

Mercantilism

Mercantilism: an economic system based on trade. A powerful country (called a mother country) conquers some other land to get natural resources from there (like raw materials, gold, silver, and food). This land is called a "colony" because it is owned by the mother country. The mother country takes the natural resources back to its homeland and has workers use the resources to make manufactured goods (like using a tree to make furniture, silver to make forks and knives, and cotton to make clothing). The mother country then sells these manufactured goods (like furniture, forks, knives, and clothing) for a higher price than they paid.

The triangular trade is an example of mercantilism, or the idea that the mother country gains wealth and power by controlling the trade of its colonies. By taking products from America and then either creating manufactured goods or selling the original products to other countries (foreign markets), England was able to profit from the wealth of goods found in America. American merchants would not be able to deal with another country directly, but would have to operate within the rules that the English government established for them.

1. Looking at the Triangular Trade Map, who is the mother country?

England

2. In your own words, describe mercantilism.

The colonies job is to help England become more rich and powerful.

3. Does mercantilism benefit the English colonists in the Americas? Why or Why Not?

No, because the colonists have to pay higher prices for the end product.

