



Chapter 3 The Colonial Era

Scope and Sequence

French Colonies

- The powerful French
- The Western Missions

French, the Indians, and the British

- The Iroquois
- The French and Indian War
- Pontiac's Rebellion

Chapter Goals

The French were in a powerful position in North America with their forts, fur trade, and missions. The Great Lakes region of “New France” was referred to as the Western Missions on account of the Jesuit missions there. Students need to understand that the location of Détroit as the gateway from the St. Lawrence to the three western Great Lakes is a key to what happens in this chapter and in future chapters.

It is also important to note the differences in how the French and British interacted with the Indians. Many of the native tribes had good relations with the French, though the relationship was not always beneficial to the natives; for the French brought diseases to the Indians and introduced alcohol to them. Some of the missionaries succeeded in getting laws approved to prohibit the sale or trade of alcohol to the Indians, but such laws were often ignored. The role of the Iroquois as enemies of the French is important, as were the effects of Iroquois expansion on other Indian nations. The Iroquois figured as the chief Native American enemy to the French and friend to the British.

While much of this chapter focuses on the French and the Indians, the British also have a part in the story. The French did not settle New France with homes, farms, and families as much as the British did in their colonies. As the British outgrew their settlements, they started to move into the territory claimed by the French. The French resisted this British encroachment, particularly at Fort Duquesne. This rivalry between the French and the English led to the French and Indian War.

Some students may assume that the French and Indian War was about the French fighting Indians; rather, it was French with some Indian nations fighting the British and other Indian nations, particularly the Iroquois. The war that lasted nine years ended in the Treaty of Paris, by which the French

abandoned their lands in North America. Though they promised that the French Catholics would be allowed to practice their religion freely and to protect their rights, the British treated the Indians poorly. This treatment led to the Pontiac rebellion, which, though unsuccessful in driving out the British, resulted in better treatment for the Indians in the Great Lakes region.

What Students Should Know

- The French colonies in North America were known as “New France.” Most of the cities (such as Québec, Montreal, and Three Rivers) in New France were east of the Great Lakes, along the St. Lawrence River. The Great Lakes region was known as the “Western Missions.” The Great Lakes settlements were not large towns; they were usually forts, trading posts, or missions. Detroit, for example, was really a large fort. Its main purpose was to protect the little strip of water that connected Lake Huron to Lake Erie. Detroit served as the gateway between the St. Lawrence and the three western Great Lakes.
- There were few French women in the Western Missions. Since most of the settlements of the Great Lakes were forts or trading posts, most of the men who came there did not intend to settle down. They were adventurers and frequently on the move. Many French trappers married Indian women. These trappers, known as *coureur des bois*, “runners of the woods,” were equally at home among the French settlements or the Indian tribes of their wives’ families. They often spoke native languages as well as French and followed Indian customs.
- The French and Indians generally got on well together, although violence sometimes broke

out between them. Contact with the French was not always beneficial to the Indians. French explorers and missionaries brought diseases, for which the Indians had no immunities. Since the Indians had never drunk alcohol before the coming of the Europeans, the wines, beers, and whisky of the French had a devastating effect on their communities. French churchmen succeeded in getting laws passed prohibiting the sale or trade of alcohol to Indians, but traders often ignored these laws.

- The Iroquois were a threat to New France; they made war on French settlements and sometimes killed Jesuit missionaries. The Iroquois were a group of Indian tribes who lived east, along the St. Lawrence River in what is now New York State. They were allies with the English and Dutch, who had settled the eastern coast of North America and gave the Iroquois European weapons.
- In the mid-1600s, the Iroquois, desiring to control the fur trade along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, began attacking other Indian tribes and destroying them. The Iroquois especially targeted the Huron, who had to flee west to the Ottawa to escape. Iroquois warriors attacked Indian villages all along the Great Lakes. Thousands of Indians fled west, into Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Those who did not flee were killed or taken into captivity. When the Iroquois invaded the Ohio Country in the 1660's, many of the Ohio tribes were forced to retreat west across the Mississippi River.
- The Iroquois attacked French settlements. In 1687, however, the French governor, Jacques de Denonville, and a force of soldiers seized all 50 of the Iroquois chiefs under the guise of peace talks and sent them back to France as galley slaves. Denonville then ravaged and burned the Iroquois lands. The French,

Iroquois, and many other tribes finally made peace in 1701. Thousands of tribes again migrated east to return to their homelands.

