

American colonists imported English pottery. ▶



### WITNESS HISTORY AUDIO

#### An Illegal Trade

According to English law, the colonies could import manufactured goods only through English ports, where an additional tax was collected. Yet, the letter below holds that colonial importers evaded the law.

“... There has lately been carried on here a large illicit [illegal] trade. . . .

A considerable number of ships have . . . lately come into this country directly from Holland, laden . . . with reels of yarn or spun hemp, paper, gunpowder, iron, and goods of various sorts used for men and women's clothing.”

—William Bollan, advocate general of Massachusetts, 1743

▲ At busy colonial ports, merchants shipped raw materials to England and received manufactured goods from England.

# The American Colonies and England

## Objectives

- Explore how English traditions influenced the development of colonial governments.
- Analyze the economic relationship between England and its colonies.
- Describe the influence of the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening on the 13 colonies.

## Terms and People

Magna Carta	mercantilism
Parliament	Navigation Acts
English Bill of Rights	Enlightenment
habeas corpus	Benjamin Franklin
salutary neglect	Great Awakening

## NoteTaking

**Reading Skill: Identify Supporting Details** Use the format below to outline the section's main ideas and supporting details.

- |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| I. Government in the Colonies       |
| A. Traditions of English government |
| 1. Magna Carta                      |
| 2.                                  |
| B.                                  |
| C.                                  |
| II.                                 |

**Why It Matters** During the eighteenth century, the colonists looked to England as their model for literature, government, and their economy. Important English documents, such as the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights, were the basis of colonial government and law. In addition, the colonial economy was dependent on trade with England. Although the relationship between England and the 13 colonies was a close one, during the 1700s, the distant American colonies began to form their own ideas about government and the economy. **Section Focus Question:** How did English ideas about government and the economy influence life in the 13 colonies?

## Government in the Colonies

England developed an empire of many disunited colonies during the 1600s. Lacking money, the English Crown granted charters to private companies or lords proprietors, individuals who supported the monarchy. Compared to the Spanish or French, the English monarch exercised little direct control over the colonists.

**Traditions of English Government** Also unlike the kings of France and Spain, the English monarchs were bound to uphold the provisions of the **Magna Carta**, a document English nobles forced King John to accept in 1215. The Magna Carta protected English nobles by limiting the king's ability to tax them and by guaranteeing due process, or the right to a trial. Before levying a tax, the king needed the consent of the nobles.

After the Magna Carta, a council of nobles continued to advise English monarchs. The nobles also maintained the right to approve taxes—one of their most important powers. During the 1300s, the council of nobles gained more power and evolved into the lawmaking body known as Parliament. The English **Parliament** became a bicameral, or two-house, legislature. Members of the House of Lords were nobles, who inherited their positions, and church leaders. Commoners elected members of the House of Commons. However, only men with property could vote. Although this limited the number of eligible voters, England allowed more people to vote than any other European nation at the time.

**A Measure of Self-Rule in America** Although they were thousands of miles away from their homeland, most settlers in the North American English colonies asserted that they were entitled to the same rights as any other English subject. Nevertheless, the type of government in the American colonies varied from region to region.

In New England, the Puritans established republics with elected governors. Elsewhere, the distant Crown or lords proprietors appointed the governor of a colony. But that governor had to share power with the propertied colonists. Those colonists refused to pay taxes unless authorized by their own elected representatives in a colonial assembly. Colonists also claimed they were protected by English common law, which emphasized individual liberties.

**King James II Asserts Royal Power** In 1685, James II became king of England and tried to rule without Parliament. An open Catholic, he alarmed the Protestant majority of England. The new king also tightened control over the New England Colonies by revoking their government charters. Then, he combined them with New York and New Jersey into a larger colony known as the Dominion of New England. The Dominion replaced the colonies' elected assemblies with a Crown-appointed governor-general and council. The Dominion angered the colonists, who insisted upon their right to refuse to pay taxes unless approved by their own elected representatives.

