

Jamestown Unit Study Guide

Test November 24th

Reasons for English colonization in America

England wanted to establish an American colony to increase its wealth and power.

- England hoped to find **silver and gold** in America
- Furnish **raw materials** that were not in England
- Open **new markets** for trade

Importance of Virginia charters

The King of England (King James I) granted charters to the Virginia Company of London to:

- establish a settlement in North America
- extend English rights to the settlers

Jamestown

- Jamestown was primarily an **economic venture** – a venture to make money.
- The **stockholders** of the Virginia Company of London financed the settlement of Jamestown – they paid for it.
- Jamestown became the **first permanent English settlement** in North America in 1607.
- Settlers arrived in **1607**,
- Location:
 - **1607** -on a narrow **peninsula** bordered on three sides by the James River.
 - **Today** Jamestown is located on an **island** in the James River.

Reasons for Site Choice

- Instructions told the settlers to **go inland and find a suitable place** for their colony
- **could be easily defended from attack** by sea (Spanish)
- water along the shore was **deep enough for ships to dock**
- They believed they had a **good supply of fresh water**

System of Government

In 1619, the governor of Virginia called a meeting of the **General Assembly**.

The **General Assembly** included:

- two representatives (called “burgesses”) from each of the divisions of Virginia
- the governor’s council
- the governor

They met as one legislative body. At that time only certain free adult men had a right to take part.

House of Burgesses By the 1640s, the burgesses became a separate legislative body, called the **House of Burgesses**. They met separately from the Governor’s Council as one of the two legislative bodies of the General Assembly.

- House of Burgesses
- Governor’s Council

Virginia General Assembly

- The current Virginia General Assembly dates from the establishment of the House of Burgesses at Jamestown in 1619.
- The General Assembly with its burgesses was the first elected legislative body in English America giving settlers the opportunity to control their own government.

Africans in Jamestown

Portuguese sailors captured African men and women from what is present-day Angola. The status of these early African men and women as either servants or slaves in Virginia is unknown.

Africans

- arrived in Jamestown against their will in 1619.
- made it possible to expand the tobacco economy.

Women

- additional women arrived in 1620
- this made it possible for more settlers to establish families and a permanent settlement at Jamestown

Hardships faced by the settlers

- the site they chose to live on was marshy and lacked safe drinking water
- the settlers lacked some skills necessary to provide for themselves
- many settlers died of starvation and disease

Changes that Resulted in Survival of the Colony

- the arrival of supply ships
- the forced work program and strong leadership of Captain John Smith
- the emphasis on agriculture

Native Peoples and Jamestown

Captain John Smith initiated trading relationships with the native peoples.

Trade:

English to native peoples → tools, pots, and copper for jewelry

Native peoples to English → food

The native peoples contributed to the survival of Jamestown in several ways.

- **Powhatan**, chief of many tribes, provided leadership to his people and taught the settlers survival skills
- **Pocahontas**, daughter of Powhatan, served as a contact between the native peoples and the English
- The native peoples showed the settlers how to plant corn and tobacco

Over time, the native peoples realized the English settlement would continue to grow. They came to see the settlers as invaders who would take over their land.