

Lesson

3

Time

1600

1750

1700s

Triangle trade routes are established

1750

Boston's population reaches more than 15,000



WHAT TO KNOW

How did New England's economy depend on the region's natural resources?

VOCABULARY

free-market p. 215

industry p. 216

naval stores p. 216

export p. 217

import p. 217

triangular trade route p. 218

Middle Passage p. 218



SUMMARIZE

Key Facts

Summary

New England's Economy

YOU ARE THERE

You have been digging rows for planting all morning. Your back is aching, but there is still more work to be done. Your mother smiles and says, "In a few weeks, this garden will give us vegetables for you and your brothers and sisters." Your stomach grumbles as you look down at the dirt and wonder why gardens can't grow faster.

► **MEETING NEEDS** Most New England families grew their own food.





► **FARMS IN NEW ENGLAND** Most New England farms had a variety of animals, such as cows, horses, chickens, hogs, sheep, and goats.

New England Farming

By 1750, many New England towns had become busy cities. Boston, one of the largest cities in the English colonies, had more than 15,000 people. However, most people in New England still lived in small towns surrounded by farmland.

Building an Economy

New England farmers struggled to grow crops. Before they could plant anything, they had to clear rocks and trees from the land. New England's long winters also made it hard to grow crops.

Over time, farmers found other ways to work with their environment. In addition to farming, many began raising dairy cows and sheep. In time, colonists produced surplus farm goods.

Farmers traded or sold their surpluses of livestock, grain, wool, fruit, and firewood in port cities. At the docks, farmers bargained with merchants over prices or items to trade. The merchants then shipped the goods to England or to other colonies. There, the goods were sold for more than the merchants had paid. Many merchants became rich from trade.

This system of trade between farmers and merchants was the beginning of a **free-market** economic system in the colonies. In a free-market economy, people are free to choose which goods to make or buy and which services to offer or use. They are free to compete in business and to set whatever prices they choose for goods and services.

READING CHECK ✨SUMMARIZE

What did farmers do with their surplus goods?



► **CARPENTERS** made many things out of wood. This reenactor is shaving a wooden board using the same kinds of tools colonists used.



Logging and Shipbuilding

The lumber industry made up a large part of the colonists' free-market economy. An **industry** is all the businesses that make one kind of product or offer one kind of service.

New England Forests

In the forests of New England, especially in what are today New Hampshire and Maine, loggers cut down trees. They sent the trees to sawmills to be cut into lumber. Other colonists used their skills and knowledge to build houses, barns, and churches out of the lumber. Much of the lumber was sent to markets in England, which had fewer trees.

New England forests also supplied the natural resources needed to make **naval stores**, the products used to build ships. Two naval stores, turpentine and

tar, were used to make a coating that prevented leaks. Logs cut in the forests were floated down rivers to coastal towns. There, workers used naval stores to build and repair ships. Shipbuilders formed the ships' hulls with oak. To make the masts, they used tall pines.

Europeans valued the strong ships built in New England. By the late 1700s, nearly one-third of all English ships had been built in the region. One reason was the low cost of building ships there. Because wood was not as plentiful in Europe, it cost more to build ships there than it did in New England.

The shipbuilding industry contributed to the growth of coastal towns and cities. Several New England cities—including Boston and Portsmouth—became major shipbuilding centers.

READING CHECK ✨SUMMARIZE

In what ways did the colonists use the forests in New England?



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The shipbuilding industry contributed

Colonial Trade

As a result of the many ships built in New England, trading became the center of the region's economy. The English government set up strict rules for trade. The government said that the colonists could only send their **exports**, or goods leaving a country, to England or to other English colonies. The government also said that colonists could only buy English-made **imports**, or goods brought into a country.

Fishing and Whaling

Many coastal towns did well because of good fishing in the ocean waters. Fishers made a living by catching fish such as cod, herring, and mackerel.

There were so many fish that New Englanders could catch more than they

needed. Their surplus fish were dried, packed in barrels, and sent to markets in other English colonies or in Europe.

