Lifestyles document-based assessment (page 32; lifestyles.pdf)

**Essential Question**

- How does where people live influence how people live?

**Guiding Questions**

- What materials were used to build this house?
- Why might the tribe have chosen a dome shape for their houses?
- How could the bark shingles have been attached?
- What does this style of house tell you about how American Indians from this region lived?

**Introducing the Primary Source**

- Ask students to draw and label a picture of what they think a typical American Indian house looks like. Have students share and compare their drawings with partners.
- Share the photograph of the American Indian bark house from the primary source card. Give students a few minutes to make lists of at least five observations or questions they have about the image.
- Introduce the essential question, and use the provided guiding questions to discuss the photograph of an American Indian house. Encourage students to ask their own questions to facilitate further inquiry.

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Students collaborate to interact with the primary source through inquiry, textual analysis, and engaging activities.

These assessments provide opportunities for students to independently practice primary source analysis.

Key content vocabulary from the historical background information is bolded in student texts and defined here for reference.

American Indian House  
**Bark House at Plymouth** (cont.)

**Analyzing the Primary Source**

- Have small groups of students read the background information, *Wampanoag Houses* (bkwampanoag2.pdf). Review the key words with students as necessary. As students read, have them annotate the text by circling information that is new to them and underline information they already know. Review the guiding questions, and ask students if any of their answers have changed now that they have more information.
- Provide time for students to complete at least two of the activities from the back of the primary source card.
- Ask students to think about how and why the homes of American Indian tribes may have differed from tribe to tribe, even if they were in similar regions.
- Have students conduct research to complete *Eastern Tribes During the Colonial Era*, which is provided in the Digital Resources (tribes.pdf).
- Refer students back to the essential question, and ask them to think about how it relates to the American Indian house in the photograph. Tell students that the first colonists constructed their first homes this way and why they eventually made different style homes, such as shingled houses.
- To learn more about American Indian houses, see page 119 for a technology-based extension activity.

**Document-Based Assessment**

- Distribute copies of *Colonial Era Lifestyles*. Digital copies of the primary sources are provided in the Digital Resources (lifestyles1.jpg, lifestyles2.jpg, lifestyles3.jpg).
- Have students think about what they've learned throughout this lesson, carefully analyze the primary source, and respond thoughtfully to the questions.

**Key Words**

These key content words are included in both levels of the background information.

- birch**—a plant with spiky balls of flowers that grows in wet areas
- cattail**—tall plant with long, flat leaves that grows in wet areas
- federally**—relating to the central government of a country
- saplings**—young trees

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# How to Use This Resource *(cont.)*

## Background Information

The historical background information provides students with key information about both the time period and the primary source. It is provided at two different reading levels to support differentiation. When preparing for a lesson, decide which level best meets the needs of your students. Use one level for all students, or differentiate the reading levels by student need.

- Encourage students to write strong questions they have as they read these texts. The *Creating Strong Questions* lesson on pages 28–30 will prepare students for this important aspect of the inquiry arc.
- Suggestions for annotations students could make while reading are provided in each lesson plan.

**Pocahontas's Story**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pocahontas was an American Indian. She was Chief Powhatan's daughter. He was the powerful leader of dozens of tribes and about 25,000 people in Virginia. Pocahontas was born around 1596. She was named Amontse. However, she quickly earned a nickname—Pocahontas—which means “playful one.”

Pocahontas never wrote about her own life. Much of what people know today comes from European settlers. According to a 1624 story by Captain John Smith, Pocahontas saved him from certain death. The event took place in December 1607. At the time, Smith was a captive of Powhatan's tribe. Smith claims that Pocahontas rushed in and laid her head in her arms and laid her own upon his to save him from death. After that, Powhatan welcomed Smith as a friend and treated him well. Some researchers claim that Smith made up this story. Other people claim that this was a traditional ceremony with this tribe. They believe that if Smith's story is true, Pocahontas's actions were probably part of the ritual.

Whether the story is true, Smith is credited with forming a good relationship with Powhatan and his tribe. For about a year, the relationship between the American Indians and the colonists was good. The settlers received help and food from their neighbors. Written documents describe Pocahontas bringing food to the settlers. Over the years, settlers' relations with the Powhatan tribe worsened. Pocahontas stopped visiting Jamestown. Finally, the tribe captured some settlers and

supplies from the English. After that, the relationship hit a low point.

