**The Three Colonial Regions of Early America**

Colonial America had three major cultural regions.

* The New England colonies, (Massachusetts, Main, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire)
* The middle colonies, (Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, New Jersey) and
* The southern colonies (Georgia, Carolina, Maryland, and Virginia).

All of these regions had much in common:

* They were all British colonies,
* they were relatively wealthy compared to other nations of the world during this time,
* Christianity had a major influence in their communities,
* they all had strong economic drives, and
* they all used slaves and indentured servants in their economies.

However, these three regions were very much different from each other in areas such as their ethnic makeup, their Christian denominations, and economic strategies.

**NEW ENGLAND COLONIES**

The northern colonies had the largest population of any of the colonial regions and were the most similar in regarding to religion.

Religiously, New England was dominated by Calvinism. This led to a lifestyle that was shaped by biblical principals and laws. New England laws were developed on a biblical foundation as seen by Calvinists. This strict view of Calvinism discouraged other religious groups from settling in New England because they would be persecuted by the Puritans.

New Englanders made their fortunes at sea. Fish was New England's major export, but livestock and timber also were major exports in the New England economy which was tied to the Atlantic trade routes. This connection with the Atlantic trade route led to New England having more specialized workers than the southern and middle regions.

**MIDDLE COLONIES**

The Middle Colonies had their own unique characteristics.

The Middle Colonies were made up of immigrants from several different western European countries (Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and The Netherlands). This meant that the Middle Colonies were more diverse than either the Northern or Southern colonies. This led to a "greater emphasis on religious toleration and cultural diversity."

Many of these immigrants came to America as indentured servants.

Economically, the Middle Colonies focused mainly on being self-sustaining. They lived on family farms where they grew enough to live on. They did not focus on growing large amounts of cash crops like the Southern Colonies. However, the Middle Colonies did export a significant amount of wheat, which made many colonists in this region very wealthy.

**SOUTHERN COLONIES**

The Southern Colonies also had their own unique traits. The major Christian denomination in the southern colonies was Anglicanism. (The official Church of England)

The major export in the Southern Colonies was tobacco, which was grown in very large quantities on large plantations. The tobacco business was a very labor intensive process. The tobacco cultivation required labor for 9 months out of the year and the soil would only produce tobacco for five years before exhausting.

To obtain the labor needed to grow this tobacco, the plantation owners bought large quantities of African slaves. "Slave ships brought almost 300,000 Africans to British North America between 1619 and 1780. Of these Africans, 95 percent arrived in the South and 96 percent arrived during the eighteenth century.

This large import of slaves meant that the population of Africans rivaled that of the White population. In some places such as Carolina, the African population exceeded that of the White population. This made the idea of a rebellion among the slaves a very great fear in the southern colonies.

In addition to tobacco, the south exported mass amounts of rice, and indigo. The southern colonies supplied 90 percent of all North American exports to Britain. This slave-based economy was very successful for the slave owners. The southern colonies quickly became the most wealthy region of the British colonies.

1. What were the names of the three colonial regions?  
2. What did these regions have in common?(list 4 things)  
3. How did the people of new England make a living?  
4. Name 3 items that were produced there  
5. How was religion important to them (what impact did it have on their society)?  
6. While the New England colonists were all from England, the Middle colonists came from several different places. Name 4.   
7. What was their main crop in the middle colonies?  
8. What crops were grown in the Southern colonies?  
9. How did tobacco growing effect the soil?  
10. Why were slaves more necessary in the Southern colonies than in the other two regions?  
11. Why were the Southern colonies more wealthy than the other two regions?