The Middle Colonies

Objective
- Describe the geography and climate of the Middle Colonies.
- Describe the early history of New York and New Jersey.
- Explain how Pennsylvania and Delaware were founded.
- Explain how the Middle Colonies changed in the 1600s and early 1700s.

Why It Matters
While the New England colonies were growing, important developments were taking place in the region south of New England, known as the Middle Colonies.

Section Focus Question
How did the diverse Middle Colonies develop and thrive?

Geography of the Middle Colonies
Four states made up the Middle Colonies: New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. New York, now the largest of these states, is also the farthest north. The scenic Hudson River flows south through eastern New York before reaching the sea at New York City. Long Island, the easternmost piece of New York, extends into the Atlantic Ocean for more than 100 miles. Today, New York City is the most populous city in the country.

Pennsylvania is the region’s second-largest state. The southeastern section is a lowland. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania’s largest city, is located there, on the Delaware River.

Most of New Jersey is a lowland along the Atlantic coast. Delaware, the region’s smallest state, is on the coast directly south of New Jersey.

Middle Colony farmers had an easier time than farmers in New England. The climate was warmer, with a longer growing season. The fertile soil was well suited for crops like wheat, fruits, and vegetables.

Reading Skill
Identify Signal Words
Signal words help readers spot comparisons and contrasts. For example, when we say, “Kentucky is warm. New York is also warm,” the word also suggests that the two states and climates are similar. If the text reads, “Kentucky is warm. Instead, New York is cool,” the word instead suggests that the two states and climates are different. Look for comparison and contrast signal words as you read this section.

Key Terms and People
proprietary colony  William Penn
royal colony  backcountry

What conditions in the Middle Colonies favored farming?

Checkpoint
What conditions in the Middle Colonies favored farming?

Section 3 The Middle Colonies

A Diverse Colony

“On the island of Manhattan, . . . there may well be four or five hundred men of different sects and nations: the Director General told me that there were men of eighteen different languages.”

—Father Isaac Jogues, describing the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, 1646

Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, 1670s

The climate was warm and soil was fertile.
Teach

Geography of the Middle Colonies

New York and New Jersey
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Instruction

- **Vocabulary Builder** Before teaching this lesson, preteach the High-Use Words fundamental and accumulate using the strategy on TE p. T21.

- **Key Terms** Have students continue filling in the See It–Remember It chart for the Key Terms in this chapter.

- **Read Geography of the Middle Colonies and New York and New Jersey with students using the Choral Reading strategy** (TE, p. T22).

- **Ask:** How might settlers in the Middle Colonies use these resources to build an economy? (Answers should indicate students’ knowledge of the resources: freshwater rivers and ample coastline, long growing seasons and fertile soil)

- **Ask students why the English wanted to and were able to take over New Netherland.** (The Dutch had made it a thriving fur trade center. There were far more English settlers living there than Dutch settlers.)

Independent Practice

Have students begin to fill in the Study Guide for this section.

**Interactive Reading and Notetaking Study Guide,** Chapter 3, Section 3 (Adapted Version also available.)

Monitor Progress

As students fill in the Notetaking Study Guide, circulate to make sure students understand the importance of trade in the new colonies. If students do not seem to have a good understanding, have them reread the section. Provide assistance as needed.

Answer

**Checkpoint** It was split off from New York after England took New Netherland from the Dutch.

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New York and New Jersey

New York began as the Dutch colony of New Netherland. By 1660, it was an economic success. Farmers in the Hudson River valley were prosperous. The colony was the base for a profitable fur trade between the Dutch and Native Americans. The Dutch also made money trading with merchants in the British colonies. This trade violated Britain’s mercantile laws and angered the government.

One of New Netherland’s major problems was its small Dutch population. Many of the colonists came from Sweden, France, and Portugal. There also were some English Puritans who had settled on Long Island. These people often were hostile to Dutch rule.

Tension also existed between England and Holland. New Netherland separated England’s northern colonies from its colonies farther south. Furthermore, England and Holland were rivals at trade.