When Smith returned to England, English Captain Samuel Argall decided to take charge. He wanted to force Powhatan to release the English prisoners and return the weapons and tools that the tribe had captured. Argall set a trap and **kidnapped** Pocahontas, holding her for ransom. During her capture, she lived with **Reverend** Alexander Whitaker. She began taking lessons in Christianity. At that time, she met an Englishman named John Rolfe. Eventually, Rolfe and Pocahontas agreed to be married. Powhatan and the Virginia governor both agreed to the marriage. Pocahontas was **baptized** with the new name of Rebecca Rolfe. In April 1614, she married Rolfe. The English settlers were relieved at the prospect of the “peace-making” marriage and a better future with the tribe. Early the next year, Pocahontas and Rolfe had a son named Thomas.

In the spring of 1616, the Rolfe family sailed to England. They went to gather support and money for the Virginia colony. Pocahontas was treated very well, and her family was presented to King James I and the royal family.

The next year, the Rolfe family set sail to return to Virginia. As they sailed home, she became gravely ill. It was a type of lung disease was taken ashore, and she died. She was buried in Gravesend, England, on March 21, 1617. She was about 21 years old.

**Pocahontas**

Within the Teacher's Guide, the texts are leveled at a seventh- to eighth-grade reading level and are denoted by a triangle in the top right of each page.

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**Pocahontas's Story**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pocahontas was an American Indian. Her father was Chief Powhatan. He was a powerful leader in Virginia. He was in charge of dozens of tribes. Pocahontas was born around 1596. Her birth name was Amontse. However, she quickly earned a nickname—Pocahontas. That name stuck throughout history.

Pocahontas never wrote about her life. Most of what people know today comes from English settlers. One man, Captain John Smith, wrote a lot about her. According to Smith, Pocahontas took place in December 1607. At the time, Smith was being held captive by Powhatan's tribe. Smith claims that Pocahontas blocked him from harm. After she saved him, Powhatan welcomed Smith as a friend. The chief treated Smith well. Some scholars claim that Smith made up this story. They put on by this tribe. They believe that Pocahontas was likely just acting out the final part of the ritual.

People do not know for sure if Smith's story is true. Still, Smith is given credit for forming a good relationship with the tribe. For about a year, things were good. The tribe helped the settlers many times. Pocahontas brought food to the settlers. Over the years, the relationship got worse. Pocahontas stopped visiting. One day the tribe captured some settlers and tools from the English. After that, the relationship

John Smith left Virginia. English Captain Samuel Argall decided to take charge. He wanted to force the Powhatan tribe to give back the settlers and **kidnapped** Pocahontas. He said he would only give her back if he got what he wanted. During this time, she lived with **Reverend** Alexander Whitaker. He taught her about Christianity. Pocahontas also met a settler named John Rolfe. Later, they wanted to be married. Powhatan and the Virginia governor both agreed to the marriage. Pocahontas was **baptized** with the new name of Rebecca Rolfe. Then, in April 1614, she married Rolfe. The settlers hoped the marriage would bring peace. Early the next year, the couple had a son named Thomas.

In the spring of 1616, the Rolfe family sailed to England. They went to gain support and money for the Virginia colony. Pocahontas was treated well while she was there.

The next year, the Rolfe family set sail for home. Sadly, Pocahontas became very ill. It is likely that she had a type of lung disease. She was taken ashore, England on March 21, 1617. She was about 21 years old.

**Pocahontas**

Texts leveled at a fifth- to sixth-grade reading level are denoted by a square and are only provided in the Digital Resources.

Glossary terms are bolded to highlight their importance to the content. All glossary words are included in both levels of the information.

A Student Glossary is provided on the digital resources. This document includes the vocabulary words and definitions from all 16 lessons.

# How to Use This Resource *(cont.)*

## Student Activity Pages

**Pocahontas**

**About the Primary Source**  
This is a painting of Pocahontas, who was the daughter of Powhatan. Artist William Sheppard created the original painting in 1616. That was when Pocahontas was in England with her husband, John Rolfe, and their son. When Pocahontas married Rolfe, her name was changed to Rebecca. She was also baptized into the Christian faith. A copy of this painting is in the United States Capitol building.

**Analyzing History**

- Which words around the portrait do you understand, and which ones do you not understand? Can you guess the meanings of any words you do not recognize?
- In what ways might this portrait have offended Pocahontas's tribe in Virginia?
- How do you imagine Pocahontas was feeling during her tour of England and while she sat for this portrait?
- Write a poem about Pocahontas that is based on facts and not just legend.

**Historical Writing**

**Fiction**  
Pocahontas had sisters, and yet legend says she was the favorite daughter of Powhatan. Write a short story from the viewpoint of one of her sisters.