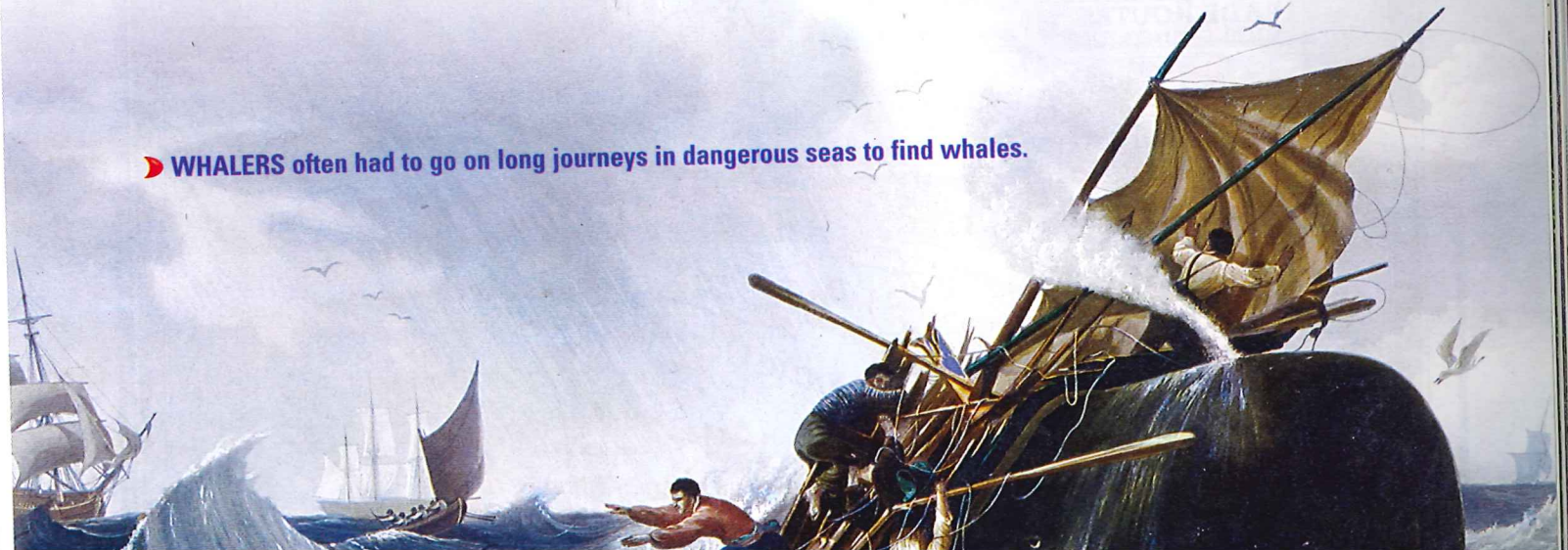
Thousands of whales swam in the cold Atlantic waters, too. New England whalers hunted for whales along the coast. The whalers then cut up and boiled the whale's blubber, or fat, to get oil, which was used in lamps.

So many whalers hunted close to shore that the number of whales declined. As a result, the whalers began sailing farther out into the ocean. As the years passed, whaling trips became longer and longer. Some whaling ships did not return for months or even years.

READING CHECK **SUMMARIZE**

Why did fishing and whaling become important industries in colonial New England?

► WHALERS often had to go on long journeys in dangerous seas to find whales.



Triangular Trade Routes

Trading ships leaving New England carried furs, lumber, grain, whale oil, and dried fish to England. The ships then returned to New England with tea, spices, wine, and English-made goods, such as cloth, shoes, and paper.