**New Netherland Becomes New York** In 1664, England’s King Charles II granted the right to all the Dutch lands in North America to his brother James. All that James had to do was conquer the territory. James sent a few warships to do the job, and the Dutch surrendered immediately. The colony was renamed New York, after James, the Duke of York. New Amsterdam, its capital, became New York City. The colony grew slowly. At the end of the 1600s, New York City was still a village on the southern end of Manhattan.

**New Jersey** New Jersey was established in 1665, when part of southern New York was split off to form a new colony. Like New York and several other English colonies, New Jersey at first was a proprietary colony—a colony created by a grant of land from a monarch to an individual or family. In 1702, New Jersey received a new charter as a royal colony—a colony controlled directly by the English king. New York had become a royal colony in 1685.

**Checkpoint** How did New Jersey become a separate colony?

Pennsylvania and Delaware

In the 1640s and 1650s, the Quakers were one of a number of new religious groups in England. Their ideas set them apart from most groups, including the Puritans.

The Quakers believed that all people had a direct link, or “inner light,” with God. Groups of Quakers, therefore, did not need ministers. Another fundamental Quaker belief was that all people were equal in God’s eyes. Thus, they were among the first in England to speak out against slavery. Women were considered equal to men in spiritual matters and often were leaders in Quaker meetings.

By the 1660s, there were thousands of Quakers in England. Many of them refused to pay taxes to support the Church of England. Because of their views, they often suffered from persecution. One Quaker leader was William Penn, a wealthy man who personally knew King Charles II. Penn wanted to find a place for Quakers to live...
where they would be safe from persecution. He used his connections to get a charter from the king for a new colony in North America. In 1681, he received an area almost as large as England itself, mainly in what is now Pennsylvania.

Penn’s “Holy Experiment” Penn arrived in his colony in 1682. For his capital, Penn established a city named Philadelphia, which means “City of Brotherly Love.” To attract settlers, he printed pamphlets in several languages and distributed them in England and on the European continent. Soon, new settlers began arriving from many places—England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Still others came from Germany, Holland, and Switzerland.

Penn considered his colony to be a “holy experiment.” His goal was to create a colony in which people from different religious backgrounds could live peacefully. In 1682, Penn wrote his Frame of Government for Pennsylvania. It granted the colony an elected assembly. It also provided for freedom of religion.

Penn tried to deal fairly with Native Americans. He did not allow colonists to settle on land until the Native Americans sold it to them. Relations between settlers and Native Americans in Pennsylvania were far from perfect. However, during Penn’s lifetime they were much better in Pennsylvania than in other colonies.

Delaware: A Separate Colony People from Sweden were the first European settlers in Delaware. The Dutch took control of the territory in the 1650s, but they lost it to the English when they lost New York.

Penn’s charter for Pennsylvania included Delaware. Because Delaware settlers did not want to send delegates to a distant assembly in Philadelphia, Penn gave the area its own representative assembly. In 1701, Delaware became a separate colony.

**Checkpoint** Why did Penn call Pennsylvania “a holy experiment”?

**Growth and Change**

By the early 1700s, more than 20,000 colonists lived in Pennsylvania. Fertile soil and hard work made its farms productive. Farmers grew more than they could use and sold the balance. The top cash crop, wheat, was sold to customers in New England and abroad. Because of all its wheat, Pennsylvania was called America’s breadbasket. New Jersey also produced large amounts of wheat.

Manufacturing was just beginning in the Middle Colonies during the 1700s. The largest manufacturers produced iron, flour, and paper. Meanwhile, artisans in towns worked as shoemakers, carpenters, masons, weavers, and in many other trades. Among the most important artisans were coopers, who made the barrels used to ship and store flour and other foods.
Growth and Change
p. 80

Instruction
- Have students read Growth and Change. Remind students to look for ways the Middle Colonies are similar to the New England colonies.
- Have students consider the complementary nature of the industries developing in the New England and Middle Colonies. Ask them to draw conclusions about the economic effects on the regions. (The colonies became interdependent, trading with each other.)
- Have students complete the worksheet Colonial Population Growth. Ask: How many more colonists lived in New York in 1700 than in 1650? (15,000)

Independent Practice
Have students complete the Study Guide for this section.