**Nonfiction**  
Research and write a report on Pocahontas's tribe. The tribe originally had the same name as her father, but today it has an extended name. Include the history of the name change and what the tribe's situation is today.

**Writing Challenge**  
Based on what you have learned, how has your perspective of Pocahontas changed? Write about how your views have changed based on the facts and myths surrounding Pocahontas's life.

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Background information provides a concise description of the primary source image students will study.

Activities for students increase in complexity, providing scaffolded opportunities for student engagement.

Fiction and nonfiction writing prompts promote deeper connections to the primary source.

An inquiry-driven writing task challenges students to take their learning to the next level.

Key information about the primary source reproduction prepares students for the activity.

Engaging activities encourage students to use higher-order thinking skills as they analyze the primary source.

Extension challenges are provided to engage students in more complex tasks.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**American Indian Trading**

**About the Broadside**  
This broadside was created in 1703 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It served as a guide for trading between truckmasters and the local tribes. A truckmaster was an officer who was in charge of trading with American Indian tribes. The left column shows the exchange rate. For example, one ruffled shirt was worth one beaver skin. The right column explains the exchange rate between different types of furs: Beavers, otters, and bears were worth the same amount. The fur on beavers varied depending on when and where they were caught. The colder it was, the thicker the beavers' furs would be. A beaver "in season" means that it had a thick coat of fur.

**Directions:** Use the background information and the text of the price of goods sign to answer the questions.

1. Evaluate the pros and cons of the fur trade in colonial America as if you were living at that time.

Pros of Fur Trade	Cons of Fur Trade

2. How might people today have different views about trading furs?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write a list of five products created with furs in colonial times. Then, list what resources are used to make those products today. For example, beaver fur coats—made with cotton today.

**Challenge**  
Research international laws about animal trapping and hunting. What organizations have been active in protecting beavers and other animals?

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Price of Goods

Key information about the primary source reproduction prepares students for the activity.

Engaging activities encourage students to use higher-order thinking skills as they analyze the primary source.

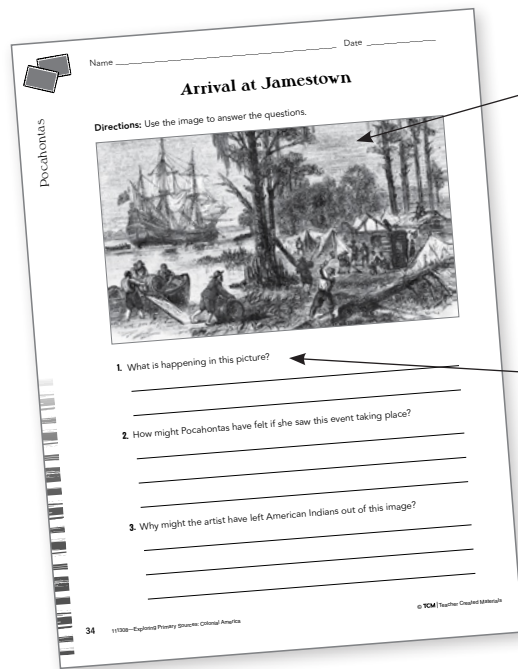
Extension challenges are provided to engage students in more complex tasks.

- **Hint:** Find and use the photograph button on your copier when copying student reproducibles, including document-based assessments. This will produce clearer images that will be easier to analyze.

# How to Use This Resource *(cont.)*

## Document-Based Assessments

A document-based assessment (DBA) connected to the content of each lesson gives students an opportunity to practice primary source analysis. These DBAs practice key skills needed for many social studies assessments in middle school and high school.



Each DBA includes a visual or textual primary source.

Students use general knowledge of the time period, what they learned in the lesson, and details in the primary source to respond to the constructed-response questions.

## Digital Resources

Projecting primary sources while students are analyzing them allows for whole-class discussions.

At times, projecting full-color versions of a primary source may be more beneficial than copying them on black-and-white copiers.





