VIRGINIA STUDIES 2015 CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK (CONDENSED) – STUDY GUIDE

VS.4 LIFE IN THE VIRGINIA COLONY

STANDARD VS.4A AGRICULTURE & SLAVERY

The success of **tobacco as a cash crop** transformed life in the Virginia colony and **encouraged slavery**.

Terms to know

- **Cash crop**: A crop that is grown to **sell for money** rather than for use by the growers
- The economy of the Virginia colony **depended on agriculture** as a primary source of **wealth**.
 - Tobacco became the most profitable agricultural product because it was sold in England as a cash crop.
 - The successful planting of tobacco depended on a steady and inexpensive source of labor.



- The Virginia colony turned to enslaved labor to make money and expand their r
- An overseer supervises two enslaved girls

and expand their resources.

- This dependence lasted for more than two hundred years, until the end of the Civil War.
- For this reason, African men, women, and children were forcibly brought to the Virginia colony and enslaved to work on the plantations.
- The Virginia colony became dependent on slave labor, and the dependence lasted a long time.

STANDARD VS.4B CULTURE REFLECTS ORIGINS

The culture of colonial Virginia reflected beliefs, customs, and architecture of Europeans, Africans, and American Indians living there.

Although a colony of England, Virginia developed a **unique culture** different from that of England.

Culture of colonial Virginia

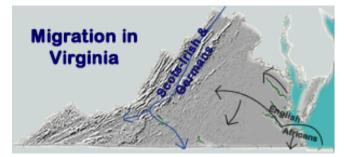
Whenever people settle an area, they change the landscape to reflect their **culture and customs**. Examples of **architecture** that reflect different cultures include

- barns
- homes
- places of worship (e.g., churches)

Place names reflecting culture

English—Richmond

American Indian - Roanoke



Settlement areas

- English and other Europeans settled primarily in Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and Piedmont regions.
- Germans and Scots-Irish settled primarily in the Shenandoah Valley, which was along the migration route.
- Africans were brought primarily to the Coastal Plain (Tidewater) and Piedmont regions to work in tobacco fields which required a great deal of labor.
- Prior to the arrival of the settlers, American Indians lived throughout Virginia.
 - After the settlers arrived, most were forced inland.

Migration and living in new areas caused people to **adapt** old customs to their new environment.

STANDARD VS.4C

CAPITAL MOVES TO WILLIAMSBURG

A variety of factors explain the reasons for moving Virginia's capital.

Reasons why the capital was moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg

- **Drinking water** in Jamestown was contaminated by seepage of salt water.
- Unhealthy living conditions caused diseases.
- Fire destroyed wooden and brick buildings at Jamestown.
- Williamsburg was an already established town.

STANDARD VS.4D MONEY, BARTER, CREDIT

Money was not often used in the early Virginia colony.

Because farmers could not pay for goods until their crops were harvested, **credit** was important in Virginia.

Terms to know

- Money: A medium of exchange (currency, which includes coins and paper bills)
- **Barter**: Trading/exchanging of goods and services without the use of money



- Credit: Buying a good or service now and paying for it later
- **Debt**: A good or service **owed** to another
- Saving: Money put away to save or to spend at a later time

Few people had paper money and coins to use to buy goods and services.

- Barter was commonly used instead of money.
- Tobacco was used as money. A tobacco farmer could use his tobacco to pay for goods and services.

Farmers and other consumers could also buy goods and services on **credit** and pay their **debts** when their crops were harvested and sold.

Colonial Virginia had no banks

STANDARD VS.4E

EVERYDAY LIFE

Resources were used in colonial Virginia to produce the goods and services that people needed.

Everyday life was **different** for whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans in colonial Virginia.

People living in **colonial Virginia** depended on **natural**, **human**, **and capital resources** to produce the goods and services they needed.

Food:

- Food choices were limited
- Meals were made of local produce and meats

Housing:

- Most people lived in **one-room homes** with dirt floors
- Some **wealthy** people (farmers) lived in large houses

Clothing:

- Women in households made clothes for family members
- Most clothing was made of **cotton**, **wool**, and/or **leather**.

Most white Virginians made their living from the land as small farmers.

- A few owned large farms (plantations).,

Enslaved Africans worked tobacco, crops, **livestock**, and in **industries** including shipping, construction, and other trades.

- Africans came to America with **prior knowledge** of skilled trade.
- Enslaved Africans were **denied basic rights.**
- Some free Africans in America owned land but were denied basic rights.
- Africans began to have **families** born in America, **increasing their population.**