

Grade 8: South Carolina - One of the United States

Standard 8-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the settlement of South Carolina and the United States by Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans.

8-1.3: Summarize the history of English settlement in New England, the mid-Atlantic region, and the South, with an emphasis on South Carolina as an example of a distinctly southern colony.

It is essential for students to know:

Jamestown was the first permanent **English** settlement in the New World [1607]. Established by a joint stock company, the settlers endured several years of starvation and the deaths of many until tobacco made the settlement sustainable. Anxious to attract more settlers, the London Company initiated the headright system that provided land to anyone who paid their own passage or the passage of others to the settlement. The headright system promoted the establishment of large tobacco plantations. Conflict over land with the natives increased as settlers took more land for tobacco production. Tobacco growers enlarged their landholding through the headright and secured workers by paying for the passage of indentured servants.

By the end of the 1600s however, they had turned to a more reliable source of labor – African slaves. The London Company also established the House of Burgesses [1619] so that settlers would have a voice in the governance of the colony. Although not completely democratic, this assembly followed English political tradition since the Magna Carta. Jamestown grew into the colony of Virginia and established the pattern for the southern colonies.

The New England colonies were founded as a haven (safe place) for religious groups persecuted in England. The Separatists [Pilgrims] landed at Plymouth after signing the Mayflower Compact [1620] establishing another bedrock of American democracy – the idea that the people form the government. They struggled to survive. With the help of Natives, they learned to plant corn and sustained themselves but never prospered.

A much larger migration of Puritans landed in the Massachusetts Bay [1630s]. The Puritans invested in their own joint stock company and brought their charter with them to the New World. They established a democratic form of government that included town meetings and a general assembly. All male church members could vote. They prospered immediately, harvesting the lumber of the great northern woods, building ships, and trading. They established schools so their children could learn to read the Bible and established religious conformity. Dissenters were exiled. Puritan families were large so the population grew and spread to other areas of New England. They enjoyed religious homogeneity (same beliefs), a thriving economy based on trade, and a democratic government.

Settlers to the Middle Colonies included a variety of Europeans, including the Dutch who first settled New York and the Swedes who first settled Delaware. English Puritans also moved into the Middle Colonies and English Quakers settled Pennsylvania. The Quakers were a group of religious dissenters who believed that everyone had an inner light. They promoted religious tolerance and good relations with natives in their region so the colony attracted many other groups of people. The Middle Colonies had the greatest diversity of people and religions in British North America. The king (Charles II) granted William Penn land in payment of a debt so Penn had proprietor rights and could name the governor of the colony. Pennsylvania also had a representative assembly as did the other

colonies in the region. Founded for the purpose of profit, this region's economic prosperity relied on its good harbors and fertile fields. It became known as the 'breadbasket' of the colonies.

Carolina, one of the Southern colonies, was founded as a proprietary colony when the king (Charles II) granted land to eight Lords Proprietors in payment of a debt, just as he had to a Penn in Pennsylvania. The proprietors hoped to make a profit by charging settlers a quitrent (\$) on the land. The proprietors commissioned John Locke to write the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina. This document included policies, such as religious toleration and a social class system based on granting titles to large landholders (even though this provision was never carried out, it shows the intention to make Carolina a society based on elites being in charge). Originally the Lords Proprietors controlled the government through a Governor and Grand Council, which included representatives of the proprietors, the Carolina elite and a smaller representation of the common people of the colony. Just as in the other colonies, Carolina had some degree of democracy from the beginning.

In order to encourage immigration, the proprietors granted large tracts of land to settlers through the headright system, just like Virginia. The headright system led to the establishment of large plantations based on cash crops that made South Carolina a distinctly southern colony. The first settlers were Englishmen who emigrated from the British colony of Barbados and brought a well-developed slave system with them. Slavery made the plantation owners very wealthy. The Carolina colony's natural resources, including fertile land, a mild climate, and many waterways, also contributed to the development of plantations and prosperity.

Other settlers attracted to the prosperous colony came from France, Switzerland, Germany, Scotland, and Ireland. Assured of religious choice by the Fundamental Constitutions, settlers came from diverse religious backgrounds, including French Huguenots and Jewish settlers.

8-1.4: Explain the significance of enslaved and free Africans in the developing culture and economy of the South and South Carolina, including the growth of the slave trade and resulting population imbalance between African and European settlers; African contributions to agricultural development; and resistance to slavery, including the Stono Rebellion and laws to control slaves.

