

6-12 FRAMEWORK

TEACHING HARD HISTORY

A FRAMEWORK
FOR TEACHING
AMERICAN SLAVERY



TEACHING TOLERANCE

ABOUT THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

The Southern Poverty Law Center, based in Montgomery, Alabama, is a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) civil rights organization founded in 1971 and dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry, and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of society.

ABOUT TEACHING TOLERANCE

A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center founded in 1991, Teaching Tolerance is dedicated to helping teachers and schools prepare children and youth to be active participants in a diverse democracy.

The program publishes *Teaching Tolerance* magazine three times a year and provides free educational materials, lessons and tools for educators committed to implementing anti-bias practices in their classrooms and schools. To see all of the resources available from Teaching Tolerance, visit tolerance.org.



Teaching **Hard History**

**A 6-12 FRAMEWORK FOR
TEACHING AMERICAN SLAVERY**



TEACHING
TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

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History is not the past. It is the present. We
carry our history with us. We are our history.

—JAMES BALDWIN, “BLACK ENGLISH: A DISHONEST ARGUMENT”

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Preface | 4 |
| Introduction | 8 |
| Key Concepts and Summary Objectives | 10 |
| Pre-Colonial and Colonial Era to 1763 | 12 |
| The American Revolution and the Constitution 1763-1787 | 18 |
| Slavery in the Early Republic 1787-1808 | 24 |
| The Changing Face of Slavery 1808-1848 | 26 |
| The Sectional Crisis and Civil War 1848-1877 | 38 |
| Acknowledgments | 52 |

Preface

America's founders enumerated their lofty goals for the new nation in the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution. Racial justice, however, was not one of their objectives. Rather, the founders sought to preserve white supremacy by embedding in America's guiding document protections for slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. In this way, they guaranteed that racial inequality would persist for generations.

Racial justice, however, is the key to achieving the democratic aims spelled out in the Constitution's Preamble. As is often said, "No one is free until everyone is free." But to achieve racial justice, we the people have to come to terms with America's long history of racial injustice. The starting point for this reckoning process is an honest examination of slavery.

Some say that slavery was our country's original sin, but it is much more than that. Slavery is our country's origin. The enslavement of Indigenous people allowed the British, the Spanish and other European colonizers to gain a foothold in the Americas. The enslavement of Africans propelled the growth of the English colonies, transforming them from far-flung, forgotten outposts of the British Empire to glimmering jewels in the crown of England. And slavery, together with the dispossession of Indigenous people, was a driving power behind the new nation's territorial expansion and industrial maturation, making the United States a mighty force in the Americas and beyond.

Slavery was also our country's Achilles' heel, responsible for its near undoing. When the Southern states seceded, they did so expressly to preserve slavery. So wholly

dependent were white Southerners on the institution that they took up arms against their own to keep African Americans in bondage and to prevent the prohibition of slavery in western lands taken from Native nations. White Southerners simply could not allow a world in which they did not have absolute authority to control black labor and Indigenous land. The central role that slavery played in the development of the United States is beyond dispute.

And yet, we the people do not like to talk about slavery, or even think about it, much less teach it or learn it. The implications of doing so unnerve us. If James Madison, the principal architect of the Constitution, could hold people in bondage his entire life, refusing to free a single soul even upon his death, then what does that say about our nation's founders? About our nation itself?

Slavery is hard history. It is hard to make sense of the genocide that started it. It is hard to comprehend the inhumanity that defined it. It is hard to discuss the violence that sustained it. It is hard to teach the ideology of white supremacy that justified it. And it is hard to learn about those who abided it.

We the people have a deep seated aversion to hard history because we are uncomfort-

able with the implications it raises about the past as well as the present. So we pretend that the most troubling parts of our past simply do not exist. We ignore the fact that slavery prevailed in Massachusetts as well as in Mississippi. Or we rationalize evil, dismissing Thomas Jefferson's sexual predations with the enslaved girl Sally Hemings, who bore him six children, as a wistful May-December romance, rather than what it was: rape. Indeed, we revel at the thought of Jefferson proclaiming, "All men are created equal," but ridicule the prospect of Hemings declaring, "Me too." Or we fabricate history. We conjure up false narratives about secession, reimagining traitors as national heroes and insisting that the cornerstone of the Confederacy was something other than slavery.

We the people are much more comfortable with the Disney version of history, in which villains are easily spotted, suffering never lasts long, heroes invariably prevail and life always gets better. We prefer to pick and choose what aspects of the past to hold on to, gladly jettisoning that which makes us uneasy. We would rather suspend reality watching the animated *Pocahontas* than trouble our minds with *Reel Injun*, an eye-opening documentary on Hollywood's repugnant portrayal of Indigenous people.

Literary performer and educator Regie Gibson had the truth of it when he said, "Our problem as Americans is we actually hate history. What we love is nostalgia."

But our antipathy for hard history is only partly responsible for this sentimental longing for a fictitious past. It is also propelled by political considerations. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, white Southerners looking to bolster white supremacy and justify Jim Crow depicted the Confederacy as a defender of democracy and protector of



white womanhood. To perpetuate this falsehood, they littered the country with monuments to the Lost Cause.

Our preference for nostalgia and for a history that never happened is not without consequence. We miseducate students because of it. Although we teach them that slavery happened, we fail to provide the detail or historical context they need to make sense of its origin, evolution, demise and legacy. In some cases, we minimize slavery's significance so much that we render its impact—on people and on the nation—inconsequential. And in almost every case, we ignore the precursor to African enslavement in what is now the United States. We completely skip over the



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enslavement of several million Indigenous people throughout the Americas. As a result, students lack a basic knowledge and understanding of the institution of slavery, from early European colonists' near-total dependence on enslaved Indigenous labor to slavery as the central cause of the Civil War.

This is profoundly troubling because American slavery is

the key to understanding the complexity of our past. How can we fully comprehend the original intent of the Bill of Rights without acknowledging that its author, James Madison, enslaved other people? How can we understand that foundational document without understanding that its author was well versed not only in the writings of Greek philosophers and Enlightenment thinkers, but also in Virginia's slave code? How can we ignore the influence of that code, that "bill of rights denied," which withheld from African Americans the very same civil liberties Madison sought to safeguard for white people?

Our discomfort with hard history and our fondness for historical fiction also lead us to make bad public policy. We choose to ignore the fact that when slavery ended, white Southerners carried the mindsets of enslavers with them into the post-emancipation period, creating new exploitative labor arrangements such as sharecropping, new disenfranchisement mechanisms including literacy tests and new discriminatory social systems, namely Jim Crow. It took African Americans more than a century to eliminate these legal barriers to equality, but that has not been enough to erase race-based disparities in every aspect of American life, from education and employment to wealth and well-being. In much the same way, we turn a blind eye toward the federal government's dismissive and discriminatory treatment of Indigenous people, which continued long

after the land grabs of the early 19th century and the forced relocation of Native nations from their ancestral homes as a part of the Trail of Tears. As a result, public policies tend to treat disparities involving African Americans and Indigenous people as simply a product of poor personal decision-making, rather than acknowledging that they are the result of racialized systems and structures that restrict choice and limit opportunity.

Understanding American slavery is vital to understanding racial inequality today. The formal and informal barriers to equal rights erected after emancipation, which defined the parameters of the color line for more than a century, were built on a foundation constructed during slavery. Our narrow understanding of the institution, however, prevents us from seeing this long legacy and leads policymakers to try to fix people instead of addressing the historically rooted causes of their problems.

The intractable nature of racial inequality is a part of the tragedy that is American slavery. But the saga of slavery is not exclusively a story of despair; hard history is not hopeless history.

Finding the promise and possibility within hard history requires considering the lives of the enslaved on their own terms. Trapped in an unimaginable hell, enslaved African Americans forged unbreakable bonds with one another. Indeed, no one knew better the meaning and importance of family and community than the enslaved. They fought back too, in the field and in the house, resisting enslavers in ways that ranged from feigned ignorance to flight and armed rebellion.

In much the same way, we need to consider the lives of Indigenous people, including those who were held in bondage. Indigenous people experienced a horrific genocide, but they survived this holocaust, buoyed by a fierce determination and resistive spirit that reflected longstanding cultural traditions and political practices.

Indeed, Indigenous people fought back just like enslaved Africans. In 1680, the Pueblo nations revolted against Spanish colonizers, driving the invaders out of their ancestral home in present-day New Mexico and keeping them away for a dozen years. The Yamasee rebelled too, forging an alliance with other Native nations in the British-controlled Carolina colony. In 1715, they killed one in 10 Europeans in a bold bid to throw off the yoke of colonial oppression.

Resistance enabled Native nations to survive European colonization and American territorial expansion. Despite the stubborn insistence that Indigenous people have disappeared, a tale spun to ease our anxiety about crimes against humanity committed in the name of advancing American civilization, Indigenous people remain—profoundly impacted, but with their cultures vibrant and communities strong.

America's founders were visionaries, but their vision was severely limited. Slavery blinded them, preventing them from seeing everyone as equal. We the people have the opportunity to broaden the founders' vision, to make racial equality real. But we can no longer avoid the most troubling aspects of our past. We have to have the courage to teach hard history, beginning with slavery.

Introduction

Welcome to Teaching Tolerance’s revised 6–12 framework for teaching American slavery.¹ The team of educators and scholars who worked on this project are passionate about its importance and pleased to share this outline of the components of the framework along with advice for how to use them.

Our goal is to inspire a widespread commitment to robust and effective teaching about American slavery in K–12 classrooms. This history is fundamental to understanding our nation’s past and its present. If the topic is taught with inadequate breadth or depth, students are unable to draw connections between historical events and the concurrent struggles for racial equality or to contextualize how the world they inhabit today was shaped by the institution of slavery and its ideological progeny, white supremacy.

In 2018, Teaching Tolerance issued *A Framework for Teaching American Slavery*. The framework was welcomed and has been widely used by teachers, scholars and educational leaders at all levels, many of whom have engaged with us to expand the work.

This new edition tells a substantially more inclusive story about American slavery—one that includes the enslavement of Indigenous people. This framework and its elementary companion are the results of extensive work with historians and educators. It has many additions, subtractions and improvements to its first iteration. We are confident that it will improve upon the support we offer to educators seeking to teach the essential history of American slavery.

1 The Framework begins with 10 “**Key Concepts**,” important ideas that students

need to truly understand if they are to grasp the historical significance of slavery. The Key Concepts also serve as tools educators can use to structure their teaching.

2 These ideas are expanded in the chronological scope and sequence, which breaks the framework into five eras to provide a blueprint for integrating American slavery across the entire span of pre-1877 American history. Each era is designated with a section title and with dates so teachers can skip to a particular time period or consult the framework continuously as they move through their courses.

3 Each era also contains “**Summary Objectives**,” broad student learning outcomes related to the era. There are 22 Summary Objectives in this document. These objectives map to the Key Concepts. (See page 10.)

4 Beneath each Summary Objective, the framework includes two sections providing additional support for teaching that objective. Because the literature on American slavery is vast and we don’t expect all teachers to be content experts, we’ve included a section titled “**What else should my students know?**” for each Summary Objective. This section provides key content at a more granular level.

5 The last section of each Summary Objective is called “**How can I teach this?**” This section provides information about critical resources that can help educators plan lessons for each objective. Many of these resources—and scores of other primary and secondary sources—are available for download in the Teaching Hard History Text Library.

¹ “American” is used instead of “United States” because the framework addresses the history of slavery beginning before the colonization of lands that are now the United States.

Pre-Colonial and Colonial Era | to 1763

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 1

Students will recognize that slavery existed around the world prior to the European settlement of North America.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPT 1

What else should my students know?

1.A Before the 15th century, most enslaved people were not Africans. Even the plantation system itself did not begin with African labor: Until the 1450s, European sugar planters in the Mediterranean imported enslaved laborers from parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

1.B Slavery was widespread in larger African kingdoms (the Kongo and Asante, for example). It was quite limited in smaller societies in regions like the Upper Guinea Coast.

1.C In many African societies, people became enslaved when they were captured during war. The status of enslaved people changed as they learned the customs and integrated into their captors' community. Slavery was not always intergenerational; the children of enslaved parents were not necessarily enslaved.

1.D Slavery was a part of some Native American societies before European settlement. In some Native American societies, slavery could be socially alienating. But others had a built-in flexibility about slavery, so enslaved people could integrate into their societies and even become people of power and influence.

1.E European colonists in North America bought, sold and enslaved Native Americans. Some white colonists engaged in wars for the explicit purpose of acquiring Native Americans

to enslave; some colonists financed or otherwise encouraged Native American allies to engage in wars with other Native Americans for the purpose of acquiring Native Americans to enslave. In South Carolina, English enslavement of Native Americans was so pervasive and lucrative that it financed the rise of American rice plantations.

How can I teach this?

The BBC program *Story of Africa* and its accompanying website allow users to search for information about slavery and the slave trade in Africa. t-t.site/story-africa

"Indian Slavery in the Americas" by Alan Gallay is a short essay on the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History website, available to K-12 teachers with a free account. It is accessible as a reading assignment for upper-level students or can be used as teacher preparation. t-t.site/indian-slavery

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 2

Students will be able to describe the slave trade from Africa to the Americas.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10

What else should my students know?

