Teaching the Unit
Unit 4: Building a Colony, 1720–1775

Unit Summary

The 18th century was a period of sustained growth for New Hampshire. The majority of New Hampshire's towns were founded during these decades. The first expansions were into the Merrimack River Valley and then all the way west to the Connecticut River Valley and north into the Lakes Region, with even a few settlements established in the North Country. By the eve of the American Revolution, New Hampshire settlers had carved out farmsteads and established towns all over the colony. The development of New Hampshire in this period mirrored what was occurring in other parts of America, as the colonists became more knowledgeable and confident about the New World just as threats from the colonies of other European powers, particularly the French, disappeared. The experiences the colonists had in this period would lay the foundation for American independence.

Full Educator Overview

The Big Picture

By 1720, the colony of New Hampshire was well established in its southeastern corner, with the thriving urban settlement of Portsmouth dominating the area's economic, social, and political life. The four original New Hampshire towns had grown to nearly a dozen English settlements containing just over 9,000 people, almost all within 30 miles of the seacoast. However, the success of these early settlements would soon be overshadowed, as the colony was on the cusp of a massive expansion.

- Portsmouth emerged as the colony's capital as well as New Hampshire's political and economic center. Merchants in Portsmouth made fortunes in the triangle trade. Ships carried New Hampshire products like fish, fur, and lumber across the ocean where traders exchanged them for manufactured goods from England, enslaved people from Africa, and commodities like sugar and molasses from the West Indies. Portsmouth also developed a substantial Black community that remains culturally vibrant today. In addition, Portsmouth became renowned throughout the American colonies for its shipbuilding industry.

- The first Scots-Irish arrived in New Hampshire in 1719, establishing a settlement at Londonderry in the Merrimack River Valley. They touched off a wave of emigration that brought thousands of Scots-Irish to the region. Among the many contributions of the Scots-Irish to the development of New Hampshire is the widespread cultivation of two important crops: potatoes and flax, the latter used for the production of fine linen. Scots-Irish culture, known for promoting hard work, efficiency, and frugality, became widespread in New Hampshire.

- In the middle of the 18th century, tensions between New Hampshire and Massachusetts came to a head. Many of the people who settled New Hampshire came from Massachusetts, but ultimately the colonies were separated both physically and politically. A royal decree established the border between the two in 1737 and New Hampshire received its own governor, separate from Massachusetts, in 1740.

- Roughly 60% of New Hampshire’s towns were founded in the 18th century, mostly in southern New Hampshire. The Masonian Proprietors—12 prosperous businessmen from Portsmouth—encouraged the settlement of these towns by granting town charters to prospective settlers. As a result, towns were established throughout the region following a pattern of settlement based on farming and local governance.

- The French and Indian War of 1754–63 involved thousands of New Hampshire men, temporarily slowing the colony’s development. The English victory over the French brought an end to the series of colonial wars that had plagued New Hampshire since the 17th century, bringing peace to the American colonists and the Abenaki (who had been allies of the French).

Portsmouth, New Hampshire’s Capital

How did Portsmouth emerge as the colony's capital, and what role did slavery play in colonial New Hampshire?

Within just a few decades of the English settling in New Hampshire, Portsmouth emerged as the largest and most significant of the colony’s towns. By 1720, it was dominated by the many merchants who conducted business there. Portsmouth’s merchant class was part of the triangle trade, a complicated economic system that involved the exchange of goods and people between Europe, Africa, the West Indies (i.e., the Caribbean), and America. The shipping routes didn’t really form a triangle on the map, but the term is generally used today to refer to trading practices in the Atlantic world in the 17th and 18th centuries among the three continents. A major pillar of this system of exchange was the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Portsmouth’s merchants owned ships that took New Hampshire’s chief commodities—fish, fur, and lumber—to Europe and the West Indies. From Europe, merchants purchased a range of products not readily available in America, like manufactured goods, spices, and tea (the latter two imported to Europe from India and China). In Africa, they loaded their ships with Black people who were enslaved; many of them were traded for goods in the West Indies. In the West Indies, merchants bought sugar and molasses, both of which were in high demand in New England. It is said that at one point in the 18th century, Portsmouth had more than 200 ships sailing in and out of its busy wharves and docks. These business ventures made the fortunes of many families in Portsmouth, allowing them to build impressive homes and create a town that offered entertainment and luxury to those who could afford it.

