

## Columbus to the Colonies

**Time Needed:** One class period

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets  
Map projection master  
Projector

**Copy Instructions:**

Reading (2 pages; class set)  
Map Activity (2 pages; class set)  
Review (1 page; class set)

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:

- Explain the three main reasons behind European exploration/colonization in North America: economics, religion, and glory.
- Explain the impact of European colonization on Native Americans.
- Describe the source of labor for the development of the colonial settlements.
- Analyze a map of the triangle trade route.

### STEP BY STEP

- ANTICIPATE** by asking students to think why people explore new places, why they move somewhere new. Give students a moment to think, then randomly call on students to share what they came up with.
- DISTRIBUTE** the reading pages to the class.
- READ** the reading pages with the class. Pause after the first two paragraphs and ask students if the three G's (Gold, God, Glory) align with any of their ideas from their brainstorming.
- DISTRIBUTE** the map activity to the class.
- READ** the paragraphs on the first activity page with the class.
- PROJECT** the Map Projection Master. Trace the path of the triangle trade route starting with England and following the darker, main route until you get back to England. Explain that this round trip could take as much as a year to complete.
- EXPLAIN** the idea of the middle passage to the students. Ships leaving Africa were filled with people captured for the slave trade. The Africans were either *tight packed* (as many humans placed on board as possible, with the expectation of higher casualties) or *loose packed* (more room for each person in the hopes of more making it to their destination alive).
- ASSIGN** the rest of the map activity. Students may work individually or in pairs.
- DISCUSS** the map activities and use the projected map to help review the answers to the Captain's Log.
- DISTRIBUTE** the review worksheet to the class.
- ASSIGN** the worksheet, addressing any questions as needed.
- CLOSE** by giving each student a strip of paper. Ask students to imagine they are writing a front-page headline about colonists coming to the New World. What would their headline say? Have them write it on the strip of paper, share, and use it as a ticket out of class.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_



*Replicas of the ships Columbus sailed to the Americas.*

## A "New World" in the Americas

Columbus sailed the ocean blue in fourteen-hundred-ninety-two... and he landed in the Bahamas. As soon as news of the discovery made it back home, Spain and Portugal raced to claim as much of the New World as they could. By the 1530s, the two empires had claimed the majority of North, Central, and South America.

It would be another hundred years before other European nations like England, France, and the Netherlands decided to stake a claim in the New World. By then, not much territory was left to explore, settle, and colonize, but England was able to claim a huge territory on the east coast of North America. By 1670, English colonists lived all along the Atlantic coast of what is now the United States.

## The Three Gs

Exploring new lands isn't cheap, and it isn't easy! What motivated nations like England to colonize the New World? Three words can sum it up: gold, God, and glory. "Gold" refers to the money Europeans hoped to make from resources and opportunities in the new territory. "God" represents the religious reasons colonists came to the New World. Many were looking for a place where they could freely practice their religion. Many also hoped to convert Native Americans to Christianity. That leaves "glory"—also known as bragging rights. Kings and Queens across Europe wanted to show off how powerful they were by controlling vast expanses of land across the Atlantic.



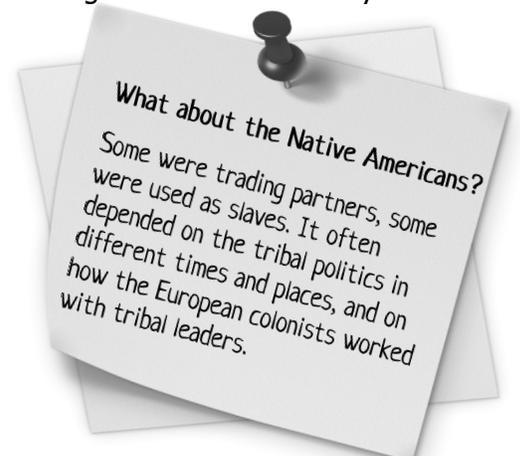
*Natural resources from the colonies were shipped back to Europe.*

## Where's the Gold?

Wealthy individuals looking to make a profit sponsored the first settlements in North America. They formed companies that outfitted explorers and settlers to go strike it rich in the new land. They quickly discovered the eastern part of North America didn't have gold and silver like South America did. But the continent made up for it in other natural resources. Rich farmlands supported cash crops like tobacco, endless forests provided timber for ship building, and the woodland was rich in furs for trade back in Europe. These products helped build communities of merchants and planters that would shape and govern colonial society.

