

cobblestone

AT WORK IN COLONIAL AMERICA

In this issue, students travel back in time to learn about the trades, occupations, and industries in Colonial America and the people who worked in them.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How did people live and work in Colonial America?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about life in Colonial America.
- Students will explain why individuals and businesses specialize and trade.
- Students will identify examples of resources used to produce goods.
- Students will classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- Students will conduct research.
- Students will use details from a text to write historical fiction.
- Students will create a timeline.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

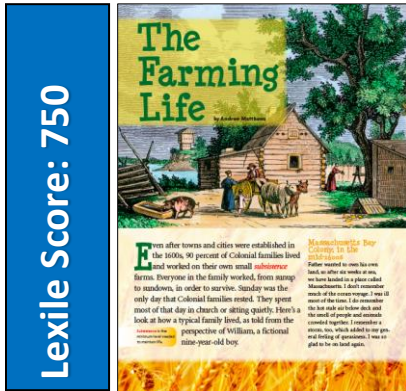
SELECTIONS

- **The Farming Life**
Historical Fiction, ~750L
- **Timber!**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L
- **Slavery Takes Root**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L

The Farming Life

pp. 4–7, Historical Fiction

Learn about the life for a colonial farming family through the eyes of a fictional young boy named William.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a short story.
- Students will learn about life in Colonial America.
- Students will explain why individuals and businesses specialize and trade.
- Students will conduct research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **barter** (p. 7) exchanges goods and services for other goods and services instead of for money
- **apprenticeship** (p. 7) a position where someone new to an occupation learns from someone more experienced
- **trade** (p. 7) a job requiring special skills and training and that is done by using your hands

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did people live and work in Colonial America?

Explain that early European settlers in North America had to start their new lives with only the supplies they brought with them and the resources that were available to them where they settled. Ask students to hypothesize what the first year of settlement life might have been like for young people.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Review the vocabulary words and definitions. Then display the sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them. Finally, remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the story.

- When William's father _____ wheat for other goods, he increases the resources his family has available to them.
- Thomas hoped that by taking an _____ with the town blacksmith, he would be able to work in a specialized _____ in the future.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the story with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

1. Why does William's family decide to farm?
2. How does William's father obtain goods his family needs but can't provide for themselves?
3. How do Thomas's opportunities expand as the town grows?

CONCEPT FOCUS: Explain Specialization

INSTRUCT: Remind students that in the story, William's father specializes in growing wheat at first. Explain that by choosing to specialize in growing something that is needed by his family and by others nearby, William's father is able to barter or exchange some of his wheat for other things his family needs.

ASSESS: Instruct students to identify the crop that William hopes his father will start growing. (corn) Have students use information in the story to come up with a hypothesis that explains how and why specializing in this new crop might benefit William's family.

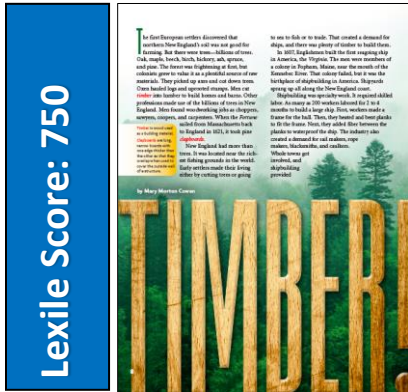
EXTEND

English Language Arts Explain to students that there were three regions or sections of colonies in Colonial America: the Northern colonies, the Middle colonies, and the Southern colonies. Divide the class into three groups and assign one region to each group. Have groups conduct research to learn more about their region: the states it included, the crops that grew well there, and other resources that benefited the region. Have each group create and deliver a presentation on its region.

Timber!

pp. 8–12, Expository Nonfiction

Discover how an abundance of trees and rich fishing waters led to the growth of specialized industries in colonial New England.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about Colonial America.
- Students will identify examples of resources used to produce goods.
- Students will use details from a text to write historical fiction.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **skilled labor (p. 8)** workers who have specialized training and experience to perform a specific job
- **lumbering (p. 9)** the business of cutting down trees and turning them into boards and logs for building
- **exporting (p. 9)** sending goods to be sold in another country

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did people live and work in Colonial America?