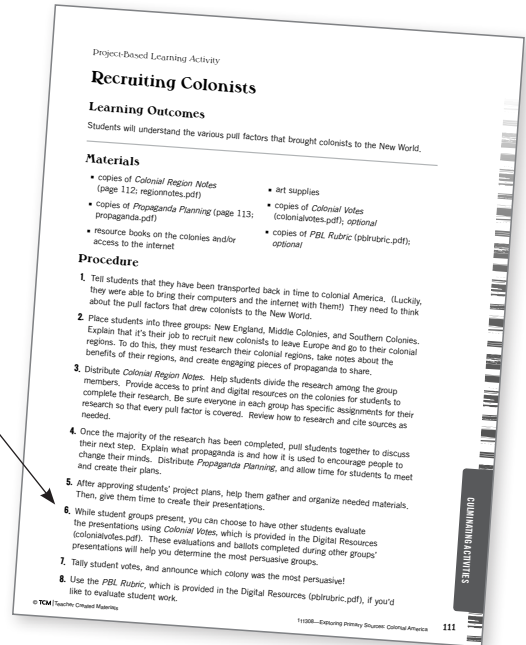
# How to Use This Resource *(cont.)*

## Culminating Activities

### Project-Based Learning Activity

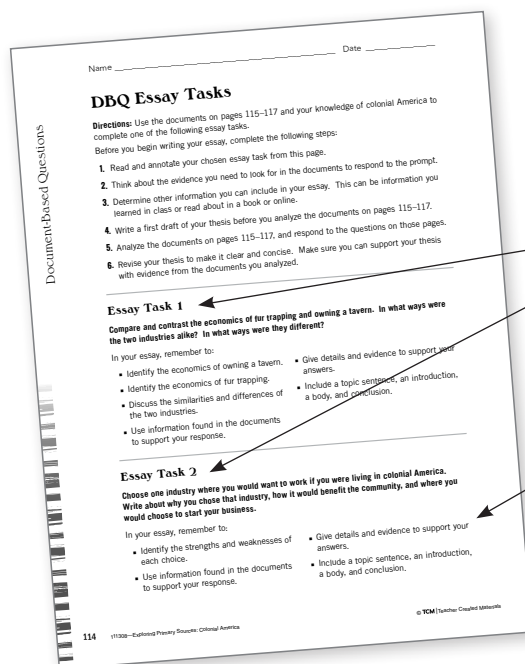
Engaging project-based learning (PBL) activities provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively and share what they've learned about the content.

Student presentations of PBL work are excellent for inviting guests to visit and see what students are doing.



### Document-Based Questions

Document-based questions (DBQs) require students to analyze multiple DBAs and then respond to essay tasks in cohesive, well-supported essays.



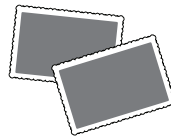
Two essay tasks allow students to choose which DBQ they'd like to answer.

Each has a specific question and indicators to guide student responses.

# Educating Children in the Colonies

## Learning Outcomes

- Students will analyze how children learned using colonial hornbooks.
- Students will examine and describe education in the colonies and compare it to education today.



## Materials

- copies of *Colonial Hornbook* primary source card (hornbook.pdf)
- copies of *Colonial Education* (page 53; bghornbook1.pdf)
- copies of the *Puritan Education* document-based assessment (page 54; education.pdf)

### Essential Question

- How do the needs and values of communities influence their educational systems?

### Guiding Questions

- What different types of text are on the hornbook, and what purpose do they serve?
- Why would the Lord's Prayer be on most colonial hornbooks?
- How did religion influence education in colonial America?
- How was learning during colonial times different from or similar to how you learn in school today?



## Introducing the Primary Source

1. Ask students to think back to when they were first learning the alphabet and how to read. Have them make lists of some of the first books they remember reading or words they remember reading and writing.
2. Share the photograph of the hornbook from the primary source card. Give students a few minutes to make lists of at least five observations or questions they have about the image.
3. Introduce the essential question, and use the provided guiding questions to discuss the colonial hornbook. Encourage students to ask their own questions to facilitate further inquiry.

# Educating Children in the Colonies *(cont.)*

## Analyzing the Primary Source

1. Have small groups of students read the background information, *Colonial Education*. (A copy of this text at a lower reading level is provided in the Digital Resources—[bghornbook2.pdf](#).) Review the key words with students as necessary. As students read, have them annotate the text by underlining education practices or beliefs that are similar to today and circling those that are different.
2. Provide time for students to complete at least two of the activities from the back of the primary source card.
3. Place students into small groups, and have them create graphic organizers to compare education in the colonial era to education today. Encourage students to include things such as subjects students learn, skills students focus on, materials in the classroom, and ages of students.

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## Document-Based Assessment

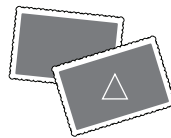
- Distribute copies of *Puritan Education*.
- Have students think about what they've learned throughout this lesson, carefully analyze the primary source, and respond thoughtfully to the questions.

### Key Words

These key content words are included in both levels of the background information.