2.A In the 1400s, Portugal was the earliest participant in the transatlantic slave trade. It was followed by other European nations.

2.B Western Hemispheric destinations of captive Africans included South America, the Caribbean and North America.

2.C European slave traders participated in



KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which was practiced by Europeans prior to their arrival in the Americas, was important to all of the colonial powers and essential to all of the European North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the economy across British North America and, later, the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were enshrined in the founding documents, state constitutions, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the masters and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit obscured by racism."

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their masters to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, class, labor performed, size of enslaving and controlled space.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and cause of slavery.

9. Enslaved and free people of African descent had profound impact on American culture, including literature and slavery, abolition and civil rights movements that continue to influence the nation.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans coped with, resisted, sought and desired.

and fundamentally changed the existing slave trade in Africa. The demand for enslaved people in the European colonies of the Western Hemisphere greatly expanded the African slave trade beyond its traditional wartime context.

2.D Europeans believed that dark skin color (which they hyperbolically described as "black"), lack of Christianity and different styles of dress were evidence that Africans were less civilized.

2.E The Middle Passage was the voyage of enslaved people from the west coast of Africa to the Americas. Enslaved people endured traumatic conditions on slavers' ships, including cramped quarters, meager rations and physical and sexual assault.

How can I teach this?

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database maps the destinations of ships of the Middle Passage and allows users to search slave trade voyages

based on data including (but not limited to) origin, destination or date. t-t.site/slave-voyages

"Stowage on the Slave Ship *Brookes*, 1788" represents 18th-century guidelines for transporting enslaved people during the Middle Passage. Abolitionists used this image to convey the horrifying conditions enslaved people suffered while being forcibly transported from Africa to the Americas.

Portuguese chronicler Gomes Eannes de Azurara compiled accounts of the slave trade circa 1450. His description of the division of captives demonstrates the prejudices of the Europeans and the horrors of the slave trade.

Excerpts from slaver John Newton's journal describe the terrors of the Middle Passage, including disease, suicide attempts and sexual assault. He also discusses the ways enslaved people resisted their captors, including plans for violent rebellion.

Available through the Teaching Tolerance website, tolerance.org, the Teaching Hard History Text Library provides educators with free access to a large collection of primary and secondary sources they can use as they implement the framework in their curriculum and their classrooms. The library is searchable by topic, author or grade level, and each text includes an introduction and reading questions for students.

Any national effort to improve our teaching about enslavement must help educators integrate this history into the existing curricula. It must make clear connections between the institution of slavery and the major events of American history. It must provide

nuanced primary and secondary sources that educators and students can rely on to further meaningful inquiry and dialogue. It must also acknowledge the causal connection between American slavery and white supremacy, an ideology that disrupts intergroup relationships and undermines justice in our country even today. It is our hope that the Key Concepts, Summary Objectives and additional teaching resources presented in *A 6–12 Framework for Teaching American Slavery* accomplish these goals and, in doing so, significantly raise the quality of our national dialogue about race, racism and racial reconciliation.

Each chronological era includes a description of how to teach the relevant Summary Objectives. The blue links indicate resources found on the Teaching Tolerance website. The purple links indicate external supporting resources.

Key Concepts and Summary Objectives

The Key Concepts are important ideas that students must truly understand if they are to grasp the historical significance of slavery. They also serve as tools educators can use to structure their teaching.

Summary Objectives are broad student learning outcomes related to each chronological era in the framework. Each of the 22 Summary Objectives maps to at least one Key Concept.

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.*

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

* Ira Berlin, “Foreword: The Short Course for Bringing Slavery into the Classroom in Ten Not-So-Easy Pieces” in *Understanding and Teaching American Slavery*, ed. Bethany Jay and Cynthia Lyerly (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016), xviii.

SUMMARY OBJECTIVES

KEY CONCEPT

PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL ERA | TO 1763

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 1. Students will recognize that slavery existed around the world prior to the European invasion of North America, changing forms depending on time and place. The enslaved often were perceived as outsiders: captives in war, the vanquished or colonized, or ethnic/religious others. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 2. Students will describe the nature and extent of colonial enslavement of Indigenous people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 3. Students will describe the slave trade from Africa to the Americas. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 4. Students will demonstrate the impact of slavery on the development of the French, British and Spanish colonies in North America. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND THE CONSTITUTION | 1763-1787

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 5. Students will describe the roles that slavery, Native nations and African Americans played in the Revolutionary War. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 6. Students will demonstrate the ways that the Constitution provided direct and indirect protection to slavery and imbued enslavers and slave states with increased political power. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SLAVERY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC | 1787-1808

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 7. Students will examine how the Revolutionary War affected the institution of slavery in the new nation and the ways that slavery shaped domestic and foreign policy in the early Republic. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

THE CHANGING FACE OF SLAVERY | 1808-1848

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 8. Students will examine how the expanding cotton economy spurred Indian Removal and the domestic slave trade. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 9. Students will describe the principal ways the labor of enslaved people was organized and controlled in what is now the United States. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 10. Students will analyze the growth of the abolitionist movement in the 1830s and the slaveholding states' view of the movement as a physical, economic and political threat. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 11. Students will recognize that enslaved people resisted slavery in ways that ranged from violence to smaller, everyday means of asserting their humanity and opposing their enslavers. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 12. Students will discuss the nature, persistence and impact of the spiritual beliefs and cultures of enslaved people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

THE SECTIONAL CRISIS AND CIVIL WAR | 1848-1877

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 13. Students will examine the expansion of slavery as a key factor in the domestic and foreign policy decisions of the United States in the 19th century. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 14. Students will analyze the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln and the subsequent decision that several slave states made to secede from the Union to ensure the preservation and expansion of slavery. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 15. Students will examine how Union policies concerning slavery and African American military service and describe how free black and enslaved communities affected the Civil War. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 16. Students will examine how Indigenous people participated in and were affected by the Civil War. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 17. Students will recognize that slavery continued in many forms in many forms through most of the 19th century in what is now the United States. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 18. Students will examine the ways that people who were enslaved tried to claim their freedom after the Civil War. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 19. Students will examine the ways that the federal government's policies affected the lives of formerly enslaved people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 20. Students will examine the ways that white Southerners attempted to define freedom for freed African Americans. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 21. Students will examine the impact of the Compromise of 1877 and the removal of federal troops from the former Confederacy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- 22. Students will examine the ways that the legacies of slavery, white supremacy and settler colonialism continue to affect life in what is now the United States. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Pre-Colonial and Colonial Era | to 1763

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 1

Students will recognize that slavery existed around the world prior to the European invasion of North America, changing forms depending on time and place. The enslaved often were perceived as outsiders: captives in war, the vanquished or colonized, or ethnic or religious others.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPT 1

What else should my students know?

1.A Slavery is the holding of people through force, fraud or coercion for purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labor so that the enslaver can extract profit.²

1.B While people have enslaved others in many ways in different times and places, unfree labor is not always slavery. For example, chattel slavery is an intergenerational system of slavery where individuals are held as property and traded as commodities. Indentured servants are not enslaved. They sell their labor for a certain number of years to pay a debt.

1.C Europeans enslaved people long before colonization. Slavery was widespread in the Roman Empire, and later justified on the basis of religion during the Crusades. Until the 1450s, European sugar planters in the Mediterranean imported enslaved laborers from parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

1.D Slavery was common in Africa and the Americas before European invasion. Arab

traders enslaved and sold millions of Africans beginning in the eighth century. Enslavement was common in the Mayan empire. When Europeans arrived, most enslaved people in Africa and the Americas were war captives. Once taken, their lives differed. In some societies, slavery could be socially alienating, with enslaved people considered as labor, prestige goods or expendable. In other societies, enslaved people could integrate into kinship networks and even become people of power and influence. In North America, as in Africa, European intervention greatly expanded slavery in scale, scope and consequence.

How can I teach this?

The BBC program *Story of Africa* and its accompanying website allow users to search for information about slavery and the slave trade in Africa. [t-t.site/slavery1](https://www.bbc.com/history/3rd_1000_years_of_africa)

Paul T. Conrad's chapter "Why You Can't Teach the History of U.S. Slavery without American Indians" in the edited volume *Why You Can't Teach United States History Without American Indians* offers teaching suggestions for how to engage the histories of, for example, Chaco Canyon, Cabeza de Vaca and the early trade of enslaved Indigenous people in the Carolinas. These lessons help students think about what slavery is, how it existed in North America before the arrival of Europeans and how European involvement changed the practice on the continent. [t-t.site/slavery3](https://www.bbc.com/history/3rd_1000_years_of_africa)

2. Adapted from *Free the Slaves*. [t-t.site/slavery2](https://www.bbc.com/history/3rd_1000_years_of_africa)



KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 2

Students will describe the nature and extent of colonial enslavement of Indigenous people.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 1, 2 & 4

What else should my students know?

2.A Throughout the Americas, Europeans enslaved between 2.5 million and 5 million Indigenous people. In much of what is now North America, Indigenous people were bought and sold until the late 19th century.

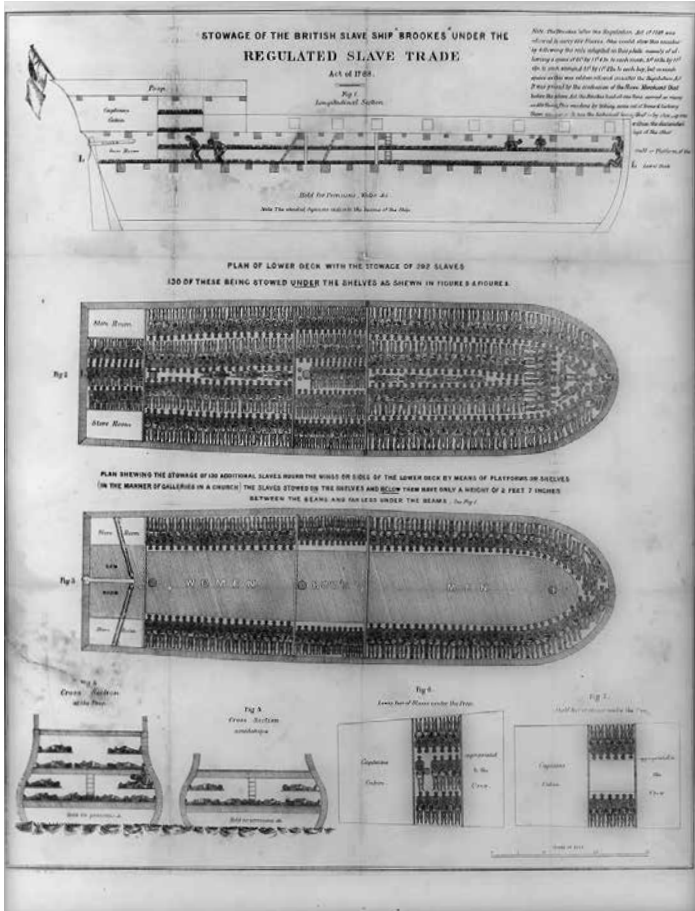
2.B All European colonies enslaved Indigenous people for profit, justifying the practice because of perceived racial and cultural inferiority. Many enslaved Indigenous people were forced to labor far from home, as evidenced by the mass export of women and children to Europe and the Caribbean, often called the "Reverse Middle Passage." Sometimes the profit from these sales was used to purchase enslaved Africans to work in the American colonies.

2.C European pursuit of enslaved Indigenous labor caused widespread warfare. Often, colonists financed or otherwise coerced their Indigenous allies to engage in wars with other Indigenous peoples for the purpose of acquiring people to enslave. Some Native nations initiated conflicts and capture to profit from selling captives to Europeans.

2.D The violence of slavery further devastated Native nations already weakened by European-introduced diseases. Because of the combined effects of disease, slavery and war, the Indigenous population in the Americas declined from 60 million people to as few as 4 million by the 1600s. These populations later rebounded significantly, and today there are about 5.2 million Indigenous people living in the United States alone.

How can I teach this?

New research suggests that the European invasion of the Americas may have resulted



“Stowage on the Slave Ship Brookes, 1788” represents 18th-century guidelines for transporting enslaved people during the Middle Passage. Abolitionists used this image to convey the horrifying conditions enslaved people suffered while being forcibly transported from Africa to the Americas.

in the deaths of as much as 90 percent of the continent’s Indigenous population. [t-t.site/slavery4](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

Enslaving Indigenous people was a primary goal of many Spanish “explorers,” but most textbooks and memorials do not discuss this. Students should learn that Christopher Columbus and Ponce de León were enslavers and examine contemporary representations of these figures. [t-t.site/slavery5](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

To connect the past to the present, students should learn about Juan de Oñate, whose brutality toward Acoma captives is still the subject of protests in New Mexico. An episode of the podcast *99% Invisible* tells that story. Many statues were erected by Mexican American and Hispanic organizations to

commemorate “Spanish America” and are very controversial. [t-t.site/slavery6](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/) • [t-t.site/slavery7](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

Historians are still trying to figure out how many Indigenous people were enslaved in the Americas. Students should examine what their textbooks say about this practice and compare representations with current estimates.