- The British settled in the lands along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. They engaged in farming much more than the French did. Because the British farmed, their settlements could support more people, and so there were more women and families in the English colonies. Because English colonies were getting crowded, English settlers were settling further west, getting closer to French lands. By the middle of the 1700s, English settlers were beginning to enter the Ohio Valley. Though the French had claimed the Ohio Valley, they had not really settled it.
- In the 1750s, the French started making an effort to settle more people in the Ohio Valley so they did not lose it to Great Britain. In what is now western Pennsylvania, the French built a fort called Fort Duquesne to guard the Ohio country against the English. In March 1754, the colonial English officer George Washington and his men, with some Indian allies, came upon a group of French soldiers in the wilderness and defeated them at Jumonville Glen, in modern day Pennsylvania. This was the beginning of the war in America, called the French and Indian War. Several Indian tribes in the Great Lakes region fought for the French, while the Iroquois fought for the English. The end of the French in North America came in 1759 when the British captured the city of Québec in Canada. The French and Indian War lasted from 1754 to 1763. In 1763 the French and British signed the Treaty of Paris to end the war. In the treaty, the French had to give up all their lands in North America. In taking over French North America, Great Britain promised that French Catholics would be allowed to practice

- their religion freely and protected their rights.
- The British treated the Indians in their new domains like conquered subjects. In particular, the Indians were concerned about the number of British colonists crossing into Indian lands. Instead of fur trapping like the French, the British colonists wanted to clear the land to farm. Huge amounts of forest were cut down. Many tribes in the Ohio country were forced to move west.
- An Ottawa war chief named Pontiac urged the Indian tribes of the Great Lakes to unite and drive out the British. Pontiac believed that if all the Indians united against the British, they could win their freedom. An Indian “prophet” named Neolin said that the Great Spirit was angry at the Indians for adopting white ways. Neolin called upon Indians to stop participating in trade with the whites, give up using European weapons, and stop drinking alcohol. He warned the Indians that if they let the British rule them, they would be destroyed and enslaved. In May 1763, Pontiac and 300 warriors attacked Fort Detroit. Though they were unable to take the fort, this was the beginning of an Indian war against the British.
- Pontiac and his Indians were able to take several British forts in the Great Lakes region. Despite these successes, however, the Indians were unable to defeat the British. Indians were not used to fighting long, drawn out wars, and by 1764 many of the warriors were returning to their homes. The British retook many of their forts. Disappointed by hopes of French help, in July 1766 Pontiac agreed to end the Indian attacks. The British promised to treat the Indians better, and they did. Yet, the British sent many more soldiers and settlers to the frontier, which was exactly what Pontiac had been hoping to stop.

- In addition to the places emphasized in Chapter 2 of this manual, students should be able to identify on a map the locations of the Western Missions, New France, Louisiana, and the British Colonies.

Chapter Checkpoint

1. **What were the “Western Missions”?**
The Western Missions was the name given to the Great Lakes region, where a network of French Catholic missions had been established.
2. **Were there many French women in the Western Missions? Why or why not?**
There were not many French women in the Western Missions since most of the men who came there were trappers and adventurers who did not intend to settle down. They thus did not bring their wives or raise families in the region.
3. **What were some of the problems that resulted from French and Indian contact?**
Among the problems of French and Indian contact: European diseases impacted Indian populations; Indians were very susceptible to alcohol brought by French traders; violence sometimes broke out between French explorers and native tribes.
4. **Who were the Iroquois and which European countries were their allies?**
The Iroquois nation was made up of several northeastern native tribes who had a pact of peace, worked, and fought together. The Iroquois were allied with the English and the Dutch, who gave the Iroquois European weapons.
5. **What did the Iroquois do to the Huron and other Great Lakes tribes?**

Some Key Terms at a Glance

Britain: or Great Britain: the name for the large island where England, Scotland, and Wales are located. The people of Britain are either English, Scottish, or Welsh, but we call them all together the *British*.

stickball: a popular Indian game where two teams would use sticks to hit a ball towards a

goal, usually a rock or tree. These games were large spectacles sometimes involving hundreds of Indians. They were popular with English colonists, too, who liked to watch them and sometimes join in.