## Help Wanted (Like It or Not)

Exploiting natural resources is hard work, and the colonists needed labor. The first labor came from **indentured servants** who agreed to work in America for a number of years in exchange for travel expenses and a place to live. Colonial landowners paid those costs, and the servants came over hoping for better opportunities in the long run. But this voluntary migration didn't produce enough labor. Soon the colonists turned to forced migration, taking people from Africa and forcing them to work as slaves in America. Slaves had no hope of ever receiving wages or freedom.



**What about the Native Americans?**  
Some were trading partners, some were used as slaves. It often depended on the tribal politics in different times and places, and on how the European colonists worked with tribal leaders.

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## Religious Freedom...

England in the 1600s had a lot of conflict among different versions of Christianity. The official religion was the Church of England, but not everyone belonged to it. Other Christian groups included Catholics and various Protestant Christians, both of whose beliefs differed from the Church of England. Some groups faced hostility in England, and their members looked to America for a place to practice their religion in peace. However, that didn't mean they thought others should enjoy the same peace. In the New World, religious settlers created two types of colonies: ones with strict religious rules and ones without.



King Henry the VIII established the Church of England as the official church in the 1530s.

## Our Colony, Our Rules

English groups that established colonies for religious reasons set up their own rules for the colony. Check out these examples:

- The Massachusetts Bay Colony was established in 1630 by Puritans, a religious group that had been harassed and punished by the English government. In America, they set up a colony with very strict rules. Colonists who didn't follow the rules were punished or driven out.
- The colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island were started by those who left Massachusetts. They created different sets of rules for religious practice.
- The colony of Maryland was set up in 1632 by a wealthy English family that was Catholic. This attracted other Catholics who were persecuted in England to settle in Maryland, too.
- The colony of Pennsylvania was established in 1681 by a Christian group called the Quakers. They also faced problems in England, but believed in tolerance for other religions (not just their own).



The seal of the Massachusetts colony shows a Native American saying "Come over and help us."

## A Piece of the Glorious Pie

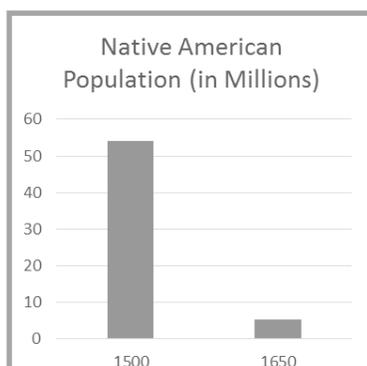
The United States traces its roots to the English colonists, but England wasn't the only nation with a stake in North America. European nations competed with each other for the "glory" of controlling territory here. Having a piece of the New World pie let nations control strategic places like rivers and sea ports that were critical for transporting goods around the globe from the New World.



Example of a merchant ship from the 1600s.

## "G" Number Four: Gone

Europeans claimed the New World for themselves despite the fact that people had already lived here for thousands of years. The Europeans encountered Native Americans from many tribes, such as the Delaware and the Iroquois. But as Europeans took over, the Native Americans were pushed out. In the 150 years after Columbus first arrived, the population of native people dropped by 90%. (That's like your class going from 30 students to just 3!) Most of those died from European diseases they'd never been exposed to. In the coming decades, Native Americans would clash with Europeans in a desperate fight to stay on their native lands. Ultimately, they would be gone from most of those lands forever.



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## Triangle Trade

Trade between England and the American colonies was not just back and forth across the Atlantic. Africa and the West Indies played a significant role as the trade of enslaved Africans became more important to the colonies. The three continents—Europe, Africa, and North America created the points of a large triangle that stretched across the Atlantic.

