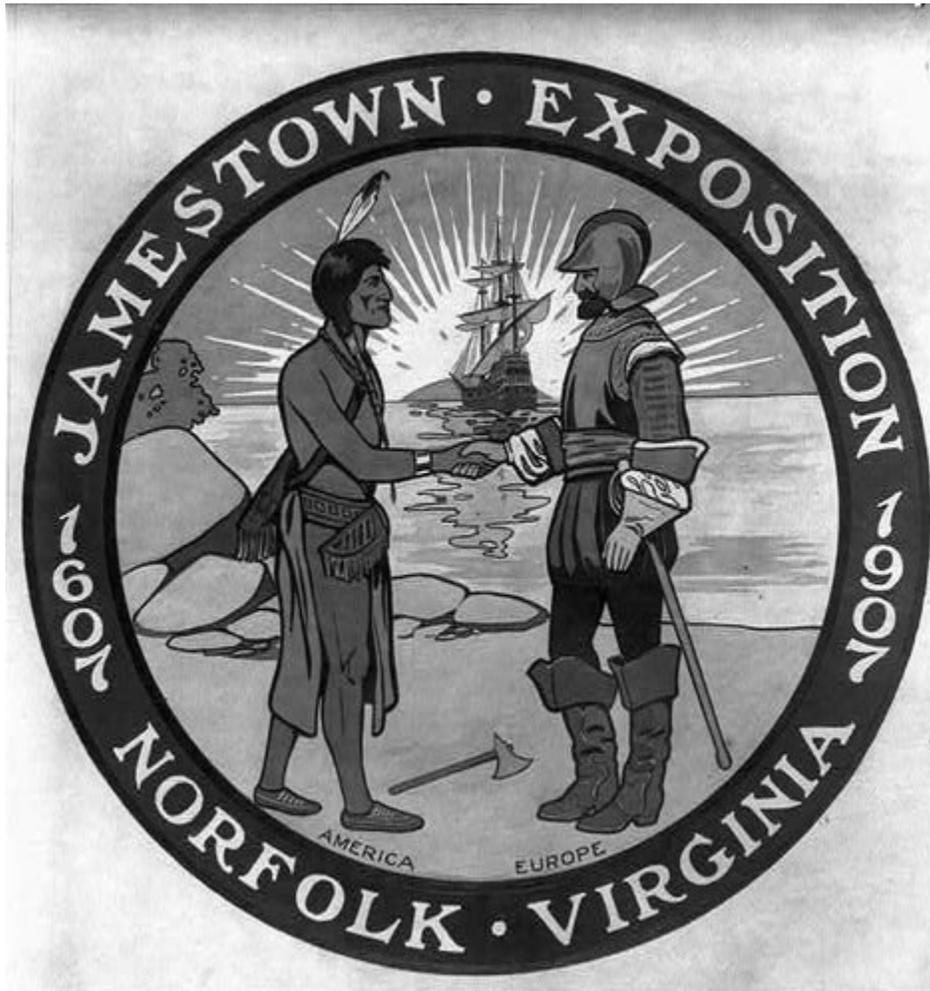


Native American Conflicts

by ReadWorks



Jamestown logo for World's Fair in 1907

Prior to European settlement in North America, Native American tribes populated specific areas of the continent. Their cultures, food, traditions, and beliefs were wrapped up in their environment. Plains Indians, for instance, hunted buffalo and used the entire animal for food, clothing, shelter, kitchen goods, and other important materials. Though it is believed that Native Americans engaged in battles between tribes prior to European settlement, the presence of the Europeans helped spawn conflicts and circumstances that would dramatically impact the lives of Native Americans across the continent.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europeans sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in hopes of settling new land and obtaining resources. North America seemed like a dream: lush forests, plenty of freshwater lakes, the promise of gold (even though it would be a long time before gold was actually found), and new uncharted lands lured European explorers to the continent. They brought along with them crops and new technology. They also brought along diseases that caused the deaths of many Native Americans. The arriving settlers had grown immune to such diseases because those

particular diseases had been in Eurasia for over five centuries. Native American tribes had not built up immunity to these infections, including smallpox. Some estimate that during smallpox epidemics in North America, 80 to 90 percent of fatalities were part of the Native American populations.