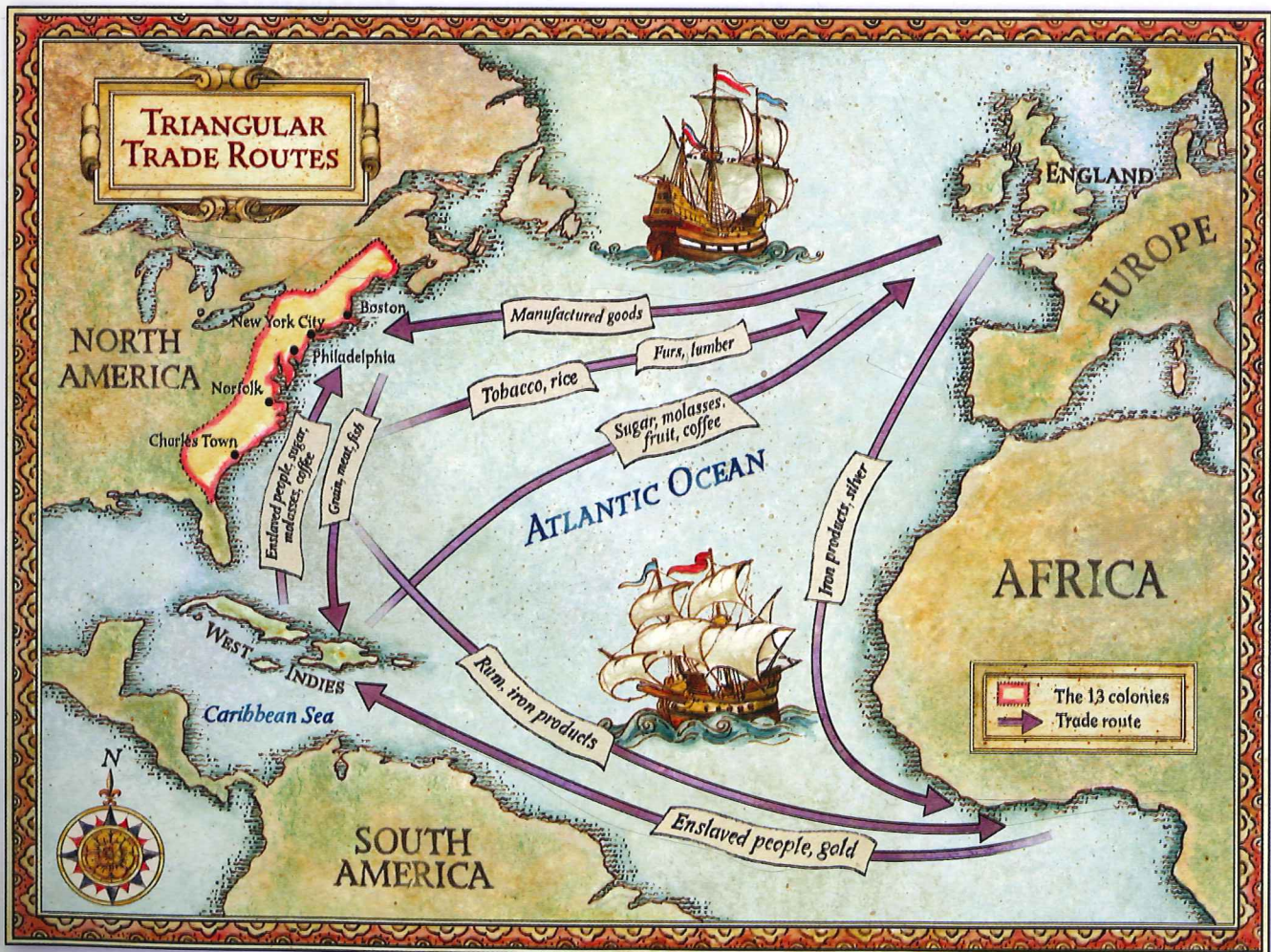
Some colonial trading ships made longer ocean voyages. They followed what became known as the **triangular trade routes**. These routes connected England, the English colonies, and Africa. On a map, the routes formed large triangles across the Atlantic Ocean.

