

Those Darned Navigation Acts! - Simulating Colonial Trade

It is the early 1700's and the colonial economy is rolling along quite well, despite the English attempts to control colonial exports. It seems those Navigation Acts, while annoying, can be avoided most of the time. Now is your chance to taste financial success in the colonies. You will each be assigned a role to play – a farmer, tobacco grower, lumber merchant, ship builder, British Trading Company Officer, British Customs Official or Banker.

You will be given some starting money and some starting goods to work with, as well as a goal or set of goals to accomplish during the simulation. You must work quickly and be careful not waste your money, because time is short! Be careful of those pesky customs officials, for they are always trying to make sure Mother England gets her cut too. You are free to trade money or goods to achieve your particular goals, but you must stick with the pre-set price minimums (at least until told otherwise). You must also pay all taxes demanded of you, and follow those Navigation Acts when the customs officials are looking. Use premium items such as whale oil to try to make a bit of an extra profit when you can. Finally, be careful not to run out of money or get into too much debt. If you can't pay your debts when called in, you are OUT! Be sure to have fun!

Make sure to listen carefully for updates on world trading conditions and important announcements, like the passage of time.

Please note that prices are not really accurate, mostly to make the game easier to play.

Last but not least, make sure you use and hang on to your notes and tally sheet because you'll need to answer some questions at the end of the simulation (which is how you get credit for participating).

Events

Announce to the class periodically throughout the simulation to adjust trading conditions. Feel free to improvise or add events as needed.

For the next three minutes, the price list does not have to be followed. You can bargain for whatever prices you wish.

News Flash! A merchant ship carrying a large store of goods has been sunk in a terrible storm off the coast of New England. Everyone here who has the following items loses two barrels of turpentine, 1 ton of tobacco, 2 bundles of lumber, and 3 bushels of wheat.

A hurricane has struck the southern coast causing a disruption of tobacco production. For the next five minutes, the price of tobacco is doubled.

Attention! A freak forest fire has swept through New England, destroyed thousands of acres of trees. The price of lumber is doubled for the next four minutes.

An unusually good crop this year has brought about a bounty of wheat. The price of wheat is £3/bushel for the next five minutes!

There has been a terrible battle with Indians in Georgia. All farmers and tobacco farmers lose £5!

A fashion wave is sweeping through Europe. Demand for cloth goes up. All British Trading Company Officers must immediately purchase 5 bundles of cloth from someone.

It looks like a bad year for farmers in the Southern colonies. As a result the price of wheat and tobacco are now double the values on the price list until further notice.

An excess of new ships has flooded the market. All ships are now worth £50 until further notice.

Pirates in the Caribbean have reduced the amount of goods available in the colonies. Add £5 to the price of all items until further notice.

Demand for whale oil, British Ale, and Big Mackerel is up in the colonies. Anyone with those items may turn them into the bank for double what they paid for them (but for no less than £10).

Periodically at Specific Intervals:

A year has passed! All debts must be repaid with interest! If you have borrowed money from a banker you must now pay your debt. If you haven't the cash or goods to trade, you are OUT!

A new crop has been harvested! Farmers get 10 bushels of wheat, and Tobacco farmers get 10 tons of tobacco. Lumber merchants get ten bundles of lumber.

It's tax day! Tax collectors will now collect a £5 tax payable only in cash. If you can't pay, you are OUT!

The British are watching! Customs officials collect £3 from all [choose a role].

Tobacco Grower/Plantation Owner

Goal: Sell as much tobacco as you can; end with as much money as you can, but at least £500.

Starting Money: £20

Starting Goods: 30 tons of tobacco

Special Goal: You will receive an additional £10 for each barrel of ale you have at the end of the game.

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

Lumber Merchant

Goal: Sell as much lumber as you can; end with as money as you can, but at least £250.

Starting Money: £20

Starting Goods: 30 bundles of lumber

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

Ship Builder

Goal: 1st buy 50 bundles of lumber, and 5 barrels of turpentine.

Then sell as many ships as you can; end with as much money as you can, but at least £250.

Starting Money: £250

Starting Goods: 10 barrels of turpentine

Special Goal: You will receive an additional £10 for each jar of whale oil you have at the end of the game.

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

Farmer

Goal: Sell as many bushels of wheat as you can; end with as much money as you can, but at least £250.

Starting Money: £20

Starting Goods: 30 bushels of wheat
10 bundles of cloth

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

British Trading Company Officer

Goal: Buy as many goods as you can, but you must end with at least 50 bushels of wheat or 50 tons of tobacco, and 5 ships. You should also try to earn as much money as you can as well.

Starting Money: £50

Starting Goods: 20 bundles of wheat
20 bundles of lumber
10 tons of tobacco
20 barrels of turpentine
50 bundles of cloth

Special Goal: You will receive an additional £10 for each bushel of indigo or each big mackerel you have at the end of the game.

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

British Customs Official (Special)

Your job is to monitor trading. If you see a transaction, you may collect a tax, or duty, on it. Collect 5% of the total value of the exchange (i.e. total money being paid for an item or items, or total value of all items in the trade based in the price sheet).

Goal: Collect taxes and import duties as directed. Remember, cash only! You may accept bribes, such as lower amounts of money, or even other goods but your final goal is to end with as much money as possible.

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

Banker (Special)

Goal: Loan money at 10% interest. Collect debts as directed. End the game with as much money as possible.

Notes/Tally Sheet

Use this tally sheet to record each transaction and record goods and money exchanged.

Price List

These are the minimum prices for these items. You may try to charge more for these items if you wish, but you may not charge or pay less than the amounts listed below, unless told otherwise. Listen carefully for world events that may cause price fluctuations.