An episode of the NPR podcast *Hidden Brain* provides useful context for examining the enslavement of Indigenous people. [t-t.site/slavery8](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

“Indian Slavery in the Americas” by Alan Galay is accessible as a reading assignment for upper-level students or can be used as teacher preparation. K–12 educators can create a school account for free access through the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. [t-t.site/slavery9](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

The Native History Project at Grinnell College offers sample lesson plans for teaching the history of Indigenous enslavement. [t-t.site/slavery10](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

For more on the colonial enslavement of Indigenous people, see Margaret Ellen Newell’s essay “The Changing Nature of Indian Slavery in New England, 1670–1720,” available through the website of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. [t-t.site/slavery11](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

“Written Out of History: Contemporary Native American Narratives of Enslavement,” available with a free login on Academia.edu, draws on oral traditions from contemporary Native nations to explore the history of Indigenous slavery. [t-t.site/slavery12](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

The National Humanities Center has excerpted accounts of the enslavement of Indigenous peoples in the Spanish Caribbean from 1495 to 1544. [t-t.site/slavery13](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/2018/05/14/stowage-on-the-slave-ship-brookes-1788/)

Slate has prepared an interactive graphic showing the names of all of the enslaved people in the colonies of New France between 1660 and 1760. It explains the trends in Indigenous slavery in New France and will help students to explore the impact of French culture on Indigenous populations.

t-t.site/slavery14

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 3

Students will describe the slave trade from Africa to the Americas.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10

What else should my students know?

3.A Western Hemispheric destinations of captive Africans included South America, the Caribbean and North America.

3.B European slave traders participated in and fundamentally changed the existing slave trade in Africa. The demand for enslaved people in the European colonies of the Western Hemisphere greatly expanded the African slave trade beyond taking people captive in war.

3.C Europeans argued that dark skin color (which they hyperbolically described as “black”), lack of Christianity and different styles of dress were evidence that Africans were less civilized. These were rationales for enslavement. Many believed that it was generally acceptable to enslave non-Christians.

3.D The Middle Passage was the voyage of enslaved people from the west coast of Africa to the Americas, usually via the Caribbean. Enslaved people endured traumatic conditions on slavers’ ships, including cramped quarters, meager rations and physical and sexual assault.

3.E Enslavers assigned monetary value to the people they traded. These prices varied over time and place. For much of the trade in

enslaved Native people, women and children were the most highly valued because they were thought to be less rebellious and more suited to household labor. Enslavers assigned different values to enslaved Africans and African Americans, particularly in the 19th century. Men in their mid-20s were the most expensive because of their physical strength; young enslaved African women were most valuable before puberty because of the assumption that they would have children who would be the property of their enslaver.

How can I teach this?

Slave Voyages maps the destinations of ships of the Middle Passage and allows users to search slave trade voyages based on data including (but not limited to) origin, destination or date. t-t.site/slavery221

Slate has developed a short interactive animation illustrating the transatlantic trade in enslaved people. With an accompanying short essay by Jamelle Bouie, the video offers a global perspective of the trade over time.

t-t.site/slavery21

“Stowage on the Slave Ship *Brookes*, 1788” represents 18th-century guidelines for transporting enslaved people during the Middle Passage. Abolitionists used this image to convey the horrifying conditions enslaved people suffered while being forcibly transported from Africa to the Americas.

t-t.site/slavery22

Portuguese chronicler Gomes Eannes de Azurara compiled accounts of the slave trade circa 1450. His description of the division of captives demonstrates the prejudices of the Europeans and the horrors of the slave trade.

t-t.site/slavery23

Excerpts from slaver John Newton’s journal describe the horrors of the Middle Passage, including disease, suicide attempts and

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4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

sexual assault. He also discusses the ways enslaved people resisted their captors, including plans for violent rebellion.

t-t.site/slavery24

The Clotilda was the last known ship carrying enslaved Africans to what is now the United States. Examining its recent discovery and the importance of this finding for descendent communities makes connections to the present.

t-t.site/slavery25

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 4

Students will demonstrate the impact of slavery on the development of the French, British and Spanish colonies in North America.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 4, 6, 8, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

4.A Enslaved labor was essential to the economy of all colonies in North America. Enslaved people produced the major agricultural and mineral exports of the colonial era, including tobacco, rice, sugar, indigo, silver and gold.

4.B Indigenous people were enslaved throughout all British colonies. The trade in enslaved Indigenous people contributed to transformative conflicts such as the Pequot War and King Philip's War. After the Yamasee War, several Southern Native nations rose up against British trade practices and nearly destroyed South Carolina. Thereafter, British colonies increasingly turned toward enslaving Africans in much larger numbers. The English in the Middle Colonies and New England were involved in slavery and its related trade, shipping foodstuffs, lumber and other necessities in exchange for rice, sugar and molasses produced by enslaved people.

4.C Enslavement varied in French colonies. In New France, most enslaved people were

Indigenous. In the Caribbean and Louisiana, French colonists developed vast plantations powered by enslaved African and Indigenous laborers. Intense work, poor diet and unrelenting heat made sugar plantations especially deadly. In the 1600s and 1700s, many enslaved people were Indigenous captives whom the French acquired through warfare or trade. But plummeting Indigenous population levels led the French to rely increasingly on the African slave trade.

4.D Enslavement was widespread under Spanish rule in the Americas. Colonists relied upon labor by enslaved Indigenous and African people forced to mine for gold and silver, grow crops and perform domestic labor. The monarchy's repeated attempts to constrain or outlaw the enslavement of Indigenous people did not end it. Colonists defied the crown outright or exploited exceptions, including the establishment of the *repartimiento* system whereby Indigenous people were legally free but wealthy colonizers still forced them to work. As Europeans sought to profit from enslaved labor, Indigenous peoples increasingly sold people captured during war instead of integrating captives into their communities. Some Native nations exploited colonial loopholes by taking control of the initial capture and sale of newly enslaved Indigenous people.

How can I teach this?

The resources of the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana offer valuable perspective on the history of enslavement in the French colonies. t-t.site/slavery26

In 1537, Spanish colonizers were alerted to the possibility of a plot among enslaved African and Indigenous people. The Viceroy of New Spain wrote to the king to explain the situation and recommend that the number

of Africans sent to the colony be reduced. The National Humanities Center provides excerpts from his report. [t-t.site/slavery27](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1793-slavery-report)

Slavery could be used as a punishment in a “holy war” or a “just war.” These designations came from legal and religious authorities, depending on place and time. If an enemy refused to accept Christ, they could be enslaved. The “Requirement,” a document widely used in the Spanish conquest of the Americas, warned populations that failure to accept Christianity would lead to enslavement. The Spanish used this concept to justify enslaving millions of Indigenous people. The National Humanities Center archives the full text of the 1510 *Requerimiento*. [t-t.site/slavery28](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1510-requerimiento)

The 1641 Massachusetts Body of Liberties was the first British North American colonial statute to formally establish the legality of slavery. [t-t.site/slavery29](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1641-massachusetts-body-of-liberties)

The Triangular Trade is one way to discuss Northern colonies’ complicity in slavery and the slave trade. Fish and foodstuffs from Northern colonies were traded to the West Indies to feed the enslaved population. In return, Northern merchants brought home sugar and molasses produced by the enslaved population. That sugar and molasses were distilled into rum in Northern distilleries. Northern enslavers and traders sent some of that rum to West Africa, where it was exchanged for enslaved Africans. Those enslaved Africans were sold to the West Indies and mainland British North America. The Crispus Attucks Museum has a useful graphic depicting the Triangular Trade. [t-t.site/slavery30](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/triangular-trade)

When studying the culture of slavery in Catholic colonies, the *Code Noir* (the set of French laws regulating slavery in Louisiana before

the Louisiana Purchase) is a useful resource. [t-t.site/slavery31](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/code-noir)

The British Library collection includes a letter that an English planter in the West Indies wrote in response to the growing abolitionist movement in England. The unnamed planter uses racist arguments to make the case that slavery is beneficial to African people. [t-t.site/slavery32](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1773-plantation-letter)

In a short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi shows how Virginian colonists protected slavery to ensure their wealth. [t-t.site/slavery33](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1773-plantation-letter)

Episode three of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast discusses the ways that enslavement was critical for the Northern economy. [t-t.site/slavery20](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/1773-plantation-letter)

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

The American Revolution and the Constitution | 1763–1787

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 5

Students will describe the roles that slavery, Native nations and African Americans played in the Revolutionary War.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 5, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

5.A The Declaration of Independence addressed slavery in several ways, including author Thomas Jefferson’s indictment of the crown’s initiation of the slave trade (deleted from the final draft) and the charge that the king had “excited domestic insurrection among us.” The document also describes Indigenous people as “merciless Indian Savages.”

5.B Free and enslaved people used the language of the Revolution to argue for their own rights. African American and Indigenous participation in the war was largely in pursuit of freedom rather than loyalty to a particular side.

5.C Many Native nations fought in the Revolutionary War on both sides, while others tried to remain neutral. Disagreements about the Revolution split the Iroquois Confederacy. Most nations allied with the British because they hoped to end further colonial encroachment. After the war, even nations that had sided with the colonists lost land and liberties.

5.D Black soldiers participated in the early Revolutionary battles of Lexington, Con-

cord and Bunker Hill, but General George Washington opposed including them in the Continental Army. After the British offered freedom to black men, Washington relented. He raised a black regiment to reinforce the Continental Army, and thousands of black men fought in the Continental Army or at sea.

5.E The British actively recruited free and enslaved black men. Though the British promised freedom in return for service, black Loyalists faced an uncertain future as the British retreated at the end of the war. Many fled and others were captured and re-enslaved.

How can I teach this?

Prince Hall, a free man who had been enslaved in Boston, is believed to have fought at Bunker Hill. He claimed Indigenous and African ancestry. An active Freemason, he also authored the 1777 “Slaves’ Petition for Freedom to the Massachusetts Legislature.” t-t.site/slavery35

For colonists using the metaphor of slavery, see the 1764 tract by James Otis, “The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved.” t-t.site/slavery36

Several other documents demonstrate the ways that enslaved colonists argued for their rights, including:



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- "Peter Bestes and Other Slaves Petition for Freedom, 1773" t-t.site/slavery37
- "Petition to End Slavery in Connecticut, 1788" t-t.site/slavery38
- "1779 Freedom Petition to the New Hampshire State Legislature" t-t.site/slavery39
- Phillis Wheatley's 1774 letter to Samson Occum t-t.site/slavery40

Though painted after the fact, John Trumbull's *The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17, 1775* (ca. 1815) and Emanuel Leutze's *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (ca. 1851) both include images of African American soldiers. t-t.site/slavery41 • t-t.site/slavery42

"A Proclamation of the Earl of Dunmore" (the Royal Governor of Virginia) offered freedom to any men enslaved by Patriots who agreed to risk their lives by fighting for the Loyalists. t-t.site/slavery43

The Black Brigade of Loyalists, the Ethiopian Regiment and the Black Pioneers were famous groups of Loyalist soldiers. Boston King and Colonel Tye were two famous black Loyalists.

The *Book of Negroes* documents the service of 3,000 black Loyalist soldiers evacuated by the British to Nova Scotia.

Among the primary documents available through the website of the PBS series *Africans in America* is a British pass issued to a black Loyalist in 1783 ensuring transport to Nova Scotia. t-t.site/slavery44

During the Boston Massacre, British soldiers killed five protesters. Crispus Attucks, a black sailor who had formerly been enslaved, was the first man killed.



The website of Colonial Williamsburg details the story of Harry Washington, a laborer enslaved by George Washington who fought for the British and was evacuated from New York City over Washington’s protests. [t-t.site/slavery45](https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/education/teaching-slavery)

The essay “African Americans in the Revolutionary War” by Michael Lee Lanning offers an overview of African American service on both sides of the war. K–12 educators can create a school account for free access through the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. [t-t.site/slavery46](https://www.gilderlehrman.org/education/teaching-slavery)

The essay “American Indians and the American Revolution” by Colin Calloway offers an overview of Indigenous participation on both sides of the war. [t-t.site/slavery47](https://www.gilderlehrman.org/education/teaching-slavery)

Episode five of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast

shows how teachers can use process drama in the classroom with an example drawn from decisions enslaved people had to make during the Revolutionary War. [t-t.site/slavery48](https://www.gilderlehrman.org/education/teaching-slavery)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 6

Students will demonstrate the ways that the Constitution provided direct and indirect protection to slavery and imbued enslavers and slave states with increased political power.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 4, 7 & 10

What else should my students know?

6.A Articles 1, 4 and 5 of the Constitution offer direct protection of slavery.

- Article 1, Section 2, Paragraph 3 – The “three-fifths” clause counted three-fifths of the enslaved population to determine a state’s representation in Congress. The clause also stated that three-fifths of the

enslaved population would be counted if a direct tax were levied on the states according to population, though most delegates assumed this would never happen.

- Article 1, Section 9, Paragraph 4 – This section repeated the tax section of the three-fifths clause. It reiterated that if a head tax were ever levied, enslaved persons would be taxed at three-fifths the rate of white people.

- Article 1, Section 9, Paragraph 9 – The slave trade clause prohibited Congress from banning the international slave trade before 1808. It did not require Congress to ban the trade at that time. This clause exempted the slave trade from the Congressional power to regulate interstate commerce.

- Article 4, Section 2, Paragraph 3 – The “fugitive slave” clause required that people who escaped enslavement be returned to their enslavers even if they had fled to another state.