With all of the money in Portsmouth, it’s hardly surprising that it became the political capital of New Hampshire. Portsmouth was also New Hampshire’s largest population center throughout the colonial period, with a population of around 5,000 people by 1770. It was one of the largest urban centers in colonial America. The colony’s legislature met there until the American Revolution, holding sessions in taverns until a public building was constructed for the legislature and the courts in 1760. This building was located in Market Square, the bustling economic heart of the community. Many of the colony’s political leaders lived in Portsmouth as well, including the powerful Wentworth family and their allies. New Hampshire’s first newspaper, the *New Hampshire Gazette,* began publishing in 1756 in Portsmouth, another indication of Portsmouth’s prominence in the colony’s affairs.

Portsmouth was also New Hampshire’s only seaport, and in the 18th century, it became known throughout the American colonies for its deep harbor and shipbuilding industry. Ship carpentry was Portsmouth’s chief occupation for those in the skilled trades, and as the 18th century progressed, Portsmouth built larger ships, including commercial vessels for American merchants and military vessels for the British navy.

Slavery. Merchants' connections to the slave trade brought New Hampshire's first Black people to its shores in 1645. Slavery was legal in New Hampshire, at least in a de facto sense. The colony had never passed a law legalizing it, but neither was there a law prohibiting it during the colonial period. There were, indisputably, enslaved people in New Hampshire, and their enslavement was viewed as sanctioned by law. Slavery, in fact, existed in all American colonies at this time. After the first small group of enslaved people arrived in Portsmouth in 1645, more were brought to the colony in the years that followed, although New Hampshire's enslaved population remained just a fraction of the colony's population as a whole. Only a small percentage of New Hampshire's white population ever had enslaved people in their households or on their farms.

Unlike in the American South where large slave communities formed on plantations, most enslaved people in Portsmouth lived in households with, at most, one or two others who were held in the same condition of servitude. They were employed in a wide variety of jobs, both skilled (blacksmithing, carpentry, maritime pursuits, pottery) and unskilled (laundry, cooking, household service, farming).

Educators should be under no illusions that slavery in New Hampshire was somehow more gentle or benign than it was elsewhere in America. Frequent advertisements in Portsmouth newspapers regarding sales of enslaved people show that Black residents were treated as property rather than people, and the number of notices regarding runaway slaves provides evidence that enslaved people were not laboring voluntarily. For those in bondage, slavery denied them the freedom to live as they chose, a restriction that was handed down to their children and grandchildren as well.

Portsmouth in the colonial period also had free Black people, a population that continued to grow throughout the 18th century. Although a small percentage arrived in New Hampshire already free, most free Black people had once been enslaved. They gained their freedom in a number of ways, sometimes by purchasing it from their white owners. White owners could also granted freedom to enslaved people as a "gift" or reward for faithful service. Since a person's status was determined by the status of their mother, once a Black woman was free, all of her descendants would be as well, thus leading to the growth of this segment of the population.

Black people in Portsmouth, whether enslaved or free, managed to create their own community and culture, separate from the English settlers in Portsmouth. One tradition, popular in both Portsmouth and other American population centers, involved electing a leader to represent the Black community. On an annual "Negro Election Day," Black people in Portsmouth organized a community festival, complete with brightly colored clothes, food, music, dancing, and celebratory gunfire. They then elected their leader for the coming year, who was dubbed the "King of the Africans." The king had a court who helped him resolve minor conflicts and maintain peace within the community. Portsmouth's most well-known king in the late colonial period was King Nero Brewster, who during the American Revolution organized the Freedom Petition for himself and 20 other enslaved Portsmouth men. (See Unit 5: New Hampshire and the American Revolution.)

The exact number of Black people living in New Hampshire during the colonial period—both free and enslaved—is unknown, but this population grew steadily throughout the 18th century and spread beyond Portsmouth to more than 50 New Hampshire towns by mid-century. In 1707, there were fewer than 100 Black people in New Hampshire, but that number rose to nearly 700 by the American Revolution. Yet the Black population in New Hampshire was substantially smaller than it was in other New England colonies, where it numbered in the thousands rather than the hundreds.

Slavery became increasingly unpopular in New Hampshire after the Revolutionary War, but it was not declared illegal until 1857, just a few years before the outbreak of the Civil War. The topic of slavery, both in New Hampshire and in America, is discussed in several units of the "Moose on the Loose," particularly Unit 5 (New Hampshire and the American Revolution), Unit 9 (Reforming New Hampshire), and Unit 10 (New Hampshire and the Civil War), as the issue of slavery is an important part of our shared history.

