Struggle for North America

In the 1600s, France, the Netherlands, England, and Sweden joined Spain in settling North America. North America did not yield vast treasures or offer a water passage to Asia, as they had hoped. Before long, though, the English and French were turning their attention to France and England controlled large parts of North America. Their colonies differed from each other and from those of Spanish America in terms of language, government, resources, and society.

Building New France

By the early 1500s, French fishing ships were crossing the Atlantic each year to harvest rich catch of cod off Newfoundland, Canada. Within 200 years, the French had occupied or claimed nearly half of North America.

Explorers and Missionaries

French claims in Canada—which the French called New France—quietly grew while French rulers were distracted by wars at home in Europe. In 1534, Jacques Cartier (zhahk kahr tee AY) began exploring the coastline of eastern Canada, eventually discovering the St. Lawrence River. Traveling inland on the river, he claimed much of present-day eastern Canada for France. As he and other missionaries went north, a few French-speaking farmers of English descent were also cutting logs on his property with his fourteen-year-old son. As they used their oxen to pull away a large log, a piece of turf came up to reveal a round, yellow object. The elaborately engraved object they found, dated 1603, was an astrolabe that had belonged to French explorer Samuel de Champlain. This astrolabe was a piece of the story of the European exploration of Canada and the French-British rivalry that followed.

Focus Question

How did European struggles for power shape the North American continent?

Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

High-Use Word: prevail

Definition: to triumph

Sample Sentence: The school’s football team celebrated after they prevailed against their archrivals.

In 1867, a Canadian farmer of English descent was cutting logs on his property with his fourteen-year-old son. As they used their oxen to pull away a large log, a piece of turf came up to reveal a round, yellow object. The elaborately engraved object they found, dated 1603, was an astrolabe that had belonged to French explorer Samuel de Champlain. This astrolabe was a piece of the story of the European exploration of Canada and the French-British rivalry that followed.

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Furs, Trapping, and Fishing

French explorers and fur traders gradually traveled inland with the help of Native American allies, who sought support against rival Native American groups. Eventually, France’s American empire reached from Quebec to the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi River to Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico.

The population of New France, however, grew slowly. The first permanent French settlement was not established until 1608, when Samuel de Champlain established a colony in Quebec. Wealthy landlords bought huge tracts, or areas of land, along the St. Lawrence River. They sought settlers to form the land, but the harsh Canadian climate, with its long winters, attracted few French peasants.

Many who went to New France soon abandoned farming in favor of the more profitable fur trapping and trading. They faced a hard life in the wilderness, but the soaring European demand for furs ensured good prices. Fishing was another industry that supported settlers, who exported cod and other fish to Europe. Fishing was another industry that supported settlers, who exported cod and other fish to Europe.

The English Colonies

In 1649, a Venetian navigator known by the English name John Cabot found rich fishing grounds off Newfoundland, which he claimed for England. Later English navigators continued to search for a northwest passage to Asia, with no success. In the 1600s, England concentrated on establishing colonies along the Atlantic seaboard—the coast of the present-day eastern United States.

Establishing the First Colonies

The English built their first permanent colony at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607. Although the colony was meant to bring wealth and profit, in the early years of the colony many settlers died of starvation and disease. The root survived with the help of friendly Native Americans. The colonists finally made headway when the settlers turned to grow and export tobacco, a plant that had been cultivated by Native Americans for thousands of years.

Answers

They found farming difficult in the cold climate and much less profitable than trapping and trading. BIOGRAPHY because he did not find valuable spices, gold, or a northwest passage to Asia.
The English Colonies

Instruct

- **Introduce: Key Terms** Ask students to find the key term *compact* (in blue) in the text and explain its meaning. Point out that the Pilgrims wrote the Mayflower Compact because they had landed far north of Virginia in a place outside the authority of the English government. What *compacts* can students think of that still people make today?

- **Teach** Trace the growth of the English colonies from the 1600s to the 1700s. Ask: What was the northwest passage, and why were the English looking for it? (It was a direct route to Asia that Europeans believed existed; the English wanted to share in the lucrative spice trade.) What were two main reasons why English settlers started colonies in North America, and how do these compare to French motivations? (The English set up colonies as commercial ventures organized for profit; others were established for religious reasons, as havens from persecution. Similarly, the French sought financial gain from their overseas ventures, but they also sought to convert Native Americans to Christianity.)