- Article 5 – This article prohibited any amendment of the slave trade or head tax clauses before 1808.

6.B Articles 1, 2, 4 and 5 also offer indirect protection of slavery.

- Article 1, Section 8, Paragraph 15 – This section empowered the use of the militia to suppress rebellions, including rebellions by enslaved people.

- Article 1, Section 9, Paragraph 5 – This section prohibited taxes on exports. This prevented Congress from indirectly taxing slavery by taxing products produced by enslaved laborers.

- Article 2, Section 1, Paragraph 2 – This section included the three-fifths clause as part of the Electoral College, giving white people in slave states a disproportionate influence in the election of the president.

- Article 4, Section 3, Paragraph 1 – This section established a process to admit new states—both slave and free—to the Union.

- Article 4, Section 4 – This section guaranteed that the U.S. government would protect states from “domestic Violence,” including rebellions by enslaved people.

- Article 5 – This section required three-fourths of the states to ratify any amendment to the Constitution. This gave slave states a veto over any constitutional changes so long as they were not greatly outnumbered by free states.

6.C The Constitution created a federal government without the power to interfere in the domestic institutions of the states. This ensured that the federal government could not emancipate enslaved people in particular states.

How can I teach this?

Between 1787 and 1860, the majority of presidents and Supreme Court justices enslaved people. Students could research presidents and justices to determine the role that slavery played in the lives of some of the most powerful Americans.

The speech “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” by Frederick Douglass draws specific and repeated attention to the hypocrisy of a “land of liberty” that preserves and defends slavery. [t-t.site/slavery49](#)

The U.S. Constitution includes many connections to slavery, enslaved people and enslavers. Students could study the text of the document itself to search for these connections.

The Electoral College has affected elections since its founding. Students could research election results to explore this impact and examine arguments for and against retaining the Electoral College.

KEY CONCEPTS

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2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

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9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

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In a short video by Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Annette Gordon-Reed shows how debates over slavery shaped the founding documents of the United States. [t-t.site/slavery50](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery50)

Episodes 10 and 11 of Teaching Tolerance's *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast explore the many ways the Constitution and the Supreme Court protected slavery. [t-t.site/slavery51](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery51) • [t-t.site/slavery52](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery52)

Slavery in the Early Republic | 1787–1808

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 7

Students will examine how the Revolutionary War affected the institution of slavery in the new nation and the ways that slavery shaped domestic and foreign policy in the early Republic.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

7.A In most Northern states, a combination of gradual emancipation laws, court decisions and other laws prohibiting slavery began the process of eliminating slavery after the Revolution. Racism delayed and drew out plans for emancipation so that formerly enslaved people were denied legal equality and economic opportunities.

7.B In the Chesapeake (British colonies that later became Virginia and Maryland), the egalitarian rhetoric of the Revolution had a mixed impact. For white Virginians, the law had a fairly limited impact on slavery despite the decline of the tobacco industry. Portions of the free black and enslaved populations used the ideas of the American and Haitian Revolutions as inspiration for Gabriel’s Rebellion, a planned uprising by enslaved people that was to take place in Richmond in 1800.

7.C The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) inspired enslaved Americans and frightened their enslavers. The United States, where enslavers were disproportionately represented in all branches of government, refused to recognize Haiti’s independence from France until 1862.

How can I teach this?

Northern racism after emancipation is visible in examples of the racist laws that emerged to limit the freedoms of African Americans. The resource bank of the PBS series *Africans in America* provides an overview in the essay “Race-based Legislation in the North.” t-t.site/slavery53

The Prudence Crandall School for Negro Girls in Connecticut offers more evidence of the racism that persisted in the North even after emancipation. The school became the target of mob violence when Crandall began educating young black women in the 1830s.

The legislation that emancipated enslaved people in Northern states may also be examined. In Pennsylvania (1780), Connecticut (1784), Rhode Island (1784) and New York (1799), these laws required children born to enslaved mothers to serve their mothers’ enslavers until they reached the age of majority (between the ages of 18 and 25). In New York, slavery did not end until 1827.

Two Virginia laws, from 1782 and 1806, provide evidence of a varied response to emancipation. Initially, Virginians seemed enthusiastic about allowing individuals to manumit, or free, enslaved people. The 1782 “Act to Authorize the Manumission of Slaves” allowed enslavers to grant freedom to those they enslaved without legislative approval. However, after the plan for Gabriel’s Rebellion was discovered, white Virginians became



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wary of a large free black population. In 1806, the state legislature amended its emancipation policy to require that, once they were emancipated, freed people would have to be deported from Virginia. [t-t.site/slavery54](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/slavery54)

Accounts of Gabriel’s Rebellion show the ways that free and enslaved black people used Revolutionary rhetoric to plan acts of resistance to slavery. Multiple accounts note that Gabriel Prosser, the leader of Gabriel’s Rebellion, planned to create a flag with the motto “Death or Liberty”—a slogan of the Haitian Revolution that also echoed American revolutionary Patrick Henry. One 1804 document points out that a conspirator in Gabriel’s Rebellion reportedly likened himself to George Washington. [t-t.site/slavery55](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/slavery55)

Many online resources will assist instruction about Haiti—not only the Haitian Revolution, but also the nation’s history and present. [t-t.site/slavery56](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/slavery56) • [t-t.site/slavery57](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory/slavery57)

The Changing Face of Slavery | 1808–1848

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 8

Students will examine how the expanding cotton economy spurred Indian Removal and the domestic slave trade.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 & 10

What else should my students know?

8.A The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 had a dramatic effect on the profitability of short-staple cotton. The cotton gin allowed two enslaved laborers to remove the seeds from 50 pounds of cotton in a single day. Before its invention, a single enslaved laborer could clean an average of only one pound of cotton each day.

8.B Motivated by a desire for cotton-rich lands, many white people supported the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Others, including many clergy and members of the Whig Party, opposed it. And many disenfranchised people publicly spoke out against it even though they lacked political power. Andrew Jackson made Indian Removal the cornerstone of his presidency and enforced it in defiance of a Supreme Court ruling (*Worcester v. Georgia, 1832*). The federal government, joined by states and troops, used this act to force about 100,000 Indigenous people to move west of the Mississippi River. More than 4,000 African Americans, who were held in slavery among Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws and Creeks, were also forced west. Thousands of people died in these migrations, which many remember as the “Trail of Tears” or the “Trail of Death.”

8.C Although Congress banned participation in the international slave trade in 1808, geographic and economic expansion allowed by Removal dramatically increased the domestic trade in enslaved people of African descent. Enslavers wanted to use the labor of enslaved African Americans to maximize profits and expand the plantation system. During the first half of the 19th century, more than a million African Americans were forced to move to parts of the Deep South. This separated and traumatized many families. So many enslaved people were forced to make this journey that it came to be known as “The Second Middle Passage.”

8.D Indigenous land dispossession and the domestic slave trade led to large profits for land speculators, removal agents and enslavers. Complex economic structures emerged to support the domestic slave trade, including insurance companies that insured enslaved people as property, traders and auction houses that served as middlemen and clearinghouses, and banks that provided credit for the purchase of enslaved laborers or allowed the capital represented in the bodies of enslaved people to be used as collateral for loans.

How can I teach this?

The University of Oregon’s website *Mapping History* provides a useful model comparing the growth of cotton production and the expansion of slavery between 1790 and 1860. t-t.site/slavery58



KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

To teach about Removal, see the following digital resources from Native Knowledge 360° at the National Museum of the American Indian. They tell many stories of removal and resistance.

- "A Story of Cherokee Removal" t-t.site/slavery59
- "What Does It Mean to Remove a People?" t-t.site/slavery60
- "How Did Six Different Native Nations Try to Avoid Removal?" t-t.site/slavery61
- "The Removal of the Muscogee Nation" t-t.site/slavery62
- "American Indian Removal: Does it Make Sense?" t-t.site/slavery63

The online resources for the PBS series *Africans in America* include a letter from Henry

Taylor to his brother. Taylor proposes selling the people his brother enslaved in Virginia for a profit in Alabama. Although it was not written until 1835, the letter allows for a discussion of the decline of the Virginia tobacco economy and the profitability of trading enslaved persons from the Upper South to the Deep South. This practice of transporting enslaved people from the Upper South to the cotton-producing states of the Deep South was ongoing from the early Republic until the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery64

In a short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Adam Rothman discusses how enslaved labor in the South fueled a global economic system during the 19th century. t-t.site/slavery65

In another short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Edward Ayers shows how the domestic slave trade affected the lives of enslaved people. t-t.site/slavery66

“Scientific” theories about race evolved to support white supremacy and enslavement. In the mid-18th century, Carolus Linnaeus classified *Homo sapiens* into several different varieties, named according to their geographic location. Linnaeus’ classifications reflected popular stereotypes of different cultures. [t-t.site/slavery67](#)

In the 19th century, the scientific debate about race focused on whether different human races represented entirely different species with different origins (polygenesis) or different varieties of the same species (monogenesis). Polygenism could be used to justify enslaving “inferior” races.

Scientific racism was also used to justify the seizure of Indigenous land. Lewis Cass (who later implemented Andrew Jackson’s policies toward Indigenous people as a member of Jackson’s cabinet) used theories drawn from scientific racism to rationalize Removal. The National Humanities Center has archived an 1830 article by Cass outlining these arguments. [t-t.site/slavery68](#)

In 1825 Cherokee leader David Brown argued that the 1,277 “African slaves” owned by the Cherokee Nation were a sign of Cherokee adoption of “civilization” as defined by white settlers. The Native nations of the Southeast that adopted European-style enslavement did so in part to prove to Europeans that they, too, were “civilized”—that they, too, used the tools of white settlers’ economic growth.

Slate published an interactive map by Rebecca Onion and Claudio Saunt showing Indigenous land loss from 1776 to 1887. [t-t.site/slavery69](#)

The papers of Z.B. Oakes, a slaver in Charleston, South Carolina, are available through the Boston Public Library. (Correspondence can be accessed through the Digital Commonwealth online collections by searching “Oakes,” along with the date and sender of

the letter.) The frank language of the documents underscores the commodification of enslaved people, the inhumanity of the slave trade and the trauma that those affected by the domestic slave trade experienced. [t-t.site/slavery70](#)

- In a February 26, 1855 letter, the enslaver writes to ask Oakes for information about an enslaved woman named Clarissa, including whether she has miscarried, has children or is “breeding.” [t-t.site/slavery71](#)
- In a letter from Jesse King dated February 1, 1855, King inquires about the cost of several enslaved people. [t-t.site/slavery72](#)
- A letter by E.A. Edwards, dated April 14, 1857, accompanies a trunk sent to Tom, an enslaved man who had recently been sold. It includes a note presumably dictated by Fatima, Tom’s wife, discussing her distress at his sale. [t-t.site/slavery73](#)

Portions of the book *Twelve Years a Slave*, by Solomon Northup, describe the domestic slave trade. Students might read his account of an auction and the separation of Eliza from her two children. [t-t.site/slavery74](#)

In her essay “Cherokee Slaveholders and Radical Abolitionists,” historian Natalie Joy argues that abolitionists were willing to look past Cherokee enslavers—or even see slavery as a sign of “civilization”—because abolitionists viewed the removal of Cherokees as part of the expansion of the slaveholding South. [t-t.site/slavery75](#)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 9

Students will describe the principal ways the labor of enslaved people was organized and controlled in what is now the United States.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 4, 5, 6 & 10

What else should my students know?

9.A While the work of enslaved people varied widely across North America, most enslaved people lived in small households in close proximity to their enslavers. They labored to maintain their enslavers' families, houses and farms. This included tasks such as cooking, child care and cleaning.

9.B Enslaved people were often highly skilled, using training and knowledge from their home cultures while acquiring new abilities.

9.C The labor that enslaved people were forced to do was often very dangerous and physically taxing, regardless of the type of work or geographic location. Most enslaved people performed heavy labor growing crops such as cotton, rice and tobacco. About five percent of enslaved people labored in coal mines and industrial mills in the United States. Many enslaved people worked under the supervision of an overseer or a driver. In the southern United States, overseers were often white Southerners. Drivers were usually enslaved men who were entrusted (at least temporarily) with supervisory powers.

How can I teach this?

Enslavers devised systems to maximize production and profit from forced labor, including the task system and gang labor. They measured effectiveness and tried to maximize production using business and accounting methods that have since become mainstream. *The Boston Review* has published an excerpt from the book *Accounting for Slavery*. It shows how many of today's ideas about business management have roots in the organization of enslaved labor in the Americas. [t-t.site/slavery76](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

In a short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Daina Ramey Berry shows how enslavers used enslaved people to generate profit. [t-t.site/slavery77](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* includes descriptions of his life on cotton and sugar plantations. In Chapter 16, Northup is made a driver. He describes the delicate balance he had to maintain to keep both the white and enslaved populations as happy as possible. [t-t.site/slavery78](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

In *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Douglass provides an account of his childhood in enslavement. In Chapter 1, he offers a description of Mr. Plummer, the drunk, malicious overseer at the plantation where he was first enslaved. [t-t.site/slavery79](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

In *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs describes her work in a white household, where she is subjected to sexual harassment by her enslaver and anger from his wife. [t-t.site/slavery80](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

In his January 19, 1854, letter to slaver Z.B. Oakes, A.J. McElveen describes an enslaved man named Isaac who works as a carriage driver, painter, violinist and cook, among other things. [t-t.site/slavery81](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

To understand industrial slavery, students might look at Frederick Douglass' autobiography, which details his time as a caulker in a shipyard. Historian Charles Dew's *Bond of Iron* explores slavery at the Buffalo Forge, an ironmaking venture in Virginia.