At the same time that Black servitude was increasing in New Hampshire, white servitude was decreasing. In the 17th century, Portsmouth had been home to a fair number of indentured servants—lower-class whites who agreed to work without pay for a set number of years in exchange for their passage to America and room and board during the terms of their contract. Indentured service was never as popular in New Hampshire as it was elsewhere in America, particularly in places like New York and Pennsylvania, and in the 18th century, the practice declined and eventually disappeared from the colony.

Many people in New Hampshire grew to resent Portsmouth's dominance of colonial affairs. The town was, in fact, very different from the rest of New Hampshire, with its involvement in international trade, its urban atmosphere, and its more diverse population. These differences with the rest of New Hampshire became more pronounced as colonial settlement expanded westward in the 18th century, an expansion that was fueled almost entirely by the need for more agricultural land. Outside of Portsmouth, almost everyone in New Hampshire depended on farming, which led to the founding of towns far from the seacoast and the way of life that had been established there.

The Scots-Irish Come to New Hampshire

How did the Scots-Irish impact the development of New Hampshire?

Among the new arrivals to New Hampshire in the colonial period were the Scots-Irish, who started coming to the Merrimack Valley in 1719. The Scots-Irish had something of a tortured history. Their ancestors were from the lowlands of Scotland and had emigrated to Ireland in the 16th and 17th centuries. The English, who ruled all of the British Isles at this time, encouraged Scottish emigration to Ireland because they hoped the Scots, motivated by the promise of economic rewards, would help subdue the Irish population and reconcile them to British rule. The Scots who moved to Ireland became known as Scots-Irish, even though they were neither Irish nor Catholic.

Deep differences quickly emerged between the Irish and the Scots-Irish, and by the second half of the 17th century, many Scots-Irish began emigrating to America, believing that more opportunity awaited them in the New World. Scots-Irish settlements developed throughout America, particularly in North Carolina, but in New England, the Scots-Irish community became centered in New Hampshire's Merrimack River Valley when 16 families settled there in 1719. They called their settlement Nutfield after all of the nut trees they found there (chestnut, walnut, butternut), but within three years they changed the name to Londonderry.

Londonderry grew quickly, with new arrivals flooding into the area at a remarkable pace. From there, they spread all over New Hampshire, founding their own Scots-Irish communities. They brought with them some traditions from the Scots-Irish settlements in Ireland, particularly the potato. Londonderry claims to be the "birthplace" of the potato in North America, although this claim has been disputed by other communities. Whether or not the first potato in America was planted in Londonderry, the Scots-Irish certainly did much to promote the growing of potatoes in New Hampshire, which were used for food, to produce starch as a stiffening agent for textiles, and as the prime ingredient for a thriving industry of whiskey distilleries. The Scots-Irish also planted large amounts of flax, which they used to make linen. In fact, Londonderry became renowned for its fine linen production in the mid-18th century. Flax had many other uses as well, such as highly durable rope. The plant also produced flaxseed and linseed oil, widely used in cooking, to feed livestock, and as a lubricant for machinery.

By 1800, the Scots-Irish had become completely assimilated, and New Hampshirites no longer distinguished between them and other people of British ancestry. But they left indelible imprints on New Hampshire's culture, as they had well-deserved reputations for being hard working, efficient, and frugal. All of these qualities would one day be seen as part of the "Yankee" character.

Resolving Conflicts with Massachusetts

In what ways did the affairs of New Hampshire and Massachusetts continue to be linked?

Although the Scots-Irish came to New Hampshire in substantial numbers during these years, they were not the largest population to arrive in the colony. It was people from Massachusetts who made up the majority of new arrivals to New Hampshire, in a migration pattern that continues even today. New Hampshire and Massachusetts had long been partners in a tenuous and confusing relationship. Not since the late 1600s had Massachusetts made an overt attempt to incorporate New Hampshire as part of its own colony, but the two colonies' affairs seemed inextricably linked, often unhappily, in three major areas.

Emigration: Since New Hampshire's earliest days, it had served as a refuge for English settlers who left Massachusetts, either voluntarily or involuntarily, because they ran afoul of the strict Puritan government there. Other emigrants were simply seeking greater economic opportunities than they could find in the more developed colony of Massachusetts, particularly opportunities to secure land.

Government: The governments of the two colonies were also interwoven. Each had its own colonial legislature, but they shared a governor and lieutenant governor. In truth, the governor of Massachusetts rarely became involved with New Hampshire's government, leaving that responsibility to his lieutenant governor, most of whom didn't care much about New Hampshire either. One notable exception was John Wentworth, whose family had emigrated from England to New Hampshire during the 1630s. The Wentworths were thus among the colony's earliest settlers. During Wentworth's years as lieutenant governor (roughly 1717 to 1730), he provided New Hampshire with more executive leadership than his predecessors had, and as a consequence he exerted more influence in the colony's affairs. He also founded a family dynasty that would dominate New Hampshire until the American Revolution. But Wentworth was unusual. New Hampshire was usually little more than an afterthought to the governor and lieutenant governor of Massachusetts.

