**5th Grade – Settlements to Colonization**

**Informative/Explanatory Writing**

***Background to the Colonies***

**STUDENT PACKET**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Directions:**

1. **Social Studies Notebook/Folder:** You may use information from your notes to include in your report.
2. **Research Article #1:** ***“Colonization and the Revolutionary War – Background to the Colonies.”***
3. **Research Article #2:** ***“Brief History of the Founding of the 13 Colonies.”***
4. **Write an informative/explanatory report.**

**Your Writing Task:**

**Write an informative report that explains some of the causes that led to the founding of 13 different colonies. Be sure to include information from the research articles and from your Social Studies notes in your report.**

**Research Article #1**

**Colonization and the Revolutionary War**

**Background to the Colonies**

Retrieved from *ReadWorks.org*

Before the Revolutionary War, there were thirteen colonies under British rule in North America. People came from all over Europe seeking freedom or fortune in the colonies. Many people brought their culture with them, and people of similar backgrounds often came together or settled in the same place. Soon, each colony began to take on its own character.

There were three main groups of colonies: The New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies, and the Southern Colonies. Each group began to share characteristics based on its location and people. For example, the Southern Colonies had fertile soil and sunshine necessary for farms. The Northern Colonies had some important ports.

**New England**

Soil in New England was rocky and the winters were harsh, which made farming difficult. There were small farms in New England, but no big farms like the southern plantations. Instead, the North became the center of the shipbuilding industry. Trees were everywhere. Before long, Boston, which began as the Massachusetts Bay Colony, became the most important port city in the colonies.

Religion was very important to the people in New England. You may have heard of the Pilgrims who came to the New World to find religious freedom. They wanted to be free to practice their own religion, but they did not always allow other people the same freedom. Town life was centered on the church. If you did not belong to the church, you were an outcast.

**The Middle Colonies**

The Middle Colonies tolerated more types of religions than the Pilgrims and Puritans of New England. William Penn founded the colony Pennsylvania. He wanted people of every faith and every nationality to come to his colony. When the Revolutionary War broke out, representatives from all the colonies met in Philadelphia for the First Continental Congress. Philadelphia became the first capital of the new continental government. Many of our nation’s symbols, like the Liberty bell, are still in Philadelphia.

New York was also a Middle Colony and an important shipping and trading center. The population in New York was the most diverse of anywhere in the young colonies. If you listened in on dinner table conversations along the Hudson River, you would hear more than 12 languages! Most of the immigrants from other countries who came to the middle colonies were skilled at a craft. They came and built shops where they could practice their trade – from cabinet making to weaving to candle making.

**The Southern Colonies**

Rich land and a mild climate determined the future of the Southern Colonies: agriculture. The Southern Colonies were based on farming, especially tobacco farming. Tobacco was grown on large plantations. The most important people in the Southern Colonies lived on these big farms and not in towns. As a result, the Southern Colonies were more spread out. Instead of going to schools in town like children in New England, southern children might have studied at home. Many were also sent to England to be educated.

**Research Article #2**

**Brief History of the Founding of the 13 Colonies**

Retrieved and adapted from *Revolutionary-War.net*

The 13 colonies were chiefly governed by the British until the time of the Revolutionary War. Although the British controlled the 13 colonies on the east coast, the French took control of Canada, which is why it is not part of America today. The British tried to fight for that land, but were defeated and the French held control. The Spanish claimed Mexico and some of the western parts of North America including Southern California and part of the Caribbean, but the British were the chief rulers of the continent.

**Virginia/Jamestown: Founded 1607**

Jamestown was the first of the 13 colonies after the failure to establish a colony on Roanoke Island. It was founded by The London Company in 1607. Jamestown was mainly founded for the purpose of making money. It was a port and trading center. Jamestown was a place for people to come and make their fortune. Another reason to form this colony was to minister to and convert the natives to Christianity.

**Massachusetts: Founded 1620**

This was the colony first formed by the pilgrims. This group was also known as the Puritans. They came over to escape British rule. This group decided that everything should be decided by the people. They wanted their government to be a democracy. They believed the people had the right to say what happened to them and who ruled over them.

**New Hampshire: Founded 1623**

From the beginning, New Hampshire was planned to be a colony. The land was given to John Mason and he decided to make a colony with it. He lived in Hampshire County in England, which is why the colony was named New Hampshire. He invested a lot of money in this land, making cities and towns. Sadly he never saw it, due to his death in 1635.

**Maryland: Founded 1632-1634**

Maryland was founded to create a place for Roman Catholics who were still struggling against religious oppression in England. Knowing this, you can probably guess that it was named Maryland after Mary, the mother of Christ. It was also created because the founder, Lord Baltimore, saw an opportunity for profit.

**Connecticut: Founded 1635**

Connecticut was mostly made up of people looking for freedom from government, people looking to earn their fortune, and people just coming to the “New World.” There were also a lot of religious people in Connecticut, as there were in all the colonies at that time. This was another place where people were looking to start over.

**Rhode Island: Founded 1636**

When Roger William wanted to make changes in religion in Massachusetts, the government did not take it very well. They banished him to England, but instead he went to live with the Native Americans. They formed a group and called it Providence. Later, three other people were banished due to religious reasons, these three also left and formed small groups. These four groups requested British permission to become a colony. The king consented, thus creating Rhode Island.

**Delaware: Founded 1638**

Delaware was originally a part of New Sweden, which also included Philadelphia. Later the King of England gained control over the portion east of the Delaware River and named it Delaware.

**North Carolina: Founded 1653**

In 1653 some Virginians grew tired of religious laws and moved just south of the border to start their own group. Soon after the King of England granted the land as a gift to some noblemen. They sent people over to colonize the area and some of them joined with the group that was already there. This was then called Carolina. Later in 1663, because of disagreements within the colony, the noblemen sold the land back to the King of England. It eventually separated into two separate colonies and was called North and South Carolina.

**South Carolina: Founded 1653**

South Carolina was formed at the same time as North Carolina. See North Carolina description.

**New York: Founded 1664**

When the Duke of York received New Netherland as a gift, it was renamed New York in his honor. He broke off two pieces of land given to him and gave them to two of his friends. These were the foundation of New Jersey.

**New Jersey: Founded 1664**

When two friends of the Duke of York received land from him they decided to colonize it. They wanted as many people to come and live there as possible, so they began to make promises about all the different things you could gain from the New World, such as fortune and freedom. Soon, there were many people living there. Not long after, Jersey was sold in two parts to Quakers. They were called East and West Jersey. In 1704, with the King’s blessing, they reunited and were called New Jersey.

**Pennsylvania: Founded 1682**

In 1682, William Penn received land from his grandfather, who had recently passed away. Penn, a Quaker, wanted freedom of religion and protection from persecution for himself and others who might want the same thing. He had not been able to find this, so he started his own colony. He called it “Pennsylvania.”

**Georgia: Founded 1732**

Georgia was the last of the 13 colonies. It was founded in 1732, long after the others. James Oglethorpe asked the King of England for a land charter and was granted an unpopulated portion of land from the Carolina charter called Georgia after King George. Oglethorpe had two motives for making this colony. One was for people to start anew after serving time in jail, the other, to serve as a military base to defend against the Spanish.

**Informative/Explanatory Report**

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**Be sure to revise and edit your work!**