

European Colonialism

What is European Colonialism?

Colonialism means taking control of other countries or territories and ruling them. Europeans wanted more land, resources, and power, so they came to North America.

The Spanish Colonies

Spain was the first European country to establish colonies in North America. They built settlements in Florida, Mexico, and the Caribbean. The Spanish wanted to find gold and silver, so they forced the indigenous people to work in mines.

Examples of Spanish Colonies:

- Florida, which is now a part of the United States
- Mexico, which gained independence from Spain in 1821
- Puerto Rico, which is currently a U.S. territory
- Cuba, which became independent from Spain in 1898

The French Colonies

The French started exploring North America in the early 16th century. They settled mainly in Canada and the area around the Mississippi River, which they called New France. The French were interested in the fur trade, which was very profitable. They traded with the indigenous people and built a strong relationship with them. The French also tried to convert the indigenous people to Christianity.

Examples of French Colonies:

- Quebec
- Louisiana, which was sold to the United States
- Acadia – present day Nova Scotia



The English Colonies

The English began establishing colonies in North America in the late 16th century. They settled along the eastern coast, in places like Virginia and Massachusetts. The English wanted to grow crops like tobacco, which was very popular in Europe. They often took land from the indigenous people and forced them to leave their homes. The English also brought their own religion, Protestantism, and tried to convert the indigenous people.

Examples of English Colonies:

- Virginia, which is now a state in the United States
- Massachusetts, which is also a state in the United States
- Maryland, another state in the United States
- New York, which was originally a Dutch colony called New Amsterdam, but was later taken by the English and renamed

European Colonialism

Questions

Use information from the text to support your answer

1) What is colonialism? What 3 countries participated in colonialism?

2) What do you think it means for a country to gain independence? Which countries got independence from their colonial power?

True or False

1) Colonialism means sharing resources with other countries.

True

False

2) The French focused on the fur trade in North America.

True

False

3) Spain forced indigenous people to work in mines for gold and silver.

True

False

4) The English settled along the western coast of North America.

True

False

5) English colonies included Virginia and Massachusetts.

True

False

Mapping

Outline the Spanish, British, and French colonies below

