

Study Guide



Chapter 3, Section 1

For use with textbook pages 84–90

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

- cash crop** crop grown primarily for market (page 85)
- plantations** large commercial estates where many workers lived on the land and cultivated the crops for the landowner (page 85)
- indentured servant** person who agreed to work for an employer in the colonies in exchange for passage to America (page 86)
- Eliza Lucas** discovered suitable conditions for growing indigo, which became an important cash crop for South Carolina (page 86)
- gentry** the wealthy landowners in the South (page 86)
- subsistence farming** system of farming in which farmers produce only enough crops to feed themselves and their families (page 87)
- William Berkeley** governor of Virginia (page 87)
- Royal African Company** English trading company that engaged in the slave trade (page 89)
- Middle Passage** the journey of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic to America (page 89)
- slave code** a set of laws that formally regulated slavery and defined the relationship between enslaved Africans and free people (page 90)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

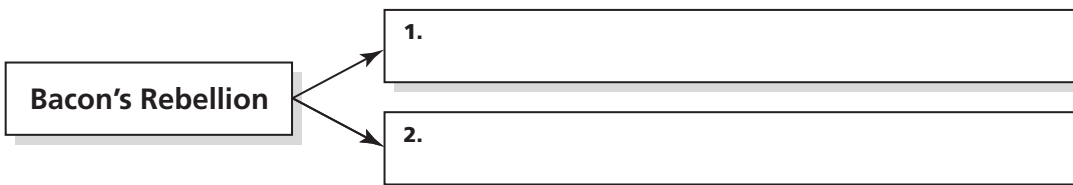
What images come to mind when you hear the word *plantation*? From where did these images come?

In this section, you will learn about the economy that developed in the Southern Colonies. You will also learn how slavery developed there.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the diagram below to help you take notes. Acquiring land was an important issue that led to conflict in the Southern Colonies in the 1600s. Bacon’s Rebellion was one such conflict. List the effects of Bacon’s Rebellion in the space provided.

Effects



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READ TO LEARN

- **The Southern Economy** (page 84)

The economy of the Southern Colonies depended on commercial agriculture. Tobacco became the South's first successful **cash crop**, or crop grown primarily for market. Rice and indigo were also important cash crops. They needed the right kind of climate and techniques to be grown. This need resulted in the start of **plantations**, or large commercial estates where many workers lived on the land and cultivated the crops for the landowner.

To be profitable, tobacco farmers needed a large workforce to grow a large crop. The Chesapeake Bay region was perfectly suited for tobacco farming. Tobacco farmers used the rivers of the region to ship their crops.

The Southern Colonies had plenty of land for growing tobacco, but not enough workers. England had many poor tenant farmers without work. Many of these people were willing to sell their labor for a chance to come to America and obtain land. To pay for their journey, these people agreed to become **indentured servants**. The American colonists agreed to pay the cost of the passage and to provide food, shelter, and clothing for the servants until their labor contracts ended. The servants agreed to work for the owners for a certain number of years.

At first, farmers in South Carolina were unable to grow rice because they did not know how to harvest it properly. Then planters began to grow a new type of rice and decided to import enslaved Africans to raise it. Rice soon became a major cash crop.

In the early 1740s, **Eliza Lucas** discovered that indigo, a plant used to make blue dye, could grow on high ground and sandy soil. Indigo could be grown on land unsuitable for rice. It quickly became a good second cash crop.

3. Why did Southern colonists bring indentured servants to the colonies?

- **Southern Society** (page 86)

Very few planters actually became wealthy. Planters who could afford a large labor force and many acres of land could produce a large crop and extend their estates. This resulted in a wealthy elite who controlled most of the land and needed workers to work the land. These wealthy landowners were referred to as the Southern **gentry**. They influenced much of the economy and politics of the region.

Because of the few towns and roads in the region, the Southern plantations were self-contained communities. They included the planters' houses, the

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workers' houses, a school, a chapel, and workshops. In the 1600s, plantations were generally small, where the planters and the indentured servants lived. In the early 1700s, when the planters switched from indentured servants to slave labor, the size of the plantations increased.

About half of the indentured servants who came to the Chesapeake region in the 1600s died before receiving their freedom. Even those who became free were rarely able to purchase their own land because of the high cost of a land survey, tools, livestock, and seed. As a result, many indentured servants became tenant farmers. They worked lands they rented from the planter elite.

Those indentured servants who were able to purchase land generally bought the land in the "backcountry" farther inland. The farmers in the backcountry generally worked small plots of land and lived in small houses. They practiced **subsistence farming**, or farming only enough crops to feed their own families. By the late 1600s, Southern society was divided into a wealthy elite at the top and poor backcountry farmers, tenant farmers, indentured servants, and enslaved Africans at the bottom.

4. How was Southern society divided by the late 1600s?

• Bacon's Rebellion (page 87)

By the 1660s, **Sir William Berkeley** controlled the House of Burgesses—Virginia's legislative assembly. By assembling a majority of supporters there, he arranged for the House to limit the vote to people who owned property. This act cut the number of voters in Virginia by half, which angered the backcountry and tenant farmers.

Backcountry farmers wanted to expand their landholdings. By the 1670s, most of the remaining land was claimed by Native Americans in the region known as the Piedmont. Most wealthy planters lived near the coast in the region known as the Tidewater. They did not want to risk war with the Native Americans, so they opposed expanding the colony. This further angered the backcountry farmers.

In 1675 war broke out between backcountry farmers and the Native Americans of the region. Governor Berkeley did not authorize military action. In April 1676, a group of backcountry farmers led by a wealthy planter named Nathaniel Bacon took action. Bacon organized a militia and attacked the Native Americans. The House of Burgesses then authorized Bacon to raise 1,000 troops to attack the Native Americans. The House also restored the vote to all free men.

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Bacon was not satisfied with the changes. In July 1676, he and several hundred armed men returned to Jamestown and took power from Berkeley, charging him with corruption. Berkeley raised his own army, and the two sides fought for control of Jamestown. Bacon's Rebellion ended when Bacon became sick and died.

Bacon's Rebellion showed many wealthy planters that they needed to have land available for backcountry farmers in order to keep Virginia society stable. It also resulted in the planters using enslaved Africans more than indentured servants. They used enslaved Africans because they never had to be freed and therefore would never need land. The policies of the English government also encouraged slavery. In 1672 King Charles II granted a charter to the **Royal African Company** to start a slave trade. The English colonists no longer had to purchase enslaved Africans from the Dutch or the Portuguese.

5. How did the policies of the English government help to increase slave labor in Virginia?

- **Slavery in the Colonies** (page 89)

By 1870 between 10 and 12 million Africans were transported by force to the Americas from West Africa. They endured horrible conditions on cramped ships. The passage across the Atlantic Ocean was known as the **Middle Passage**.

When the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619, English law did not recognize slavery. As a result, these Africans were treated like indentured servants. As the number of Africans increased in Virginia and Maryland, their status began to change. In 1638 Maryland became the first British colony to recognize slavery. In 1705 Virginia enacted a **slave code**, a set of laws that formally regulated slavery and defined the relationship between enslaved Africans and free people. Other colonies also enacted slave codes. Under these laws, Africans could not own property and could not meet in large numbers. By the early 1700s, slavery had become an accepted institution, especially in the Southern Colonies where the work of enslaved Africans was important to the plantation economy.

6. How were the first Africans to arrive in Virginia in 1619 treated?
