

Lesson 1: Working and Trading

Vocabulary

apprentice someone who learns a skill by working for an experienced person

artisan a worker skilled at making things by hand

triangular trade routes trade routes that are between three regions; they make the shape of a triangle

Middle Passage the middle part of a slave's journey from Africa to the Americas

Life for Young Workers

Many young people in the colonies were **apprentices**. Apprentices learned skills from experienced workers, such as rope makers and carpenters. These skills could help them make money as **artisans**. Artisans are workers who make things by hand. Apprentices had to work very long hours. They had little free time. Not all young people were apprentices. Many worked on farms. Others made soap, candles, and other products for their homes.


Colonial Economies

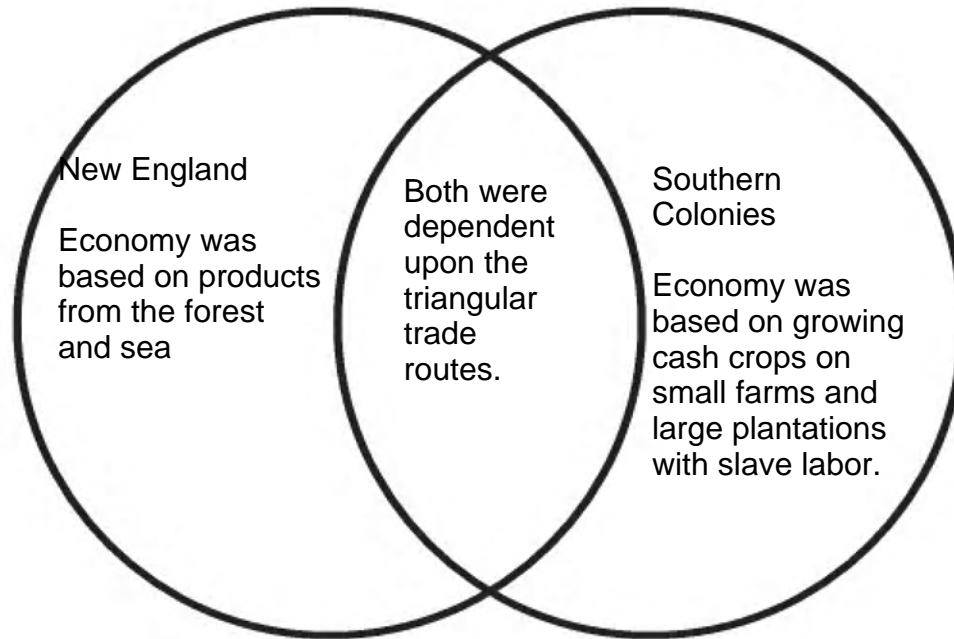
The colonial areas had different economies. The New England economy depended on fishing and timber. The economy of the Middle Colonies was based on farming and minerals such as iron. The Middle Colonies were called “the breadbasket of the colonies” because they grew so much wheat. The Southern Colonies had an economy based on farming. Farms ranged in size from small family farms to large plantations. Cash crops included tobacco, rice, and indigo.

Colonial Trade Routes

The slave trade was very important to the colonial economy. Colonial ships used **triangular trade routes**, or routes shaped like triangles, to trade goods for slaves. On a common triangular trade route, ships sailed from the colonies. The ships brought guns and other goods to West Africa. These things were traded for captured Africans. Then the ships brought the Africans to the West Indies. This part of the trip is known as the **Middle Passage**. Many Africans died on this long and hard journey. The Africans were traded for sugar and molasses in the West Indies. Then ships brought the goods to the colonies. This finished the triangle.

Lesson 1: Review

1.  **Compare and Contrast** Complete the diagram comparing and contrasting the economies of two different colonial areas.



2. Explain the hardships and benefits of working as an apprentice.

Hardships: Long hours, little pay

Benefits: learn a skill to become an artisan

3. Which region was known as “the breadbasket of the colonies”? Why?

The Middle Colonies were known as the breadbasket colonies because wheat was grown and ground to make flour.

4. Describe a common triangular trade route. Where did the ships sail? What did they carry from each port?

Ships carried goods from Europe to Africa. Those goods were traded for enslaved Africans. They sailed to the West Indies, exchanging some slaves for goods such as sugar and molasses before

continuing on to the colonies. Finally, The ships would return to England with goods from the

5. **Critical Thinking: Make Decisions** Think about all the types of work described in this lesson. If you were a colonist, which would you most like to do? Explain.
