

Document-Based Assessment



16C.1.10,
16D.1.5

European Motivations for Colonization

Why did European countries want colonies in North America? What motivated people to leave their homes to live on the edge of a distant continent they knew little about? Use your knowledge of colonial America and Documents A, B, and C to answer questions 1 through 4.

Document A

"It will be a service to the Church of great consequence to carry the Gospel into those parts of the world. . . . The whole earth is the Lord's garden. . . . Why . . . suffer a whole continent as fruitful and convenient for the use of man to lie waste without any improvement? . . . What can be a better work, and more honorable and worthy of a Christian than to help rise and support a particular church while it is in its infancy, and to join his forces with such a company of faithful people, as by a timely assistance may grow strong and prosper. . . ."

—John Winthrop, *Reasons for the Plantation*
in New England, c. 1628

Document B

"Whereas . . . several lands, Islands, Places, Colonies, and Plantations have been obtained and settled in that Part of the Continent of America called New England, and thereby the Trade and Commerce there, hath been of late Years much increased: And whereas We have been informed by the hirable Petition of our Trusty and Well beloved John Winthrop [and others], being Persons principally interested in Our Colony or Plantation of Connecticut, in New England, that the same Colony . . . was Purchased and obtained for great and valuable Considerations, and some other Part thereof gained by Conquest . . . and at the only Endeavors . . . of theirs and their Associates . . . Subdued, and Improved, and thereby become a considerable Enlargement and Addition of Our Dominions and

Interest there. Now Know YE, That in consideration thereof . . . We have ordained . . . the said John Winthrop [and others] . . . One Body Corporate and politique, in Fact and Name, by the Name of, Governor and Company of the English colony of Connecticut in New-England, in America. . . ."

—from the Charter of Connecticut, 1662

Document C

"Carolina is a fair and spacious Province on the Continent of America. . . . This Province lying so neer Virginia, and yet more Southward, enjoys the fertility and advantages thereof; and yet is so far distant, as to be freed from the inconstancy of the Weather, which is a great cause of the unhealthfulness thereof. . . ."

The Land is of divers sorts as in all Countryes of the world, that which lyes neer the Sea, is sandy and barren, but beareth many tall Trees, which make good timber for several uses; . . . up the River about 20 or 30 mile, where they have made a Town, called Charles-Town, there is plenty of as rich ground as any in the world. . . . The Woods are stored with Deer and Wild Turkeys, of a great magnitude, weighing many times above 50lbs a piece, and of a more pleasant tast than in England; . . . other sorts of Beasts in the Woods that are good for food; and also Fowls. . . . Here are as brave Rivers as any in the World, stored with great abundance of Sturgeon, Salmon, Bass, Plaice, Trout, and Spanish Mackrill, with many other most pleasant sorts of Fish, both flat and round, for which the English Tongue hath no name. . . . Last of all, the Air comes to be considered . . . and this is it which makes this Place so desirable, being seated in the most temperate Clime, where the neighbour-hood of the glorious Light of Heaven brings many advantages. . . . The Summer is not too hot, and the Winter is very short and moderate, best agreeing with English Constitutions. . . ."

—Robert Horne, *A Brief Description of the Province of*
Carolina, 1666

- Document C suggests that England valued its New England Colonies for
 - commercial reasons.
 - religious reasons.
 - strategic reasons.
 - political reasons.
- Which documents are most likely advertisements?
 - Document A only
 - Document B only
 - Document C only
 - Documents A and B
- Which documents suggest a religious motive for establishing colonies?
 - Document A only
 - Documents B and C
 - Documents A and C
 - Documents A and B
- Writing Task** What role do you think economics played in the establishment of European colonies in North America? Use your knowledge of the colonial period and evidence from the sources above to explain your answer.