COMPARING THE COLONIES IN AMERICA

A Centers or Response Group Activity by ©Michele Luck available at http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Michele-Lucks-Social-Studies
Visit each station/center or read the Content Cards for each region

Complete your notes on the general characteristics of each region

Complete your business cards for each region and each theme

Complete your Comparison Worksheet on the different themes

Cut out your business cards and separate them into the correct regions

Write your “Colonial Region Description” for each of the colonial regions

Affix (tape or glue) the business cards to each region’s page

Work with your team/group to discuss the wrap-up questions

Record your OWN answers for each wrap-up question after the discussion

Check your answers with your teacher or be prepared to report your answers as the class reviews the activity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Key Terms to Remember</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>Take notes on the general characteristics of the region in this space. Be sure to identify what makes this region unique.</td>
<td>Define key terms in this box.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Colonies</td>
<td>Take notes on the general characteristics of the region in this space. Be sure to identify what makes this region unique.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Colonies</td>
<td>Take notes on the general characteristics of the region in this space. Be sure to identify what makes this region unique.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For each Colonial Region, complete TWO business cards that detail the key characteristics of *EDUCATION* of the region.
For each Colonial Region, complete TWO business cards that detail the key characteristics of **BUSINESS & TRADE** of the region.

- New England
  - Business & Trade

- New England
  - Business & Trade

- Middle Colonies
  - Business & Trade

- Southern Colonies
  - Business & Trade

- Southern Colonies
  - Business & Trade

- Middle Colonies
  - Business & Trade
For each Colonial Region, complete TWO business cards that detail the key characteristics of **COMMUNITY LIFE** of the region.
For each Colonial Region, complete TWO business cards that detail the key characteristics of **GOVERNMENT** of the region.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Comparing Themes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business &amp; Trade</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make 3 concise comparisons on <em>Business and Trade</em> between the regions. What is similar? What is different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Life</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make 3 concise comparisons on <em>Community Life</em> between the regions. What is similar? What is different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make 3 concise comparisons on <em>Education</em> between the regions. What is similar? What is different?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make 3 concise comparisons on <em>Government</em> between the regions. What is similar? What is different?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Write your complete “Colonial Region Description” in this space. Be sure that your summary includes the key characteristics of the region that make it unique from the others reviewed in this unit. Attach your “Business Cards” for each theme in the space below this box.

What made this colonial region successful? Explain.
Write your complete “Colonial Region Description” in this space. Be sure that your summary includes the key characteristics of the region that make it unique from the others reviewed in this unit. Attach your “Business Cards” for each theme in the space below this box.

What made this colonial region successful? Explain.
Southern Colonies

Write your complete “Colonial Region Description” in this space. Be sure that your summary includes the key characteristics of the region that make it unique from the others reviewed in this unit. Attach your “Business Cards” for each theme in the space below this box.

What made this colonial region successful? Explain.
How did homeland traditions play a role in the development of the colonial regions?
Write a complete answer with specific facts and details from the information gathered in the activity.

What major concerns were faced by all of the regions? How did each deal with these concerns?
Write a complete answer with specific facts and details from the information gathered in the activity.

How was democracy seen in the different colonial regions?
Write a complete answer with specific facts and details from the information gathered in the activity.

In which region do you think life would have been easiest? Explain.
Write a complete answer with specific facts and details from the information gathered in the activity.

In which region would you have chosen to live? Why?
Write a complete answer with specific facts and details from the information gathered in the activity.
NEW ENGLAND COLONIES
The New England Colonies were settled primarily by those seeking religious freedom from their homelands. With that in mind, they created a region based on the Christianity-devoted, hard-working, and knowledge-based ideals they had set for themselves as they ventured into the new lands. As they set up small communities in their new locations, they brought with them many traditions from their homeland, but also strove to make their own rules and to establish new ways of living based on what they saw as the right way to do things. With every day life based on this hard-work ethic, even women in the New England Colonies were expected to help with the support of their families, and many worked on their farms, in stores, or through the production of goods to bring in family subsistence.

