Title: Affects of Geography on Colonial Cultures
Lesson Author: Matthew Walker and Jay Hipes
Key Words: culture, colony, regions
Grade Level: 6th grade
Time Allotted: 1hr 30min

Rationale/ Purpose (so what?)
To help students understand and realize the effects geography has on the development of culture.

Key Concept(s) include definition: Geography affects the lifestyles and the development of culture.

NCSS Standard(s)
SOL Information (As written in the Virginia SOL “Curriculum Framework” for the grade level)

NCSS Theme(s) with indicators:
Theme 3: People, Places, and Environment
Indicators:
- enable learners to construct, use and refine mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate their understanding of relative location, direction, size, and shape;
- have learners create, interpret, use, and distinguish various representations of Earth, such as maps, globes and photographs, and use appropriate geographic tools such as atlases, data bases, systems, charts, graphs, and maps to generate, manipulate, and interpret information
- ask learners to describe how people create places that reflect culture, human needs, current values and ideals, and government policies
- have learners explore the ways Earth's physical features have changed over time; and to describe and assess the ways historical events have influenced and have been influenced by physical and human geographic features

SOL:
**USI.1a, d, f:** The student will develop skills for historical and geographical analysis, including the ability to
a) identify and interpret primary and secondary source documents to increase understanding of events and life in United States history to 1877
d) interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives
f) analyze and interpret maps to explain relationships among landforms, water features, climatic characteristics, and historical events

**USI.5b:** The student will demonstrate knowledge of the factors that shaped colonial America by
b) comparing and contrasting life in the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern colonies, with emphasis on how people interacted with their environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Knowledge</th>
<th>Essential Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions of people and environment</strong></td>
<td>Identify and interpret primary and secondary source documents to increase understanding of events and life in United States history.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New England</strong></td>
<td>(1a)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Geography and climate</td>
<td>Interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Appalachian Mountains, Boston harbor, hilly terrain, rocky soil, jagged coastline</td>
<td>(1d)</td>
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<td>- Moderate summers, cold winters</td>
<td>Analyze and interpret maps to explain relationships among landforms, water features, climatic characteristics, and historical events. (1f)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fishing, shipbuilding industry and naval supplies, trade and port cities</td>
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<td>- Skilled craftsmen, shopkeepers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Social life</td>
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<td>- Village and church as center of life</td>
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<td>- Religious reformers and separatists</td>
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<td>- Political and civic life</td>
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<td>- Town meetings</td>
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<td><strong>Mid-Atlantic</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Geography and climate</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Appalachian Mountains, coastal lowlands (harbors and bays, wide and deep rivers), rich farmlands
- Moderate climate

**Economy**
- Livestock and grain, trading
- Unskilled and skilled workers and fishermen

**Social life**
- Villages and cities
- Varied and diverse lifestyles
- Diverse religions

**Political and civic life**
- Market towns

**South**

**Geography and climate**
- Appalachian Mountains, Piedmont, Atlantic Coastal Plain, good harbors, rivers
- Humid climate

**Economy**
- Large farms/plantations, cash crops, wood products, small farms
- Slavery

**Social life**
- Plantations (slavery), mansions, indentured servants, few cities, few schools
- Church of England

**Guiding Question(s):**
How did the settler's different environments of the colonial regions affect the culture and lives of the English settlers in America?

**Assessment Tool(s):** The students will create a brochure on the features of a specific colonial region and then present their brochure to the class. Students will also fill out a “Colonial Features” table based on the information from the presentations.
**Background: How does this lesson fit into a unit of study? Looking backwards, looking forwards**

It will connect to the previous lessons of the creation of the colonies, who founded them, and why they came to America. This lesson will also connect to the much earlier lesson on the affects the environment had on the formation of the American Indians’ culture in America. The lesson will be looking to the future lessons by creating a base of knowledge for the students to understand the different types of people that lived in the colonies and their different places in the multiple colonial societies. This is one lesson in a series of lessons on the creation, types, and people that made up the English colonies in America.

**Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will be able to:
1. Recognize and list the cultural features of the colonial regions.
2. Identify the affects of geography and the environment on culture.
3. Work in groups to create a public presentation.

**Historical Source(s):** *(include copies in materials section)*

Pictures of each region.

**Additional Materials/Resources:** *(include copies in materials section)*

- Colonial regions information handouts
- Pictures of each region
- Example Brochure
- “Colonial Features” table handout