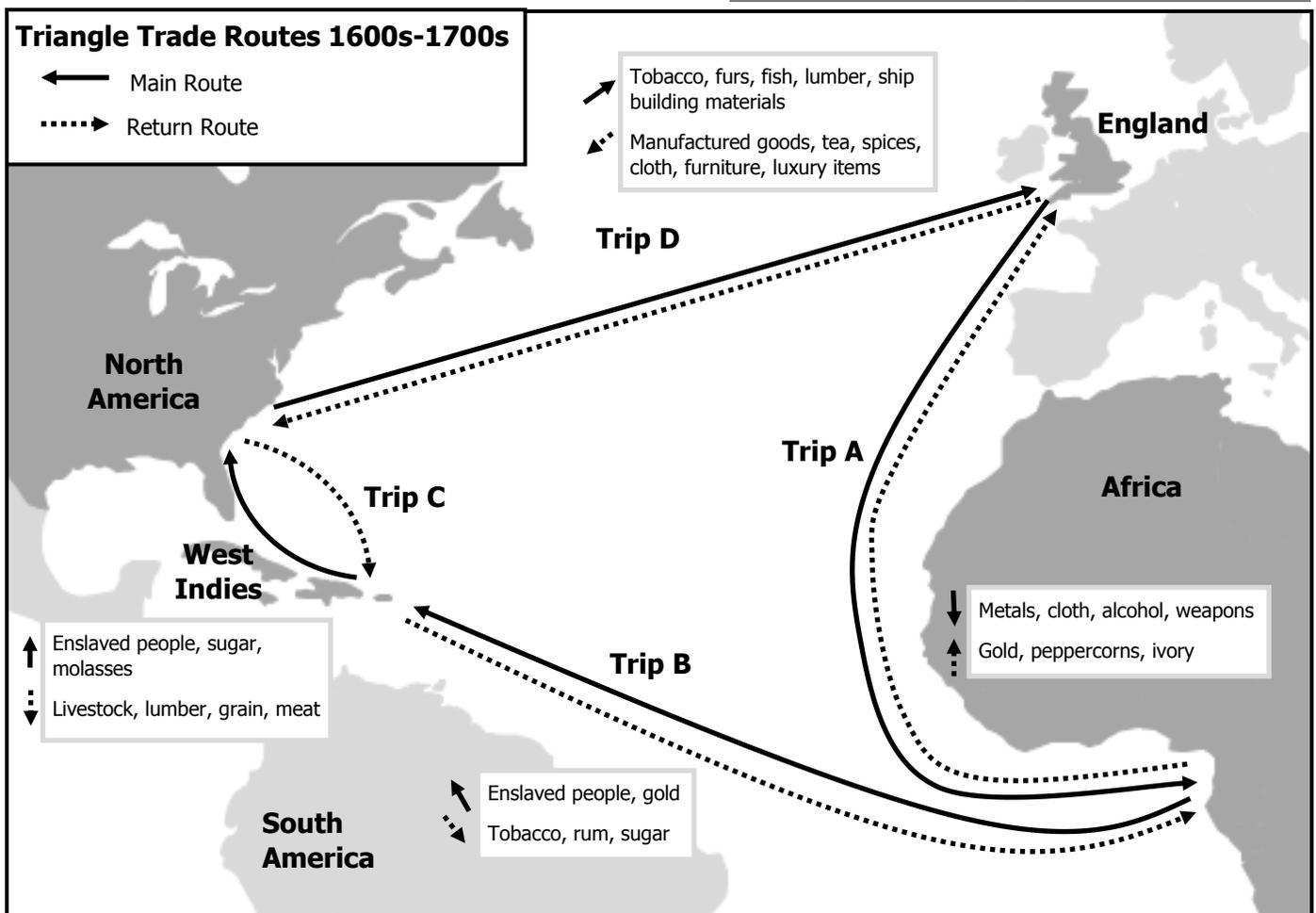
Each stop on the trade route provided goods needed by the people at the next stop. Sometimes a ship would take the full triangular route, but others would go back and forth along one side of the triangle.

Check out the map below to discover what these ships carried to and from each area. The main route starts in England, works its way to Africa, the West Indies, and North American ports, and then returns to England. The return routes on the map show what ships often carried if they focused on that segment instead of traveling the entire triangle.

**A. Map Review** Use the map to help you answer the following questions:

- The term *middle passage* refers to the trip that enslaved Africans took across the Atlantic to the West Indies. Which trip is the middle passage on the map?
  - Trip A
  - Trip B
  - Trip C
  - Trip D
- Imported* goods are things that are brought into the area. *Exported* goods are things that are sent out to other places. In the table below, list one import and export for each.

England	Africa
Import:	Import:
Export:	Export:
West Indies	North America
Import:	Import:
Export:	Export:



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**B. Captain's Log 1650.** You are the captain of an English trading ship sailing the Atlantic Ocean on the triangle trade route. There are four legs of this trip, and you need to keep track of where you go and what you do. Use the map to help complete your Captain's Log with details of your voyage and cargo.

Step 1: Determine your departure and destination locations and fill in the blanks.

Step 2: List what your ship is carrying that will be used for trade when you arrive at your next destination.