- **abroad**—to or in a foreign country
- **apprenticeships**—positions where people learn skills or jobs before working
- **compulsory**—required by rule or law
- **plantations**—large areas of land where crops are grown





# Colonial Education

School was very important to colonists. Most boys went to grammar schools, where they studied subjects such as Greek, Latin, science, fencing, reading, writing, and manners. Most girls went to dame schools, where they studied subjects such as art, music, French, and cooking. Girls learned enough reading and writing to manage a household.

The rules at colonial schools were very different from today. If students were not displaying proper manners, teachers might spank or whip them. If students were talking too much, teachers might put whispering sticks in their mouths. These were sticks held by pieces of fabric that prevented children from speaking. Nose pinchers kept students from acting out. Tall hats, known as *dunce caps*, were put on children who gave incorrect answers.

In the northern colonies, schooling was paid for by parents, taxes, and donations. Education was important in the North. Many northern colonists were Pilgrims, and they thought everyone should be able to read the Bible. So, in 1647, the Massachusetts Bay Colony made elementary school **compulsory**. Other New England colonies followed suit. By law, every 50 households had to have a person teach reading and writing, and every 100 households had to have someone teach Latin to children.

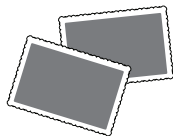
In the middle colonies, schools were rare. The middle colonists did not have the same religious principles as their neighbors to the north. In addition, many people in the middle colonies worked as farmers. Some children didn't

attend school and helped out on the farms instead. Wealthier colonists hired tutors to educate children at home.

In the South, **plantations** and homes were spread far apart. That made community schools difficult to manage. So, a tutor would teach neighboring children. Parents had to figure out how to educate their children. In the colonies, slave children received no education at all.

When boys were old enough, they had two courses open to them. Anglican boys with wealthy parents were often sent to England to continue learning. Some boys remained overseas to earn their college degrees. Other boys would come back to the colonies and study at institutions such as Harvard College and William and Mary. Boys from working families took another route. They got **apprenticeships** and learned new skills and trades, such as printing and shoemaking. Most girls did not have those options; they were not sent **abroad** and did not earn degrees. Instead, the majority of them helped around the house until they were ready to get married and manage their own households.





Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Puritan Education

**Directions:** Read the law, and answer the questions.

### Puritan Law Dated 1647

“..It is therefore ordered by this Court and Authoritie therof; That every Township in this Jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty Housholders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read, whose wages shall be paid either by the Parents or Masters of such children, or by the Inhabitants in general..”

#### General Information

Puritans cared about schooling and quickly founded their own college in 1636—Harvard College. In 1642, the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed a law that parents had to make sure that their children could read and write. Then, five years later, they expanded the law. An excerpt of that law is shown above.

1. Why is this law considered a first attempt at required public education?

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2. How will they pay the teacher?

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3. At what point in a town’s growth would this law be required?

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† A b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q  
r s t u v w x y z & a e i o u  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q  
R S T U V W X Y Z  
a e i o u  
a b c b i b o b u b a e i o u  
a c e c i c o c u c a b e b i b o b u  
a d e d i d o d u d a d e d i d o d u  
In the Name of the Father, and of the  
Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Our Father, which art in  
Heaven, hallowed be thy  
name; thy Kingdom come, thy  
Will be done on Earth, as it is in  
Heaven. Give us this Day our  
daily Bread; and forgive us our  
trespasses, as we forgive them  
that trespass against us: And  
lead us not into Temptation, but  
deliver us from Evil. Amen.



# Colonial Hornbook

## About the Photograph

This photograph shows a hornbook from the eighteenth century. Hornbooks were used to teach the alphabet to children. They were common in England and were brought over with settlers to the colonies. A sheet was mounted on a wooden frame. Protecting the sheet was a thin, transparent layer of animal horn. That's where it gets its name. Each hornbook had a cross, followed by lowercase and uppercase letters. Then, the vowels formed a line and vowel/consonant combinations followed. Finally, the Lord's Prayer was stamped at the bottom.



### Analyzing History

- What was a colonial hornbook made of?
- Why would it be difficult to learn to read using only this as a textbook?
- Would you have liked living in the colonies as a child? Why or why not?
- Make a modern version of a hornbook. Cut out the hornbook shape in cardboard. Create your own hornbook lesson. Then, glue the paper onto the cardboard shape.



### Historical Writing

#### Fiction

Write a diary entry as if you were a young child living and going to school in colonial America.

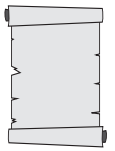
#### Nonfiction

Compare and contrast the life and schooling of girls and boys in colonial America. Do additional research if needed, and write about the major similarities and differences.



