

The Birth of the United States of America

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Seed
Learning

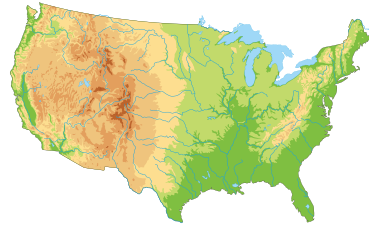


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The Land

Do you know how countries are created?
The United States today is a powerful

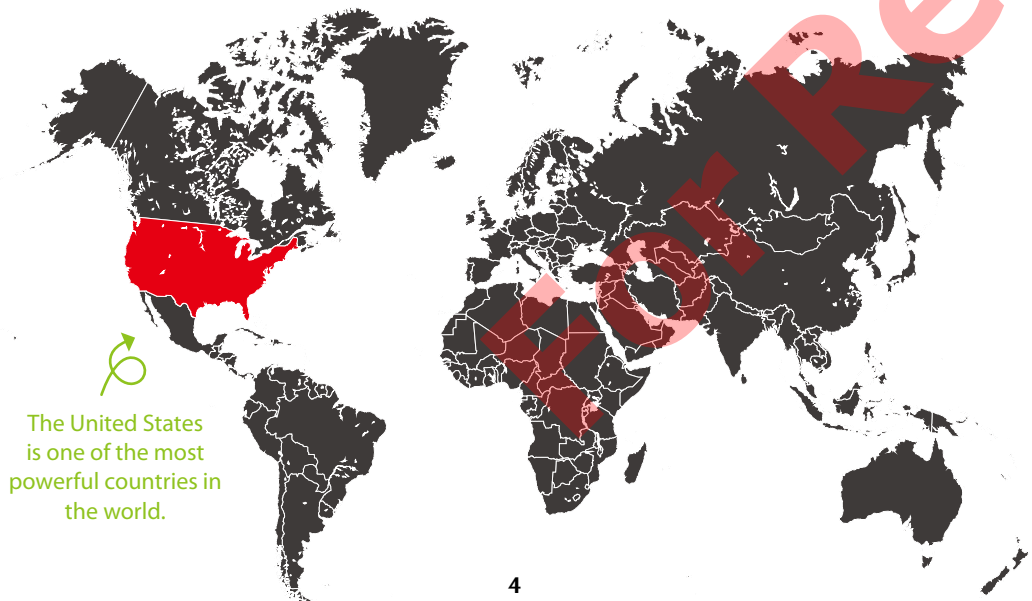


The territory of the United States has mountains, plains, rivers, and lakes.



A beautiful fall landscape in the United States

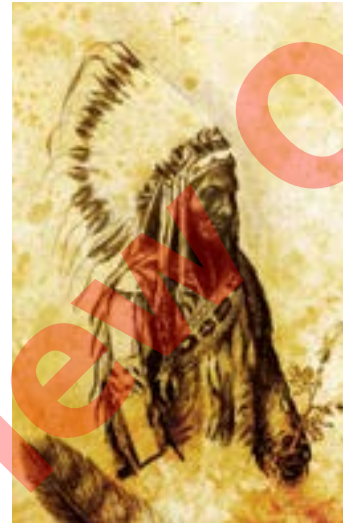
country, but 250 years ago, it didn't exist. In the beginning, it was only a very large and beautiful land between two oceans.



The United States is one of the most powerful countries in the world.

American Indians

American Indians lived in the Americas at that time. They had their own languages and ways of living. Most of them were nomadic or semi-nomadic.



An American Indian



A portrait of an American Indian



American Indian chiefs

The European Explorers

A few years after Columbus found the Americas, other European explorers discovered the land in the north of the Americas. The British settled on the East Coast as colonists. They considered the new land, which would become the United States, as a part of Britain.

They built homes and started new lives. They established new colonies.



A replica of the three ships that brought English colonists to Virginia in 1607



A replica of a Colonial-era ship at Jamestown, Virginia



American Indians greet European colonists at Sandy Hook.