**The Glorious Revolution Results in a Bill of Rights** In 1689, the colonists learned that James II had been overthrown in England in a coup called the Glorious Revolution. The plotters replaced him with two Protestant monarchs, King William and Queen Mary. The new monarchs promised to cooperate with Parliament and to support the Anglican church. William and Mary also agreed to sign an **English Bill of Rights**, a document guaranteeing a number of freedoms and restating many of the rights granted in the Magna Carta. These rights included **habeas corpus**, the idea that no one could be held in prison without being charged with a specific crime. The English Bill of Rights also stated that a monarch could not keep a standing army in times of peace without Parliament's approval. (See the primary source at right.)

#### Vocabulary Builder

**assert**—(uh SURT) *v.* to state positively; declare



#### The English Bill of Rights

The Glorious Revolution ousted James II. King William and Queen Mary took the throne and signed the English Bill of Rights. A few of the provisions of the Bill of Rights appear below.

**Primary Source** “That levying money for or to the use of the Crown by pretence of prerogative, without grant of Parliament . . . is illegal;

That the raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of Parliament, is against law; That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted;”

—English Bill of Rights, 1689

● INFOGRAPHIC

# ROOTS of DEMOCRACY

Although the United States is more than 200 years old, the ideas of democracy and representative government are far older. The roots of democracy reach back to civilizations in southwest Asia and Europe.



## JUDEO-CHRISTIAN ROOTS ▲

The values found in the Bible, including the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus, inspired American ideas about government and morality.



## THE ENLIGHTENMENT ▲

Two Enlightenment philosophers who influenced American ideas about government were John Locke and Baron de Montesquieu. Locke stated that all people have natural rights and that if a monarch violates those rights, then the people have the right to overthrow the monarch. Montesquieu declared that the powers of government should be clearly defined and limited.



## ENGLISH PARLIAMENTARY TRADITIONS ▼

Two key English documents inspired Americans. The Magna Carta (1215) and the English Bill of Rights (1689) guaranteed certain rights to citizens, including the right to trial by jury. The ideas of a two-house lawmaking body and voting rights also influenced Americans.

## GRECO-ROMAN ROOTS ▶

Ancient Greek democracy and Roman republicanism have influenced American government.



**DO THIS**

### Thinking Critically

- 1. Draw Conclusions** How did the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights limit English monarchs?
- 2. Make Inferences** What Enlightenment values appear in the Declaration of Independence?

### History Interactive\*

For: More about the roots of democracy  
Web Code: nep-0114




News of the English upheaval inspired rebellions among colonists in Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland. In Boston, colonial militia arrested the king's appointed governor-general, the hated Sir Edmond Andros.

All the rebels claimed loyalty to the new monarchs. And Protestant rebels in Maryland were delighted when William and Mary converted their colony into a royal colony. The new monarchs merged the Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies into a single royal colony, called Massachusetts. The new charter provided a royal governor assisted by an appointed council and an elected assembly. The assembly was permitted to choose council members, subject to the governor's approval. The king let Rhode Island and Connecticut keep their old charters, which allowed them to elect their governors as well as their assemblies.

Compromise was harder in New York. There, the leader of the rebellion, Jacob Liesler, had seized the position of governor. Liesler, however, made many political enemies. When England appointed a new governor, Liesler was made to surrender. He was quickly tried, convicted, and executed in 1691. That hasty trial and execution left a bitter legacy. For the next generation, Liesler's supporters and enemies feuded, souring politics in New York.

The Glorious Revolution encouraged England to adopt a colonial policy that historians would later call **salutary neglect**. England allowed its colonies local self-rule. In return, the Crown expected colonial cooperation with its economic policies and assistance in the empire's wars against France and Spain.

**Freedom of the Press** About 50 years after the Glorious Revolution, conflict broke out between the English-appointed governor and colonists in New York City. In 1734, articles criticizing the governor appeared in the *New York Weekly Journal*, a newspaper printed by John Peter Zenger. Although Zenger did not write the articles, the governor had Zenger imprisoned for libel—printing falsehoods that are intended to damage a person's reputation. He sat in jail for eight long months awaiting trial. When Zenger came to trial, his lawyer argued that the articles were not libelous but truthful. The jury agreed and found Zenger not guilty. Today, Zenger's case is considered an early victory for freedom of the press.

