Summary: Dutch and French Colonies

New Netherland

In the 1500s and 1600s, European explorers claimed land in North America. Henry Hudson claimed land for the Dutch. They named it New Netherland. The first settlements were fur-trading posts along rivers in present-day New York. In 1626, the colony's governor, Peter Minuit, bought Manhattan Island from the Manhates Indians. He started a settlement and named it New Amsterdam. He also set up a colony for Sweden on the present-day Delaware River.

The Dutch West India Company controlled both settlements. The company encouraged people of different religions and nationalities to go to New Netherland. The diversity of the population grew, and the settlers practiced tolerance. In 1647, Peter Stuyvesant became governor. He was unpopular because he was not tolerant and he made harsh laws. In 1664, English ships sailed to New Amsterdam. The settlers were so unhappy with Stuyvesant that they refused to fight the English. The English renamed the colony New York.

New France

In the 1600s, France claimed land in present-day Canada and named it New France. Few settlers lived there. The cold climate was bad for farming. Most settlers were young men. They lived near Quebec, a fur-trading post. Fur was an important business. New France had many animals with thick fur. American Indians trapped them and traded the fur to the French for goods like tools, pots, and cloth. The French sold the furs to Europeans to make into hats and coats.

The French were partners with the Huron and Algonquin Indians, who were at war with the Haudenosaunee, a group of five Indian nations. The fur traders helped the Huron fight their enemies. Missionaries also went to New France to teach the Catholic religion. In 1673, a missionary named Marquette and an explorer named Jolliet traveled by canoe down the Mississippi River. In 1682, an explorer named La Salle claimed the Mississippi and the land around it for France. He called it Louisiana after King Louis XIV.

Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

diversity *noun*, the variety of people in a group

tolerance *noun*, respect for beliefs that are different from one's own

missionary *noun*, a person who teaches his or her religion to others who have different beliefs

After You Read

REVIEW **Why was Stuyvesant an unpopular governor?** Underline the sentence that tells about Peter Stuyvesant.

REVIEW **How did the traders of New France get fur to sell to Europeans?** Circle the sentence that tells who trapped the animals to get their fur. Underline the words that tell what the French gave the Indians in exchange for furs.

Resources for Reaching All Learners
Use with *United States History*, pp. 144–147