Education and participation in government was very important in the New England Colonies. Public schools were first established in New England, and education was considered essential for citizenship and their Christian faith. Much of the life of New Englanders centered around their involvement in the church and their participation in government. The Meetinghouse was often in the center of town, and in addition to it holding all church services, it served as a place for town meetings to be held to discuss the pressing matters for the local citizenry. All free, male landowners were expected to participate in the town meetings and to voice their opinions in the daily operations of the town.

Concerns for the New England colonists came mainly from two sources. The first was an ever present fear of invasions or attacks from the natives. As the colonists continued to encroach on the lands of the natives, this was often met with resistance or revenge. Violent attacks left entire villages burnt with settlers sometimes killed or taken captive.

The other major concern for New Englanders was maintaining the strict rules and discipline of their community. Based on Biblical interpretation, many rules were to be followed by the citizens of New England. Their children were to be taught early, and it was not acceptable to be different or to speak out against the established way of life. Those who did speak out were often excluded from the communities or treated as outcasts from society.
Throughout the New England colonies, a vast array of business and trade existed for the settlers. While many started off as subsistence farmers, some soon took on farming for profit with their surplus goods, others took to the sea to harvest the abundant seafood available, and others took to gathering the lumber from the forests to build great, sturdy ships.

Farming in this region was typically a great challenge. With cold winters and rocky, or hilly lands, farmers were not able to harvest the same amount of crops as those in other regions. Still, many provided for their families from the farms they maintained, and they also worked to take advantage of other resources around. One of the greatest resources of the region was its forests. These forests provided a great amount of lumber that was used to build houses, to build furniture, and to build ships that could be used in the trade industry.

Finally, the ocean and other waterways provided the New Englanders with steady income from fishing and whaling. These more adventurous ones fought the waves to bring in great catches to not only feed their own families, but to export to other colonies in hopes of making a great profit.

Artisans made goods valued in other industries. They made ropes, barrels, and sails for the shipping industry, and carpenters made fine goods for the home and workplace. Women worked in and out of the home, often helping with the farming or the family business. As trade increased through the Triangular Trade Route, the people of New England expanded their skills to meet the demands, making the region a very successful one in manufacturing and trade.
Education in New England was very important in Colonial times. Most believed that education was vital to learn the scriptures and to understand the foundations of their religion. Reading was the central focus, and at an early age, children were introduced to schooling.

For most, schooling took place in the home, or eventually in the first public schools, dame schools, where they were taught basic reading, mathematics, and Biblical principals. Boys were prepared for grammar schools and university training, while girls learned skills to prepare them in caring for their home.

Some trade skills were taught in the later years, but throughout the Colonial era in New England, the Bible was the central focus of learning, and it was often believed that without learning, one was being controlled by Satan.
With a dedication to both religion and government, the communities of New England quickly arose with a philosophy of public involvement and commitment. Everything in New England life centered on the community, and the entire community was based on the ideals of the Christian church and Puritanism.

The center of every New England town was the center of the community and the gathering place. A meetinghouse would be built early on as a gathering place for worship and for government. Houses and other structures would be built around the meetinghouse, always making it the center of the town. As the town grew, so did the meetinghouse.

New England families were very focused on keeping the family and the family’s faith strong. They worked, played, and worshiped as a family, and were dedicated to spending time together, in and out of church.

On Sundays, the Sabbath was honored, with all community members coming into town to worship. Services were ongoing through the day, and between worship, the townspeople would socialize and share. Most importantly, the faith of the people established the rules by which they lived. It was not acceptable to be different or to speak against the beliefs of the church. In all things, one’s belief in Christianity was the center of their daily life.

“It is necessary to come to the meetinghouse on the Sabbath and to worship with our community. Yet, for those with trouble, the tithingman walks up and down the aisles to rap on their heads.”
Almost as important as religion for the people of New England was the practice of government. From early on in the New England colonies, they met in the meetinghouse to hold town meetings. At these meetings, the men would discuss and vote on the issues and concerns of the community. Most often these issues were on the development of the community, but for the Puritans, it was also government business to discuss the behavior of its community members.

Elected townsmen, or selectmen, served as the leaders of the government, and would help in making decisions for town projects or on the punishment of wrong-doers.

The town meetings and selectmen of the New England region would eventually become a model for democracy throughout the United States.

