

COLONIAL SETTLEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Performance Standards (16EUS/16EW/17D).I

Create a chart and a written response showing the cause-effect relationship of the colonial settlement of the United States and the development of environmental problems/issues over time accordingly:

- *Knowledge:* identify human activities and environmental problems in the colonial north and south;
- *Reasoning:* compare the connections between the human activities and future environmental problems in each region; and
- *Communication:* produce a chart and a written response that is well-organized, well-focused and well-detailed; express all ideas in a way that provides evidence of knowledge and reasoning processes.

Procedures

1. ***In order to understand Illinois, United States and world environmental history (16E), and understand the historical significance of geography (17D)***, students should experience sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
 - Identify the origins of significant environmental issues confronting the United States and North America,
 - Describe how the rise in colonial powers affected the environment in colonial empires, and
 - Compare past and present types of settlements in the United States and other countries to determine similarities and differences (e.g., the colonial South of the United States vs. the colonial North, settlement of Australia).
2. Have students review and discuss the assessment task and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
3. Students should possess a basic understanding of European colonial settlement and the physical geography/climate of North America.
4. In small groups have students compile a list of factors that prompted European settlement of North America.
5. Have students group and label the factors: economic, political, and social.
6. Each student generates a chart during the group discussion showing two headings: colonial north and colonial south. The students should list human activities occurring in each of these regions and indicate similarities and differences of the human activities between each of the regions.
7. Have students individually explain on their chart how the human activity contributed to environmental problems in each region.
8. Students develop an individual response to the following question:
 - How has colonial settlement and human activities contributed to a future environmental problem in both the northern and southern Atlantic U.S. coastal regions?
9. Evaluate each student's work using the Social Science Rubric as follows and add the scores to determine the performance level:
 - *Knowledge:* the identification of human activities (e.g., cotton and tobacco production in the south, industrialization in the north) and environmental problems in each region is accurate and complete.
 - *Reasoning:* the analysis in the response provides at least two valid, logical connections between northern and southern Atlantic coastal region settlement and future environmental problems and is logical and well-reasoned.
 - *Communication:* the chart and written response is well-organized, well-focused and well-detailed; the knowledge and reasoning were completely and effectively communicated.

Examples of Student Work follow

Resources

- Paper and pen
- Social Science Rubric

Time Requirement

- One-two class periods

ASSESSMENT (16EUS/16EW/17C).I

Human Activities

Colonial North

- Grain
- Cattle
- Lumber
- Fish
- Whales
- Furs
- Ships
- Iron
- Rum

Colonial South

- Tobacco
- Cotton
- Rice
- Livestock
- Indigo
- Timber
- Grain
- Fish
- Iron
- Rum

Many human activities during the colonial time period contributed to the environmental problems of present day. For example, the northern colonists often had jobs that dealt with the ocean such as fishing or whaling; these actions then led to the endangerment of many of the aquatic wildlife found in the area. Also, the colonists of the north and south used the plentiful forests to their advantage. This, in turn, led to many of the deforestation problems that we are facing today.

Colonists and Current Environmental Problems

"Meets" (page 2)

Everyday human activities, including those of the colonists can be connected with many of the environmental problems that the eastern United States faces today. For example, the northern colonists often had jobs that dealt with the ocean, such as fishing or whaling; these actions then led to the endangerment of much of the aquatic wildlife found in the area. Also, the colonists of the North and South used the plentiful forests to their advantage. This, in turn, led to many of the deforestation problems that are being faced today. Many human activities, such as these, during the colonial time period contributed to the environmental problems that exist today.

In colonial times, many of the colonial citizens often relied on the ocean for a certain amount of everyday needs, such as food and even work. Often men found fishing and whaling to be good jobs. However, because of the all the whales that were killed during this time there is a great chance that this may have led to the beginning of the endangerment of whales. As more and more whales and other fish were captured and killed by the colonists, there were fewer in the ocean left to reproduce and therefor the population could not rebuild as fast as it was being destroyed. Also, with the lack of whales and certain types of fish the food chain would be slightly thrown-off. With out the larger aquatic life around to prey on the smaller forms then the smaller form may become over populated causing an entirely new problem. Partially due to some colonial acts humans of modern day must face the challenge of rebuilding the whale population. One way that the human race should go about helping to fix this mistake would be to - as some are currently doing – set up certain programs in which the whales would be able to reproduce in

captivity and eventually be released into the wild. Of course, the main goal would be to rebuild the whale population enough that such programs were no longer needed. "Meets" (page 3)

Another problem that is currently being faced by the eastern United States is that of deforestation. When colonists first landed, one of the desires for the area in which they settled was a plentiful forest. Once found, they destroyed the forests in order to create many of their everyday needs, such as boats, houses, and many other goods. Over the years the continuous lumbering, with out planting more trees, has led to complete destruction of many of the forests and left others with a mere fraction of the trees that once stood. The current environmental problems arise due to the lack of trees. Through many of their studies scientists have been able to verify that the large amounts of deforestation do contribute to some of the problems with air pollution that the world has. This is mainly connected to one of the trees main natural functions: oxidation. Through this process tree takes carbon dioxide and other gases in the air and changes them to create oxygen. With the drastic decline in the number of trees there is much more carbon dioxide and other gases in the air to create pollution. This then effects the way everything breathes, lives, grows, etc... One way that humans can help to reverse the damages is to plant more trees, this eventually increases the amount of oxygen being produced helping to clean the air. Also, humans can be need to be more careful as to the amount of trees they destroy each year, for any use. This helps us to become more aware of what we are doing to the earth.

Deforestation and endangerment of certain aquatic wildlife are just a few of the problems that the eastern coast of the United States faces today. These and other environmental problems may have started in colonial days; however, they are now a problem that we all face and must take action to fix.