

## KS3 Empire

### To develop an awareness of the types of benefits a colony could bring.

**Under British Control:** 1607-1776

Read the information and do further research in order to complete the Tasks at the bottom of the sheet.



**The Grand Union Flag. This was Flag of the British Empire in America**

#### **1. Settling America**

There were different groups who went to settle America (which they also called the New World), and they went for different reasons. The first settlement, which was started in 1607 in Jamestown, Virginia, was formed so that the settlers could look for gold and other precious minerals to send back to England. Another group of colonists, who left Britain in 1619, went because they wanted a place where they could follow their own religion. They were Puritans (people who split from the Church of England because they thought it was not 'pure' enough). By the end of British rule in America there were thirteen different colonies. Some, like Virginia and South Carolina had been formed so the settlers could find wealth, but others like Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Maryland were formed to provide a religious haven for those who had been outcasts back in Britain.

#### **2. Government in America**

In the 1600s there was not much direct government of America by Britain. Most of the colonies had their own government, and they chose people from the colonies to lead them. In 1686 James II of England tried to exert control over New England (a group of colonies in the northeast of America) by sending a governor over to rule them and making the Church of England the only church that was allowed. This made the New Englanders very angry because they wanted to make their own laws, and because religious freedom was very important to them. In 1689, when they heard that James II had been overthrown they captured the governor and changed their laws back.

**3.** In the mid 1700s the British tried to exert control again, making lots of laws that restricted the trading of the colonies. The colonists were annoyed at this, and in 1776 declared that they were independent and no longer under the control of Britain.

#### **4. Benefits of America to the British Empire**

Britain got lots of benefits from having America as a colony. It provided a place where poor people could go to try to earn their fortune. Land was very important for people as it provided them with the opportunity to grow food. In Britain there was not much land, and poor people could often not get enough to support themselves. In America there was lots of land, and anyone could get enough to support themselves and their family very cheaply.

**5.** America also provided another place for Britain to sell the goods it made. In the early years the colonies were not very industrial and all the goods they bought, such as clothes and farm and domestic equipment came from Britain.

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**6.** Britain also made a lot of money through the slave trade. Traders from places like London, Bristol and Liverpool would take goods to Africa and once they had sold those they would capture natives and transport them to America where they would sell them as slaves. These slaves were used in lots of the southern colonies as field hands. It was a very good business for Slave traders as the slaves would often die in bad conditions and so the American slave owners would always need to buy more.

### **7. Types of Export**

As well as providing a place for Britain to sell goods, America produced a lot of goods that were exported to Britain, or were sold by British merchants to other countries. Some of these goods included:

- Corn and wheat – with lots of land available farmers could produce enough corn and wheat to feed their family and have a surplus to sell. In Britain there was less of a surplus and so they needed to import it. America was able to sell lots of corn and wheat to Britain which helped to ensure that there was always enough to eat.
- Tobacco – in some parts of the colonies the climate wasn't very good for growing some crops, but it was very easy to grow tobacco. Colonies like Virginia got rich very quickly by growing lots of tobacco that was then exported to Britain and other parts of the empire.
- Rice – In South Carolina the temperature was very humid, and the colonists realized that they could easily grow rice, this was also a good staple crop.
- Cotton – In other southern states such as Georgia, Louisiana and Kentucky cotton was a widely grown crop. This made the southern states very rich as the British cloth industry imported most of its cotton from these states, but it also helped Britain as it made sure they always had a good supply of cotton for their cloth industry.

### **8. Culture and Religion**

Culture and religion was very varied in America as the colonies tended to be very different. Lots of different people from different parts of Britain, Ireland, and also Europe had come to live there, bringing their own customs and religions. In some colonies like Massachusetts the culture was very dull. Strict religious laws meant that lots of games and activities were restricted. In other places like Virginia, the laws were more relaxed and Virginians often enjoyed activities like gambling.

**9.** Slavery also affected the culture. In the south in some colonies the number of slaves was greater than the number of white colonists. These slaves brought an African influence, and had their own culture which included singing African songs and practicing tribal magic.

**10.** Religion also varied. The most common religion was Christianity but there were lots of different groups of Christians. In Massachusetts there were Puritans, in Pennsylvania there were Quakers, in Maryland there were Catholics, and there were Baptists and Presbyterians in Virginia. There were also some Jews in the colonies.

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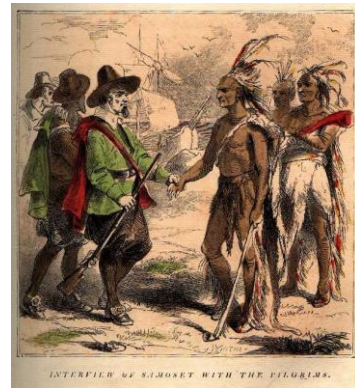
### 11. Climate

The climate varied across America. In the south it was a lot warmer all year round, with summer temperatures reaching high levels, but also bringing lots of rain. In the north the change between summer and winter temperatures is bigger, with hot summers and freezing winters, often bringing a lot of snow.

### 12. Images



A. Slaves harvesting tobacco



B. Settlers meeting Indians



C. The type of houses new colonists would have lived in around 1620

### TASKS:

### **KS3 Empire**

1). Create an effective poster in your book that encourages British citizens to move to the American colonies, why would ordinary Britons benefit? The poster must include text as well as pictures.

On your poster you might include – large amounts of good quality land, climate, freedom of religion, making money, good crops to export to Britain.

2). Write a letter explaining to The Times newspaper why the American colonies can benefit Great Britain as a country.

In your letter you could mention – Acquiring new land, food for Britain, growing the Empire, taxes, soldiers, new crops.

Start: Dear Sir...

Finish:Yours [Name]

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