 **Checkpoint** How did the Glorious Revolution affect the 13 colonies?

**DO THIS**

**Chart Skills** The Navigation Acts were a series of laws that regulated trade between Britain and the colonies. *What benefits did the act passed in 1663 provide to Britain? How did it affect the colonies?*

Dried tobacco leaves


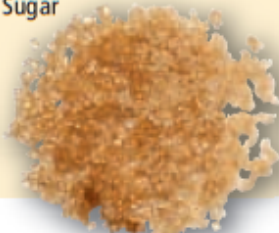
## England's Economic Relationship With the Colonies

England's colonization of the Americas was driven in large part by financial concerns. The purpose of the English colonies was to increase the wealth and power of England—the mother country. The economic policy of mercantilism supported those ideas.

**Mercantilism Drives the British Economy** The policy of **mercantilism** holds that a nation or an empire could build wealth and power by developing its industries and exporting manufactured goods in exchange for gold and silver. This policy encouraged monarchs to minimize imports from rival empires and to drive those rivals out of colonial markets. By selling more than it purchased, the empire could build wealth in the form of gold or silver.

In general, the colonies fit nicely into the mercantile system because they offered different economic strengths to the empire. In England, land was scarce whereas people

The Navigation Acts	
1651	Goods imported to England from Asia, Africa, and the Americas could be transported only in English ships.
1660	The American colonies could export sugar, tobacco, cotton, and indigo only to England.
1663	All foreign goods shipped to the colonies had to pass through English ports where a duty was collected.
1733	Duties were increased on sugar traded between the French Indies and the American colonies.



were numerous, which meant that labor was cheap. Money for investment was abundant. This combination favored the development of industry. In the colonies, however, there was more land but fewer people and less money for investment. That combination favored agriculture. As a result, more than 90 percent of the colonists lived and worked on farms or plantations. They exported their produce in ships to buy tropical goods from Africa or the Caribbean or manufactured goods from England.

**The Navigation Acts Regulate Trade** The English regarded colonial commerce as the key to imperial power. By controlling colonial trade, they could collect more customs duties—taxes on imported goods. They used this money to build a stronger navy, which enabled them to defeat the Dutch and later the French. To obtain more sailors, ships, and trade, Parliament in the mid-1600s enacted a series of trade laws called the **Navigation Acts**.

The Navigation Acts stated that only English ships with English sailors could trade with English colonies. The acts also specified that especially valuable colonial goods, including tobacco and sugar, be shipped only to the mother country. Colonial ships were free to take their other products elsewhere. For example, New Englanders could export fish to Portugal and Spain.

Finally, the colonies had to import all their European goods via an English port, where they paid customs duties. For example, if a Virginian wanted a bottle of French wine, the wine had to come to America by way of an English port, rather than directly from France. Violators risked the confiscation of their ships and cargoes.

The Navigation Acts promoted the dramatic growth of English colonial commerce and the nation's prosperity. During the 1600s, English merchant shipping doubled. The value of imports and exports increased at least sixfold. In 1600, England had been a relatively poor nation, trading primarily with nearby northern Europe. By 1700, England's commerce was global, and London had become Europe's leading seaport.

At first, the Navigation Acts hurt the colonists economically because they had depended upon Dutch ships and Dutch manufactured goods. That changed by 1700. Protected by the Navigation Acts, British manufacturing and shipping improved in quality and quantity, outstripping the Dutch. The colonists could obtain better goods from British suppliers at lower costs. Thereafter, colonists often protested some particular feature of the Navigation Acts, but not the whole system.

**The Consumer Revolution** Most colonists lived on farms or plantations. There, they produced most of their own food, fuel, and home-spun cloth. But no farm or plantation could produce everything that a family needed. The colonists wanted to purchase expensive imported goods, such as sugar from the West Indies, tea from India, and manufactured goods from Britain. To obtain those goods, every colonial farm and plantation needed to produce a surplus of produce that they could export.

The expanding transatlantic commerce produced a "consumer revolution" that brought more and cheaper goods to the colonies. Between 1720 and 1770, colonial imports per person increased by 50 percent. An immigrant from Germany marveled that "it is really possible to obtain all the things one can get in Europe in Pennsylvania, since so many merchant ships arrive there every year."

