

Table of Contents

UNIT NARRATIVE..... 1

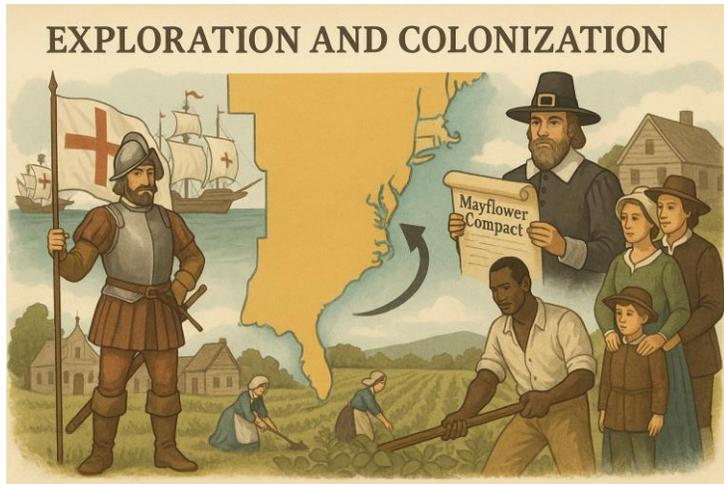
CONTENT STANDARDS 2

UNDERSTANDINGS, QUESTIONS..... 2

UNIT NARRATIVE

This unit introduces students to the causes and consequences of European exploration and colonization in North America. Students examine the motivations behind English, Spanish, and French exploration, including the search for new trade routes, the desire for wealth and land, and the spread of Christianity. They compare the political, economic, and religious goals of different European powers and how these influenced the development of colonial settlements.

Geography is a key focus of this unit, as students analyze how physical and human geographic factors such as landforms, climate, waterways, and natural resources shaped patterns of exploration, transportation, and settlement. Students explore how colonists modified their environments and how geography influenced population distribution and regional economic activity. The unit also highlights the development of the plantation system and the transatlantic slave trade as foundational to Southern colonial economies.



In addition, students investigate the roots of representative government through key documents such as the Mayflower Compact and the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. They learn how principles such as limited government and popular sovereignty took shape in the colonies. The role of religion in colonial life is also emphasized, including how it supported both community identity and the development of early governing institutions. Students also explore how immigration and the contributions of racial, ethnic, and religious groups influenced the formation of a diverse colonial society.

CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards taught and assessed in this unit.

Exploration and Colonization		Connected Knowledge and Skills 8.3, 8.7, 8.11, 8.12, 8.15, 8.23, 8.25
8.2 History. The student understands the causes of exploration and colonization eras.		
STAAR	Readiness Standards	Supporting Standards
4-5 items	8.1(A)^ identify the major eras in U.S. history through 1877, including colonization, ... and describe their causes and effects	8.1(B)^ explain the significance of the following dates: 1607, founding of Jamestown; 1620, arrival of the Pilgrims and signing of the Mayflower Compact; ...
	8.2(A) identify reasons for English, Spanish, and French exploration and colonization of North America	8.2(B) compare political, economic, religious, and social reasons for the establishment of the 13 English colonies
	8.3(A) explain the reasons for the growth of representative government and institutions during the colonial period	8.3(B) analyze the importance of the Mayflower Compact, the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, and the Virginia House of Burgesses to the growth of representative government
	8.7(D) analyze the impact of slavery on different sections of the United States	8.3(C) describe how religion and virtue contributed to the growth of representative government in the American colonies
	8.10(B)^ compare places and regions of the United States in terms of physical and human characteristics	8.7(B) compare the effects of political, economic, and social factors on slaves and free Blacks
	8.10(C)^ analyze the effects of physical and human geographic factors such as weather, landforms, waterways, transportation, and communication on major historical events in the United States	8.10(A)^ locate places and regions directly related to major eras and turning points in the United States during the 17th, 18th, ... centuries
	8.11(A)^ analyze how physical characteristics of the environment influenced population distribution, settlement patterns, and economic activities in the United States	8.11(B)^ describe the positive and negative consequences of human modification of the physical environment of the United States
	8.12(B) explain reasons for the development of the plantation system, the transatlantic slave trade, and the spread of slavery	8.12(A)^ identify economic differences among different regions of the United States
	8.12(C)^ analyze the causes and effects of economic differences among different regions of the United States at selected times	8.15(E) explain the role of significant individuals such as Thomas Hooker, Charles de Montesquieu, and John Locke in the development of self-government in colonial America
	8.15(D)^ analyze ... the principles of limited government, republicanism, ... popular sovereignty, ...	8.23(D)^ analyze the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity
8.23(A) identify racial, ethnic, and religious groups that settled in the United States and explain their reasons for immigration	8.25(A) trace the development of religious freedom in the United States	

UNDERSTANDINGS, QUESTIONS

Key Questions

- What was North American like prior to colonization?
- Why did Europeans want to explore and colonize the Americas?
- What are the major differences between the colonial regions of the British North American colonies?
- What was the role of religion in colonial society?
- Why was representative government allowed to grow in the North American British colonies?

Unit At-A-Glance

Lesson 01: European Arrivals to America

Lesson 02: Spanish Colonization and the Columbian Exchange

Lesson 03: French and Dutch Exploration and Colonization
Lesson 04: Jamestown and Bacon's Rebellion
Lesson 05: The Pilgrims and the Mayflower Compact
Lesson 06: Massachusetts Bay Colony and Rhode Island
Lesson 07: The New England Colonial Region
Lesson 08: The Middle Colonies
Lesson 09: The Southern Colonies
Lesson 10: The First Great Awakening
Flex Day
Unit 1 Assessment