The Iroquois attacked and attempted to destroy the Huron and other tribes around the Great Lakes; they forced thousands of Huron Indians to flee west and killed or captured the rest.

6. **What did the French governor, Jacques de Denonville, do in 1686 to stop Iroquois attacks on French settlements?**

Denonville tricked all 50 of the Iroquois chiefs into coming for a peace talk, but instead he captured and sent them to France as galley slaves. Without their chiefs, the Iroquois were vulnerable, and Denonville ravaged and took their lands.

7. **Were English settlers farmers or fur traders? What difference did this make for the English colonies?**

English settlers were farmers. Because of this, their families and wives joined them and their colonies could support more people. They cut down forests and settled in greater numbers than the French did.

8. **Who was involved in the French and Indian War? What were its dates?**

The French and Indian War primarily involved Great Britain against France. Each

side had Indian allies: the Iroquois fought with the English; the Huron and Ottawa fought with the French. The conflict began in 1754 and ended in 1763.

9. **Who was Chief Pontiac? What did he want to do about the British?**

Chief Pontiac was an Ottawa war chief who urged the Great Lakes tribes to unite and drive out the British before the British could gain control over them.

10. **What was the result of the French and Indian War for Chief Pontiac and the Great Lakes tribes?**

Though Chief Pontiac and his Ottawa and Huron allies were able to take several British forts, they could not defeat the British army, and, finally, Chief Pontiac agreed to end attacks on British forts. The British, however, sent many more soldiers and settlers to the frontier and gained control of the land.

Geography Challenge

For reference, use the map on the page facing page 1 in the textbook.

1. **What European country claimed the land north of the Great Lakes?**

France claimed the land north of the Great Lakes.

2. **The eastern seaboard was claimed for the colonies of what European nation?**

The colonies on the eastern seaboard were claimed by England (or Great Britain).

3. **Fort Détroit is closest to which Great Lake?**

Fort Détroit is closest to Lake Huron.

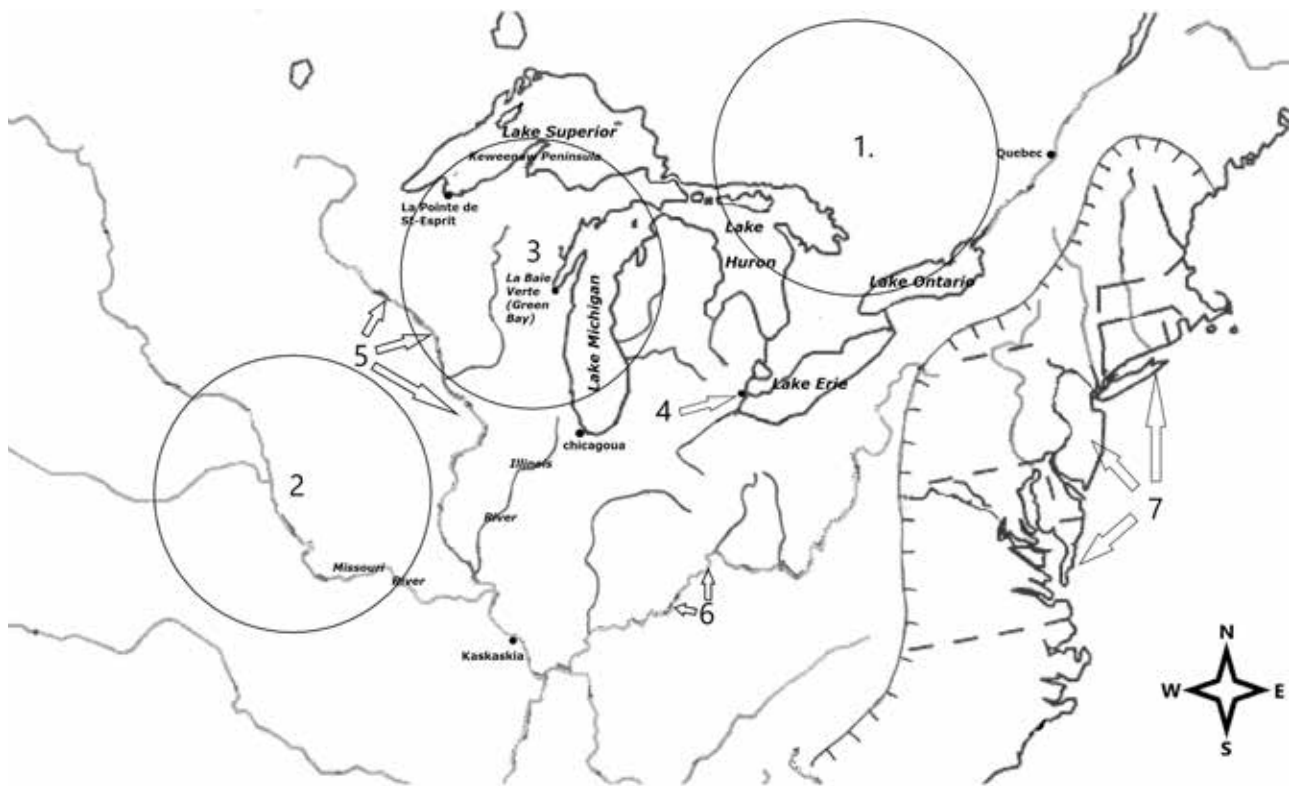
4. **Along which major river system was French-claimed Louisiana located?**