Episode seven of Teaching Tolerance's *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast discusses the diverse lives of enslaved people, offering suggestions to teachers for ways to present this material to their students. [t-t.site/slavery82](https://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 10

Students will analyze the growth of the abolitionist movement in the 1830s and the slaveholding states' view of the movement as a physical, economic and political threat.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 3, 5, 7, 9 & 10

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.
2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.
3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.
4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.
5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.
6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.
7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.
8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.
9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.
10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

What else should my students know?

10.A Opposition to slavery in North America dates to slavery's beginnings there. Enslaved men and women were constantly seeking ways to use the religious and civil values espoused by enslavers to argue for their own freedom. Indigenous people in the early British and Spanish colonies tried to use the courts to gain freedom, but few succeeded.

10.B Some colonists argued for abolition very early, including Bartolomé de las Casas in the 16th-century Spanish colonies and some white Quakers in 18th-century British colonies.

10.C During the Revolution, many enslaved people actively sought their freedom by escaping to the British or by adopting the language of inalienable rights and challenging white American colonists to live up to their liberty-loving rhetoric.

10.D Many prominent white people, including Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (both enslavers), thought slavery would eventually end but did not support abolition. In the early 19th century, they joined a majority of white Americans supporting the removal of African Americans to Africa. The American Colonization Society raised money to facilitate this removal, which they said would include both free and enslaved African Americans. African American opposition to the American Colonization Society was part of a new, centralized movement to promote abolition and work toward citizenship rights.

10.E William Lloyd Garrison and black allies launched the radical abolitionist movement in 1831 using the ideas of all of these predecessors. Garrison began promoting immediate abolition as an alternative to gradual emancipation or colonization. He started publishing the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator* in 1831 and founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833.

10.F White women and free black Northerners, many of whom also opposed the Indian Removal Act, were among the largest groups represented in Northern abolitionist societies. Influential advocates included Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, many others who had escaped enslavement and the publishers of many black newspapers. Even so, scholars estimate that abolitionists never accounted for more than one percent of the population, meaning that support for enslavement continued to be widespread among the white settler population.

10.G Southern lawmakers and cultural leaders reacted to the growth of Northern abolition with an increased commitment to defending slavery as a positive good and with political actions to prevent the spread of the abolitionist message in the South.

How can I teach this?

In a short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Martha Jones discusses the American Colonization Society and its roots in white supremacy. [t-t.site/slavery83](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/t-t.site/slavery83)

Angelina and Sarah Grimké were sisters from South Carolina who became prominent advocates of abolition and women's rights. Their writings are readily available.

Sarah Parker Remond and her brother Charles Lenox Remond were members of a prominent free black family from Salem, Massachusetts. Both became popular anti-slavery lecturers.

David Walker's 1829 *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* described the conditions of African American people in slavery and called for armed rebellion. Walker's *Appeal* was smuggled into the South using underground networks and subterfuge. Enslavers severely punished anyone caught reading or distributing it. The David Walker



Sisters Sarah (left) and Angelina (right) Grimké rejected their South Carolina plantation roots and became staunch supporters of the abolitionist movement after converting to Quakerism. The outspoken sisters also advocated for the expansion of women's rights.

Memorial Project offers an overview of the *Appeal* (including excerpts) and its distribution. t-t.site/slavery84

Free and fugitive black Northerners participated in “Colored Conventions” to pursue educational, labor and legal goals. Before the war, the delegates to these conventions discussed, among other topics, colonization and immediate abolition. t-t.site/slavery85

Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman are among the most well known of the many formerly enslaved people who became abolitionists. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* is among several fugitive slave narratives available through the website Documenting the American South. t-t.site/slavery86

Copies of *The Liberator* are widely available online. t-t.site/slavery87

Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was an effective way to educate Northerners on the horrors of slavery, even

though it perpetuated many racist stereotypes.

In 1835, the American Anti-Slavery Society began a direct mail campaign in the South. Local postmasters refused to deliver the mail and mobs in Charleston, South Carolina, burned the anti-slavery materials along with effigies of abolitionists. Following this campaign, various slave states passed laws that made it illegal to deliver abolitionist

materials. The blog of the Postal Museum includes a short article, “America’s First Direct Mail Campaign,” detailing this event. t-t.site/slavery88

After the growth of abolitionist societies, Southerners produced a number of forceful defenses of slavery grounded in specific ideas about religion and science. For examples, see John C. Calhoun’s “Slavery a Positive Good” from 1837, James Henry Hammond’s “Letter to an English Abolitionist, 1845” or Hammond’s 1858 speech, “Cotton Is King.” t-t.site/slavery89 • t-t.site/slavery90

Southerners also produced defenses of slavery grounded in the comparisons between enslaved men and women and the Northern working class. See, for example, the poem “The Hireling and the Slave” by William Grayson. t-t.site/slavery91

To understand the Southern reaction to abolition, see the 1836 Gag Rule, which automatically “tabled” (postponed) action on all abolitionist petitions relating to slavery without hearing them. Speeches on the subject by John Quincy Adams are also useful.

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.
2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.
3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.
4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.
5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.
6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.
7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.
8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.
9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.
10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

Gradual emancipation procedures differed widely. For example, New York’s law allowed for the abandonment of enslaved children who were destined for freedom and therefore of little value to their enslavers. They would be separated from their mothers and sent to the local poorhouse to be rented out.

t-t.site/slavery92

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 11

Students will recognize that enslaved people resisted slavery in ways that ranged from violence to smaller, everyday means of asserting their humanity and opposing their enslavers.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

11.A Violent rebellions by enslaved people were rare in continental North America. Unlike in the British Caribbean, where violent uprisings were more common, enslaved people in British North America and the United States were outnumbered by white people. Moreover, substantial militias in the United States were ready to put down armed rebellions.

11.B Despite the rarity of violent rebellion, evidence suggests that enslavers were often anxious that enslaved people would find ways to harm them. Enslaved women, for example, who were frequently the cooks in their enslavers’ households, were often feared to use poison.

11.C Anger at slavery contributed to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. In a coordinated uprising, the Pueblo people liberated themselves from Spanish oppression by killing hundreds of colonists and successfully driving the Spanish from New Mexico for more than a decade.

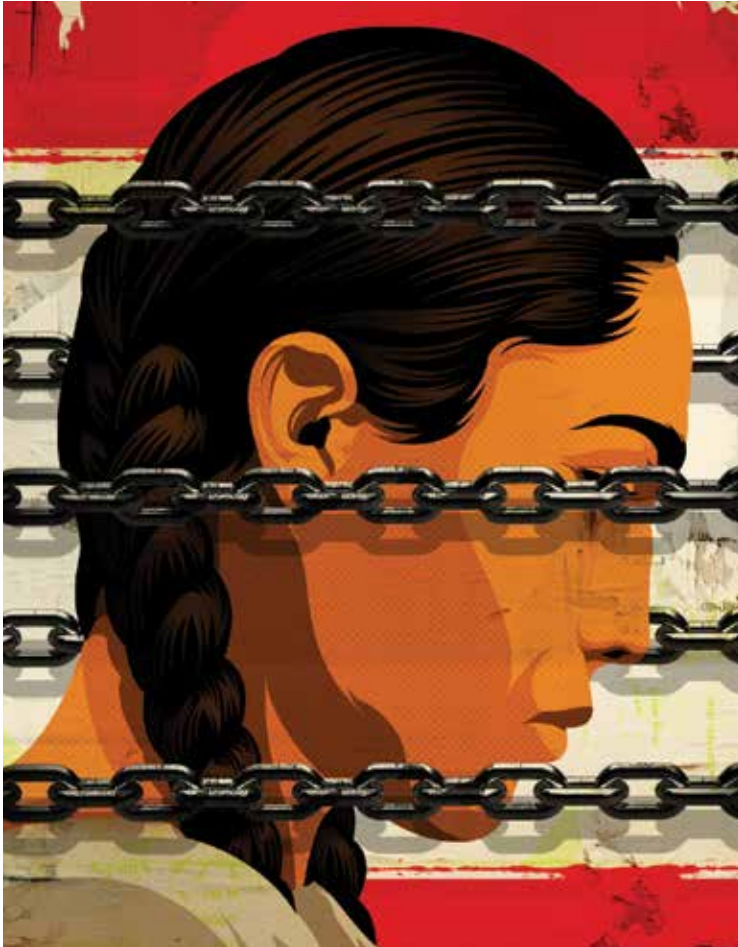
11.D In 1739, a group of enslaved people in South Carolina participated in the Stono Rebellion, the largest rebellion against slavery in the British mainland colonies.

11.D In 1831, Nat Turner, an enslaved man from Southampton County, Virginia, orchestrated a rebellion. Seeking freedom, enslaved people killed at least 50 white people. Many died in the attempt. Afterward, enslaved and free black people in the East were prohibited from holding or attending religious assemblies without white supervision. Many Southern states also tightened laws against teaching enslaved people to read and write and further restricted the movements and liberties of free African Americans.

11.E Sometimes Indigenous people and African Americans joined together. During the 1700s and early 1800s, many people of African descent (later called Black Seminoles) came to Seminole territory in what is now Florida. Some were forced there as captives, and others joined voluntarily, having escaped slavery elsewhere in the South. Black Seminoles became tributaries of Seminole chiefs; they lived in independent villages and enjoyed a great deal of liberty, but owed Seminoles a percentage of their crops as well as military allegiance. During the Second Seminole War (1835–1842), Seminoles and Black Seminoles joined together to protect themselves against Indian Removal and the spread of slavery.

11.F Everyday acts of resistance were common. These included working slowly, breaking tools, feigning illness, feigning ignorance to avoid work and running away for short periods. Religion—which stressed the self-esteem, dignity and humanity of enslaved people—also proved a means of resistance. Working to build and maintaining kinship networks was another “everyday” form of resistance. Many enslaved people resisted by learning to read and write European languages.

11.G Enslaved people who successfully escaped were known as “fugitive slaves.” Escape was common enough that:



- There was an elaborate system of patrols to catch people escaping from slavery.
- Enslavers depended on newspapers to advertise their “fugitive slaves.”
- Some white men made a living catching fugitives.
- Residents of free states and of many Native nations were bound by fugitive slave laws and treaty provisions, respectively, to return escapees.

How can I teach this?

Scholars are still debating the extent to which enslavement influenced the Pueblo Revolt. Spanish imposition of Christianity was also a major cause. The Wisconsin Historical Society provides several primary sources that give different perspectives on the Pueblo Revolt. [t-t.site/slavery93](https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/DocType/primary)

The 19 Pueblo sovereign nations collectively maintain the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, providing resources that include a Pueblo-based curriculum. [t-t.site/slavery94](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery94)

William Henry Singleton’s *Recollections of My Slavery Days* provides many examples of everyday resistance. The National Endowment for the Humanities’ *Edsitement* website includes a useful lesson: “*Recollections of My Slavery Days with Emphasis on Resistance.*” [t-t.site/slavery95](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery95)

Episode six of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast explores

the many ways beyond rebellion that enslaved people employed to resist bondage. [t-t.site/slavery96](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery96)

In a short video from Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Tera Hunter shows how enslaved people attempted to have control over their own lives. [t-t.site/slavery97](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery97)

The National Humanities Center has compiled a useful overview of the Stono Rebellion. The site also includes two accounts of the rebellion—one provided at the time by a white official and another recorded in 1937 by a descendant of the rebellion’s enslaved leader. [t-t.site/slavery98](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery98)

Solomon Northup’s *Twelve Years a Slave* has many examples of resistance, from prayer to violence. [t-t.site/slavery99](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery99)

In *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Harriet Jacobs details her harrowing efforts to avoid

being sexually harassed and assaulted by her enslaver, including explicitly resisting his advances, escaping and spending years in hiding. t-t.site/slavery100

“Slave for sale” and “Runaway slave” advertisements are widely available and illustrate both the types of work that enslaved people often performed and their continued, sometimes violent, resistance to enslavement. The website *Freedom on the Move* collects ads that show the efforts of self-liberating people. t-t.site/slavery101

The City College of New York has an online collection of short texts about the Black Seminoles. t-t.site/slavery102

The “WPA Slave Narratives” (which should be introduced carefully and contextualized for students) offer many rich examples of everyday resistance. t-t.site/slavery103

The poetry of George Moses Horton is a window into one enslaved man’s struggle with the ways slavery chained his creativity and genius. Many of Horton’s poems, particularly “George Moses Horton, Myself” illustrate the ways Horton refused to see himself as his enslaver saw him. t-t.site/slavery104

Students should examine treaties between Native nations and the United States that include provisions related to enslavement. For example, the Treaty of Hopewell in 1785 was the first treaty signed between the United States and the Cherokee Nation. Article 1, which demanded that the Cherokee Nation return all African Americans who had escaped or were taken captive, was a standard feature of treaties during this time. Note also Article 2, wherein Cherokees demanded the release of all Indigenous captives taken by white people during and after the Revolutionary War. t-t.site/slavery105

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 12

Students will discuss the nature, persistence and impact of the spiritual beliefs and cultures of enslaved people.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 5, 6, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

12.A Across all European colonies and what is now the United States, white settlers forbade enslaved people from practicing their own spiritual practices and forced them to convert to Christianity. While religion was often a critical tool of oppression and cultural extinction, it could also be a form of resistance. Many enslaved people used the Christian message of God’s love and the promise of a spiritual paradise to express their own desire for freedom in this world and the next. They also called on this idea to resist enslavers’ use of religion as a justification for slavery.

