

Social Studies Coalition of Delaware  
Signature Lesson

Lesson Title: Where in the Worlds!

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Lesson Description: In this lesson, the students will demonstrate an understanding of what makes an excellent and workable environment for a successful colony.

Grade Level: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Standard: Geography Standard Three: Students will develop an understanding of the diversity of human culture and the unique nature of places.

End of Cluster Expectations (Benchmarks): By the end of grade 5 students will be able to: understand the reasons for locations of human activities and settlements and the routes connecting them in Delaware and in the United States.

Essential Question: What are the necessary elements that are needed for a successful settlement site?

Assessment: Constructed Response:

Benchmark Statement: This assessment should give evidence of the student's ability to show and support a clear understanding that an appropriate site for a colony would include the elements necessary for survival (food, water, shelter, protections, and availability of transportation/communication with other colonies and the home world/mother country).

Prompt: Carefully read the information sheets describing three planets for possible colonization. Using your knowledge of what is necessary for a successful colony decide which planet you would choose for a new settlement? Explain why you chose this site and support your answer with specific geographic evidence.

Sample Response: The planet I would choose for my colony would be Planet C. I would choose C because it seems that there would be no problem taking care of our basic needs. There is plenty of water, and lots of plants and animal life for food. We would need shelter, but there is a lot of building material. The locals are friendly, so we would be safe. If we want to travel to other colonies or visit other planets, it will be easy. I think life will be good on Planet C.

Rubric:

2 – This response gives a valid well-informed argument to support the selected choice with accurate and relevant geographic evidence.

1 – This response gives an argument with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no geographic evidence.

0 – Inaccurate response.

Assessment: Multiple Choice

Benchmark Statement: This assessment should give evidence of the student's ability to show and support a clear understanding that an appropriate site for a colony would include the elements necessary for survival (food, water, shelter, protections, and availability of transportation/communication with other colonies and the home world/mother country).

Prompt: Which of the following elements would not be necessary for a colony to survive.

- Item: A. Clean, fresh water for drinking  
B. Stone or wood for building homes  
C. Reeds for making baskets  
D. Plants and animals for food

Answer:

- C. Reeds for making baskets

Objective(s): Students will be able to identify essentials in the environment for the survival of a new colony.

Prior Knowledge and Skills: Vocabulary (colony, resources, survival)

Time to Complete: 2-3 class periods

Materials/resources needed:

- Chart paper for making chart of basic needs for human survival
- Handout 1: the questions for the information sheets on the three settlements
- Handout sheets 2, 3, and 4 describing the geographic profile of the three selected colonial settlements of: Wilmington, DE, Williamsburg, VA, and Boston, MA
- Handout 5: the answer sheet for the prompt and Multiple Choice Quiz
- Handout 6: Planet profile sheet

Procedure Steps:

1. Begin with a discussion that answers the question: What elements are necessary for human survival in any given environment? It should be brought out that no matter where humans settle there are certain elements that they must have or they will die. All humans need water to drink, food to eat, shelter from the weather, clothes to protect their bodies, and relative safety for peace of mind and to protect their lives. In addition, a society cannot live in isolation if they are to survive and flourish. Interaction between communities allows for trade, sharing of new ideas, and wider social interaction. To summarize the discussion, make a chart of needs and how they might be met. Needs can be met with basic resources, or they may be met by more unusual or desirable means. For example, we need water for survival, but we might want juice because it tastes better. On

the other hand, if the only drink available is milk, milk will suffice. Have the students identify at least three resources we use to satisfy each basic want.

2. To reinforce this concept, distribute Handout 1, 2, 3, and 4 . Review the directions. Divide the class into three groups and assign each group to take a closer look at one of the settlements. Direct the group to look over the information sheet for their assigned settlement. They must decide whether the site is a good choice for a colony. Does it meet the necessary requirements for human survival: food, water, shelter, clothing, and protection? Will communication and travel from this site to other settlements and the mother country be possible? Would a colonist be able to find work to support himself? Support your opinion with specific geographic evidence. The groups will report their findings to the class in an oral presentation. The presentation should answer the following questions:
  1. What is the geographic profile of this site? (water source, food, shelter and clothing materials, protection)
  2. What is the main form of commerce? (How do the colonist make a living?)
  3. Is there a way for easy travel from colony to colony, or from colony to motherland? (overland, river travel, ocean travel)
  4. Can this colony trade or have social interaction with other colonies?
  5. Do you think this colony is likely to be successful? Why or why not?
3. The groups of students are to be able to answer all five questions orally, supporting their answers with geographic evidence. If desired, a grade may be assigned based on the accuracy and detailed evidence included in the presentation. After each group explains their answers, there should be a debriefing to decide if the group answered the questions correctly and fully.
4. In the final activity, the children will use the knowledge they have gained and apply it to a new situation. Pass out Handout 5, which includes the Multiple Choice Assessment item and also the prompt for the Constructed Response, and Handout 6, the information sheets for the three planets. Read the directions and make sure that everyone understands what they are to do. Discuss the scoring rubric included in this lesson. This is individual work and will be graded using the rubric.

Closure: Once all responses have been collected ask students to explain their choices. Start by saying that there is no single right or wrong answer. A correct answer is any answer that supports what is needed for survival and connections. Review the original chart that the class developed concerning basic needs and how they are met. While debriefing their answers, go over the geographic evidence to decide if it supports their choices.

Citations:

Delaware, The First State, Dr. Carol E. Hoffecker, Middle Atlantic Press, Moorestown, N.J., 1988.