Monitor Progress
- As students complete the Notetaking Study Guide, circulate to make sure students understand the importance of agriculture and manufacturing in the Middle Colonies. Provide assistance as needed.
- Tell students to fill in the last column of the Reading Readiness Guide. Probe for what they learned that confirms or invalidates each statement.

Answers
(a) Delaware, Hudson, and Susquehanna
(b) Possible answer: They provided food and transportation.

Differentiated Instruction
Advanced Readers
Write an Essay Have students choose one of the states that were once part of the Middle Colonies to research current religious and ethnic diversity. Have students write an essay comparing and contrasting the diversity of the state today with that of colonial times. Allow time to have them present their findings to the class.
The Backcountry The western section of Pennsylvania was part of a region called the backcountry. The backcountry was a frontier region extending through several colonies, from Pennsylvania to Georgia.

Many of the people who settled in the backcountry were not English. Thousands were Scotch-Irish. Originally from Scotland, they had settled in Ireland before coming to North America. Large numbers of German immigrants began arriving early in the 1700s. The word these German newcomers used to describe themselves was Deutsch, for “German.” Americans thought they were saying “Dutch.” As a result, German immigrants in Pennsylvania were called the Pennsylvania Dutch.

By the middle of the 1700s, many settlers were pushing south and west along a route that led from Pennsylvania to Georgia. Because they often traveled in covered wagons, the route was called the Great Wagon Road. These backcountry settlers often fought with Native Americans.

Diverse and Thriving Colonies By 1750, the non-English immigrants had made the Middle Colonies the most diverse part of English North America. Philadelphia and New York were accumulating people at such a rate that they had become the largest cities and busiest ports in the colonies. All of the colonies had thriving economies.

Checkpoint How was Pennsylvania a breadbasket?

Looking Back and Ahead Both the New England and Middle Colonies had many small family farms. In the next section, you will read that parts of the Southern Colonies developed a plantation economy that was far different.

Assess and Reteach

Assess Progress Have students complete Check Your Progress. Administer the Section Quiz.

Teaching Resources, Section Quiz, p. 88

To further assess student understanding, use the Progress Monitoring Transparency.

Progress Monitoring Transparencies, Chapter 3, Section 3

Reteach

If students need more instruction, have them read this section in the Interactive Reading and Notetaking Study Guide and complete the accompanying question.

Interactive Reading and Notetaking Study Guide, Chapter 3, Section 3 (Adapted Version also available.)

Extend

Have students write a short report comparing and contrasting the populations and economies of the four Middle Colonies.

Progress Monitoring Online Students may check their comprehension of this section by completing the Progress Monitoring Online graphic organizer and self-quiz.

Section 3 Check Your Progress

1. (a) Recall What was the geography and climate of the Middle Colonies?
   (b) Identify Economic Benefits What advantages did the geography and climate give to people living in the Middle Colonies?

2. (a) Summarize What were William Penn’s goals for his colony?
   (b) Compare How did Penn’s “holy experiment” differ from the Puritans’ “city on a hill”?

3. Reading Skill 3. Identify Signal Words What word in the sentence that follows suggests a comparison? What similarity is being identified? Sentence: Both Pennsylvania and New Jersey produced a lot of wheat.

4. Why did so many people settle in the backcountry?

5. Writing
   6. Imagine that you are a Pennsylvania farmer. Write a letter to a fellow farmer in New England telling him about your life in your new home. Then, write a letter that the New England farmer might send back describing his life in New England.

Section 3 Check Your Progress

1. (a) It had rivers and coastline, fertile soil, and long growing seasons.
   (b) They used the rivers for trade and transport and the land for farming.

2. (a) to create a colony in which people from different religious backgrounds could live peacefully
   (b) Penn sought cooperation between religions; the Puritans were not as tolerant.

3. Both; a similarity in agricultural products

4. Possible response: As a royal colony, New Jersey was controlled directly by the king, not a private company or family.

5. The backcountry was a frontier that seemed welcome to new immigrants.


Answer Checkpoint It produced wheat, from which flour for bread is made.