British manufacturers increasingly needed the growing American market. In 1700, the American colonies consumed about 10 percent of British exports. The rate of consumption rose to 37 percent by 1772.

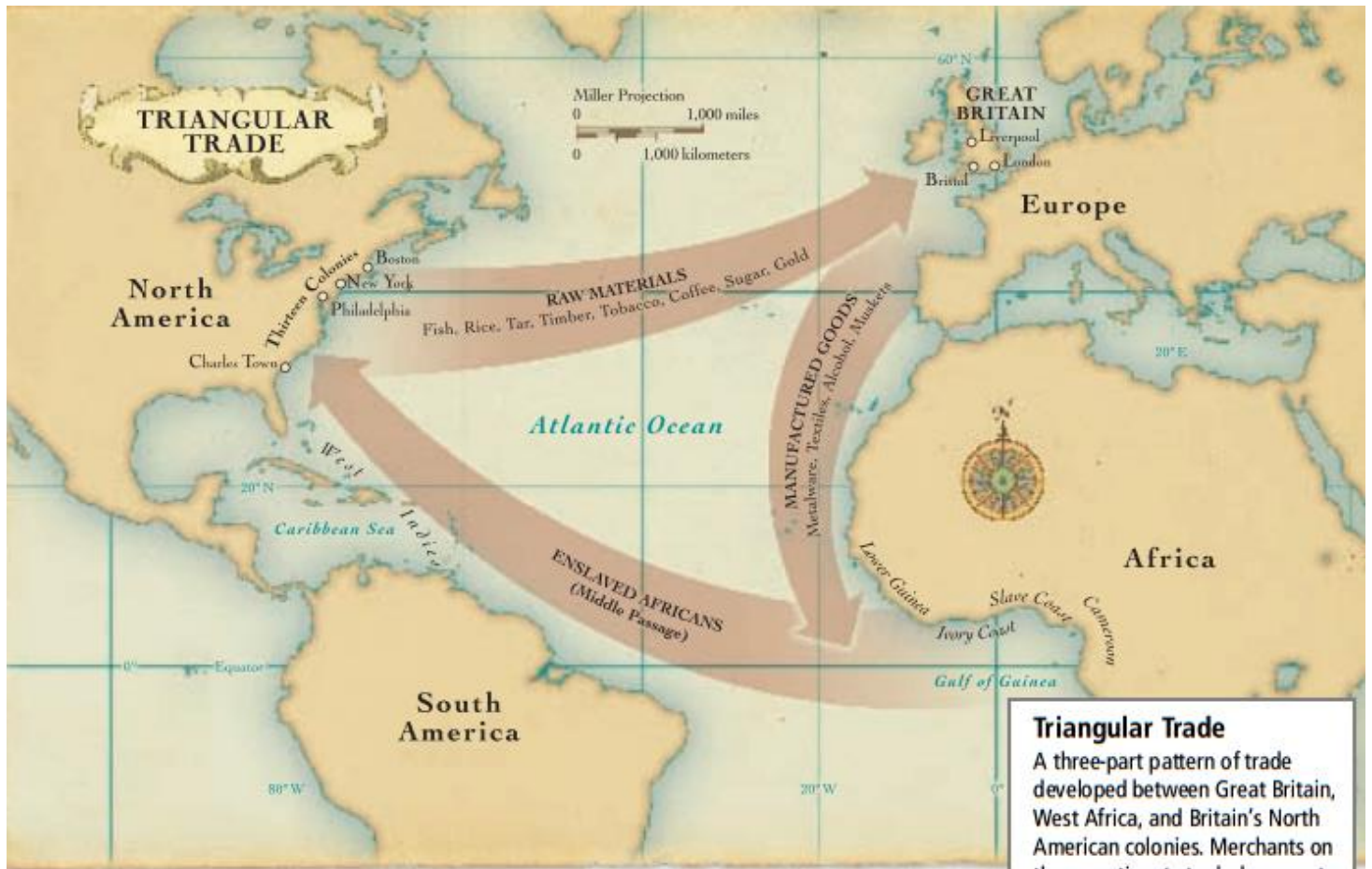
## Global Trade

This young colonial girl enjoys tea from India, sugar from the West Indies, and wears a dress of cloth made in England. *What products do people in the United States import in the twenty-first century?*



A sugar bowl





**Triangular Trade**  
 A three-part pattern of trade developed between Great Britain, West Africa, and Britain's North American colonies. Merchants on three continents traded raw materials, manufactured goods, and enslaved Africans. *What goods did England provide to West Africa? What did the colonies send to England?*

Grateful for the prosperity and consumer goods, the British as well as the colonists felt greater pride in their shared empire.