[http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/va\\_geography.htm](http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/va_geography.htm)

[http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/ma\\_geography.ht](http://www.netstate.com/states/geography/ma_geography.ht)

## Handout 1

Look over the information sheets for each settlement. Decide whether the site is a good choice for a colony . Does it meet the necessary requirements for human survival: food, water, shelter, clothing, and protection? Will communication and travel from this site to other settlements and the mother country be possible? Would you be able to find work to support yourself? Support your opinion with specific geographic evidence. Answer the following questions to help you decide.

1. What is the geographic profile of this site? ( water source, food, shelter and clothing materials, protection, )
2. What is the main form of commerce? (How will the colonists make a living?)
3. Is there a way for easy travel from colony to colony or from colony to motherland? (over land, river travel, ocean travel)
4. Can this colony trade or have social interaction with other colonies?
5. Do you think this colony is likely to be successful? Why or why not?

## Mayflower Colony

The Mayflower Colony of Massachusetts was started by mistake. The captain of the Mayflower was supposed to deliver his passengers to the Virginia Colony, but a storm drove the ship off course and the captain was afraid that if he wasted any more time sailing to Virginia he would not get back to England before the bad weather made the Atlantic even more dangerous to cross. So he found a safe harbor hundreds of miles from what was the real destination. Instead of the mild climate and rich coastal plains of Virginia, the colonists found themselves in a harsh place. The climate was cold which made the growing season shorter and the soil was rocky which made it difficult to farm. They were left on the long extended coastline filled with sand and rocks of all sizes. The land was hilly with many water features ranging from small lakes and ponds to shallow streams and rivers. Swamps were not uncommon. The area was heavily wooded and filled with game and plants. Some of the plants and animals were unknown to the settlers. The ocean was immense and filled with sea life. Although the Native Americans appeared to be very friendly and helped the Europeans to survive the first year, the settlers were nervous about their long-term friendship. They built a wooden wall around the colony and continued to drill the militia.

## Virginia Colony

The Virginia Colony was one of the first settlements in the new world. It was very different from England and offered the colonists many benefits. The climate was much warmer than that of England and the long coastal plain was a flat expanse of rich soil. In this mild climate the growing season was long and the winters very pleasant. The broad Atlantic Coastal Plain stretched inland for about 100 miles in land as it gently began slopping upward into the rolling hills of the piedmont. Beyond the piedmont soared the Appalachian Mountains. This area also had the benefits of the ocean and the wealth of sea life, and the deeply forested woodland, rich with game and vegetation. The plant life provided a variety of vegetables, fruits, and nuts growing wild or randomly cultivated by the Native Americans. The native people did not completely accept the Europeans and conflicts sometimes ended in death.

## Handout 4

### Wilmington, Delaware

The settlement of Wilmington was originally called Willingtown after its founder, Thomas Willing. He founded the town in 1731 on the banks of the Christina River and designed the street pattern in a grid similar to Philadelphia, Pa. The Delaware colony was located on a peninsula or a body of land surrounded on three sides by water. Most of the region was flat coastal plain. There were many water features ranging from fresh, to brackish, to salt water. Streams and ponds were plentiful and the region was easily navigated by means of the Delaware River to the east and the many rivers crossing the land. To the far south of the region was the Atlantic Ocean which could be reached by traveling down the Delaware River. The soil of the flat coastal plain was rich and fertile. The well established forests supported a wide variety of animal life, particularly beaver. Both edible and useful plants flourished in the moderate climate. Wilmington was built in the northwest corner of the colony. This area was part of the rising Piedmont Plateau leading to the hills of Pennsylvania. The piedmont was the hilly lands that were once much higher mountains, but were worn down to softly rounded hills by long years of wind and erosion. Rivers and streams in this area ran swiftly, sloping downward toward the coastal plain below it. The point where the rivers reached the plain was called the fall line and was an excellent source of water power. As ships could not sail uphill, the fall line was often the place where water and land transportation met. Cities and towns were often built in these places for this very reason. The Native Americans in this area were very friendly and peaceful. They would leave an area that became too populated with Europeans rather than fight for the land.



## Handout 6

### Planet Profiles

#### Planet A

Planet A is the largest of the three planets. It is also the farthest away from the Home Planet. Its surface is mostly water with several large land masses (continents). The climate is mild with changing seasons. The land masses have rich soil and much plant and animal life. There are many lakes and rivers crisscrossing the continents. Volcanoes are plentiful and active. The native people are war-like and are thought to practice cannibalism. This planet is surrounded by an asteroid field which makes entering and exiting its atmosphere difficult.

#### Planet B

Planet B is much smaller in size to Planet A. It is a good distance from its larger neighbor, but within easy travel distance to Planet C. Most of this planet is a dry desert land mass. The climate is very hot with average daytime temperatures in the 90s. Little rain falls throughout the year, but there is a monsoon season which causes planet-wide flooding. Located on one small part of the landmass is a tropical zone. This area is an oasis rich with life. Here a rain forest filled with plants and animals stretches for miles. The natives of this planet are friendly and peaceful. The atmosphere has no particular barriers and travel from planet to planet is easy.

#### Planet C

Planet C is closest to the Home Planet. It is the smallest of the three planets. The climate is temperate with changing seasons. This planet is mostly water with a few large land masses. Two of the largest continents have excellent soil covering vast plains. Beyond the plain is woodland with abundant plant and animal life. There is adequate rain, to keep the many lakes and rivers flowing. Although two volcanoes have been sighted on one of the land masses, they appear to be inactive. There are no native peoples. Other than one moon peacefully circling this planet, no barriers prevent travel to or from this planet.