There were many instances when Native Americans traded in peace with the Europeans. The Native Americans made good use of some of the technology the Europeans brought, like metal tools. The Native Americans often exchanged food or rights to hunting lands. However, wars would break out often due to disputes over deals between the Native Americans and Europeans.

In Jamestown, Virginia, for instance, European settlers found themselves in peaceful times with Native Americans when they were able to make agreements. Though the settlers, who founded Jamestown in 1607, had to depend on the Native Americans for some food and resources, they also typically viewed the natives as people who should be conquered. When hard times came for the settlers in 1608 and many of them did not have much food, they pressured the natives into giving them food. These aggressions began a slew of conflicts now collectively called the Anglo-Powhatan Wars, which lasted several decades with thousands of Native Americans either dying or being displaced.

The consequences of European arrival to North America negatively affected the relationships even between Native American tribes from time to time. Native Americans were suddenly scrambling to share resources with whole new groups of people who had access to powerful weapons, technology to build sturdy buildings, and the ability to call for reinforcements from thousands of miles away. The relationships Native American tribes had built with each other became tenuous as the mounting pressure coming from European settlers threatened to destroy their ways of life. This sparked many skirmishes between tribes over hunting land that was becoming more and more scarce as Europeans continued to settle further into the West. At this time, land was both currency and livelihood. If tribes were forced off their lands, they needed to either find somewhere else to go, or learn to live with the Europeans who had taken over and assumed power, which proved impossible much of the time.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Why did the Europeans come to North America?

- A. to meet people from different cultures
- B. to test their ships
- C. to get more land and resources
- D. to learn a new language

2. What argument does the author develop in this text?

- A. Europeans and Native Americans worked together to fulfill their needs.
- B. Native Americans had many problems even before the arrival of Europeans.
- C. The arrival of Europeans had a negative impact on the lives of Native Americans.
- D. Native Americans had a negative impact on early European settlers.

3. Read these sentences from the text.

The consequences of European arrival to North America negatively affected the relationships even between Native American tribes from time to time. Native Americans were suddenly scrambling to share resources with whole new groups of people who had access to powerful weapons, technology to build sturdy buildings, and the ability to call for reinforcements from thousands of miles away.

Based on this evidence, what conclusion can be drawn?

- A. Native Americans had plenty of resources to share both with other tribes and with the European settlers.
- B. Native Americans posed a greater threat to European settlers than the Europeans posed to Native Americans.
- C. Native Americans faced the threat of war with the Europeans if they did not share their resources with the settlers.
- D. Native Americans wanted to share their resources with the Europeans in order to gain access to weapons and building technology.

4. Read these sentences from the text.

The relationships Native American tribes had built with each other became tenuous as the mounting pressure coming from European settlers threatened to destroy their ways of life. This sparked many skirmishes between tribes over hunting land that was becoming more and more scarce as Europeans continued to settle further into the West.

Based on this evidence, what conclusion can be drawn?

- A. Native American tribes fought with each other over access to the resources and goods provided by European settlers.
- B. Native American tribes had already been engaged in conflicts with each other when the Europeans arrived and worsened the situation.
- C. The European settlers were attempting to improve the quality of life for Native Americans by settling in the West.
- D. The European settlers caused Native American tribes to have conflicts with each other that they might not have otherwise had.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. The Native Americans were unwilling to work with the European settlers.
- B. The presence of Europeans in North America had a significant impact on Native Americans.
- C. The Europeans and Native Americans combined their resources to establish a new civilization by working together.
- D. The European settlers interacted with Native Americans because they wanted to settle new land.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

The relationships Native American tribes had built with each other became tenuous as the mounting pressure coming from European settlers threatened to destroy their ways of life. This sparked many skirmishes between tribes over hunting land that was becoming more and more scarce as Europeans continued to settle further into the West.

Based on these sentences, what does the word "tenuous" mean?

- A. cooperative
- B. pleasant
- C. weak
- D. surprising

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

When hard times came for the settlers in 1608, they pressured the natives into giving them food, _____ a slew of conflicts now collectively called the Anglo-Powhatan Wars.

- A. due to
- B. for example
- C. resulting in
- D. in spite of

8. What did settlers in Jamestown depend on Native Americans for?

9. How did Europeans in North America negatively impact Native Americans?

Give at least two examples to support your answer.

10. How can the relationship between the European settlers and Native Americans best be described? Support your answer with evidence from the text.