- **Analyzing Visuals** Direct students’ attention to the photograph of the recreation of the Jamestown colony. Ask: What does this photo of the recreation of the Jamestown colony support the player’s views? (It was a direct route to Asia that Europeans believed existed; the English wanted to share in the lucrative spice trade.)

Independent Practice

- **Have students fill in the Outline Map Claims in the Americas in the 1700s.**
- **Teaching Resources, Unit 1, p. 54**

Monitor Progress

- **Circulate to make sure students are filling in their Outline Maps accurately.**
- **Administer the Geography Quiz.**
- **Teaching Resources, Unit 1, p. 56**

Answers

- **Caption** No; the stockaded, roughly-constructed village suggests that settlers led hard lives and were always worried about being attacked. Nothing suggests easy wealth or leisure.

Link to Literature

**Northwest Passage** The novel *Northwest Passage*, by Kenneth Roberts, tells of nations and cultures in conflict. It focuses on an American military unit fighting in the British army during the French and Indian War. As the Americans and British fight alongside each other, they become aware of the growing differences and distrust that threaten to divide them.

- **Have students read the first few pages of Chapters 10 and 14.** Then ask them to answer the following questions based on their reading: (1) What were the tactics used by Rogers’ Rangers different from those used by the British regular army? (2) What was the American attitude toward British military leadership and tactics? (3) In what ways might the French and Indian War have helped lead to the American Revolution?

In 1620, another group of English settlers landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts. They were *Pilgrims*, or English Protestants who rejected the Church of England. They sought religious freedom rather than commercial profit. Before coming ashore, they signed the Mayflower Compact, in which they set out guidelines for governing their North American colony. A compact is an agreement among people. Today, we see this document as an important early step toward self-government.

Many Pilgrims died in the early years of the Plymouth colony. Local Native Americans, however, taught them to grow corn and helped them survive in the new land. Soon, a new wave of English Protestant immigrants arrived to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The English Colonies Grow In the 1600s and 1700s, the English established additional colonies. Some, like Virginia and New York, were commercial ventures, organized for profit. Others, like Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, were set up as havens for persecuted religious groups. Still others, like Georgia and South Carolina, were gifts from English kings to loyal supporters.

Settlers in all of the colonies spent the early years just struggling to survive. They quickly abandoned dreams of finding riches like the Spanish gold and silver. However, over time they learned to create wealth by using the resources native to their surroundings. In New England, prosperous fishing, timber, and shipbuilding industries grew. In the middle colonies, farmers grew huge quantities of grain on the abundant land. In the South, colonists found that cash crops such as rice and tobacco grew well in the warm climate. They therefore developed a plantation economy to grow these crops. As in New Spain, the colonists imported African slaves to clear land and work the plantations. In several colonies, especially in the South, enslaved Africans and their descendants would eventually outnumber people of European descent.

Governing the Colonies Like the rulers of Spain and France, English monarchs asserted control over their American colonies. They appointed royal governors to oversee colonial affairs and had Parliament pass laws to regulate colonial trade. Yet, compared with settlers in the Spanish and French colonies, English colonists enjoyed a large degree of self-government. Each colony had its own representative assembly elected by property-holding men, that advised the governor and made decisions on local issues.

The tradition of consulting representative assemblies grew out of the English experience. Beginning in the 1200s, Parliament had begun to play an important role in English affairs. Slowly, too, English citizens had gained certain legal and political rights. England’s American colonies expected to enjoy the same rights. When colonists later protested British policies in North America, they viewed themselves as “western Englishmen” who were defending their traditional rights.
Within a hundred years or so, many ways. Europeans and Native Americans both relied on the resources of the land they inhabited. Though the groups often clashed, they influenced each other in many ways.

Struggling for Power

Instruct

1. Introduce: Vocabulary Builder Have students read the Vocabulary Builder term and definition. Point out that Britain prevailed in North America and worldwide in a struggle for power among European nations. Ask students if they can think of examples of recent wars, and who prevailed in these wars.

