

Was the colonisation of North America by the British a success?

In 1607, colonists founded the first British colony in North America at Jamestown, Virginia. In 1620, Puritans founded a settlement called New Plymouth. In 1630, the colony of Massachusetts Bay was settled by more Puritan refugees from England. By 1732, the last of the original 13 colonies had been founded, Georgia, and by the mid-18th Century Britain had established an overseas empire in North America. How successful were they?

The evidence below varies in challenge: ★ straightforward ★★ time to start thinking ★★★ demanding - think about it carefully

<p>★★ In November 1620 Puritans, strict Protestants, founded a settlement called New Plymouth (in 1691 it joined Massachusetts). The name given to these first settlers was the 'Pilgrim Fathers'. By spring 1621 half the colonists were dead and half struggled on and, helped by local Native Americans, managed to grow food.</p>	<p>★ The example of New Plymouth led to more religious groups moving to the area. Between 1629 and 1640 more than 20,000 settlers arrived in Massachusetts. In 1664 the English took over the Dutch colony of New Netherland, which included the state of New Amsterdam. The English renamed this New York.</p>	<p>★★★★ The New Plymouth settlers worked hard and democratically elected a leader - William Bradford. In his diary Bradford wrote: 'we came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness; but we cried unto the Lord, and he heard our voice.'</p>	<p>★★★★ It was not until 1625 that Bradford wrote in his diary that the settlement had begun to taste the 'sweetness' of the country'. And it was not until 1648, as England was in crisis (due to the English Civil War), that the colonists paid off the final debts incurred by their journey to the New World (America).</p>	<p>★★ In November 1620 Puritans, strict Protestants, founded a settlement called New Plymouth (in 1691 it joined Massachusetts). The name given to these first settlers was the 'Pilgrim Fathers'. By spring 1621 half the colonists were dead and half struggled on and, helped by local Native Americans, managed to grow food.</p>
<p>★ In 1607 a new colony - Jamestown was founded in honour of King James. Early life in Virginia meant hunger and death. However, with the support of some local tribes the settlers began to farm successfully (instead of search for gold) and tobacco planting in particular led to success - it was easy to grow and profitable.</p>	<p>★ in 1500 there were approximately 560,000 Native Americans in, future, 'British' territory. By 1700 there were fewer than 280,000. Diseases (e.g. measles and smallpox) that native immune systems could not deal with were devastating.</p>	<p>★★★ in 1609 Virginia settlers described the Native Americans: 'wild and savage people that live all over the forests. They have no law but native. They are easy to be brought to god [Christian ways] but would happily like better conditions.'</p>	<p>★★ Some argue that the British colonists were not just looking for a quick wealth. They created religious and democratic rules (e.g. constitutions). However, others argue money was the motivator as crops such as tobacco; cotton and sugar were grown and then transported to Britain for huge profits.</p>	<p>★ In 1607 a new colony - Jamestown was founded in honour of King James. Early life in Virginia meant hunger and death. However, with the support of some local tribes the settlers began to farm successfully (instead of search for gold) and tobacco planting in particular led to success - it was easy to grow and profitable.</p>