12.B Many enslaved African and Indigenous people used Christian rituals as tools of resistance so they could continue their cultural beliefs and practices. Others developed hybrid traditions that blended their cultural forms of spirituality and religion with Protestant and Catholic rituals and beliefs. These new forms of religious expression continue to thrive across what is now the United States.

12.C Enslaved people drew on longstanding traditions of communicating oral history to pass along knowledge and stories when reading and writing were strictly controlled.

12.D More than 573 sovereign Native nations exist today in what is now the United States. Many of the Indigenous people who belong to these nations continue to engage with their lands, languages, art forms, food traditions, political systems, economies and spiritual belief systems.

12.E Enslaved Africans created two of America’s most enduring musical forms: spirituals and blues music.

12.F Indigenous and African foodways persisted and developed during enslavement, continuing to the present day and influencing diets across what is now North America with foods like corn and barbecue.

How can I teach this?

When teaching about Indigenous cultural persistence, resilience and influence, it is essential to unpack stereotypes, generalizations and appropriations. An article from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia provides an excellent introduction to identifying and countering common misconceptions and stereotypes about Indigenous people. [t-t.site/slavery106](#)

In 1991, a construction project unearthed the African Burial Ground in New York City, a colonial cemetery. The bodies interred there showed evidence of African burial traditions such as the burying of ritual objects with the deceased. [t-t.site/slavery107](#)

Some early advertisements for Indigenous people who escaped slavery specify cultural or geographic origin, showing evidence that enslaved Indigenous people resisted assimilation. For example, some describe “Carolina Indians.” [t-t.site/slavery108](#)

Many enslaved Africans were Muslim. The Library of Congress has collected documents by and about Omar Ibn Said, an enslaved scholar from West Africa. This includes his autobiography, originally written in Arabic. Rich supplemental resources include an English translation, a podcast episode, discussion questions and his obituary. [t-t.site/slavery109](#) • [t-t.site/slavery110](#) • [t-t.site/slavery111](#) • [t-t.site/slavery112](#)

Spirituals offer rich ground for exploration in many dimensions, including subject matter, lyrical style, cultural importance and contemporary interpretations. There are many versions online. Many spirituals illustrate the relationship between Christian allusions and imagery and the desire for freedom from enslavement. The songs “Hold the Wind” and “We’ll Soon Be Free” are two useful examples. “Run, Mary, Run” was a popular spiritual that incorporated African traditions of drumming and syncopation with a message of freedom. [t-t.site/slavery113](#) • [t-t.site/slavery114](#) • [t-t.site/slavery115](#)

The Library of Congress has multiple online collections that include the music of enslaved African Americans, including recordings of free people singing and playing music they learned while enslaved. [t-t.site/slavery116](#)

In a short video by Teaching Tolerance, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi discusses the ways that the cultural practices of enslaved Africans persist and continue to influence others. [t-t.site/slavery83](#)

Many non-Indigenous people have misconceptions and stereotypes about the music of Indigenous people. A 1977 *Folklife* article provides a good, if somewhat dated, start to exploring these. [t-t.site/slavery118](#)

Explore the ways that Indigenous people shaped contemporary music with the documentary *Rumble* or the documentary *Sounds of Faith*, by Lumbee filmmaker Malinda Maynor Lowery. [t-t.site/slavery119](#) • [t-t.site/slavery120](#)

For current music by Indigenous people, students could watch MTV’s documentary *Rebel Music*. [t-t.site/slavery121](#)

The “Br’er Rabbit” folktales provide examples of stories that originated among the

KEY CONCEPTS

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7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

enslaved African population as a way to teach survival skills to enslaved children. When exploring these stories, be careful to use collections such as *Jump! The Adventures of Brer Rabbit*, which avoid the racism of earlier compilations by white folklorists.

There are many opportunities to explore the ways that Indigenous people sustain and innovate cultural traditions and practices. Some topics can include contemporary Indigenous artists and those working to sustain languages. t-t.site/slavery122 • t-t.site/slavery123

Many popular foods have roots in enslaved communities. Gumbo shows how Indigenous, African and European cultures sometimes merged. One traditional component of this dish is an Indigenous ingredient called filé, a powder made from sassafras leaves. Our term “gumbo” derives from a West African word for okra, which is another essential ingredient. The French contributed flour, which is used for gumbo’s dark roux. Barbeque (which comes from the Arawak word *barbacoa*) grew out of the culture of Indigenous and African enslaved people as a way to use smoke and sauces with African spices to flavor the less-desirable cuts of pork that enslavers gave as rations. Historian Michael Twitty has written several accessible articles on slavery and the culinary history of the American South. Southern food in Indigenous communities, like the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, also demonstrates this fusion. t-t.site/slavery124 • t-t.site/slavery125

The Minnesota Department of Education’s Department of Indian Education offers an excellent resource for teaching about Indigenous oral traditions and practices. t-t.site/slavery126



Enslaved people encountered different versions of Christianity, including Bibles that enslavers censored. The “WPA Slave Narratives” contain many testimonies about how enslavers and white preachers tried to reduce the Christian message to “Don’t lie, and don’t steal.” Some narratives also contain enslaved Christians’ clear repudiation of this version of Christianity. t-t.site/slavery127

Peter Randolph’s “Sketches of Slave Life” includes examples of the ways enslavers tried to control Christianity’s message. t-t.site/slavery128

- Elizabeth Merwin Wickham’s narrative discusses the way that enslaved ministers defied the laws against preaching after Nat Turner’s Rebellion. t-t.site/slavery129
- Lunsford Lane discusses how enslaved people abandoned an Episcopal minister because of his religious justifications for their slavery. t-t.site/slavery130
- Friday Jones’ narrative discusses several forms of resistance, including clandestine religious meetings and running away. t-t.site/slavery131

The Sectional Crisis and Civil War | 1848–1877

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 13

Students will examine the expansion of slavery as a key factor in the domestic and foreign policy decisions of the United States in the 19th century.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

13.A Slavery was key in the debates about entering the Mexican War and admitting Missouri, Texas, Kansas and California to the Union.

13.B The desire to maintain a balance of slave states and free states in the Senate was central to Southern lawmakers' domestic policy.

13.C The Kansas-Nebraska Act and its potential effect on the expansion of slavery was a key event in the sectional crisis. After the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed, both Northerners and Southerners rushed to populate Kansas. The violence of "Bleeding Kansas" resulted.

13.D In 1857, Chief Justice Taney wrote the majority decision for the Supreme Court in the *Dred Scott* case. Southern enslavers applauded the decision, which they saw as recognizing enslaved people as their property. Northerners were outraged. Taney's decision established several key precedents related to slavery. The three most important were:

- There was nowhere in the United States enslaved people could go to be free. Taney ruled that the status of enslaved people was determined by the laws in their home state; traveling to a free state did not render an enslaved person free (this was the key issue at hand).

- Black people were not citizens of the United States. Because Scott was black, Taney's argument said, he was not a citizen. Because he was not a citizen, he had no right to sue.

- The Missouri Compromise of 1820 was unconstitutional. According to Taney, the Missouri Compromise restricted slavery in the territories, which Congress did not have the power to do.

How can I teach this?

In his editorial "War With Mexico," Frederick Douglass discusses the war as a mechanism to expand slavery. t-t.site/slavery132

Henry David Thoreau's *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* discusses his protest against the Mexican War. t-t.site/slavery133

The "Compromise of 1850" was a series of laws intended to appeal equally to free and slave states. The compromise strengthened the Fugitive Slave Act, exacerbating sectional tensions. New provisions included:

- The appointment of "commissioners" to search for fugitives in the North.
- The requirement that individuals and organizations in free states assist the commissioners searching for people who escaped slavery.
- The acceptance of spurious evidence to convict accused fugitives.



KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

- A compensation structure that paid the commissioners \$10 if they returned an accused fugitive to slavery but only \$5 if they found that the accused was legally free.

Primary sources surrounding the 1854 trial of Anthony Burns, an enslaved man who escaped Virginia only to be arrested in Boston, offer examples of a range of responses to the Fugitive Slave Act. t-t.site/slavery134

To understand the violence that characterized "Bleeding Kansas," students can look at the 1856 sacking of Lawrence, Kansas, by pro-slavery forces and at John Brown's murder of several pro-slavery voters at Pottawatomie Creek a few days later.

To understand the impact of the slavery debate on American political institutions, students can examine the caning of Charles Sumner, a senator from Massachusetts. Preston Brooks, a congressman from South Carolina, repeatedly struck Sumner with a cane after the senator made a fiery speech denouncing slavery and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. t-t.site/slavery135

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 14

Students will analyze the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln and the subsequent decision that several slave states made to secede from the Union to ensure the preservation and expansion of slavery.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 3, 4, 7 & 10

What else should my students know?

14.A Lincoln disliked slavery but believed that the Constitution protected the institution where it existed. He ran on the Republican platform of non-expansion of slavery into the territories.

14.B The first seven states to secede from the Union were South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. In their declarations to the world explaining why they seceded, slavery and the political conflict over slavery were the central factors.

14.C The Confederate States of America was established in February 1861 (but never recognized by any other government or nation). Its constitution legalized and protected slavery.

14.D It is estimated that 20,000 Indigenous people participated in the Civil War on the Union and Confederate sides. Their reasons varied. The Confederacy, seeking to ally with slaveholding peoples of the Southern nations, promised to protect slavery as well as Indigenous land. The Union, meanwhile, declared that, to uphold existing treaties, Native nations had to side with them. Many Native nations initially tried to remain neutral but were drawn in once the war touched their territories.

How can I teach this?

In Lincoln’s “First Inaugural Address,” he reiterated, “I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery where it exists” and asked “dissatisfied fellow countrymen” to rethink their decision to destroy the government.

[t-t.site/slavery136](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery136)

In Lincoln’s December 22, 1860, letter to Alexander H. Stephens, the future Confederate vice president, he stated that slavery was safe where it existed and outlined the differences between enslavers and Republicans, namely, “You think slavery is right and ought to be extended; while we think it is wrong and ought to be restricted.” [t-t.site/slavery137](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery137)

States that left the Union created documents explaining why they did so. These documents cite Lincoln’s hostility to slavery as the key reason for secession. South Carolina’s “Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union, December 1860” provides a useful example.

[t-t.site/slavery138](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery138)

In his famous 1861 “Cornerstone” speech, Alexander Stephens argued that slavery was central to the project of the Confederate States of America. [t-t.site/slavery139](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery139)

In a short video by Teaching Tolerance, Christy Coleman explores the reasons that

Southern states were willing to go to war to protect the institution of slavery.

[t-t.site/slavery140](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery140)

Episodes one and two of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast discuss the ways that slavery caused the Civil War, offering concrete strategies for teaching. [t-t.site/slavery141](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery141) • [t-t.site/slavery142](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery142)

The City of Alexandria, Virginia, offers an accessible overview of Indigenous people and the Civil War. The Cherokee Nation, which was surrounded by Confederate territory and divided in its support of Union and Confederate causes, experienced great loss. The population of the Cherokee Nation declined from 21,000 to 15,000 people after the war.

[t-t.site/slavery143](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery143)

The John Hope Franklin Young Scholars, a group of middle school historians in Durham, North Carolina, made a documentary in 2015 called *The Civil Rights War* about untold stories of the Civil War in North Carolina. The documentary highlights the civil rights struggles of Lumbee and Cherokee people, freedmen, and women on the home front during the war. [t-t.site/slavery144](https://www.teachingtolerance.org/slavery144)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 15

Students will examine how Union policies concerning slavery and African American military service affected the Civil War, and they will describe how free black and enslaved communities affected the Civil War.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

15.A Union political leaders initially rejected emancipation and black military service to appease border states, where slavery was legal.

15.B Enslaved African Americans fled to Union lines in such numbers that the military accepted them as contraband property,

a classification that negated any legal claims of ownership by enslavers and set important precedents for more general emancipation.

15.C It was largely through the persistence of the African American community that Union policy on black military service changed. Eventually, the 180,000 black soldiers who served, including the 98,500 formerly enslaved men, provided a crucial service to the Union Army.

15.D Many enslaved African Americans who remained on Southern plantations and farms risked their lives to help Union forces and hinder the Confederate military, including by providing valuable information on troop numbers and positions.

15.E In the South, enslaved men, women and children left plantations in large numbers or refused to work. Their actions affected the Confederacy's ability to supply its army and feed its civilians.