Tell students that people use the resources available to them to produce goods and services. Explain that in the colonial era, settlers in North America took advantage of local resources to start new industries and develop new trades. Ask students to hypothesize which colonial region (Northern/New England, Middle, or Southern) had the resources that were best suited for the development of the shipbuilding and fishing industries.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Review the vocabulary words and definitions. Then have students work in small groups to write a single sentence that uses all three vocabulary words correctly. Invite students to share their sentences. Then remind them to look for these words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

1. What created the demand for ships in colonial New England?
2. How did the growth of the shipping industry lead to the growth of specialized trades and other industries?
3. How did England's policies threaten the New England timber industry and those who worked in it?

CONCEPT FOCUS: Identify Resources

INSTRUCT: Explain that three types of resources were needed for the shipbuilding industry to take root in New England: human resources, natural resources, and physical resources. Make sure students understand the different resource types: human (skilled labor), natural (things obtained from nature), and physical (machines or tools). Invite students to name examples of these different resources in the article.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to review the article to find examples of each type of resource the shipbuilding industry depended on. Have pairs summarize their findings orally, visually, or in writing.

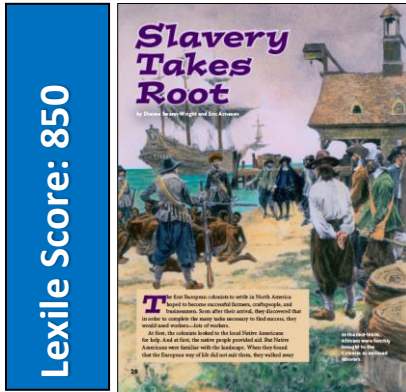
EXTEND

English Language Arts Remind students that the article discusses how the shipbuilding industry developed in colonial New England. Ask students to use details from the text to write a realistic historical fiction story about what living and working in colonial New England was like for someone involved in the shipbuilding industry. Encourage them to develop realistic characters and events and use dialogue and description in their stories. Invite students to share their work.

Slavery Takes Root

pp. 20–23, Expository Nonfiction

Find out how the practice of enslaving people became deeply intertwined with the growth of industries in Colonial America.



RESOURCES

- Classify Events

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about Colonial America.
- Students will classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- Students will create a timeline.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **bondage (p. 21)** the state of being a slave
- **Atlantic slave trade (p. 21)** the transportation of enslaved African people across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas between the 16th and 19th centuries

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did people live and work in Colonial America?

Ask students to share what they know about colonial American industries. Prompt them to understand that many of these industries were labor-intensive, requiring many people to do hard, physical work. Have students hypothesize how colonial industries met the need for laborers.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Review the vocabulary words and definitions. Then ask students to use the vocabulary words to make predictions about the topic of the text. If necessary, help students guess the topic by revealing the title of the article. Then remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

1. Why did most enslaved persons work in the Middle and Southern colonies?
2. Describe what life was like for enslaved men, women, and children in Colonial America.
3. How did the growing of cash crops contribute to the expansion of slavery?

SKILL FOCUS: Classify Events

INSTRUCT: Tell students that events and developments in history can be classified as either examples of change or continuity. Explain that some events represent a change in how things have been done or thought about in the past. These are known as *historical changes*. Other events may be important but don't represent a change in how things have been done or thought about in the past. These are known as *historical continuities*.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Classify Events* organizer and go over the directions. Then have students work in pairs to review the article and complete the organizer. Discuss responses as a class.

EXTEND

Social Studies Remind students that the article provides several important dates related to the history of slavery in Colonial America. Instruct students to create a timeline with at least five entries relating to the development of slavery during this period.

Name _____

Classify Events

Reread the article to find events that are examples of *historical continuity* and *historical change*. In the first column, describe the event. In the second column, classify the event as an example of historical change or historical continuity. In the third column, note details from the article that support your classification.

| Event from the article | Is it an example of historical <i>change</i> or historical <i>continuity</i> ? | Text details that support your classification |
|------------------------|--|---|
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