## Leg One

Leaving England for \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: 6-8 weeks    Time in Port: 4 weeks

What's in the ship...

## Leg Two

Leaving \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: 8 weeks    Time in Port: 3 weeks

What's in the ship...

## Leg Three

Leaving \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

Travel Time: a few days    Time in Port: 4 weeks

What's in the ship...

## Leg Four

Leaving \_\_\_\_\_ for Home Sweet Home!

Travel Time: 6-8 weeks    Time in Port: 5 weeks

What's in the ship...

**C. Raw or Manufactured?** Much of the triangle trade exchanged **raw materials** (natural resources still basically in their natural form) for **manufactured goods** (products that are made by people). Look at the map and find four examples of each type of product. List them here.

**RAW  
MATERIALS**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**MANUFACTURED  
GOODS**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

# Columbus to the Colonies

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**A. Which "G" Motivates Me?** Read the five statements from people planning to move to the Americas. On the blank, write whether the person speaking is motivated by Gold, God, or Glory.



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. All the other kings and queens have claimed land in the Americas, so I need to get some territory for my nation!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Things are getting hard here at home. I have no land of my own to farm. Maybe I can get someone to hire me in Virginia. I could work and earn my own farm some day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I believe that my way of practicing religion is best, but a lot of people around me don't agree. I've already been arrested twice, just for going to church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I have some spare cash to invest in a project. It looks like there is a lot of money making potential in building ships in Massachusetts for trading around the Atlantic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. All of the Native Americans in the New World need to be converted to Christianity. We should send over missionaries.

**B. Pick Your Colony.** Each of the early American colonies had its own unique character and attracted different kinds of colonists from England. Draw lines to connect each English settler with the colony most suited to his needs.

**A.** I am a Puritan, and am tired of the Church of England! Where should I go?

Colony of Maryland



**B.** I'm looking for a place to practice my religion without people looking over my shoulder!

Massachusetts Colony



**C.** As a Catholic, it is difficult to find a place to worship not worry about getting arrested.

Pennsylvania Colony



**D.** I heard that the Quakers have set up a colony in America- I'm a Quaker too!

**C. Which Came First?** Read each pair of events. Underline the event that happened first.

- 1. The Native American population shrunk by 90%.  
Columbus lands in the Bahamas.
- 2. Massachusetts Bay Colony was founded.  
The colony of Connecticut was founded.
- 3. Wealthy Englishmen invested in the American colonies.  
Explorers discovered natural resources like lumber, furs, and rich farmland.
- 4. Slaves were brought to the colonies to act as the labor for plantations and farms.  
Englishmen came to the colonies as indentured servants who earned their independence.
- 5. Spain and Portugal explored the New World.  
England, the Netherlands, and France explored the New World.