Both the middle class and the poorer class, however, bought more than they could afford. Americans suffered from a chronic trade imbalance, as they imported more than they exported. Most colonists bore mounting debts. The shortage of cash and the increasing debts fed a nagging unease at odds with the overall prosperity and general contentment with the empire.

**Triangular Trade Route** During the 1700s, a pattern of trade emerged that connected England, its colonies, and West Africa. Trade among the three continents had three main parts and formed a triangular shape (see the map on this page). On the first leg of the journey, British ships loaded with manufactured goods sailed to Africa's west coast. There, they swapped British manufactures—such as guns and cloth—for enslaved Africans. On the second, or middle, leg, the traders then carried the enslaved Africans to the American colonies. After selling the slaves for colonial raw material—such as sugar, timber, and tobacco—the traders returned to Europe.

✓ **Checkpoint** What was the purpose of the Navigation Acts?

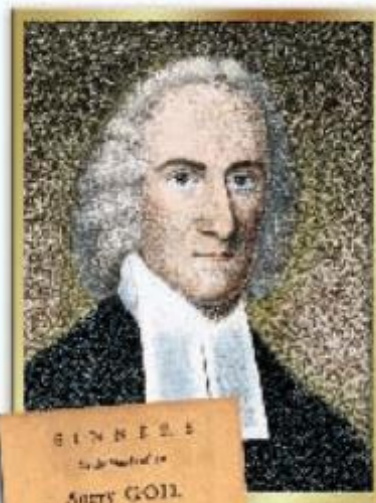


## New Ideas Affect the American Colonies

During the 1600s and 1700s, Europe experienced an intellectual movement known as the **Enlightenment**—a movement headed by thinkers who believed that all problems could be solved using human reason. The Enlightenment challenged old ways of thinking about science, religion, and government in Europe. Enlightenment thinkers changed the way many American colonists viewed the world as well.

## A Fiery Preacher

Jonathan Edwards's sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" was reprinted many times. It warned readers to ask God's forgiveness.



**Enlightenment Thinkers Offer New Worldviews** Enlightenment philosophers formulated new ideas and suggested radically new ways of thinking about the world. However, these thinkers were influenced by the work of scientists who were part of a movement now called the Scientific Revolution. During the 1500s, scientists began to use observation and experimentation to learn about the physical world. Scientists, such as Sir Isaac Newton, used reason and observation to formulate new ideas about mathematics and physics. Those ideas challenged the traditional power of religious leaders to explain the physical world.

Enlightenment thinkers, like Rousseau and Voltaire of France and John Locke of Great Britain, looked for natural laws that could be applied to government, society, and economics. Many Enlightenment philosophers focused on government. Some, like Locke, challenged the unlimited power of monarchs. Locke believed that people had natural rights that came from God, and not from monarchs. Locke's ideas would have an enormous influence on American political leaders in the late 1700s. (See the infographic *Roots of Democracy* in this section.)

**Impact on the Colonies** A number of colonists were inspired by Enlightenment ideas. One such person was **Benjamin Franklin**. A successful printer, Franklin's hunger for knowledge embodied Enlightenment ideals. He conducted scientific experiments and invented a number of devices, including the lightning rod and bifocal eyeglasses. Franklin authored almanacs and books. Not many other colonists had the financial means to build their lives around the pursuit of knowledge. The majority knew little about Enlightenment philosophers.

**Religion in the Colonies** Many colonists came to America to freely practice their religions. However, most colonists were intolerant of religions other than their own. This was especially true in New England, where the church establishment was strongest. Because of its ethnic and religious diversity, many different churches were tolerated in the Middle Colonies.

