**Period 2**

**1607 - 1754**

**OVERVIEW**

Period 2 begins in 1607 when the English established the first permanent North American colony at Jamestown, Virginia. The period focuses on colonial development and European rivalries in North America up to the eve of the French and Indian War. Included are comparisons of European interactions with American Indians, as well as the imperialist powers’ approaches to colonization.

European colonizers had different goals and methods as each sought to expand their hold on North American territory. The Spanish maintained tight control of the areas they conquered, relying on military garrisons and working to convert the native population to Catholicism. The French and the Dutch were much less disruptive, working to forge trade alliances that involved fewer Europeans and often intermarrying with American Indians as they sought to build networks to acquire furs and other goods for European markets. The English sought to establish permanent colonies, clearing large tracts of land for agriculture, which disrupted Indian hunting and resources, leading to hostile encounters.

Because English colonists often came as family groups, they rarely intermarried with the native population or with Africans who were brought over as slaves, thereby creating a society marked by strict social and racial lines. As English indentured servants became fewer and the demand for labor to produce goods for European markets grew, southern colonists in particular increasingly turned to slave labor. Slavery in the English colonies gradually became more widespread and rigid, with slaves and their offspring held in perpetuity. In spite of these difficult circumstances, Africans managed to maintain many of their cultural and traditional values, and they found numerous ways to resist their captors.

Differences in climate, geography, and available resources resulted in striking regional differences among the British colonies in North America. New England, settled mainly by Puritans, developed into a closely knit region with an economy built around shipping, commerce, and farming. The middle colonies were the most diverse, relying on trade as well as agriculture. The Chesapeake region depended on tobacco, relying first on the labor of indentured servants and then increasingly on slaves. Farther south and in the West Indies, colonies grew other staple crops, sugar in particular, and depended heavily on slave labor.

As the European empires expanded in North America, they competed for land and resources and came into conflict with each other and with American Indians. They often tried to make alliances with various Indian groups to further their own interest. When the emerging British Empire attempted to assert imperial control over its North American colonies, the colonists began to find themselves at odds with the mother country.

American Indians grew alarmed as the colonial holdings expanded. Threats to their traditional ways of life and the dangers of European diseases began to outweigh their desire for European trade goods. Although the Spanish made some accommodations to Indian culture after the Pueblo Revolt in 1680, English colonists refused to make concessions. Conflicts between American Indians and Europeans were made more destructive by the introduction of European weapons and alcohol.

Colonies in eighteenth-century North America were part of the commercial, political, and cultural network known as the Atlantic world. Goods traveled to and from the Americas and Europe, and Africa became a ready source of slave labor for the New World.

The British colonies exhibited many characteristics of life in England, including political institutions, religious denominations, commercial interests, and an admiration for the ideals of the Enlightenment. The growing reliance on slave labor and the reluctance to accept either slaves or American Indians as equals led to a colonial society with clearly drawn racial divisions, unlike those of the French of the Spanish.

The British government attempted to assert stricter control over their North American colonies as they grew more important to the economy and prestige of the empire. Periods of benign neglect lad led the colonists to recognize their ability to be self-reliant and to lessen their sense of being distinct regions. They began to realize their similar interests and advantages, which often did not fit neatly with the demands of the British government. British mercantilist policies often went against colonial interests, and resistance to imperial control became more frequent.

This period of history ends with colonial resistance on the rise as the colonists became more experienced in self-government, more accepting of religious diversity, more dissatisfied with British imperialist economic control, and more interested in the ideals of the Enlightenment.

**KEY TERMS**

Anglicization Natural rights

Chattel slavery Overt and covert resistance

Deism Print culture

Enlightenment ideas Protestant evangelism

Freeholder ideal Royal and proprietary colonies

Indentured servitude Salutary neglect (benign neglect)

Mercantilism Tribalization

**GUIDED QUESTIONS**

1. What were the various methods used by European colonizers as they sought to expand their hold on North American territory?
   1. Spanish
   2. French/Dutch
   3. English
2. Why did African slavery flourish in the English colonies?
3. Describe economic differences among the British colonial regions:
   1. New England
   2. Middle
   3. Chesapeake
   4. Southern/West Indies
4. What factors encouraged and what factors impeded the development of an “American” identity?
5. Give three specific examples of the destruction of the American Indian way of life mentioned in the reading.
6. Describe the cultural network of the Atlantic world.
7. In what ways did British American colonists model their political institutions on England?
8. How did benign neglect contribute to the coming American Revolution?
9. How did religion shape the development of colonial societies?
10. What four factors listed in the reading contributed to the rise of colonial resistance against the British?