According to Thomas Jefferson, the Town Meetings of the New England people were “the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government and for its preservation.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsistence Farming</th>
<th>Export</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farming that produces just enough food for the family to survive on through the year. Most farming families were subsistence farmers.</td>
<td>Goods that were grown or produced to be sent elsewhere for sale. This could create good profits and allowed for a variety of goods to be bought and sold throughout the regions.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Import</th>
<th>Artisan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goods brought in from other colonies, from England, or from other countries in Europe. These goods allowed the colonists to have more foods and supplies than what they could produce in their own region.</td>
<td>Specially skilled workers in a specific area or craft. Shipbuilding in New England was a very skilled craft and provided many with the skills great jobs in the region.</td>
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</table>
MIDDLE COLONIES
A Regional Description

Everything about the Middle Colonies can be summed up with the word DIVERSITY. From the very beginning, the colonies were established based on religious diversity, economic diversity, and governmental diversity. Even the people who came to the Middle Colonies were diverse in comparison to the primarily English who settled the other regions of New England and the South. With the Dutch, German, Scottish, and many others bringing their own cultures, traditions, languages, and religions, the Middle Colonies became unique through difference.

Called the breadbasket of the colonies, the region produced a vast amount of produce, including the majority of wheat for America, along with wheat-products such as German pretzels and Dutch waffles. More importantly, the people of the Middle Colonies were innovative, creating the Conestoga wagon and other tools needed to support their marketed goods.

The communities of the Middle Colonies were also different in simple size. They ranged from small, rural areas to large, overcrowding cities with an ever-changing population, a huge variety of languages, and an assortment of cultural traditions and practices. The communities on the frontier stretched the colonies all the way to the base of the Appalachian Mountains, and established new communities based on shared and equal responsibilities all along the way.

Geography of the Region

Concerns for the Region

Across the Middle Colonies, a variety of concerns arose for the people who settled and developed the lands. In the busy cities, problems quickly arose as the population grew and the areas became overcrowded. Crime became a concern for many and theft or violence led many to be cautious of their surroundings.

Outside the cities, in the more rural or frontier communities, people learned to rely on each other as a means to protect them from natives in the region or from other outsiders. For all areas, the diversity of the colonies led to a concern for some groups that their own identities or cultural customs, including religious ideals, would be lost in the mix.
Business and trade in the Middle Colonies was easily supported through agriculture. Known as the breadbasket of the colonies, this region had a good climate and excellent soil, well equipped to produce more crops than were needed by the land-owning farmers. This allowed for the production of cash crops, leading to many other advantages for the Middle Colonies region.

To get the wheat, and wheat-made products to market, the people of the Middle Colonies created the Conestoga wagon, a sturdy wagon with large wheels capable of traveling through the mud and other challenges filled with cargo. This innovation was typical of those in the Middle Colonies, along with a diversity of products based on the diverse cultures of the people they represented.

In the area of New York, large landowners, or patroons, would rent out acreage to smaller farmers. These huge estates brought in great profits for the wealthy land-owners, but often left the tenants unhappy with their situation.

In the fast growing cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, shipbuilding, lumber production, and other crafts soon emerged to become major industries. Workshops were common in the towns, and many people built shops and stores onto their homes. In these cities, a variety of goods was available for anyone who had the money. Trade was common, and the stores in the cities sold everything from hats and gloves to books and tea.
The diversity in the settlements of the Middle Colonies led to a diversity in the systems of education for the region. It was very common for the basic educational skills, such as reading and writing, to be taught in the home or in churches. With the different religions in the Middle Colonies, it was important that children be taught what their own church felt was important.

In addition to the basics, the people of the Middle Colonies felt that it was important to teach their children practical skills. They were often taught skills or trades, and were encouraged in their teens to take on apprenticeships to become masters of a skill, trade, or craft.

For the upper class, tutors were often brought in to educate the children and to prepare them for college abroad. From any class, most girls were taught the skills of the home, and were trained at home to learn to care for their own families.
Community Life

The Middle Colonies were quite different from the other regions due to their diversity. While most of the other colonist were British, the colonists that settled the Middle Colonies came from Germany, France, and other European states. They brought with them a mix of religions, a vast array of beliefs, and a number of traditions and customs not seen in other parts of the new world settlements.