**Procedure/Process:**

**JUST DO IT! The “Hook”:** (A high-interest activity that introduces new content with connections to students’ prior knowledge. Between 1-5 minutes (Could also introduce the days guiding question)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Obj #</strong> See above.</th>
<th><strong>Processing Activity and Procedure</strong> -include directions, question frames, assignment detail to be given to students (these should all be made into explicit materials (e.g. see material A), and time estimates</th>
<th><strong>Check for Evidence of Understanding</strong> -Either Formal or Informal- (Checks Essential Knowledge and Skills)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Just do it.</strong></td>
<td>Students will write a sentence or two answering the following questions: What are the town’s physical surroundings? (Ex. lakes, mountains, oceans, flatlands, etc.) Where does some of your friends’ parents work? (5-10 min)</td>
<td>Go over the questions with the students and their answers. We will point out the connection between the geography and the types of jobs that exist and don’t exist in the region.</td>
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<td><strong>Transition:</strong> (Objective 2)</td>
<td>Explain how each colonial region was geographically different, and this made their cultures distinctly different. Explain the upcoming brochure activity and go over the directions. Tell students how they will be divided into six groups (number in each group depends on size of class) and two groups will receive the same handout describing a certain colonial region; three different handouts in all. Show them an example of a brochure. (10 min)</td>
<td>Check the progress and understanding during the activity and ask students questions about what they think life was like in their regions. Check the students paragraph about what they liked about their region.</td>
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<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
<td>The groups will take their regional information sheets and create a brochure. Before creating the brochure the students will be asked to individually write a paragraph on what they like most about their region. The brochure must include the name of their region, two geographic features, three types of jobs, predominant religion, and the type of civic life. (40 min)</td>
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<td><strong>Transition:</strong></td>
<td>The groups will be asked to choose a member to present their brochures. The students will also be given the “Colonial Features” handout and told that it will be filled in after each group has presented their brochures to the class.</td>
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<td><strong>Objective 1, 3</strong></td>
<td>The two groups that have the same colonial region brochure will present their brochures back to back, and the class will take note on the information after both groups have gone. This will happen for each pair of groups with the same colonial region brochures. (30 min)</td>
<td>The quality of information in the brochures and the completed “Colonial Features” handout.</td>
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**Closure/Writing Prompt:** The closure will be going over the answers to the “Colonial Features” handout and mentioning how these differences during the colonial period still exist, for the most part, today. The writing prompt will be the brochure that was
assigned, and completed during class. This should be a sufficient amount help develop their writing abilities and their mastery of the content.

**Materials (one resource per page- so it becomes a teacher or student handout, or overhead directions or ppt presentation):**
Material A: Colonial regions information  
Northern Region/ New England

Geography and Climate

• Appalachian Mountains
• Boston harbor
• Hilly terrain
• Rocky soil
• Jagged coastline

Economy

• Fishing
• Shipbuilding industry
• Naval supplies
• Trade
• Port cities
• Skilled craftsmen
• Shopkeepers

Social Life

• Village and church as center of life
• Religious reformers and separatists, mainly Puritans (a group of extreme Protestants)

Political and Civic Life

• Town meetings

Brochure Directions:
Create a brochure that is three sided and contains the name of your region and two geographic features on the first side. The second side should have three types of jobs and the predominant religion of your area. Finally, the third side should contain an example of the type of civic life of your region...be creative and either draw a picture, write a description, or
make up your own way to give an example of their Political and Civic Life. The brochure should be folded like the example shown in class.

**Middle Colonies/Mid-Atlantic**

**Geography and Climate**

- Appalachian Mountains
- Coastal lowlands
- Harbors
- Bays
- Wide and deep rivers
- Rich farmlands
- Moderate climate

**Economy**

- Livestock
- Grain farming
- Trading
- Unskilled and skilled workers (artisans)
- Fishermen

**Social Life**

- Villages and cities
- Varied and diverse lifestyles
- Diverse religions (Quakers, Catholics, Puritans, Presbyterians, Jewish, Baptists, Anglican)

**Political and Civic Life**

- Market towns (small compact towns that were based on trading, and buying and selling items)

**Brochure Directions:**

Create a brochure that is three sided and contains the name of your region and two geographic features on the first side. The second side should have three types of jobs and the predominant religion of your area. Finally, the third side should contain an example of the type of civic life of your region...be creative and either draw a picture, write a description, or
make up your own way to give an example of their Political and Civic Life. The brochure should be folded like the example shown in class.

**Southern Colonies**

**Geography and Climate**

- Appalachian Mountains
- The Piedmont (the plateau between the coastal plain and the Appalachian Mountains: parts of Virginia and North and South Carolina and Georgia and Alabama)
- Atlantic Coastal Plain
- Good harbors
- Rivers
- Humid Climate

**Economy**

- Large farms/plantations
- Cash crops (a single crop that is grown strictly to be sold to others and not for the personal use of the grower)
- Wood Products
- Small farms
- Slavery

**Social Life**

- Plantations (slavery)
- Mansions for the plantation owners
- Indentured servants (the people that sold their labor for 7 to 14 years for someone to buy their way to America)
- Few cities because farms were so large no one lived close enough to create a city
- Few schools
- Church of England was the main religion of the south

**Political and Civic Life**

- Counties

**Brochure Directions:**

Create a brochure that is three sided and contains the name of your region and two geographic features on the first side. The second side should have three types of jobs and the predominant religion of your area. Finally, the third side should contain an example of the
type of civic life of your region...be creative and either draw a picture, write a description, or make up your own way to give an example of their Political and Civic Life. The brochure should be folded like the example shown in class.

**Material B:** Pictures of each region to use during the brochure exercise and presentation.

**Northern Region/ New England**
**Middle Colonies/ Mid-Atlantic**
Southern Colonies
Material C: Example Brochure

**Virginia**

**Geographical Features**
Virginia is known for its views of the Appalachian Mountains. The beautiful and peaceful sight can be found all along the western borderer of the state.

The second most notable feature of Virginia is its farmland. Virginia has plenty of farmland, both big and small, for any newcomers to start their own farm.

**Economics and Jobs**
Virginia has three major job opportunities for people moving to the state. Plantation work is the biggest employer in the state in front of owning your own small farm and supporting yourself and your family. Finally, the wood industry is the third biggest employer in the state, and offers a good chance for those who don’t want to work the land to have a job.

**Political and Civic Life**
Virginia is known for its House of Burgesses that is a democratic governing body. Virginia also has county governments throughout the state. The county is the territory under the jurisdiction of a count or earl; it is the largest administrative division of most states.
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<th>Economy</th>
<th>Social Life</th>
<th>Political and Civic Life</th>
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