Border: The major dispute between Massachusetts and New Hampshire in the 18th century was the location of the border separating the two. In the early 1600s, the line between the two colonies was laid out in colonial charters as being three miles north of the Merrimack River. The problem was that the English had not explored much beyond the coastline. They assumed that the Merrimack River ran in an east-west direction. They didn't realize that 40 or so miles inland the Merrimack River takes a dramatic turn and begins to run in a north-south direction. The changing course of the river threw the boundary line between the two colonies into question. New Hampshire authorities insisted that the boundary should be drawn three miles north of the river's *mouth* (around present-day Newburyport, Massachusetts), while Massachusetts authorities claimed the boundary should be drawn three miles north of the river's *source* (Lake Winnipesaukee). The difference between these two boundaries comprises a huge portion of southern New Hampshire.

These three issues were intertwined, making it impossible to separate one from the other. They were a source of tension between the two colonies for years, but that tension escalated during the 1720s and 1730s. During his tenure as the de facto political leader of New Hampshire, Wentworth increasingly pushed for the border controversy to be resolved and the governments of the two colonies to be separated. New Hampshire's political leaders agreed with him.

At the same time, the Massachusetts government made a concerted effort to claim a large portion of southern New Hampshire as its own. The government granted dozens of charters for towns in southern New Hampshire during this period, promising free land to Massachusetts residents who would move north and establish communities in the disputed area. These townships had unoriginal names like Narragansett No. 4 or Frontier Town No. 2. Although most of these townships failed, the boundaries established for these towns more or less remained and became the basis of new towns founded later by New Hampshire officials.

The Massachusetts government also sent agents to England to present the colony's case in the border dispute and to argue that New Hampshire's government should continue to operate under the Massachusetts governor. In response, New Hampshire sent its own agents. The dispute dragged on through most of the 1730s, but finally the British government came to a decision. In both matters, the British sided with New Hampshire in an effort to curtail Massachusetts' ambitions for expansion. In 1737, the border between the two colonies was established as it still stands today—three miles north of the mouth of the Merrimack River and then continuing west when the river turns north. Three years later, the two colonies' governments were entirely divided, and New Hampshire received its own governor. The first governor of New Hampshire appointed by the British Crown was Benning Wentworth, who was John Wentworth's son.

The Masonian Proprietors and Town Charters

How were New Hampshire's towns settled and governed?

With Massachusetts finally out of the picture in southern New Hampshire, development of the region began in earnest. The establishment of the border meant that all of the contested land was part of the original charter, which had been granted to John Mason back in the early 1620s. (The mascot for "Moose on the Loose"—Mason the Moose—is named after John Mason.) Mason had died before he could come to New Hampshire, leaving only an infant son to defend his claim to the land. Over the next 100 years, Mason's claim was handed down through the generations of his family. Others challenged it, most notably the Massachusetts government, but individual claimants did as well. In 1741, though, the Crown ruled that all of this land was part of the Mason family's original claim. Mason's descendants, still living in England, didn't have much interest in New Hampshire, so they sold the claim—and all the land—to a group of 12 Portsmouth businessmen who became known as the Masonian Proprietors.

The Masonian Proprietors were wealthy and well-connected. They included among their number the governor himself, Benning Wentworth. They wanted New Hampshire settled, and they also wanted to make some money while doing it. The land was divided into townships and offered to any group of settlers who agreed to develop it. Today, the land itself would be valuable, but in 18th-century America, land was not valued unless it had been improved, which meant the land had to be put to some profitable use. Therefore it was essential that settlers create towns, cultivate farms, harvest lumber, and find other ways to extract resources from the land. Only in this way did the land have value.

The announcement of townships brought forth men from New Hampshire and Massachusetts who saw opportunities in southern New Hampshire. They became known as town proprietors. In each community, the Masonian Proprietors gave a town charter to the town proprietors on the condition that the town proprietors would develop a town quickly and establish a number of community services that would attract other settlers. These services included things like building a meeting house, hiring a minister, setting up a school, creating a town cemetery, and establishing mills for grain and lumber. Town proprietors, who numbered 60 to 100 men in each town, were required to make up-front investments to establish these services in the community in order to keep their town charter.