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**\*\*TEACHER GUIDE\*\***

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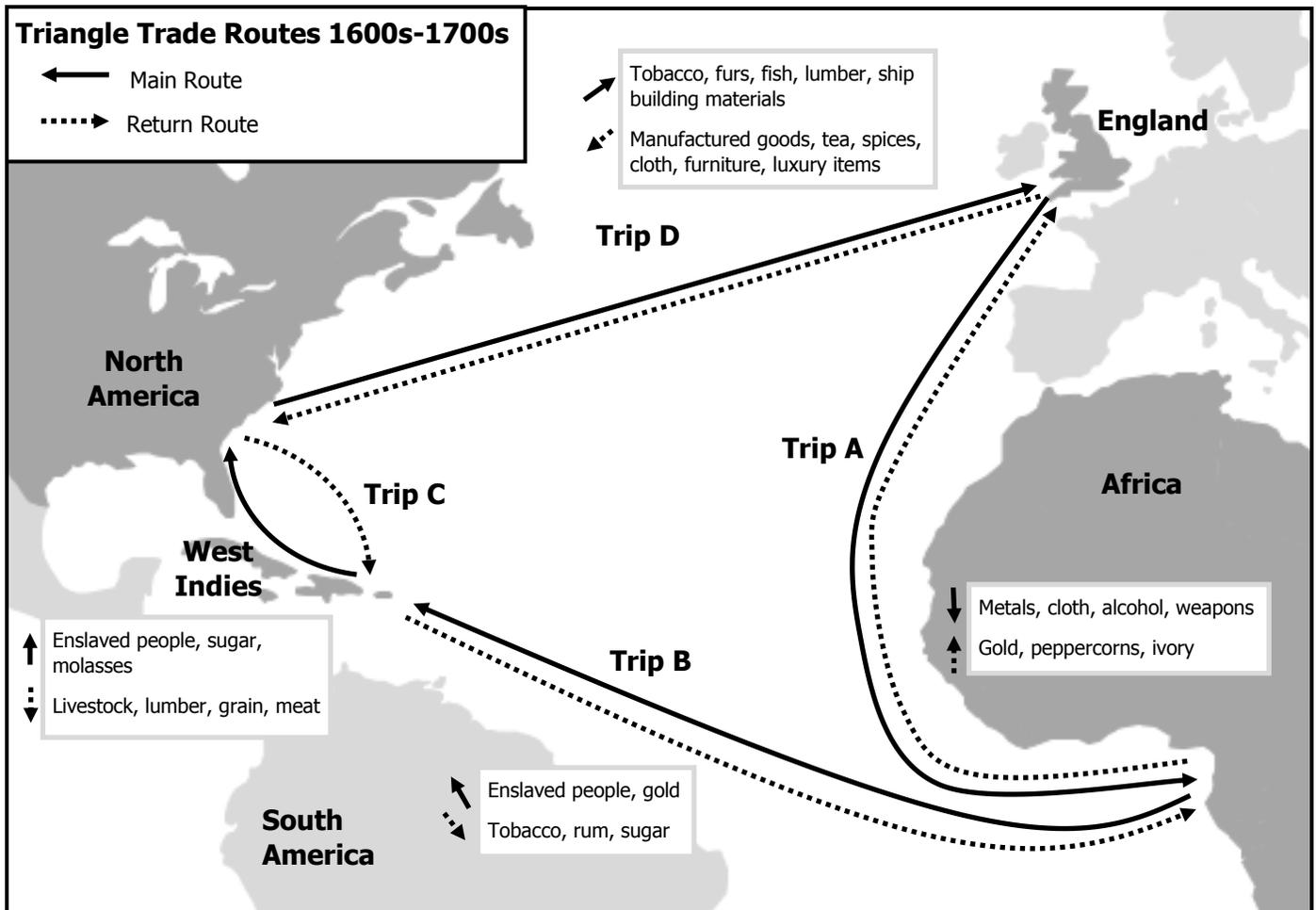
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- a. Trip A
- b. **Trip B**
- c. Trip C
- d. Trip D

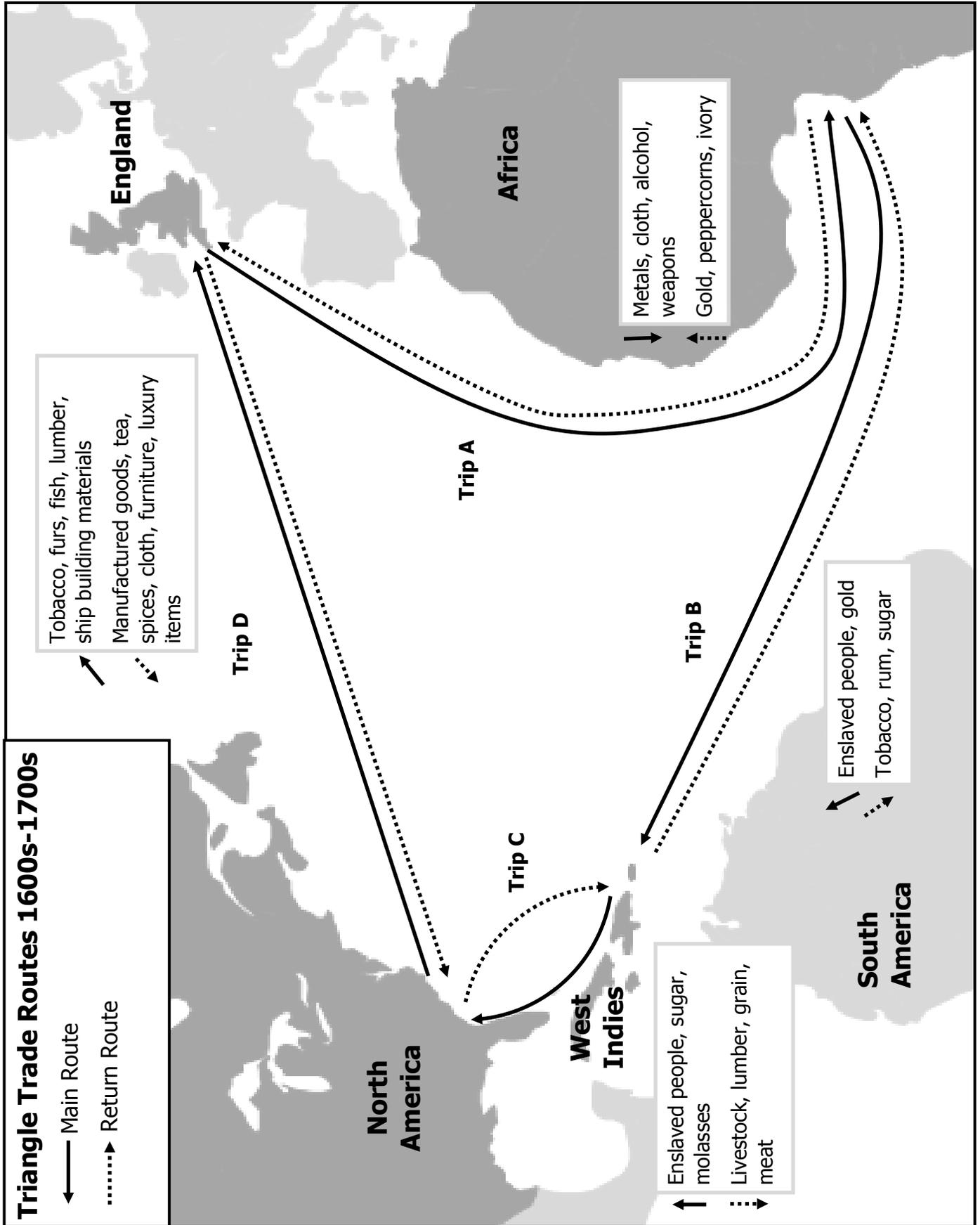
2. *Imported* goods are things that are brought into the area. *Exported* goods are things that are sent out to other places. In the table below, list one import and export for each.