2. Teach Explain the reasons for some of the conflicts in North America among European rivals and their outcomes. Ask Why were Europeans in conflict over the Caribbean region? (Sugar production had become big business, and by the 1700s, French and English Caribbean exports surpassed the whole of North American exports to Europe.)

3. Analyzing the Visuals Point out the locations of European land claims on the map on this page. Ask students why they think England came into conflict with Spain and France, but not Portugal. Have them look at the artifacts and read the captions. Ask What do these items show about life in North America about 1700? (People of different cultures were learning from one another; all people depended on local resources.)

Independent Practice

1. Have students access Web Code nbp-1531 to take the Geography Interactive Audio Guided Tour and answer the map skills questions in the text.

2. Have students fill in the Outline Map North America in 1763.

Monitor Progress

Circulate to make sure students are filling in their Outline Maps accurately.

Answers

Map Skills

1. Review locations with students.

2. All are near oceans or waterways such as rivers and lakes; people depended on waterways for resources and transportation.

3. Samples: Geographic factors prevented the spread of European colonies; the boundaries are only those of about 1700; all people depended on local resources.

Social Needs

For visual and hands-on learners, as well as for students who need help with basic concepts, ask volunteers to chart on the board the changing land claims in North America. Use these dates as headers for the tops of columns: 1600s, 1700s, 1763. Have volunteers reread or scan the text and then list which nations controlled which areas during those times, and ask them to note which lands changed hands. (For example, under 1600 students might list: France—present-day Canada and central U.S.; Spain—present-day Texas and Florida; England—east coast; Netherlands—present-day New York, lost to the English in 1664; and so on.)
Assess and Reteach

Assess Progress
- Have students complete the Section Assessment.
- Administer the Section Quiz.
- Use Teaching Resources, Unit 1, p. 44.
- To further assess student understanding, use Progress Monitoring Transparencies, 64
day Transparencies.

Reteach
If students need more instruction, have them read the section summary.
- Reading and Note Taking Guide, p. 142
- Adapted Reading and Note Taking Guide, p. 142
- Spanish Reading and Note Taking Guide, p. 142

Extend
Remind students that in the struggle for North America, various European and Native American cultures left their imprints on the different regions. Have them conduct research on their hometowns to find evidence of European and Native American settlement. Have them present their findings as a fact sheet or a brochure for a guided tour.

Answer
It was fought to determine which country—France or Britain—would have dominance over North America.

Vocabulary Builder

- Using Languages
A sign in British Columbia—written in both English and the local Indian language—shows how Native American influence lasted long after the Americas became British.

Struggling for Power
By the 1800s, Spain, France, England, and the Netherlands all had colonies in North America. They began to fight—both in the colonies and around the world—to protect and expand their interests.

Competing for Colonies
By the late 1600s, French claims included present-day Canada as well as much of the present-day central United States. The Spanish had moved north, making claims to present-day Texas and Florida. Meanwhile, the English and Dutch maintained colonies along the East Coast. Native Americans throughout the colonies entered the conflict, hoping to play the Europeans against one another. Competition was also fierce in the Caribbean, as European nations fought to acquire the profitable sugarcane-producing colonies. By the 1700s, the French and English Caribbean islands, worked by enslaved Africans, had surpassed the whole of North America in export to Europe.

Bitter Rivalry Turns to War
During the 1700s, Britain and France emerged as powerful rivals. They clashed in Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia. In North America, war between the two powers erupted in 1754. Called the French and Indian War, it raged until 1763. It also turned into a worldwide struggle known as the Seven Years’ War, which spread to Europe in 1756 and then to India and Africa.

During the war, British soldiers and colonial troops launched a series of campaigns against the French in Canada and on the Ohio frontier. At first, France won several victories. Then, in 1758, British troops launched an attack on Quebec, the capital of New France. The British scaled steep cliffs along the river and captured the city. Although the war dragged on until 1763, the British had prevailed in Canada.

The 1763 Treaty of Paris officially ended the worldwide war and ensured British dominance in North America. France was forced to cede Canada and its lands east of the Mississippi River to Britain. It handed the Louisiana Territory over to Spain. However, France regained the rich sugar-producing islands in the Caribbean and the slave-trading outposts in Africa that the British had seized during the war.

Checkpoint
Why was the French and Indian War fought?