The town proprietors were also required to get settlers moved onto the land as quickly as possible. They divided the land in their town into shares and drew lots among themselves to establish ownership, with the Masonian Proprietors keeping a few select shares in each town for themselves. Once the town had been established and the land had some value, the Masonian Proprietors would sell the land and make a profit.

Remarkably, the shares of land were given—not sold—to settlers, who either moved there themselves, gave the land to family members, or sold the land to other settlers. To keep their shares, though, landowners had to make certain improvements within a specified period of time. These requirements were usually written into the town charter that had been granted by the Masonian Proprietors. Each settler’s share of land was contingent on them building a house or putting the land to use for farming or some other employment, like harvesting lumber. The town’s charter typically laid out specific requirements for landowners, even stating the dimensions of the house that needed to be built and setting a deadline for completion. For example, a settler had to commit to constructing a house that was at least 16 feet by 20 feet with a chimney and cultivating an acre of land within four years of claiming the property or they forfeited their claim. The land may have been free for settlers, but they could only keep it if they improved it.

The vast majority of people who settled in these towns were farmers. Clearing the land of New Hampshire’s thick forests was a monumental task, and New Hampshire farmers were required to undertake a number of different operations to keep their farms solvent, including raising livestock, gathering fruit and berries, hunting and fishing, cultivating bees, and tapping trees for maple syrup. Farm families made nearly everything they needed, and what they couldn’t make themselves, they traded their neighbors for. It was largely a barter economy with very little currency in circulation. Even the town’s minister was likely to be paid in livestock, food, or firewood rather than cash. This type of farming is often referred to as subsistence farming, but that word implies a struggle for survival. In truth, New Hampshire farms were more successful than that. They are more accurately described as self-sufficient, with most farmsteads being capable of supporting the people who lived there in some degree of comfort.

The proliferation and stability of New Hampshire’s family farms made the colony predominantly middle class. Outside of Portsmouth, New Hampshire was overwhelmingly rural, with no other major population centers developing until the middle of the 19th century. For most of the people of New Hampshire, life followed the rhythm of the seasons. Community activities, such as church, school, and town meeting, were all structured around the agricultural calendar. Nearly every member of the community, aside from the minister, made their living through agriculture. It was a hard, labor-intensive life, but it offered opportunities for economic independence that were undreamed of in England or anywhere else in Europe.

Once fields were cleared, fences and houses built, and herds of livestock established, New Hampshire farm families typically expanded the small cabins they had built when settling their property to larger, more comfortable farm houses with a series of barns and outbuildings. These larger farm complexes accommodated the growing number of children or the multi-generational nature of many households. This architectural style was known as connected farms, or "big house, little house, back house, barn." Many of these farm structures can still be seen in New Hampshire today. (For more on farm life in New Hampshire, see Unit 8: Changing Times on the Farm.)

Each town was initially governed by the town proprietors, as they were the ones putting up all the investment to create the town and establish town services. Eventually, as the town grew, the people themselves petitioned the New Hampshire government to incorporate their town, adopting a form of local government that is more or less still in place today. Residents governed themselves by electing select boards and other local officials, and the people of the community made many decisions themselves at town meeting, which was a major annual event for the people of New Hampshire. Traditionally, town meeting day is in March, when the winter snows have melted enough to allow for travel but early enough in the year to not interfere with spring planting. Town meeting has become a hallmark of New England government, where people discuss and debate the issues before voting. In New Hampshire, where local government is predominant more than in any other place in America, town meeting is one of our most cherished traditions. (See Lesson Plan 18.5 for more about the New Hampshire town meeting and local government.)

This system of settlement brought thousands of people to New Hampshire in the 18th century and was the basis on which most of the towns in southern New Hampshire were formed, particularly west of the Merrimack River. The spread of development was staggering for such a short period of time. By 1770, towns had been established throughout southern New Hampshire, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Connecticut River. In fact, 60% of all New Hampshire towns were founded between 1715 and 1765. Settlement was less dense in the Lakes Region and sparse in the White Mountains and further north; these areas wouldn't be settled until after the American Revolution. The population of New Hampshire likewise exploded during the 18th century, leaping from just over 9,000 people in 1720 to more than 60,000 in 1770. New Hampshire created counties in 1770 in an effort to provide more coordinated political leadership, but the colonial government—either the counties or the colonial legislature—played a minimal role in the affairs of most communities, with almost all governance conducted at the local level.

The French and Indian War

In what ways did the French and Indian War impact New Hampshire?