Churches filled a key role in social life, especially in rural areas. Families who lived on widespread farms and plantations looked to the church as a place to gather with members of their community. Churches also served as a public space for reading government proclamations, for posting new laws, and for holding elections.

**The Great Awakening** During the mid-eighteenth century, a religious movement swept through the colonies. Known as the **Great Awakening**, it was a time when powerful evangelical preachers traveled from town to town giving emotion-packed sermons that deeply touched listeners. Hundreds, sometimes thousands, of people would come from miles around to be inspired by a preacher's words.

Preachers stressed that personal religious experience was important in seeking God's salvation. They rejected the Enlightenment view that everything in the world could be explained by natural law and logic. Jonathan Edwards of Massachusetts was a leading preacher during the period of the Great Awakening. Edwards used the vivid images of an angry God dangling unbelievers like a spider over a roaring fire to inspire listeners to repent of their sins. In his well-known sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," Edwards urged people to ask forgiveness for their sins:

### Primary Source

"O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hands that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread."

—Jonathan Edwards, 1741

In 1739, George Whitefield, England's most celebrated preacher, came to tour the colonies. For two years, he attracted large and enthusiastic crowds. Like Edwards, he promoted an emotional style of worship. Indeed, Whitefield urged common people to forsake ministers who favored a more subdued and rational style. Many other preachers copied Whitefield to spread the revivals. Indeed, the Great Awakening did much to inspire the American people with a sense of their own power as individuals.

**Effects of the Great Awakening** The Great Awakening had a profound impact on the colonies. Preaching that individuals could find their own salvation, the movement led to the formation of new churches in the colonies. Many Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Congregationalist congregations were split between those who followed the preachers of the Great Awakening and those who did not. Eventually, the acceptance of the new churches contributed to an increase in tolerance. The movement also led to a rise in democratic belief in the colonies. Many preachers stressed that formal church rites were not as important as feeling God's spirit. Many colonists began to believe that if they could choose their method of worship, they could decide on their form of government.

✓ **Checkpoint** What was the significance of the Great Awakening on the colonies?

## HISTORY MAKERS

### George Whitefield (1714–1770)

A celebrated preacher, George Whitefield moved audiences with his message—and his powerful voice—in both Great Britain and the American colonies. In school, Whitefield developed skill at speaking and a passion for the Bible. In college at Oxford, he met John and Charles Wesley, who founded the Methodist Church. Whitefield had a powerful conversion experience and devoted the rest of his life to preaching. He gave more than 18,000 sermons, sometimes speaking to crowds so large that the meetings had to be held outside. Along with travels across Britain, he journeyed to the colonies to preach, where the emotional power of his words and the message of salvation help launch the Great Awakening.



**DO THIS**

**DO THIS ENTIRE ASSESSMENT**

SECTION

2

Assessment

Progress Monitoring *Online*

For: Self-test with vocabulary practice

Web Code: nce-0304

### Comprehension

**1. Terms and People** For each term or name below, write a sentence explaining its impact on the political or economic life of the English colonies in North America.

- Magna Carta
- Parliament
- English Bill of Rights
- habeas corpus
- salutary neglect
- mercantilism
- Navigation Acts
- Enlightenment
- Benjamin Franklin
- Great Awakening

**2. NoteTaking Reading Skill:**

**Identify Supporting Details** Use your completed outline to answer the Focus Question: How did English ideas about government and the economy influence life in the 13 colonies?

### Writing About History

**3. Quick Write: Brainstorm for Possible Solutions** Choose one topic from this section, such as the Glorious Revolution, about which you could write a problem-solution essay. Use the text and your own knowledge to create a list of possible solutions to the problem that you have chosen to write about. Next, organize your list to rank the solutions from most effective to least effective.

### Critical Thinking

**4. Make Inferences** How do you think England's policy of salutary neglect toward the 13 colonies would affect the colonies' future political and economic development?

**5. Summarize** How did England's economic policies serve the interests of the British as well as the American colonists?

**6. Recognize Cause and Effect** How did the ideas of the Enlightenment lead to the Great Awakening? How did the Great Awakening lead to the growth of democratic ideas in the 13 colonies?