With the battle for religious freedom by many of the groups who settled in the Middle Colonies, the colonies were more accepting of the many different Christian beliefs. Quakers, Protestants, and Catholics had all faced persecution in Europe, so tolerance was more common in the colonies.

Many of the customs that came with the immigrants to America took hold in the Middle Colonies. Whole communities would come together for a Barn Raising, in which they build a barn and celebrate with a great feast. Quilt making was another custom that soon became a favorite of the frontier women in the region.

In the big cities, life was quite different. With homes, businesses and industries growing rapidly, the cities became busy and crowded early on in Colonial times. The diversity could be seen even more sharply in the towns with a number of languages, foods, and dress exhibited every day.
Government

Government throughout the Middle Colonies was as diverse at the people. In some areas, the wealthy land-owners held much of the decision-making power, while in other areas, a more representative government formed.

For the many devout religious groups, their town or community governments were often run by the elders of their church. These leaders would make the everyday decisions for the area, and would serve as a court for those who behaved inappropriately. While toleration of different religions was a theme in the religion, tolerance of bad behavior was not accepted.

In the larger, more established cities, governments formed more on a representative basis, but some limited those they represented to the wealthy.

Yet, in the frontier areas, as the groups moved westward toward the Appalachian Mountains, the people needed to rely more on each other, and therefore, more acceptance was seen for all people, including women, allowing them more power in the decision-making process for their communities.

“The Van Rensselaer family controlled the lands and the unhappy tenants tried to rebel several times, but they failed to change the way things were.”
Cash Crop

Foods grown and produced solely for the purpose of selling them into the market to make a profit.

Patroon

Large landowners who rented out parcels of land to smaller farmers for profit.

Apprentice

A trainee who would work under a skilled artisan to learn a trade or specific craft. Once completing an apprenticeship, they could work on their own in the field.

Frontier

Unsettled lands further inland from the coastal settlements that became the destination for many as the population grew and developed.
SOUTHERN COLONIES
A Regional Description

Life is the South was not like that in any other region in America. The land, the weather, and the people were drastically different. In addition, priorities, including the focus of a rural lifestyle and the use of slave labor to make a profit from the plantation fields made the South a place with its own set of rules and its own set of unique problems.

Most of the areas of the South settled with money-making in mind. Wealthy aristocrats bought the lands, or were given them by the kings, and they set up plantations for the mass production of agricultural goods. With the wealth of the weather and fertile soil, these wealthy farmers were able to buy up slave labor, allowing them to make great profits while not doing any of the work themselves.

With the focus on the crops, such as tobacco, rice, and indigo, it was not on other issues like in the northern regions. The people of the South were not as concerned about education or government, and tended to set their own rules as they needed or wanted them.

In the South, the class and race lines were strictly drawn, with the wealthy having all control, and the poor or African having few or no rights or liberties at all. This, however, also led to conflict in this region not seen by the others, between the wealthy and the enslaved.

In the end, the Southern colonies became dependent on the institution of slavery, and while the white plantation owners reaped the profits from the slave labor, it would bring them conflict and chaos as the system would be their only means of survival.

Geography of the Region

Concerns for the Region

In the Southern Colonies, the most common problems were those that came with the territory. From conflicts with the natives to problems over competition between wealthy landowners, the wealth and value of the land was the central concern for most in the South.

In addition to concerns over the land itself, many in the South dealt with issues over those who worked the lands. Slaves were brought in through the Middle Passage of the Triangle Trade Route, and were from that point, treated as property. As they fought for their freedom, often running away or attempting rebellions, the Southern plantation owners only tightened the reins.
In the Southern colonies, life was all about business. Large plantation owners used slave labor to grow profitable crops like tobacco, rice, and indigo. This large production structure allowed the plantation owners to make great income.

With a good agriculture climate, many crops were able to be grown in the South. Tobacco became the early staple crop, with its introduction to the market by John Rolfe in the Jamestown Colony. Following the success of tobacco, other crops, such as indigo were sold in mass, as well as rice which was developed in the African method for productive growing. Corn and cattle were also staples for the farmers in the South, but they were not the strong money-makers for the owners.