The rapid expansion of English settlements in New Hampshire in the mid-18th century was temporarily slowed by the periodic colonial wars between the French and the English that frequently erupted between the two European powers and spilled over to their North American colonies. In the 17th century, the French established a solid presence in Canada and built strong alliances with many of the indigenous people, like the Abenaki, who were pushed out of the English colonies. The French offered them a home, allowing them to establish their own communities in the St. Lawrence Valley. In return, the French often called on their Native American allies to fight against the English settlers. The Abenaki, settled in northern New Hampshire or in Canada, periodically launched raids on the colonial settlements in southern New Hampshire, particularly in the Connecticut River Valley. During these raids, colonists were often killed or kidnapped. Those who were taken captive were usually marched to Canada and then ransomed back to their families. These raids were generally encouraged by the French, who viewed the harassment of English colonists as a useful tool in their ongoing feud with Great Britain.

In an effort to provide colonists with some defense, the governments of Massachusetts and New Hampshire built a few small forts in New Hampshire and what is now Vermont. The most prominent of these fortifications was the Fort at No. 4 on the banks of the Connecticut River. At the time it was built in 1744 it was the northernmost British fortification in New England, even though it was staffed by colonists serving in the militia rather than British troops. It was the site of several skirmishes and one fairly significant battle during King George's War of 1744–48.

Although the French and the English were often at war during the 17th and 18th centuries, the tensions between the two countries came to a head during the Seven Years' War, which was a global conflict that most historians consider to be the first world war. The portion of this war that was fought in North America is known as the French and Indian War, and it was waged between 1756 and 1763. Although Native Americans fought on both sides of the conflict, most of New England's indigenous population were allied with the French.

New Hampshire played a significant role in this war, even though very little fighting occurred within the colony's borders. Roughly 1,000 New Hampshire men served in the colonial militia and fought alongside the British Army at any given time during the conflict. Most of them fought in the upper Hudson River Valley near Lake Champlain where the British built a number of forts that were frequently under attack by the French and their Native American allies. New Hampshire men also served in British offensives launched into Canada, most notably at the attacks on Louisburg, Quebec, and Montreal. In addition, New Hampshire soldiers built the Crown Point Road, a massive undertaking to carve a road through Vermont to link the Fort at No. 4 with the British fortification at Crown Point, New York, which was located at the southern tip of Lake Champlain. Fort Crown Point was at the center of the British military operation in upstate New York, and British forces hoped the road could serve as a means to move men and supplies into the largely unsettled area around Lake Champlain. (After the war, the Crown Point Road served as a spur to the development of what is now Vermont.)

The French and Indian War also produced two of New Hampshire's most famous colonial military figures: Robert Rogers and John Stark. Rogers in particular gained famed for his unusual fighting techniques, which were heavily influenced by tactics he had learned from the Abenaki. He trained a band of men, which included the young John Stark, to move quickly and quietly through the wilderness and to use the rocks and trees to camouflage their presence. This troop, which became known as Rogers' Rangers, conducted scouting operations for the British Army and served as a highly effective strike force against the French.

Few people remember the French and Indian War today, but it had a tremendous impact on New Hampshire during these critical years of the colony's development. When the British won the war in 1763, they stripped France of its North American holdings, which eliminated the hostile foreign power on New Hampshire's northern border. Without their French allies, the indigenous populations in Canada and northern New Hampshire stopped their attacks on English settlements. The Abenaki recognized the futility of fighting with the settlers and tried to adopt a policy of peaceful coexistence, with mixed results. Although Abenaki communities survived well into the 19th and 20th centuries, most New Hampshire settlers were more intent on establishing new farmsteads and towns than they were on respecting their Abenaki neighbors.

With the threats of French and Abenaki conflict removed, New Hampshire was no longer considered on the frontier of British settlement, which ushered in a period of stability and further development. The New Hampshire communities that were established during this period, with their traditions of local government and self-sufficiency, served as the foundation for the society we know today in the Granite State.

Course Essential Questions

Essential questions are designed to be answered repeatedly throughout the entire curriculum. This unit particularly addresses the following essential questions:

- How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is?
- How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?
- How have New Hampshire's people shaped its government?

Unit Focus Questions

Lessons in this unit are geared towards students answering the unit focus questions comprehensively through a variety of methods. This unit's focus questions are:

1. How did towns develop throughout New Hampshire during this time?
2. How was New Hampshire connected to other colonies, countries, and continents in the 18th century?