<b>England</b> Import: tobacco, gold Export: tea, weapons	<b>Africa</b> Import: metals cloth Export: slave, gold
<b>West Indies</b> Import: slaves, grain Export: sugar, slaves	<b>North America</b> Import: cloth, luxury items Export: fish, furs



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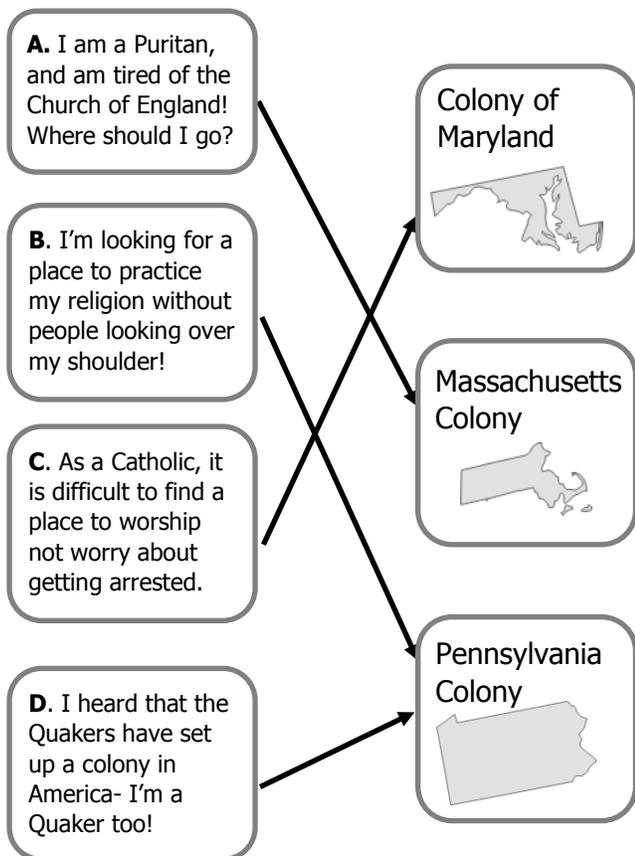
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- God 3. I believe that my way of practicing religion is best, but a lot of people around me don't agree. I've already been arrested twice, just for going to church.
- Gold 4. I have some spare cash to invest in a project. It looks like there is a lot of money making potential in building ships in Massachusetts for trading around the Atlantic.
- God 5. All of the Native Americans in the New World need to be converted to Christianity. We should send over missionaries.

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