The other big business of the South was the slave trade. Slaves were brought over through the Triangular Trade Route in the Middle Passage from Africa to America. They were usually kidnapped from their homes and brought to the colonies, stripped of their homes, families, and identities. Even in their new plantation homes in the South, they were not treated as humans, but as property, and were subject to strict slave codes, limiting their freedom and their most basic rights as humans.

Charles Town was the largest city in the South and became the central trading hub. It was the location where the crops went out as exports and new and fresh slaves came in as import goods.

While the South found great profit in the agriculture and slave business, it would bring with it challenges and conflict in the latter years. Slave revolts, run-aways, and even conflict between the North and South would arise as a result of the profit-making slave trade in the South. For the Southerners, they grew dependent on the use of the slaves, and would find themselves challenged to find another means for their profitable production.
Education in the South was not a regional priority. In lands where the homes were more rural and the priority was profit, education fell to one group. It was a matter of class. The upper class aristocrats saw to it that their children were brought in tutors who schooled them in everything from reading, writing and mathematics to music and social skills right in the parlor of their homes.

Lower class and slave children did not have the same opportunities, and were often forced to work in the fields rather than take any time out for any formal learning.

For those families wanting to provide education to their children in the South, it was left primarily to be done by them in the home. With most communities being more rural, the access to schools or even local churches was not as common as in other regions.
Community Life

Community life in the South was vastly different from the other regions. With most Southerners living more rural lives, it was not uncommon for neighbors to not see neighbors for days or even weeks at a time.

In the Big House, the families would spend leisure time reading, listening to music, or enjoying the outdoors for sport. They typically taught their children at home, or those concerned about preparing their children for college would bring in tutors for the grammar and Latin lessons.

With this rural lifestyle, the plantation was a self-sufficient place. On the grounds would be the Big House, where the family lived and enjoyed their leisure days, and there would be a number of other buildings used to support the living of the family, such as barns, a laundry, a separate kitchen, and stables. Slave quarters were also provided, but were usually further away from the home, and did not have near the same comforts as the Big House.

The slaves were utilized to care for the plantation families in all areas. They cooked, cleaned, took care of the laundry, and even took care of the children for plantation families, while field slaves worked the grounds and tended to the crops.

Community life for the slaves was very different. While they were very limited in their rights and freedoms by their owners, they were a very tight-knit community when unsupervised. Slaves brought with them their home traditions, music, and folklore to keep them hanging on for hopes of freedom and a life without the limitations of slavery.

In addition to preserving the traditions of home, slaves worked hard to create a support system for each other with the hardships they faced on the plantations. As families were often split apart, children taken from their mothers for sale, slaves learned to rely on each other for the emotional support they needed to survive.

“In the ‘big house’ the family lived well, but the workers [slaves] lived in small cabins far from the plantation house.”
As the Southern colonies developed, their governments were less structured and less concerning for the rural people than those in the larger cities and the Northern colonies.

Early on, the House of Burgesses was created in Virginia, selecting men to hear the concerns of the community and to make decisions on the issues facing the colony. The other colonies were typically ruled by a British governor, and smaller issues were dealt with by the locals in a region. The wealthy aristocrats that settled in the areas of the South, often ruled with their wealth, and made the decisions they saw fit for their communities.

There was little consistency for the Southern colonies in the area of law and regulation. In Georgia, settlers were freed from their previous debts, but were limited in their income until proving themselves. For the poor and for slaves, there were often few liberties or opportunities.

Slaves were not even considered humans by many in the South. With this idea, they were not allowed to marry, were separated from their families, and were sold from place to place as property without consideration. They did not have the right to schooling, and in some areas, laws were passed to make it illegal to teach a slave to read, fearing it would lead them to rebellion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Plantations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who live outside of a town or city, usually farmers.</td>
<td>Large tracts of land owned by the wealthy for the growing of crops. Plantation mansions were usually built atop a hill where the workers, or slaves, could be observed from afar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slavery</th>
<th>Farmer Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The practice of owning others for use of their labor. Most slaves in America came from Africa, and were sold after being transported through the Middle Passage by slave traders. Slaves had no or few rights, and were considered property.</td>
<td>Lower class citizens who owned small tracts of land that they farmed to help maintain their family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>