### Writing Challenge

Choose another topic to research related to life in the colonies for children, such as games, chores, hobbies, or diet. Write a historical background page about that topic.



# “Not Worth a Continental”

## Learning Outcomes

- Students will examine and analyze reproductions of colonial banknotes.
- Students will compare and contrast colonial banknotes and look for symbols representing colonial life.

## Materials

- *Colonial Banknotes* reproduction (banknotes1.pdf)
- copies of *Money in the Colonies* (page 107; bgbanknotes1.pdf)
- copies of *Colonial Currency* (page 108; banknotes2.pdf)
- copies of *Classifying Colonial Currency* (page 109; currency.pdf)
- copies of the *Tobacco Drying* document-based assessment (page 110; tobacco.pdf)

### Essential Question

- How or why does something gain or lose value?

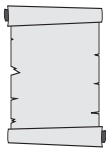
### Guiding Questions

- What overall impression do you have of these banknotes?
- How do these banknotes appear to be similar to each other, and how are they different?
- Why might colonial banknotes have been from different countries?
- What problems do you think would be involved in using this money since there are so many different values?



## Introducing the Primary Source

1. Distribute the colonial banknotes to students, so they can feel them and examine them up close. Ask them to share what they notice about the money and how it is similar to or different from the money they use today.
2. Either project the digital images of the banknotes or distribute copies of *Colonial Currency* for students to analyze more closely.
3. Introduce the essential question, and use the provided guiding questions to discuss colonial money. Encourage students to ask their own questions to facilitate further inquiry.



## “Not Worth a Continental” (cont.)

### Analyzing the Primary Source

1. Have small groups of students read the background information, *Money in the Colonies*. (A copy of this text at a lower reading level is provided in the Digital Resources—[bgbanknotes2.pdf](#).) Review the key words with students as necessary. As students read, they should annotate the text by underlining colonists’ actions and circling actions of the British government.
2. Distribute copies of *Classifying Colonial Currency*. Tell students they will use the copies of *Colonial Currency* to complete *Classifying Colonial Currency*. They may need additional access to the internet or other reference resources.
3. Ask students to think about how digital currency is used in today’s society and how and why we give it value. Invite students to share ideas about what kind of money or currency we might use one hundred years from now.

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### Document-Based Assessment

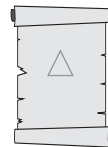
- Distribute copies of *Tobacco Drying*. A digital copy of the primary source is provided in the Digital Resources ([tobacco.jpg](#)).
- Have students think about what they’ve learned throughout this lesson, carefully analyze the primary source, and respond thoughtfully to the questions.

#### Key Words

These key content words are included in both levels of the background information.

- **bartering**—the exchanging of goods, products, or services for things instead of for money
- **currencies**—the types of money that countries use
- **minting**—making coins out of metal
- **Parliament**—the group of people in the United Kingdom that are responsible for making the laws





## Money in the Colonies

English colonists arriving in the United States continued to use British money in the colonies. They trusted its value and understood how much it meant. The main **currencies** were pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings. The British **Parliament** allowed the colonies to use their money. In return, the colonies would provide raw materials and markets for British industries and trading.

Parliament, however, only allowed colonists to use paper money. It passed laws stopping the export of silver coins. Parliament did not want the colonies to take silver from the homeland. It also became against the law for colonists to print their own money.

As a result, having a stable flow of currency was a constant problem for the colonists. Many colonies allowed **bartering**. However, different colonies put different prices on goods, depending on what they needed. Some foreign currency from Spain and Portugal made its way to the colonies. This mainly happened through trading with sailors. Colonists began assigning British values to foreign currency. There were problems with that system too. A Spanish dollar might equal one pound in some colonies; but the same dollar might only equal 10 shillings in another colony.