Lesson Plans

In this unit, lessons 1 and 2 examine the development of New Hampshire's towns and daily life in the colony in the 1700s. The third lesson considers Portsmouth's connection to the Triangle Trade and how colonists in New Hampshire participated in the enslavement of people.

Lesson Plan 1: Building New Hampshire Towns

Students participate in a simulation as town manager for a Masonian Proprietor and create a geographic representation of their town's development over five years.

Lesson Plan 2: Life in New Hampshire in the 1700s

Students complete six stations examining life in the 1700s, including organizing a farmer's activities by season, comparing girls' embroidery samplers, and learning about the traditions of the colony's Black residents.

Lesson Plan 3: Merchants, Ships, and the Triangle Trade

After working with an infographic on the Triangle Trade, students view a mini-museum exhibit to investigate slavery in New Hampshire and reflect on the impacts of economic interdependence.

Unit Vocabulary

Abenaki	(noun) Name used to refer to the indigenous people of the land now called New Hampshire
apprentice	(noun) A person who is learning a trade from a skilled employer; they usually agree to work for a set amount of time
apprenticeship	(noun) The time a person agrees to work for a skilled employer and learn their trade
barter	(verb) Exchanging goods and services you have for the goods and services you need
border	(noun) A real or imaginary line that divides two places. Usually a human feature; also called a boundary.
card	(verb) With fiber, to clean and detangle it so that it is ready for spinning or weaving
charter	(noun) A document that states who owns a particular tract of land
colonial period	(noun) The period of time between 1607 and 1776 when America was a colony of Great Britain
colony	(noun) An area governed by another, often distant, country

commons	(noun) A public area, usually flat and grassy, that is used by all members of a community
community	(noun) A group of people living together or having something particular in common
consumer	(noun) Someone who buys products or goods
county	(noun) A section of a state or county with defined boundaries and its own governmental services. New Hampshire now has ten counties.
culture	(noun) The beliefs, values, and practices learned and shared by a group of people from generation to generation
economic	(adjective) Describing the system by which goods and services are made, bought, and sold
enslaved	(verb) The act of labeling a human being as property and forcing them to work for nothing
fiber	(noun) A thread of a plant or hair of an animal
flax	(noun) A plant whose fibers are used to make a cloth called linen
governor	(noun) The leader of the executive branch of a state government, or during the colonial period, a colony government
grainmill	(noun) A machine run by power that grinds grain into flour
Great Britain	(noun) The country, also known as England, that governed the original 13 colonies
historical perspective	(noun) Understanding that people's actions and beliefs are shaped by the time period in which they live
indigenous people	(noun) The first people who lived in an area before people from other cultures arrived
inland	(adjective) Meaning away from the seacoast
interdependence	(noun) When systems, things, or people are mixed together and rely on one another
legislature	(noun) A group of people chosen or elected to make the laws for a colony or state
letterbook	(noun) A book that contains copies of letters a person has sent and received
linen	(noun) A type of cloth that comes from flax
livestock	(noun) Animals that are raised on a farm, like cows, chickens, horses, and sheep
lumber	(noun) Wood that has been processed from a tree into usable boards or pieces
manufactured goods	(noun) Products that are made, especially by machines in factories
Masonian Proprietors	(noun) 12 businessmen who, in the middle of the 1700s, bought the Mason family land grant; from this land they founded 60% of New Hampshire's towns
masts	(noun) Tall, vertical posts on sailing ships that carry the sails
meeting house	(noun) A building for gathering for town meetings, worship, and school
merchant	(noun) Someone who buys and sells items to make money

militia	(noun) An organized group of people who are prepared to fight in support of a regular army
natural resources	(noun) Something found in nature that is used by people, such as animals, plants, or fossil fuels
perspective	(noun) The point of view expressed through writing, speech, photographs, and other sources of information
raw material	(noun) Material that has not yet been processed or manufactured into a final form
sampler	(noun) A piece of needlework made to show sewing skills
sawmill	(noun) A building along a river with a machine to cut logs into timber
seal	(noun) A symbol that represents an organization, a town, a state, or a country
selectmen	(noun) A group of men elected to govern a town; also known as a select board
servants	(noun) People whose jobs are to provide a service to meet the daily needs of other people
service	(noun) In the economy, actions that are bought and sold, such as a haircut or cleaning a house
settlement	(noun) A place where people establish a community
settler	(noun) A person who goes to a new place to establish a community
slave trade	(noun) The practice of buying and selling enslaved people
slaveholder	(noun) Someone who was recognized by law as owning enslaved people
slavery	(noun) When human beings are treated as property and made to work for nothing
tax	(noun) An amount of money, added to the regular cost of an item, that goes to the government
timber	(noun) Trees that have been cut into large beams or small planks to be used in construction
town meeting	(noun) A formal gathering of the citizens of a town to discuss and vote on town business
township	(noun) The planned outline of an area where people will live together
trade	(verb) The practice of buying and selling goods, either in exchange for other goods or for money
traditions	(noun) Well-known beliefs or customs shared by a group of people over many years
trapper	(noun) Someone who catches animals, like beaver, and sells them
Triangle Trade	(noun) Trading routes in the 1600s–1800s that linked Africa, Europe, and the Americas; raw materials, manufactured goods, food stuffs, and enslaved people were traded between the three continents
weirs	(noun) Underwater fences used to trap fish