It is essential for students to know:

African Americans played a significant role in the developing economy of Carolina. The economy of South Carolina, like the economies of other southern colonies, was largely based on the plantation system. Most of the crops were labor intensive, requiring many workers to cultivate the land. In Virginia, indentured servants were used as laborers at first. However, by the time of the settlement of the Carolinas, there were fewer workers willing to accept an indentured servant contract. Initially, planters attempted to use natives as workers, however natives could easily escape into the land they knew and male natives were not accustomed to cultivating land.

Settlers from British-owned Barbados brought their slaves with them to Carolina. Additional slaves were forced through the "Middle Passage" from the west coast of Africa and sold on the auction block. These Africans brought knowledge of cultivation from their western Africa, including the knowledge of tending cattle and cultivating rice. Africans were also used to harvest naval stores and lumber from forests of the Carolinas. With the development of cash crops and the plantation system came an increase in the slave trade. Large-scale importation of African slaves began in the 1690s and thousands of African slaves came to Carolina and the South through the port of Charleston. The growing demand for rice and indigo led plantation owners to import more slaves.

Slaves brought their African culture directly from West Africa, including language, dance, music, woodcarving, folk medicine and basket weaving. African rhythms could be heard in the call and response songs that slaves used to sustain their work and spirit. Drums kept the beat of the fields and communicated with slaves on other plantations until they were banned by fearful whites after the Stono Rebellion. Gullah was both a spoken language and shared culture of Africans that developed in the Sea Islands off the coasts of (South) Carolina and Georgia, where it is called Geechee. Gullah - a mixture of many spoken languages combined with newly created words - was unique to the coastal region because of this area's limited access and the large concentration of Africans.

As early as 1698, the Assembly began to worry that there were too many slaves in the colony, but because slaves were vital to the economic success of the colony, the Assembly did not limit the number of slaves coming into SC. This created a population imbalance - slaves outnumbered whites by large numbers in many areas. This fact raised concerns about controlling the slave population. The Stono Rebellion, a slave revolt near Charles Town, significantly increased this concern. This uprising began when a small group of slaves, who wanted to escape to St. Augustine Florida where the Spanish said they would be free, broke into a store on the Stono River and killed two settlers. Using their drums, the rebels summoned more slaves to join them. By day's end, many settlers and slaves had been killed and the rebellion was ended.

As a result of the Stono Rebellion, slave codes, originally brought from Barbados, were strengthened. Slaves codes [the Negro Act of 1740] prohibited slaves from gathering without white supervision, learning to read and write, and carrying guns. Much of the Negro Act was devoted to controlling every aspect of a slave's life. It created harsher punishments for disobeying the law and fined slave owners who were cruel to their slaves. What was most important to colonists was that codes established tighter control of their slaves. Even after the Stono Rebellion, the slave trade was not limited.

South Carolina had fewer free Africans-American than many other colonies. The state legislature acknowledged the right of owners to free their slaves for good cause in the early 1700s. Some slaves were free by the last will and testament of their owners, for faithful service, or from masters freeing their slave mistresses and their children. However this occurred rarely because slaves were so valuable. Some slaves were able to purchase their freedom as the result of having some special talent or skill that allowed them to be hired out and earn money which they used to purchase their freedom. However, freed blacks were required by law to leave South Carolina within 6 months or be re-enslaved and sold at auction. Very few free blacks [4%] lived in the South. Free blacks were most likely to live in urban areas where they were able to earn a living by their craft.

8-1.5: Explain how South Carolinians used their natural, human, and political resources uniquely to gain economic prosperity, including settlement by and trade with the people of Barbados, rice and indigo planting, and the practice of mercantilism.

It is essential for students to know:

Carolina's **natural resources** included: abundant deer; pine forests to harvest; broad expanses of fertile land; a mild climate; and a long growing season. Geographic conditions in the Lowcountry made it suitable for rice planting. A good port at Charleston and navigable waterways along the coast and into the interior rivers made shipping goods to market possible.

As a result of its natural resources, a flourishing trade made the Carolinas a profitable colony. Initially, traders obtained furs and deerskins from Native Americans in exchange for beads, trinkets, guns and alcohol. When some Natives were forced into slavery, this good relationship ended. Because early Carolina settlers came from Barbados, Carolinians established a thriving trade with this Caribbean island. Carolinians sold cattle and Native American slaves to the people of Barbados. South Carolina pine trees were a source of pitch and tar (naval stores) which the British used for making ships watertight. Rice became known as "Carolina Gold," a staple crop and the source of long-term prosperity.

