

CHAPTER
20

Section 2

SKILLBUILDER PRACTICE *Comparing and Contrasting*

Comparing and contrasting means looking for similarities and differences between events, places, institutions, ideas, or people. In this section you read about conflicts between Native Americans and English settlers. By comparing and contrasting Native American views with those held by Europeans, you can begin to understand some of the reasons for these conflicts. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. (See Skillbuilder Handbook)

Disputes Over Land and Religion

Disputes between the Puritans and Native Americans arose over two issues—land and religion. For every acre a colonial farmer needed to support life, a Native American needed 20 for hunting, fishing, and agriculture. To Native Americans, no one owned the land—it was there for everyone to use. Native Americans saw land treaties with Europeans as mere agreements in which they received gifts—blankets, guns, iron tools, or whatever—to share the land for a limited time. Europeans, however, saw the treaties as a one-time deal in which Native Americans permanently sold their land to new owners.

Similar misunderstandings existed over religion. Puritans considered Native Americans heathens—people without a faith. At first, Puritans tried earnestly to convert them, which many Native Americans resisted. Over time as hostility between the two groups grew, many Puritans tended to view the Native Americans as agents of the devil who presented a constant threat to their godly society. Rather than convert the Native Americans, the New England colonists set out to remove or destroy native societies. For their part, Native Americans developed a similarly hard view toward the white invaders.

1. Why did the Native Americans need more land than European colonists? _____

2. How did Native American and European views of land ownership differ? _____

How did these differences affect how both groups viewed land treaties? _____

3. Why were the Puritans at first so interested in converting the Native Americans? _____

How did Native Americans react to attempts to convert them? _____

4. What differences would you say finally led to war between the two groups? _____