Starting Items:

Tobacco	£10/ton
Wheat	£5/bushel
Lumber	£5/bundle
Turpentine	£5/barrel
Cloth	£1/bundle
Ship	£100 each

Misc. Items:

Barrel of Fine British Ale	£10/barrel
Jar of Whale Oil	£1/jar
Bushel of Indigo	£15/bushel
One Big Mackerel	£5/fish

Those Darned Navigation Acts! - Simulating Colonial Trade Worksheet

Name: _____ Class: _____

Directions: You didn't think you were going to get out of this without doing any work, did you? Don't worry though, no matter how successful you were for our simulation, these questions should be a breeze. Just answer them using your tally sheet from the game. Use the back of this page or a sheet of loose leaf if you run out of room.

1. What was your role? _____
2. What were your goals for the game?
3. Did you achieve your goals, exceed them, or did you not quite get there?
4. How did the Navigation Acts affect your success?
5. Did you find it more difficult to be successful when you had to follow the Navigation Acts? Why?
6. Do you think this simulation made it seem easier or more difficult to be successful than in an actual colonial economy? Why?
7. What would you do differently if you could do this simulation over again?

1 Ton of Tobacco	1 Ton of Tobacco
1 Ton of Tobacco	1 Ton of Tobacco
1 Ton of Tobacco	1 Ton of Tobacco
1 Ton of Tobacco	1 Ton of Tobacco
1 Ton of Tobacco	1 Ton of Tobacco

1 Bushel of Wheat	1 Bushel of Wheat
1 Bushel of Wheat	1 Bushel of Wheat
1 Bushel of Wheat	1 Bushel of Wheat
1 Bushel of Wheat	1 Bushel of Wheat
1 Bushel of Wheat	1 Bushel of Wheat

1 Bundle of Lumber	1 Bundle of Lumber
1 Bundle of Lumber	1 Bundle of Lumber
1 Bundle of Lumber	1 Bundle of Lumber
1 Bundle of Lumber	1 Bundle of Lumber
1 Bundle of Lumber	1 Bundle of Lumber

1 Barrel of Turpentine	1 Barrel of Turpentine
1 Barrel of Turpentine	1 Barrel of Turpentine
1 Barrel of Turpentine	1 Barrel of Turpentine
1 Barrel of Turpentine	1 Barrel of Turpentine
1 Barrel of Turpentine	1 Barrel of Turpentine

1 Bundle of Cloth	1 Bundle of Cloth
1 Bundle of Cloth	1 Bundle of Cloth
1 Bundle of Cloth	1 Bundle of Cloth
1 Bundle of Cloth	1 Bundle of Cloth
1 Bundle of Cloth	1 Bundle of Cloth

1 Barrel of Fine British Ale	1 Barrel of Fine British Ale
1 Barrel of Fine British Ale	1 Barrel of Fine British Ale
1 Barrel of Fine British Ale	1 Barrel of Fine British Ale
1 Barrel of Fine British Ale	1 Barrel of Fine British Ale
1 Barrel of Fine British Ale	1 Barrel of Fine British Ale

1 Jar of Whale Oil	1 Jar of Whale Oil
1 Jar of Whale Oil	1 Jar of Whale Oil
1 Jar of Whale Oil	1 Jar of Whale Oil
1 Jar of Whale Oil	1 Jar of Whale Oil
1 Jar of Whale Oil	1 Jar of Whale Oil

1 Bushel of Indigo	1 Bushel of Indigo
1 Bushel of Indigo	1 Bushel of Indigo
1 Bushel of Indigo	1 Bushel of Indigo
1 Bushel of Indigo	1 Bushel of Indigo
1 Bushel of Indigo	1 Bushel of Indigo

1 Big Mackerel	1 Big Mackerel
1 Big Mackerel	1 Big Mackerel
1 Big Mackerel	1 Big Mackerel
1 Big Mackerel	1 Big Mackerel
1 Big Mackerel	1 Big Mackerel

10 Tons of Tobacco	10 Tons of Tobacco
10 Tons of Tobacco	10 Tons of Tobacco
10 Tons of Tobacco	10 Tons of Tobacco
10 Tons of Tobacco	10 Tons of Tobacco
10 Tons of Tobacco	10 Tons of Tobacco

10 Bushels of Wheat	10 Bushels of Wheat
10 Bushels of Wheat	10 Bushels of Wheat
10 Bushels of Wheat	10 Bushels of Wheat
10 Bushels of Wheat	10 Bushels of Wheat
10 Bushels of Wheat	10 Bushels of Wheat

10 Bundles of Lumber	10 Bundles of Lumber
10 Bundles of Lumber	10 Bundles of Lumber
10 Bundles of Lumber	10 Bundles of Lumber
10 Bundles of Lumber	10 Bundles of Lumber
10 Bundles of Lumber	10 Bundles of Lumber

10 Barrels of Turpentine	10 Barrels of Turpentine
10 Barrels of Turpentine	10 Barrels of Turpentine
10 Barrels of Turpentine	10 Barrels of Turpentine
10 Barrels of Turpentine	10 Barrels of Turpentine
10 Barrels of Turpentine	10 Barrels of Turpentine

10 Bundles of Cloth	10 Bundles of Cloth
10 Bundles of Cloth	10 Bundles of Cloth
10 Bundles of Cloth	10 Bundles of Cloth
10 Bundles of Cloth	10 Bundles of Cloth
10 Bundles of Cloth	10 Bundles of Cloth

1 Big Ship	1 Big Ship
1 Big Ship	1 Big Ship
1 Big Ship	1 Big Ship
1 Big Ship	1 Big Ship
1 Big Ship	1 Big Ship

£10

£10

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