Louisiana was located along the Mississippi River system.

5. **Explain what is the best water route to go by boat from La Pointe de St Esprit to Fort Détroit.**

The best route is by way of Lake Superior into Lake Huron.

Chapter 3 Test Map



Vocabulary and Important Names

1. What do we call the large island where England, Scotland, and Wales are located? (**Great Britain**) What do we call its people? (**British**)
2. What is the name of the confederacy or union of five powerful native tribes from the area we now call New York state? (**Iroquois**)
3. What is the term for an official agreement or negotiation made between two or more ruling states or countries? (**treaty**)
4. Who was the Ottawa war chief who tried to unite the Ottawa and Huron tribes in order to drive out the British? (**Chief Pontiac**)
5. Coureur des bois is a French term for the fur traders who often lived among the Indians and married Indian women. What does the term mean? (**runners of the woods**)

Chapter Extra: French Trading Posts

As a small group or individually, work to make a French trading post from items you might find in your yard or around your house. You will probably need:

- A cardboard box, such as a shoebox, for the diorama.
- Small sticks or brown paper for the exterior walls
- Tiny items like pebbles or seeds to look like food or other items
- Felt or other cloth scraps to cut into your “furs”
- Aluminum foil for shaping into metal pieces
- An assortment of small items to furnish the fort: cardboard, craft sticks, buttons, beads, etc.

- Paper to label each of your items
- Anything else to make your diorama of a trading post interesting

Additional Activities

A Readers’ Theater

Create a readers’ theater script with at least three characters based on an important event in the chapter.

Directions: Create a readers’ theater script for at least three people, focusing on events in the chapter. You might choose a conversation between Pontiac and the other natives to convince them to go to war, or between Pontiac and the British. You could choose a conversation between the French and the British following the French and Indian Wars, to negotiate terms, or about other subjects.

Make a Song

Create a one to two-minute song about the events of the French and Indian War, or Pontiac’s Rebellion, the fur trade, or other topics in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Sample Quiz I (pages 21–24)

Please answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why were forts built in New France or the Western Missions area?
2. Why was the relationship between the French and Indians not always good for the Indians?
3. Which Indian nation was an enemy of the French? What sorts of things did they do against the French?
4. How did the Indian nation mentioned in question 3 behave with other Indian tribes?

Answer Key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, need only approximate the following.

