

Colony Builder

Mission: The Crown has given you 10 settlers for a new colony. Test each region: assign settlers to jobs, run a year, and read the ledger. Your settlers need 10 food to survive the winter, and extra food can be sold. Can you find the best plan for each region, and explain WHY it works?

Big question: How did climate and natural resources decide the economy of each colonial region?

★ Warm-up: Resource match

What could you make money from?

A forest ✓ **Lumber, ships, furniture.**

A deep harbor ✓ **Fishing, shipping, trade.**

Key vocabulary

Natural resource	Something from nature people use, like fish, soil, or trees.
Surplus	Extra, more than you need.
Profit	Money left over after costs.
Trade-off	Giving up one thing to get another.

1 Box 1

Predict

PREDICTION In New England, which job do you think will earn the most?

☐ Fishing & whaling ☐ Grain farming ☐ Cash crops

2 Box 2

Test New England

In the simulator: Earn at least £36 in one year in New England.

Why did farming do so poorly in New England?

☐ Rocky soil and a short growing season ☐ Too much rain ☐ No one knew how to farm

✓ **Rocky soil and a short growing season**

Test the Middle colonies

In the simulator: Earn at least £33 in one year in the Middle colonies.

Why were the Middle colonies called the "breadbasket"?

☐ They grew so much grain they could sell the extra ☐ They baked bread for England

☐ They had the most bakeries

✓ **They grew so much grain they could sell the extra**

Test the Southern colonies

In the simulator: Earn at least £33 in one year in the Southern colonies.

What did you notice?

3 Box 3

Record your best plans

Record the most money you earned in each region.

Region	Best £
New England	from simulator
Middle	from simulator
Southern	from simulator

4 Box 4

Trade-offs

In the South, putting ALL settlers on cash crops earned less than a mix. Why?

- ☐ Settlers had no food and had to spend money buying it
- ☐ Cash crops don't grow in the South
- ☐ The price of tobacco went to zero

✓ Settlers had no food and had to spend money buying it

5 Box 5

Explain the pattern

Explain how geography determined the best plan in TWO regions. Use numbers from your ledger.

Region 1

Look for: Names a region; Explains the geography; a number from the simulator; at least 14 words

Region 2

Look for: Names a region; Explains the geography; a number from the simulator; at least 14 words

6 Box 6

Legend: the missing workers 🏆 Legend only

The simulation leaves out enslaved people. Explain how leaving them out could give students a false picture of how Southern plantations made money.

Look for: Names forced labor; Connects to the money; at least 25 words

Exit ticket: answer the big question in your own words

How did climate and natural resources decide the economy of each colonial region?

Look for: Each region's best economy matched its geography: New England made money from the sea and forests, the Middle colonies grew extra grain to sell, and the Southern colonies grew cash crops but still needed food. People choose jobs that use the resources around them.

Completion codes

Students see a code like **ABC-I3** when they finish. The first part must match below. The letter is the level (E = Explorer, I = Investigator, L = Legend), and the number at the end is how many stars they earned.

Level	Code starts with
 Explorer	1WU-E
 Investigator	17H-I
 Legend	JGA-L

! Watch for these misconceptions

- "All Native Americans lived the same way." Hundreds of nations had different languages, homes, and economies.
- "The land was empty when colonists arrived." Native nations had lived there for thousands of years.
- "All colonists came for religious freedom." Many came for land, money, or were forced (enslaved Africans).