Using the Student Content Readings

The student content for this curriculum is designed to be used in many ways. Here are suggestions for reading activities and strategies that support independent and guided reading at different stages of each unit. Please note that some lessons in this unit use the student content in their learning activities.

- Introducing Units: Preview the student content before diving into lesson plans and activities. Ask students to skim the text by looking for key design elements. What are the headings? What do they tell us about the big ideas of the unit? Look for words in bold. What are the important vocabulary words used in this unit? Which are familiar? Which are not? What kinds of graphics or images are used in this content? Which important ideas do they illustrate?
- Developing Understanding: Some lesson plans direct you to specific sections of the student content, but the student content should be revisited throughout completion of a unit. Students can create visual representations of specific sections, summarize paragraphs, or complete jigsaw chunking and present their section summaries to other students.
- Reviewing Concepts: After lessons, return to the student content to look for evidence of the concept explored in the lesson. Students can create timelines, cause and effect charts, mind maps, and Venn diagrams using the information provided in each section.
- Extending Comprehension: Students can develop a review quiz for fellow students by writing their own questions about the information in each section. Translating the content into data that can be displayed on a map or graph is another way to extend comprehension of the text.

Additional Resources

Format: Book
Title: *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England*
Author/Creator: Thomas C. Hubka
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Explores the four components of New England farmhouses and how they reflect rural culture in the 18th and 19th centuries

Format: Book
Title: *Black Portsmouth: Three Centuries of African-American Heritage*
Author/Creator: Mark J. Sammons and Valerie Cunningham
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A thought-provoking look at New Hampshire’s Black heritage that shares the stories of individual Black people and sets them in context

Format: Website
Title: Britain’s North American Empire, 1607–1764
Author/Creator: Leventhal Map and Education Center
Audience: For Students and Educators.
Description: Historic map collection of Britain’s North American empire with document connections, inquiry worksheets, background, and teaching tips. Wider site has extensive collections, resources for educators, and connections to other website’s collections
Website: https://collections.leventhalmap.org/map-sets/11

Format: Book
Title: *Child Out of Place*
Author/Creator: Patricia Q. Wall
Audience: For Students.
Description: A story that focuses on the experience of a slave child in Portsmouth, although it is set in the early 19th century

Format: Website
Title: Colonial America: The Colonies, New Hampshire
Author/Creator: Small Planet
Audience: For Students and Educators.
Description: A clear presentation of colonial history with extensive bibliography
Website: http://www.smplanet.com/teaching/colonialamerica/colonies/newhampshire

Format: Book
Title: *Colonial New Hampshire: A History*
Author/Creator: Jere R. Daniell
Audience: For Educators.
Description: The definitive history of New Hampshire from the arrival of Europeans to the beginning of the American Revolution

Format: Book
Title: *Enemy in the Fort: American Girl History Mysteries*
Author/Creator: Sarah Masters Buckey
Audience: For Students.
Description: Tale of two children living at Fort at No. 4, one of whom had been kidnapped by the Abenaki and recently returned to his family

Format: Book
Title: *A Long, Deep Furrow: Three Centuries of Farming in New England*
Author/Creator: Howard S. Russell
Audience: For Educators.
Description: A comprehensive, almost encyclopedic source on farm life in this region of the country

Format: Podcast
Title: Teaching Hard History, Seasons 1 and 2: American Slavery
Author/Creator: Learning for Justice
Audience: For Educators.
Description: Series of podcasts discussing best practices for educators teaching about American slavery; some episodes are specifically aimed for elementary educators. In the first season, see episodes 1.3, 1.4, 1.10, and 1.18 (starting, oddly, with 1.18). In the second season, see episodes 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.12 (episodes 2.5 and 2.6 focus on teaching about slavery through children's literature)
Website: www.learningforjustice.org/podcasts/teaching-hard-history