Chapter 1: Origins of a New Society

Columbus’s voyages to the Americas brought together and reshaped the differing cultures of the Americas, Europe, and West Africa.

I. The Atlantic World
   A. Land Ownership Across Three Different Cultures
      1. Native Americans did not believe land could be owned. Buying and selling land was unthinkable.
      2. Europeans believed land was a source of power and wealth. Acquiring land through purchase, or force, was expected and common.
      3. West Africans did believe land could be bought and sold. But it was not a source of power. In West Africa power came from the number of people that a king ruled, not the amount of land that they owned.
   B. England’s King John, signs the Magna Carta which places the King under the rule of law.
   C. Vegetation regions in West Africa are dominated by rain forests, savannas, and deserts.
   D. Lineage groups provide West Africans with the kinds of support that governments provide in Europe.
   E. In the late 1400’s the West African kingdom of Songhai thrived as a major trading post.
   F. Spanish nobles wanted Columbus to succeed so they would gain a quicker trade route to India. This would make them wealthy.

After 1492, the Spanish began building and empire in the Americas, and in the 1600’s, France established fur-trading post in present-day Canada. In 1607, the English began establishing colonies along the Atlantic Coast.

II. European Colonization of the Americas
   A. Missionaries are people sent out by their church to teach others their religion. They wanted to teach Native Americans the Spanish religion (Catholic) and customs.
   B. English Colonization was motivated to find the “Northwest Passage”, an all water trade route across North America to Asia.
   C. The French in North America were motivated by trade for fur with the Native Americans.
   D. New England is the establishment of three colonies in the new world in an attempt to escape religious attacks: Massachusetts (Puritans), Pennsylvania (Quakers), and Maryland (Roman Catholics)
The English colonies developed diverse economies and prospered with little direct interference from England. Meanwhile enslaved African Americans often suffered brutal treatment, and tensions developed between the French and Native Americans.

III. Growth of the American Colonies
   A. England prized its North American colonies because they supplied England with large amounts of food and natural resources, and the colonist purchased large amounts of English made goods.
   B. Politics and society were dominated by landowning men.
   C. Colonial legislatures (CL) dominate colonial government
      a. CL created and passed laws regarding defense
      b. CL set the salaries of royal officials
      c. CL influenced the appointment of judges and other officials.
   D. Increased production of staple crops such as tobacco and rice led to an increased number of slaves brought from West Africa.
   E. Plantations in the southern colonies (The Carolinas, Georgia), is where most slaves worked.
   F. The benefits of Triangular trade:
      a. The colonies obtained enslaved West Africans to cultivate tobacco.
      b. England obtained raw materials from the colonies and trade manufactured goods.
      c. Merchants in both places profited from the trade.
   G. Olaudah Equiano wrote a vivid account of the Middle passage, the journey from West Africa to the New World as a slave.
   H. Land shortages push colonist westward into Native American lands.
   I. Westward expansion also brings conflict with the French.
   J. In the 1750’s tensions grow as each group tries to control the intersection of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and the Ohio Rivers.
   K. The Great Awakening is a series of religious revivals in the British colonies.