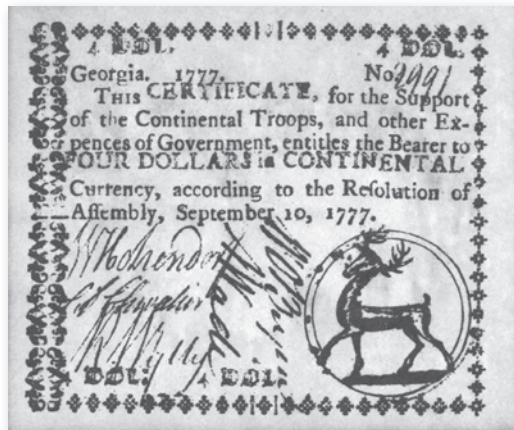
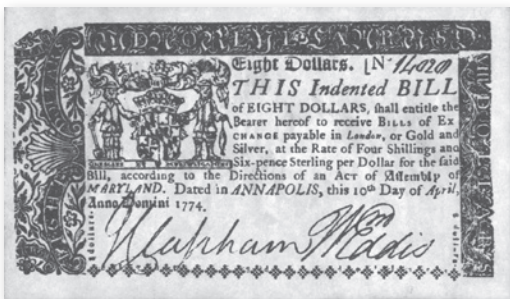
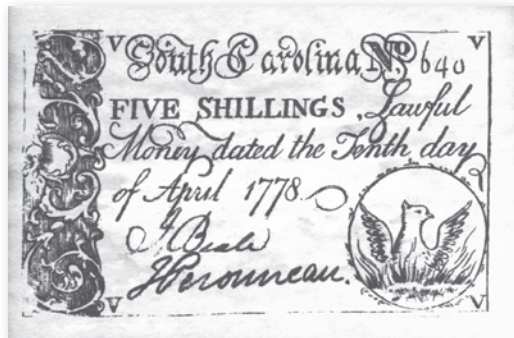
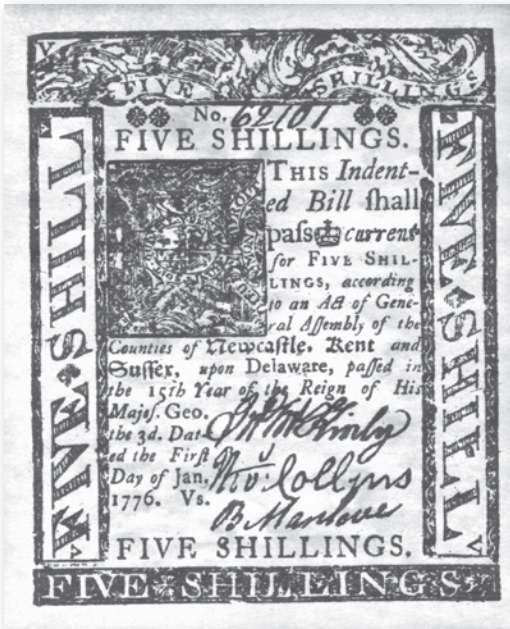
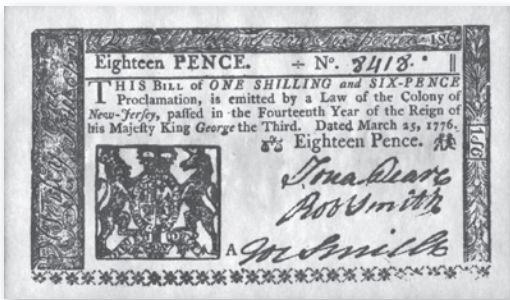
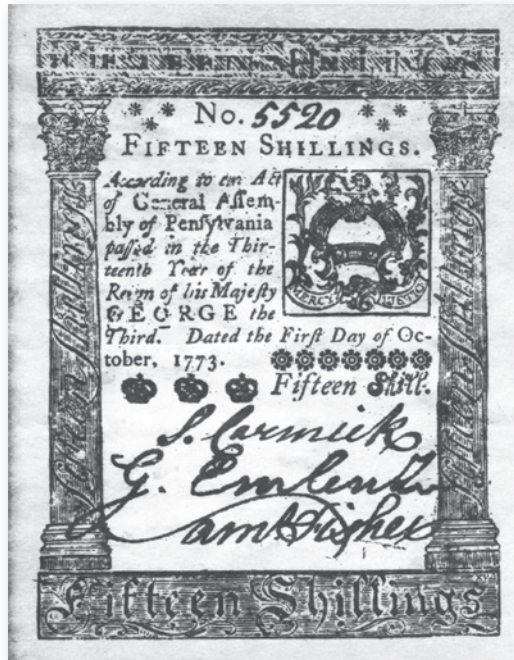
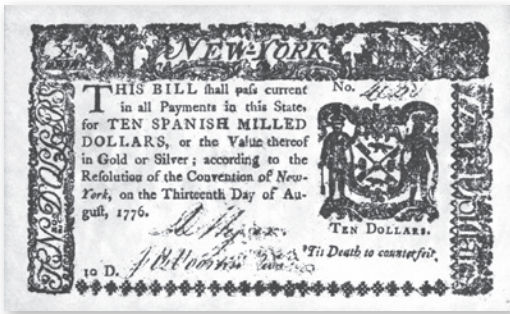
These differences were causing major problems in the colonies. In 1652, Boston began producing silver coins. This “underground” **minting** of money was against British law. So, in 1684, the Massachusetts charter was revoked. They were ordered to close the mint. However, six years later, the British needed soldiers

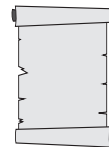
to fight in King William’s War. So, King William and Queen Mary allowed the colonists to print so-called Bills of Credit. These bills were not actual money. Instead, they could be redeemed in the future for shares of goods, such as corn, grain, and cattle. The notes were passed around, and soon other colonies began printing their own bills. However, as more and more bills were issued, their values began to drop.

