

Name _____



Why the Settlers Came

By Sharon Fabian

Why would a family pack up everything they owned, buy passage on a ship, and set sail for a faraway new world?

Most of America's early settlers came from Europe. Europe had big, beautiful cities, art, music, fine clothing, famous universities, royal leaders, and much more. Why did some Europeans make the hard decision to leave?



Some of America's early settlers came from Africa. Africa also had beautiful cities and ancient cultures. It had a wealth of open spaces and natural resources. Why did some Africans leave for America?

During the colonial period, thousands of people came to America, and many different reasons brought them here.

Some of the settlers came to find work. In early America, most of the people were farmers, and anyone could come to America and work on the land. People also came to work in the timber and fishing industries. Timber and fish were two of America's earliest exports.

Some people came because they had been persecuted for their beliefs in the home country. The Pilgrims, Roman Catholics, Huguenots, Jews, and Quakers all came to America for religious freedom.

People also came to America because they wanted to become landowners. Land in America was either free or very inexpensive. Once someone owned land, he became a freeholder with certain rights, usually including the right to vote.

All of these people had the opportunity to come to America because countries and companies in Europe were interested in America too. European countries like Great Britain, France, and Spain wanted to

expand into the Americas to increase their wealth and their power in the world. Companies discovered that transporting settlers across the ocean was a good business. They even made arrangements in which someone with no money could pay for his trip by working as an indentured servant for the first few years after he arrived in America.

Some of the early settlers came to America against their will. People from African countries were kidnapped and sent to America as slaves.

There were also people who were already living in America before colonial times. Native Americans had been here since ancient times. Explorers from some European countries were also here before the colonists. France and Spain had been sending people to explore and settle various parts of America for years before the first English settlers arrived.

All of these people settled the American continents. Whether they came for reasons of their own, whether they were brought here against their will, or whether they already lived here, all of these people became part of America.

Do people today still pack up all of their belongings to settle in a new land today? Yes, they do. Some people risk dangerous border crossings just to start a new life in the United States. Some people explore outer space, maybe with the hope of one day seeing Earth colonies there. They go for adventure; they go in the hope of finding wealth; they go for freedom; they go to find a better life.

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Questions

- _____ 1. This article is mainly about _____.
- A. reasons why settlers came to America
 - B. the countries that sent settlers to America
 - C. how difficult the journey was
 - D. where the settlers lived
- _____ 2. Settlers came to America from _____.
- A. England
 - B. France
 - C. Africa
 - D. all of the above