15.F The Emancipation Proclamation was the culmination of evolving Union policy. Lincoln's proclamation freed enslaved people in areas of seceded states not under Union control, though it did not necessarily include Indigenous enslavement. The Emancipation Proclamation was the result of several factors: Lincoln's developing opposition to slavery, the changing sentiment in the North about the necessity of ending slavery as a way to end the war, the valor of the African American soldiers who fought for freedom, and the self-emancipation of hundreds of thousands of enslaved Southerners who had already fled to Union lines.

How can I teach this?

The archives of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project website house a number of letters that can serve as primary documents for student interpretation.

t-t.site/slavery-145

On the need to maintain the loyalty of the border states where slavery was legal, see an 1861 letter from a Missouri Unionist to the commander of the Department of the West and the commander's reply. In the letter, Thomas T. Gantt asks whether the federal government will interfere with slavery.

t-t.site/slavery146

A widely republished 1861 letter from black Ohioan William A. Jones to the secretary of war discusses the formation and preparation of a black regiment that was waiting for the opportunity to fight. t-t.site/slavery147

In 1862, John Boston, a fugitive from Maryland, writes to tell his wife that he has enlisted in a Brooklyn regiment. t-t.site/slavery148

An 1863 letter "to the Commander of a Louisiana Black Brigade" describes the service of African American soldiers during the Battle of Port Hudson and offers firsthand accounts of the bravery of these troops. t-t.site/slavery149

The First and Second Confiscation Acts offer opportunities to examine evolving Union policy. The First Confiscation Act (1861) allowed the Union Army to "confiscate" enslaved people as property, legally negating enslavers' claims to ownership. However, the law did not clarify whether, once "confiscated," these formerly enslaved people were free. The Second Confiscation Act (1862) freed everyone enslaved by a member of the Confederate military or government. t-t.site/slavery150 • t-t.site/slavery151

The Militia Act of July, 1862 allowed African American men to serve in the army. t-t.site/slavery152

In his September 1861 editorial, "Fighting Rebels With Only One Hand," Frederick Douglass makes a persuasive argument for black service in the Union army. t-t.site/slavery153

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

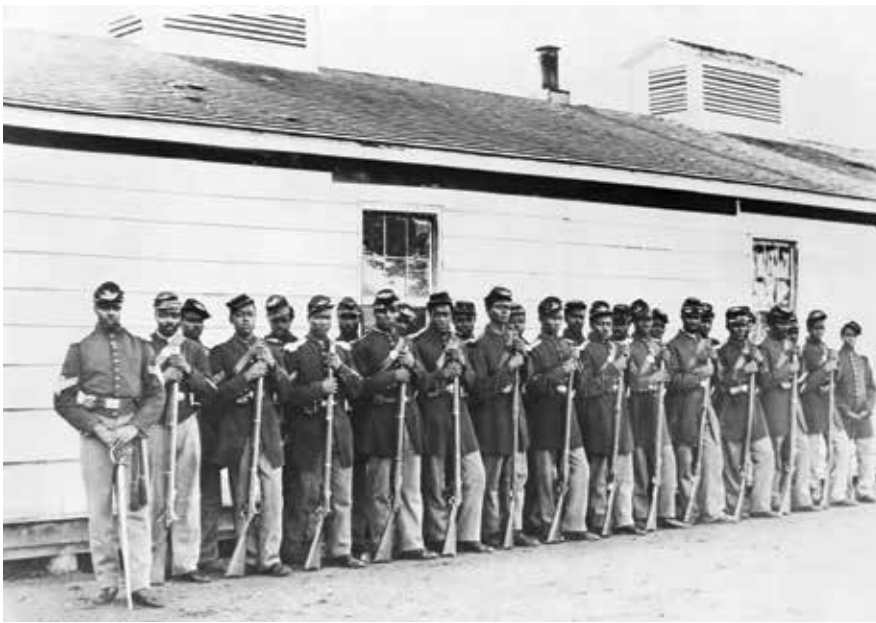
6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.



Union soldiers in Company E of the Fourth Colored Infantry at Fort Lincoln, Washington, D.C., in 1865.

For one example of the impact of black service, see accounts of Harriet Tubman’s Combahee River expedition. Tubman, along with a regiment of African American Union soldiers, led a raid to disrupt Confederate supply lines and free hundreds of enslaved people. In the end, Tubman’s mission freed 700 enslaved people. She gave an account of the Combahee River raid to Sarah Bradford, who published it in *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*. t-t.site/slavery154

On the unequal pay of black soldiers, see the letter from 54th MA Corporal James Henry Gooding to the president. Gooding asks Lincoln to intervene to ensure that he and his fellow soldiers are fairly paid. Black soldiers were paid \$10 per month while white soldiers were paid \$13. t-t.site/slavery155

Lincoln stresses how critical black service is to the Union in an 1864 letter to Isaac M. Schermerhorn. He writes that “[a]ny different policy in regard to the colored man, deprives us of his help, and this is more than we can bear. We can not spare the hundred and forty or fifty thousand now serving us as soldiers, seamen, and laborers. This is not a question of sentiment or taste, but one of physical force which may be measured and estimated as horse-power and Steam-power are measured and estimated. Keep it and you can save the Union. Throw it away, and the Union goes with it.” t-t.site/slavery156

The widely available diary of Mary Chesnut is another source. An elite white woman living in South Carolina, Chesnut provided accounts of enslaved peoples’ rebellions during the war. Students should be aware that Chesnut’s presentation of these events is intensely biased and includes racist ideas and language. Significant dates in the diary include:

- October 7, 1861. In this passage, Chesnut talks about the murder of Mrs. Witherspoon by the people she enslaved.
- July 13, 1862. Chesnut recounts a story of enslaved laborers in South Carolina attempting to inform a Union soldier of the location of a Confederate camp.
- January 9, 1864. Chesnut records the escape of two enslaved people from the household of C.S.A. President Jefferson Davis. She notes the surprise of Davis’ wife, Varina, at their leaving.

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 16

Students will examine how Indigenous people participated in and were affected by the Civil War.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 8, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

16.A Indigenous people fought on both sides of the Civil War, depending on which side they believed would better protect the interests of their own nation.

16.B During the Civil War, the United States failed to meet many treaty obligations with Native nations. In Minnesota, the Dakota Nation stopped receiving payments and food that had been promised for ceded land. They were starving and sought to reclaim their land. This led to the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. When the

Dakota nation surrendered, it suffered mass internment. Lincoln authorized the hanging of 38 Dakota soldiers, the largest mass execution in the history of the United States.

16.C In the Southwest, the Union army drove Texans out of New Mexico and killed 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho civilians in the Sand Creek Massacre. Next, Union forces led by “Kit” Carson attacked Navajo people when they would not surrender and cede their land. Slavers from Mexico and some Native nations took thousands of Navajo captives during the war and its aftermath. The United States forced thousands of Navajo civilians to walk hundreds of miles, interning and ultimately displacing them.

16.D After the Civil War, the United States redeployed many federal troops west to continue national expansion by taking Indigenous land. Indigenous people resisted. The ensuing campaigns, which some call the “Indian Wars,” lasted through 1877.

How can I teach this?

Scott Manning Stevens’ chapter “American Indians and the Civil War” in *Why You Can’t Teach United States History Without American Indians* provides a useful overview for the history of the Civil War with regard to Indigenous people.

The National Park Service and the Essential Civil War Curriculum websites have various resources related to Indigenous people in the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery157 t-t.site/slavery158 t-t.site/slavery159

The Cherokee Nation has a timeline of its participation in the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery160

The magazine of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian has covered the role of Tuscarora soldiers in the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery161

A Michigan Public Radio segment describes a regiment of Indigenous people from several nations that fought for the Union. t-t.site/slavery162

The University of Minnesota’s Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies has a timeline and many resources for teaching about the U.S.-Dakota War. t-t.site/slavery163

The National Museum of the American Indian’s exhibit *Patriot Nations: Native Americans in Our Nation’s Armed Forces* discussed the role of Indigenous people in many conflicts, including the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery164

An editorial by scholars Boyd Cothran and Ari Kelman from *The New York Times* charts the relationship between the Civil War and the “Indian Wars.” t-t.site/slavery165

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 17

Students will recognize that slavery continued in many forms through most of the 19th century in what is now the United States.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 4, 6, 8 & 10

What else should my students know?

17.A In the Southwest, most bound laborers were Indigenous or Latinx. They were forced into labor through various means, including capture in warfare and debt peonage. Indigenous enslavement in the Southwest was so widespread in the 1800s that by the mid-1860s, almost all property owners in New Mexico enslaved Indigenous people.

17.B Debt peonage was widely used in the West throughout the 1800s. Enslavers claimed that their laborers were working off debts, though these debts could be transferred from one landowner to another and could also be passed from parent to child.

17.C Some Native nations raided Mexico repeatedly, bringing Mexican captives north for

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

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sale or for incorporation into their nations. Native nations engaged in the slave trade changed tactics and even purposes over time, as social changes led to different economic needs. For example, while Comanche raiders once conducted raids for the purposes of acquiring captives to sell into slavery, a shifting economy (a rise in the hide trade, for example) led to more incorporation of captives into their own labor force.

17.D Slavery took many forms in California, technically a free state, and expanded after the population boom associated with the California Gold Rush. Some enslaved African Americans were forced to migrate west alongside their enslavers. Many thousands of Indigenous people were held in bondage in households and on ranches and mines. As slavery evolved, mandatory employment laws, forced apprenticeship, vagrancy laws and convict leasing came to control the labor and lives of Indigenous people.

17.E In Utah, Mormons enslaved Indigenous people, holding at least 400 children between 1847 and 1900. The territorial legislature authorized Utah residents to purchase Indigenous children and hold them in bondage. The practice was justified as an attempt to “civilize” or “save” these children; Brigham Young said that Mormons were called to make Indigenous people into “a white and delightsome people.”

How can I teach this?

NPR reported on descendants of enslaved Indigenous people in New Mexico who are fighting for recognition of their ancestors’ enslavement. [t-t.site/slavery167](#)

Andrés Reséndez, in his book *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America*, covers the long history of Indigenous enslavement in the Americas. Among many other topics, he describes the

role of Mormons in the slave trade in Utah. He also notes that 400 Indigenous people were enslaved in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1866, illustrating that Indigenous enslavement continued well into the late 19th century.

California’s 1850 Act for the Government and Protection of Indians was used to force many Indigenous Californians into slavery. As many as 10,000 Indigenous Californians were enslaved before 1863.

Many resources cover the enslavement of Indigenous people related to the Gold Rush, including a chapter by Jean M. O’Brien in *Why You Can’t Teach United States History Without American Indians*. [t-t.site/slavery168](#) • [t-t.site/slavery169](#)

RadioWest discussed the history of Mormon enslavement of Indigenous people with history professors Elise Boxer and Matthew Garret. [t-t.site/slavery170](#)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 18

Students will examine the ways that people who were enslaved tried to claim their freedom after the Civil War.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 7, 8, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

18.A Provisions that guaranteed rights to formerly enslaved Africans, such as the 13th Amendment, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 14th Amendment, did not protect Indigenous people from enslavement. African Americans enslaved by Indigenous people were also not clearly protected by these provisions or by the Reconstruction Treaties signed after the Civil War. The tribal status of these freedmen remains controversial today.

18.B Indigenous people were not protected from involuntary servitude in large part because they were excluded from citizenship rights in the Constitution as “Indians not

taxed.” The Supreme Court upheld the exclusion of Indigenous people from 14th Amendment protection in *Elk v. Wilkins* (1884).

18.C Freed African Americans sought to exercise their freedom in several ways, including relocating (leaving the plantations where they had been enslaved); pursuing education (in the numerous schools established after the war); living as families; and participating in politics.

18.D Black voters became influential in Southern elections during Congressional Reconstruction. Between 1865 and 1877, black men served in the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and in state capitols. More than 600 black men also served in state legislatures.

18.E The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 formally extended citizenship to all Indigenous people. Though some Indigenous people were already citizens by this time, many Indigenous people did not desire citizenship in the United States (they were already citizens of their own nations). One byproduct of the law may have been that Indigenous people, as U.S. citizens, were now protected from enslavement.

How can I teach this?