In 1751, the British Parliament passed a law that colonies could no longer issue money. However, by this time, some colonies were already thinking about independence. When war broke out in 1775, the Continental Congress printed paper money to help finance the war. This paper money was called “Continental.” These notes did not represent actual money. Instead, they were backed by the promise of future tax returns. Once again, too much paper money was issued without a solid backing. Money began to lose its value, leading to the phrase “not worth a Continental.” After the American Revolution, the new U.S. government knew it needed a solid currency for the new country. In 1792, Congress passed the Coinage Act. Finally, the United States had a national currency and a national mint.



# Colonial Currency





# Classifying Colonial Currency

## About the Banknotes

These banknotes were used 1773–1778. The amounts are written in English denominations (such as shillings and pence), Spanish milled dollars, colonial currency, and continental currency. Banknotes printed in the colonies usually indicated that they were backed by gold, silver, or English money, but they varied in value. One estimate is that a Spanish dollar in the mid-1700s was worth about six shillings, or about one-third of a pound. Continental currency (printed during the American Revolution) had limited value and wasn't always backed by gold.

**Directions:** Use the colonial currency and other references to complete this chart.

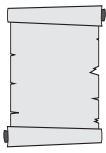
Name of Notes	Amount of Note	Description of Illustration	Government Distributor	Date of Note
milled dollars				
dollars				
shillings				
Continental dollar				
pence				



### Challenge

Choose one colony, and write a short summary of the history of its currency.





# Tobacco Drying

**Directions:** Study the image, and then answer the questions.



1. What started the popularity of tobacco?

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2. In which colonies was most of the tobacco grown?

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3. Why was tobacco production important to the economic development of the colonies?

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EIGHTEEN PENCE. \* No. 3418 \*

THIS BILL of ONE SHILLING and SIX-PENCE Proclamation, is emitted by a Law of the Colony New-Jersey, passed in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of his Majesty King George the Third. Dated March 25, 1773. Eighteen Pence.



*Thomas Deane*  
*Robt Smith*  
*A. G. Smith*

Georgia, 1777. No. 2991  
THIS CERTIFICATE, for the Support of the Continental Troops, and other Expenses of Government, entitles the Bearer to FOUR DOLLARS in CONTINENTAL Currency, according to the Resolution of the Assembly, September 10, 1777.



*Woburn*  
*of England*  
*W. W. W.*

No. 5520  
FIFTEEN SHILLINGS.

According to an Act of General Assembly of Pennsylvania passed in the Thirtieth Year of the Reign of his Majesty GEORGE the Third. Dated the First Day of October, 1773.



Fifteen Shill.  
*L. Linnick*  
*G. Embury*  
*and Fisher*

NEW-YORK  
THIS BILL shall pass current in all Payments in this State, for TEN SPANISH MILLED DOLLARS, or the Value thereof in Gold or Silver; according to the Resolution of the Convention of New-York, on the Thirteenth Day of August, 1776.



TEN DOLLARS.

South Carolina No. 640  
FIVE SHILLINGS  
Money dated the Tenth of April 1778.  
*A. Buel*  
*Herouneau.*

Eight Dollars. [N<sup>o</sup> 11020  
THIS Indented BILL of EIGHT DOLLARS, shall entitle the Bearer hereof to receive Bills of Exchange payable in London, or Gold and Silver, at the Rate of Four Shillings and Six-pence Sterling per Dollar for the said Bill, according to the Directions of an Act of Assembly of MARYLAND. Dated in ANNAPOLIS, this 10<sup>th</sup> Day of April, Anno Domini 1774.



*Clapham*  
*Madis*

FIVE SHILLINGS.  
THIS Indented Bill shall pass current for FIVE SHILLINGS, according to an Act of General Assembly, of the Counties of Newcastle, Kent and Sussex, upon Delaware, passed in the 15th Year of the Reign of His Majesty Geo. the 3d. Dated the 3d. Day of Jan. 1776. Vs.

*W. W. W.*  
*W. Collins*  
*B. Harboe*

FIVE SHILLINGS.