



Day 17 Colonization Unit  
70 Minutes

Mid-Atlantic Colonies

## Lesson Title

### The Mid-Atlantic Colonies: Diversity, Trade, and Opportunity

**Grade Levels:** 5–9

**Time:** 60–70 minutes

**Region:** Mid-Atlantic Colonies

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## Colonies Covered

- New York
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- Delaware

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## Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Locate the Mid-Atlantic colonies on a map
- Explain how climate and geography affected life in the Mid-Atlantic region
- Describe religious diversity in the Mid-Atlantic colonies
- Identify major economic activities and trade patterns
- Compare similarities and differences among the Mid-Atlantic colonies

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## Materials

- PowerPoint: *The Mid-Atlantic Colonies*
- Map of the 13 Colonies (print or digital)
- Articles on the Mid-Atlantic Colonies (from your site)
- Reading comprehension activities (teacher choice), including:
  - General comprehension
  - Colony-specific comprehension
  - **Compare & Contrast: Mid-Atlantic Colonies**
- Student notebooks or organizers

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## Lesson Structure Overview

- **Map Review & Engagement:** 10 minutes
- **PowerPoint & Guided Instruction:** 20 minutes
- **Culminating Reading Comprehension Activities:** 25–30 minutes
- **Wrap-Up Discussion:** 5–10 minutes

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## Part 1: Map Review – Identifying the Mid-Atlantic Colonies (10 Minutes)

### Teacher Directions

Display a map of the 13 Colonies. You can display our interactive colonies map here. Feel free to click on the Mid-Atlantic states and cities to provide additional information about the Mid-Atlantic colonies.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/admin/pages/american-history/13-colonies/13-colonies-interactive-map-and-scavenger-hunts>

### **Teacher Script:**

“Before we talk about life in the Mid-Atlantic colonies, we need to know exactly where they were located. Geography played a huge role in how people lived and worked.”

Guide students to locate:

- **New York** – large colony with major rivers and harbors
- **New Jersey** – between New York and Pennsylvania
- **Pennsylvania** – inland and coastal, west of New Jersey
- **Delaware** – small colony along the coast

### **Quick Checks:**

- “Which colony had the best natural harbor?”
- “Which colony is the smallest?”
- “Why might rivers be important for trade?”

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## **Part 2: PowerPoint – Climate, Religion, and Economy (20 Minutes)**

Use your PowerPoint as the visual anchor. Below is a **teacher script aligned to common Mid-Atlantic slide topics**.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/explorers/plans/middle.pptx>

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### **Slide: Climate and Geography**

#### **Teacher Script:**

“The Mid-Atlantic colonies had a milder climate than New England. Winters were cold, but summers were warm, and the soil was rich and fertile. Wide rivers like the Hudson and Delaware made transportation and trade much easier. Because of this geography, farming was more successful here than in New England.”

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### **Slide: Agriculture and Resources**

**Teacher Script:**

“These colonies became known as the ‘Breadbasket Colonies’ because they grew large amounts of wheat, barley, and oats. The fertile soil allowed farmers to grow enough food not only to feed themselves, but also to export crops to other colonies and countries.”

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## Slide: Religion in the Mid-Atlantic Colonies

**Teacher Script:**

“One of the most important features of the Mid-Atlantic colonies was religious diversity. Unlike New England, no single religion dominated the region. Quakers, Catholics, Lutherans, Jews, and others lived side by side. Many colonies, especially Pennsylvania, were founded on the idea of religious tolerance.”

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## Slide: Religious Tolerance

**Teacher Script:**

“Pennsylvania, founded by William Penn, was especially welcoming. Penn believed people should be free to practice their religion without fear. This tolerance attracted immigrants from many parts of Europe, making the region culturally diverse.”

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## Slide: Economy of the Mid-Atlantic Colonies

**Teacher Script:**

“The Mid-Atlantic economy was diverse. Farming was important, but so were trade and manufacturing. Major port cities like New York and Philadelphia became busy centers of commerce where goods were bought, sold, and shipped.”

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## Slide: Trade and Cities

**Teacher Script:**

“Because of their central location and excellent harbors, Mid-Atlantic cities became trade hubs. Merchants traded grain, lumber, and iron tools with other colonies and Europe. Rivers allowed farmers inland to ship goods easily.”

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**Optional:** Teachers can dig deeper into the Mid-Atlantic Colony by reading to students articles about individual Mid-Atlantic Colonies.

[New York](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [Delaware](#)

# Part 3: Culminating Reading Comprehension Activities (20 Minutes)

Teachers may choose **any of the following options**, depending on grade level and instructional focus.

- [Comparing and Contrasting the Mid-Atlantic Colonies Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
- [Comparing and Contrasting the 13 Colonies Regions Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 800
- [Mid-Atlantic Colonies Super Cloze Series](#)
- [New York Colony Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100
- [New York Colony Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100
- [New Jersey Colony Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
- [New Jersey Colony Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
- [Pennsylvania Colony Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
- [Pennsylvania Colony Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 850
- [City of Philadelphia Online or Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 750 or 1000
- [Delaware Colony Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1000

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# Part 4: Wrap-Up Discussion (5–10 Minutes)

Use whole-class discussion or written exit slips.

## Discussion Questions:

- Why were the Mid-Atlantic colonies good for farming?
- How did religious tolerance shape the region?
- Why did cities grow so quickly in the Mid-Atlantic colonies?

## Exit Question:

“What made the Mid-Atlantic colonies different from New England?”