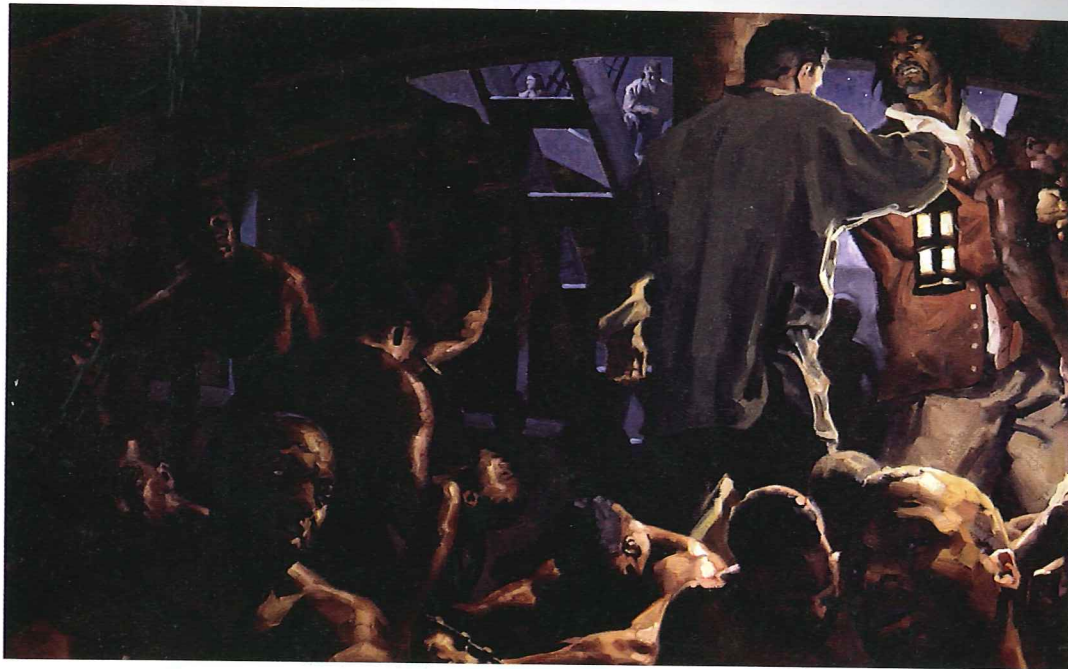
The Middle Passage

Trading ships carrying goods and raw materials also carried enslaved people from central and western Africa. These people were kidnapped in Africa and later sold as workers in the English colonies. Millions of enslaved Africans were placed on ships and forced to travel across the Atlantic Ocean from Africa to the West Indies. This journey was called the **Middle Passage**.

The Africans suffered terribly on the ships. Many of them died during the Middle Passage. Their long trip in overcrowded ships was part of a large

MAP SKILL MOVEMENT England, Africa, and the English colonies were connected by trade routes. What goods did the colonies get from England?





► **THE MIDDLE PASSAGE**
Africans held in ships had almost no room to move.

and cruel slave-trade business. During the 1700s, some people in the colonies grew angry about the cruelty of the slave-trade. Over time, some New England colonists formed groups that tried to end slavery.

READING CHECK ✨ **SUMMARIZE**

What were the triangular trade routes?

Summary

By the 1700s, many industries made up New England's free-market economy. Some colonists grew crops, cut lumber, or caught fish. Merchants made their living by trading. Trade routes connected the English colonies, England, and Africa.

REVIEW

1. **WHAT TO KNOW** How did New England's economy depend on the region's natural resources?
2. **VOCABULARY** Use the terms **import** and **export** in a sentence about trade.
3. **GEOGRAPHY** What was the Middle Passage?
4. **CRITICAL THINKING** How did the free-market economic system affect life in New England?
5. ✏️ **WRITE A LIST OF QUESTIONS** Imagine that you are a colonist deciding what type of work to do. Write a list of questions you might ask a farmer, merchant, shipbuilder, and whaler.

6. ✨ **SUMMARIZE** Copy and complete this graphic organizer on a separate sheet of paper.

Key Facts	Summary Different industries made up New England's economy.