1. Forts were built to provide trading areas and to protect areas of land or waterways.
2. The French brought diseases to the Indians and traded alcohol with them. The Indians did not have immunities to French diseases and could not handle drinking alcohol.
3. The Iroquois were an enemy of the French. The Iroquois often made war on the French settlements and killed Jesuit missionaries.
4. The Iroquois would attack other tribes to destroy them.

Chapter 3: Sample Quiz II

(pages 24–29)

Please answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Why were the British more successful than the French in settling North America?
2. What event started the French and Indian War?
3. What was the Treaty of Paris? What did France and Great Britain have to do, according to the treaty?
4. How did the British treat the Indians after the French and Indian War?
5. Who was Pontiac and what did he do?
6. What was the outcome of Pontiac's war on the British?

Answer Key to Sample Quiz II

Students' answers should approximate the following.

1. The British were farmers, which meant that many men and women, with families, settled in British America. The French tended to be

trappers, which meant they did not settle the land with as many people as the British did.

2. The French and Indian War started when George Washington and some Indian allies defeated some French soldiers at Jumonville Glenn, in what is now Pennsylvania.
3. The Treaty of Paris was the agreement to end the French and Indian War. The French had to give up their lands in North America, and Great Britain promised that the French Catholics would be allowed to practice their religion and enjoy their rights.
4. The British treated the Indians like conquered subjects. British settlers cleared large tracts of forest. Tribes were forced to move west.
5. Pontiac was an Ottawa chief who united tribes to drive out the British. He attacked Fort Detroit, which started a war with the British.
6. Pontiac and his warriors eventually lost many of the forts they had taken, but the British promised to treat the Indians better. However, more British soldiers and settlers came to the area, which Pontiac did not want.

Chapter 3: Sample Test

Please answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the name for the large island where England, Scotland, and Wales are located?
2. The Great Lakes region was part of a larger region, ruled by the French. What was the name of that region? The French had a special name for the Great Lakes region itself. What was that name?
3. How did the French in the New World harm the Indians? How did they benefit them?
4. The Iroquois were enemies of the French. With what European nations were they friends?

5. Who came to control the Great Lakes region because of the Treaty of Paris, which ended the French and Indian War?
6. What did Pontiac try to achieve in his war with the British?
7. What was life like for the Indians in the Great Lakes region following Pontiac's Rebellion?
8. Identify which of the following place names belong with numbered places on the map your teacher gave you. In the space after each place name, write the correct number from the map:

a) Mississippi River	e) Ohio River
b) Fort Detroit	f) Western Missions
c) New France	g) Louisiana
d) British Colonies	
7. Following Pontiac's Rebellion, the Indians were treated better, but the British kept coming and clearing the land and driving the tribes away.
8. *Answers (For reference, use page 79 of this manual):*
 1. New France
 2. Louisiana
 3. Western Missions
 4. Fort Detroit
 5. Mississippi River
 6. Ohio River
 7. British colonies

Answer Key to Sample Test

Students' answers should approximate the following.

1. Britain or Great Britain is the name for the large island where England, Scotland, and Wales are located.
2. The first name was New France. The French called the Great Lakes region the Western Missions.
3. The French brought diseases for which the Indians had no immunities. They also introduced the Indians to alcohol, which the Indians did not have before. French missions, however, brought the Gospel to the Indians.
4. The Iroquois were friends with the British and the Dutch.
5. The British came to control the Great Lakes because of the Treaty of Paris.
6. Pontiac wanted to unite the Indians in a war and drive the British from the Great Lakes region.

Resources for Further Student Reading

Pontiac: Ottawa Rebel, by Celia Bland

When Did George Washington Fight his First Military Battle: Other Questions about the French and Indian War (Six Questions Book), by Francesca Davis DiPiazza

The St. Lawrence: River Route to the Great Lakes, by Lynn Peppas and Barbara Bakowski

The Voyageur's Paddle (Myths, Legends, Fairy and Folktales), by Kathy Jo Wargin

Explore More About Iroquois Tribes in History, by Elke Sündermann

Teacher Resources

Pontiac and the Indian Uprising (Great Lakes Books Series), by Howard Peckham