The determination of settlers and hard work of their slaves resulted in a growing agricultural economy. As an immigrant from Antigua, Eliza Lucas Pinckney planted indigo because she was determined to make the family plantation successful. Indigo was a plant used to make a highly valued blue dye and the British government was offering a subsidy (\$) as an incentive to anyone who would grow it. Eventually, Eliza Lucas succeeded and shared her success with other area planters. Indigo became a new cash crop for South Carolina.

Political factors also contributed to South Carolina's prosperity. Mercantilism was an economic system in which the mother country controlled trade in order to export more goods than it imported. By enforcing mercantilist policies, the mother country would amass more gold and silver and become wealthy and powerful. South Carolina served as both a source of raw materials and a market for British manufactured goods. This lessened the mother country's dependence on foreign trade and improved her balance of trade (exports over imports). Both rice and indigo were on the 'enumerated' list of products that could be sold only to England. Carolina planters therefore had a secure market in which to sell their crops. However the British government did not enforce this law on Carolina rice, thus giving South Carolina the economic advantage of a wider market. In fact, the British government was lax in its enforcement of most mercantilist laws (a condition known as salutary neglect) and so the people of British North America were free to develop their economies without much interference from the mother country.

8-1.6 Compare the development of representative government in South Carolina to representative government in the other colonial regions, including the proprietary regime, the period of royal government, and South Carolina's Regulator Movement.

It is essential for students to know:

Carolina's government became more democratic during the colonial period. Carolina began as a proprietary colony when the land and political control over the land was granted to the eight Lords Proprietors by the king. In order to attract more settlers the proprietors began to share some of the political control of the colony with property owners. Carolina developed a political elite - the wealthiest and largest plantation owners. Other colonies also developed a political elite based on economic status.

Just as in the other colonies, in Carolina there was a legislative assembly established to make laws, including tax laws, for the colony. Most English colonies had a bicameral (two house) assembly. In Carolina, the Proprietors and the elite had greater representation in the government than did the common people. The Grand Council decided that the representatives of the Proprietors, the colonial elite and the common people - should have equal voice in the government even though this representation would not be proportional to their numbers in the population. Later a separate house was established as the Commons House of Assembly to represent the people.

By the end of the 1600s, most English colonies founded as joint stock companies had become royal colonies. This meant the king (NOT proprietors) appointed the governor. Most often this change was the result of the king's desire to control the wealth or to limit the independence of the colony. South Carolina became a royal colony at the invitation of the colonists. Tension between the colonists and the Proprietors grew because the colonists felt neglected by the absentee landlord who collected rent but offered them little protection. The Proprietors thought that the colonists were disobedient and they were making little profit. The Council protested to the king about the neglect of the proprietors and appealed to the king to make Carolina a royal colony. The king made Carolina a royal colony and it was split into North and **South Carolina**. South Carolina continued to have self-government through their representative assembly but now had a governor who was appointed by the king. The power of the royal governor was limited because colonial assemblies controlled the taxes that paid the governor's salary. Most often the king and Parliament left the colonies alone to control their own local government.

South Carolina enjoyed some economic advantages as a result of becoming a royal colony. The English government increased subsidies for naval stores and allowed merchants to sell rice directly to foreign countries. The English government through the royal governor established townships in the backcountry to encourage migration. Settlers moved there to establish subsistence farms. This intensified the animosity between the Lowcountry and the backcountry.

The first white settlers to move to the backcountry were traders and woodsmen, so they were viewed by the Lowcountry elite as "uncivilized." As the first area settled, the Lowcountry along the Atlantic coast surrounding Charleston was the home of plantation owners who grew rich from the export of rice and indigo. As more coastal settlers moved inland and immigrants such as the Scotch Irish and Germans settled in the upstate, the backcountry's white population grew to outnumber the Lowcountry.

Although the backcountry had a larger white population, they continued to have much less representation in the Assembly. Although they paid taxes, the backcountry folk got little in return from their colonial government. They had no law enforcement so backcountry settlers took the regulation

of society into their own hands in what was called the Regulator movement. Because there were no courts, the Regulators operated as vigilantes. This movement to provide law and order through “self-regulation” turned lawless. The “guilty” were hanged or beaten to death without a jury trial, violating their rights as Englishmen. Eventually the government of South Carolina came to the aid of the backcountry settlers by setting up seven circuit courthouses around the colony to provide justice, law and order in the region. However representation in the General Assembly was still disproportional and the tensions between the Lowcountry and the backcountry continued.