The First British Colony

The first British colony was established in 1586, and the whole area was called Virginia after Queen Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen.

Later, when James I was king, he sent a group of people to find gold.

In 1607, the British colonists founded the first permanent town, calling it Jamestown after their king. They didn't

find gold. After a year, half of them had died from disease, starvation, or attacks by the American Indians.



Queen Elizabeth I



John Rolfe (1585-1622) is known for introducing the cultivation of tobacco in 1612.

The Mayflower

A group of British people called the Pilgrims didn't like the Church of England. Because they wanted to have their own religion, they left England in a ship called the *Mayflower*. They landed in a new region they called New England.



A stamp commemorating the *Mayflower*.

Life for the Pilgrims was very hard due to the cold winters. Farming was not as easy as in the warmer south. Sometimes they did not have enough food. Friendly American Indians taught them how to plant local seeds. Some colonists started fishing and shipbuilding and others had shops.



A replica of the *Mayflower*



Pilgrims walk with a Bible in hand.



Mannados (now Manhattan), New York



A fictional image of the colonists and American Indians eating a meal together

The Thirteen British Colonies

The British settled in many more places. Soon there were thirteen colonies protected by British soldiers. The colonists lived in farms or towns connected to ports where supplies from England arrived.



Charles Town, South Carolina (now Charleston)

In the south, the farms were called plantations. They were very large because the colonists began to grow cotton and tobacco. As they needed people to work in the plantations, people were brought in from Africa as slaves. Some colonists did not like people having slaves, which led to a big war many years later.

Comprehension Questions

1. The Europeans and the American Indians...
 - (a) were always at war.
 - (b) traded goods.
 - (c) spoke the same language.
 - (d) were always friendly.
2. King James I sent colonists to Virginia because he wanted...
 - (a) a new land.
 - (b) gold.
 - (c) slaves.
 - (d) freedom.
3. The Pilgrims came to America because they wanted to...
 - (a) become rich.
 - (b) have their own country.
 - (c) practice their own religion.
 - (d) be adventurous.
4. How many colonies were there?
 - (a) 28
 - (b) 52
 - (c) 7
 - (d) 13
5. African people came to America because the colonists wanted...
 - (a) smart farmers.
 - (b) more colonists.
 - (c) to help them.
 - (d) slaves.
6. The American Revolution started because the British Americans...
 - (a) didn't want to pay taxes.
 - (b) became American Indians.
 - (c) didn't like British goods.
 - (d) wanted to buy more tea.
7. Who was NOT a founding father?
 - (a) George Washington
 - (b) Thomas Jefferson
 - (c) William Penn
 - (d) Benjamin Franklin
8. When did the United States declare its independence?
 - (a) In 1776
 - (b) In 1778
 - (c) In 1781
 - (d) In 1789
9. The Constitution includes...
 - (a) the surrender of the British.
 - (b) rules for the US government.
 - (c) some extra taxes on tea.
 - (d) a picture of the new flag.
10. Who was the first president of the United States?
 - (a) George Washington
 - (b) Benjamin Franklin
 - (c) Abraham Lincoln
 - (d) John Adams

Glossary

- **colony** a country or area controlled by a more powerful country
- **constitution** a set of rules for a country
- **cotton** a plant used for making thread and cloth
- **declare** to say; to announce
- **found** to start
- **independence** freedom from being ruled by another country
- **loyalist** a person or group who wanted Britain to govern the colonies
- **nomadic** living the life of a person who travels around and has no permanent home
- **patriot** a person or group who feels loyal to the land or place where he or she was born
- **plantation** a large farm where a specific crop is grown
- **port** a place where ships arrive and leave from
- **rebel** to oppose or rise up against a government
- **slave** a person who is bought and owned by another person
- **tobacco** a plant with leaves that are dried and used for smoking
- **trade** to exchange goods for money in business