Reading the 13th Amendment creates an opportunity to discuss the scope of emancipation. The provision for the treatment of prisoners, for example, can lead to subsequent conversations about continued enslavement, including through the convict labor system. An excerpt from *Slavery by Another Name* provides important details. [t-t.site/slavery171](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery171) • [t-t.site/slavery172](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery172)

Several useful online resources cover the Reconstruction Treaties, including an essay from the Oklahoma Historical Society. For information about the histories and experiences of African-Indigenous people, see the exhibit *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, a joint effort from



the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Smithsonian Travelling Exhibition Service, which is available in book form online. The exhibit includes a discussion of tribal citizenship for African-Indigenous people and shares personal stories from African-Indigenous families. [t-t.site/slavery173](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery173) • [t-t.site/slavery174](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery174)

Charlotte Forten’s article “Life on the Sea Islands,” published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1864, describes her work teaching formerly enslaved students. George Mason University’s website History Matters provides an informative excerpt. [t-t.site/slavery175](https://www.tolerance.org/slavery175)

In pursuing the freedom to live as families, many formerly enslaved people searched for family members who had been sold during slavery. The Historic New Orleans Collection has archived more than a thousand “Lost Friends” advertisements from the South-

In 1878, African-American representatives in the South Carolina Legislature outnumbered white legislators.

western Christian Advocate. Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery also offers a free, searchable, online archive of such ads. t-t.site/slavery176 • t-t.site/slavery177

In December 1865, 2,500 black residents of Washington, D.C., signed a letter to Congress outlining their loyalty to the Union and contributions to the community and thereby requesting the right to vote. The letter is available on the site of The Freedmen & Southern Society Project. t-t.site/slavery178

The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship, from the Library of Congress, provides a variety of sources (both images and text) to explore the activities of formerly enslaved people in the South. t-t.site/slavery179

The account book from Hampton Plantation in South Carolina shows formerly enslaved people being paid for their work. t-t.site/slavery180

The November 16, 1867, cover of *Harper's Weekly* was a drawing by Alfred R. Waud titled "The First Vote." It showed African American voters casting their first ballots. t-t.site/slavery181

In 1878, African American representatives in the South Carolina legislature outnumbered white legislators. A photograph of the legislature is archived at the Library of Congress. t-t.site/slavery182

The first African American to serve in the Senate was Hiram Revels of Mississippi. A group portrait featuring Revels, "The First Colored Senator and Representatives," was published by Currier and Ives in 1872. t-t.site/slavery183

Several online histories of the Snyder Act (the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act) offer different details and documents, including at the websites of the Library of Virginia and the

National Archives. t-t.site/slavery184 • t-t.site/slavery185

The Snyder Act was controversial among many Indigenous people. The Onondaga Nation and the Haudenosaunee continue to resist the Snyder Act, saying it is a tool of assimilation and a rejection of their sovereignty. t-t.site/slavery186

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 19

Students will examine the ways that the federal government's policies affected the lives of formerly enslaved people.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 8, 9 & 10

What else should my students know?

19.A The U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau) was a large bureaucracy created after the Civil War to help African Americans who had been enslaved. It provided services including legal aid, food, housing and education. The Freedmen's Bureau also tried to reunite separated families and oversaw the attempts to settle formerly enslaved people on confiscated or abandoned Confederate lands.

19.B Access to land was one of the main issues to affect the lives of formerly enslaved African Americans. During the war, the Union Army relocated formerly enslaved people onto confiscated Confederate land. However, most of those resettled were kicked off their farms in 1866 when President Andrew Johnson ordered the land returned to the former enslavers.

19.C By passing the 14th and 15th Amendments during Congressional (Radical) Reconstruction, the federal government made a commitment to protect the legal and political rights of African Americans. Federal troops enforced the civil and political rights of African Americans in the South during Congressional Reconstruction.

19.D None of these Reconstruction efforts applied to formerly enslaved Indigenous people, whose lands and rights continued to be taken away after the end of the Civil War.

19.E The 1877 Dawes Severalty Act divided tribal lands into allotments meant for private ownership. The act, which was an attempt to assimilate Indigenous people and undermine tribal governance, offered citizenship to Indigenous people who accepted and held allotments for 25 years. Other land was sold to non-Indigenous people. Although Indigenous people successfully challenged the Act in court, it took 90 million acres of Indigenous land by 1934.

How can I teach this?

A wealth of primary documents is available through the website of The Freedmen and Southern Society Project. [t-t.site/slavery187](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)

- A Georgia planter complained to the Freedmen’s Bureau about free women who preferred to take care of their families instead of working in the fields. [t-t.site/slavery188](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)
- Demonstrating the persistence of forced servitude, a free man in North Carolina appealed to the Freedmen’s Bureau when his children were apprenticed to his former enslaver. [t-t.site/slavery189](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)
- A Tennessee free man expressed his worry that his rights to federally controlled land would disappear if the land were returned to former Confederates. [t-t.site/slavery190](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)

William Tecumseh Sherman’s Special Field Order No. 15 (1865) confiscated 400,000 acres of land from enslavers in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and distributed it to people who had been enslaved. The land was returned during Presidential Reconstruction, when Andrew Johnson restored most former Confederates’ political rights and property. [t-t.site/slavery191](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)

The Southern Homestead Act of 1866 gave individual grants of 80 acres of publicly owned land to settlers who resided there for five years. No one who supported the Confederacy could file a claim before 1867. However, the land was of poor quality and few formerly enslaved people had the money necessary to move or to buy farming supplies. Landless white people and white speculators benefited the most from this program.

Students can read the Dawes Act and examine maps of its effect on Indigenous land holdings on the National Archives website. *Indian Country Today* published a 2017 article that offers an in-depth examination of the Act’s causes and consequences. [t-t.site/slavery192](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/) • [t-t.site/slavery193](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/) • [t-t.site/slavery194](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)

Efforts to assimilate Indigenous people included forcibly placing children into boarding schools. Students can read the words of Carlisle School founder Richard Pratt and examine the resources offered by the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center. To make connections with the present, students can study the Indian Child Welfare Act and current efforts to eliminate it. [t-t.site/slavery195](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/) • [t-t.site/slavery196](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/) • [t-t.site/slavery197](https://www.freedmenandsovereignty.org/)

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 20

Students will examine the ways that white Southerners attempted to define freedom for freed African Americans.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 4, 5, 8 & 10

What else should my students know?

20.A White Southerners largely wanted to return to the pre-war plantation economy. Sharecropping and tenant farming, which offered some independence to formerly enslaved people, emerged as the dominant labor forms in the post-war South. Unfair labor contracts between farmers and landowners

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. “Slavery was an institution of power,” designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.



In this 1862 photograph, taken in Fair Oaks, Virginia, Captain George Armstrong Custer (right) of the Fifth Cavalry sits with a Confederate prisoner, Lieutenant James B. Washington, and a child Washington enslaved.

left sharecroppers and tenant farmers in an endless cycle of debt and poverty.

20.B The Ku Klux Klan emerged as a terrorist organization committed to violent repercussions for African Americans or their white allies who sought education, political power or economic success for the black population.

20.C Black Codes were sets of laws passed by former Confederates who regained power under Johnson’s Presidential Reconstruction. These laws codified certain rights, such as owning property or legally marrying, but they also guaranteed harsher punishments for people of color accused of the same crimes as white people.

How can I teach this?

To understand sharecropping and tenant farming, examine a sharecropper contract. These documents are widely available online. These documents are widely available online, or K–12 educators can create a school account for free access through the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American history. t-t.site/slavery198

Letters archived by *The Freedmen and Southern Society Project* provide contemporary protests of racial violence and unfair laws. t-t.site/slavery199

- In a January 25, 1866, letter to the Freedmen’s Bureau, M. Howard, a freedman in

Mississippi, protests labor contracts and Black Codes. t-t.site/slavery200

- In a December 16, 1865, letter to the Freedmen’s Bureau, black soldier Calvin Holly writes to protest the violence directed at formerly enslaved people in Mississippi. t-t.site/slavery201

The Colfax Massacre is an understudied act of violence that occurred after a contested Louisiana gubernatorial election in 1873. One hundred and fifty black men were murdered by Southern Democrats who saw them as a threat to Democratic power. Several of the perpetrators of the massacre were prosecuted under the Enforcement Act (Civil Rights Act of 1870). This law was passed to protect the rights of African Americans, who were regularly threatened by violent groups like the Ku Klux Klan. The Colfax convictions were appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, which ruled in *United States v. Cruikshank* (1876) that the protections of the 14th Amendment protected people only from the actions of state governments—not from the actions of individuals. This meant that the federal government could not use the Enforcement Act to target terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. A 2016 *Smithsonian Magazine* article explains Colfax and its consequences. t-t.site/slavery202

Students might examine documents that threatened African American rights. A broadside published by a “Committee” (likely the name for a local band of white vigilantes) and seized by the Freedmen’s Bureau in Tennessee, outlined rules for formerly enslaved people and promised penalties for any infractions. t-t.site/slavery203

Key examples of Black Code legislation included laws that exploited or regulated the labor of black bodies. Vagrancy laws (particularly in Mississippi and South Carolina) allowed magistrates to arrest any black man who appeared unemployed and hire him

out to a white planter. Apprenticeship laws meant that if courts ruled that parents were unable to adequately care for children under 18, those children could be apprenticed out as labor, with preference given to former enslavers. Licensure laws required African Americans to get a special license to do anything other than farm.

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 21

Students will examine the impact of the Compromise of 1877 and the removal of federal troops from the former Confederacy.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 8, & 10

What else should my students know?

21.A The Compromise of 1877 emerged from the contested presidential election of 1876. Republican Rutherford B. Hayes was given the presidency in exchange for the formal end of Reconstruction, including the removal of the last federal troops from the South.

21.B After the end of Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan and local and state governments attacked African American political participation, leading to the return of white Democratic rule in the former Confederacy.

21.C White Democratic governments across the South used Jim Crow legal codes to enforce new ways of controlling black labor and black bodies.

21.D. A sustained campaign of racial terrorism, including public lynchings of thousands of African Americans, enforced white supremacy after slavery itself was ended.

How can I teach this?

During the Jim Crow era, Southern states used peonage and convict labor to force African Americans to work without pay for years and even decades. The PBS documentary

Slavery by Another Name covers this period well. t-t.site/slavery204

States imposed literacy tests and the grandfather clause, which were designed to disqualify African Americans from voting. Literacy tests were unfairly administered to the black population. The grandfather clause, which obviously targeted African Americans, provided exemptions from these tests and from poll taxes only for voters—or descendants of voters up to grandchildren—who had voted prior to 1867.

From producers Hannah Ayers and Lance Warren, *An Outrage* is a short documentary on lynching in the American South. The film and the accompanying viewer's guide teach about the rise of white Democratic rule in the post-Reconstruction era and how African Americans resisted racial terror, in part by joining The Great Migration. t-t.site/slavery205 • t-t.site/slavery206

The digital project *A Red Record* documents histories of lynching throughout the former Confederacy, demonstrating the connection between lynchings and white supremacy after the Civil War. t-t.site/slavery207

Many hundreds of Indigenous and Latinx people were lynched throughout the West. The history is still being uncovered, but several online resources provide an introduction. The work of Ken Gonzales-Day in his *Erased Lynchings* project illuminates some of this history. t-t.site/slavery208 • t-t.site/slavery209 • t-t.site/slavery210

SUMMARY OBJECTIVE 22

Students will examine the ways that the legacies of slavery, white supremacy and settler colonialism continue to affect life in what is now the United States.

MAPS TO KEY CONCEPTS 2, 3, 4, 8 & 9

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

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6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and freed people worked to maintain cultural traditions while building new ones that sustain communities and impact the larger world.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

What else should my students know?

22.A Long traditions of African American and Indigenous resistance have shaped the United States and continue in the present, as shown by actions by the American Indian Movement, the Black Panther Party, the Black Lives Matter movement and at Standing Rock.

22.B Segregation and inequality persist in the United States. This is most evident in employment, housing and education but can also be seen in health care, workplaces, sports settings and churches.

22.C Profound economic inequalities stratify American society. African Americans and Indigenous people face many obstacles to advancement, including unequal educational opportunities, unemployment, wage disparities, barriers to home ownership and persistent wealth inequality. Well into the 20th century, elite white landowners in the West and South continued to hold Indigenous and African American people as captive laborers through systems of debt peonage and carceral labor.

22.D Mass incarceration has devastated many Native nations and communities of color. Police officers, district attorneys and judges arrest, charge and imprison African Americans at rates far exceeding white people, with lasting consequences for political and economic participation. The school-to-prison pipeline leads many Indigenous and African American students to come into contact with law enforcement at a young age after being suspended and expelled from school at rates much higher than those for white students.

22.E The legacies of settler colonialism continue in the many ways that Indigenous people are disenfranchised and disadvantaged. Many Latinx people who come to the United States are Indigenous, and they also face many of the legacies of slavery that manifest as contemporary oppression and inequity.

22.F Although race has no scientific basis, as a social construct it has the power to profoundly affect the lived experiences of fairness, equality and opportunity for people perceived to be non-white.

22.G Legacies of seeing Indigenous women as sexual objects to be bought, used and traded echo today in the extreme numbers of Indigenous women who go missing and are murdered each year.

How can I teach this?

Let's Talk: Discussing Critical Topics With Students supports educators in thinking critically about their own identities and in helping students talk about oppression and injustice in the classroom. t-t.site/slavery211

Teaching The New Jim Crow is a set of teaching tools (lessons and excerpts) for high school students that introduces the origins of racial caste as well as the history and devastating impact of mass incarceration on communities of color. t-t.site/slavery212

The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein tells the disturbing story of how white supremacy intentionally caused and perpetuated housing segregation in the United States. t-t.site/slavery213

White Rage by Carol Anderson traces the ways in which white reactions to black social and political gains undermined those gains and derailed progress for black Americans. t-t.site/slavery214

Contemporary debates about removing Confederate monuments illustrate not just the lasting legacy of white supremacy but the ways that the Civil War was reframed to erase Confederate support for slavery. “New Orleans’ Mayor Mitch Landrieu’s Address on the Removal of Four Confederate Statues” is the transcript of a speech given on Friday, May 19, 2017, as a statue of Confederate General

Robert E. Lee was to be taken down. A video from Vox shows how the United Daughters of the Confederacy worked to reshape memory of the Civil War. [t-t.site/slavery215](#) • [t-t.site/slavery216](#)

Episode eight of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast explores strategies for using crucial examination of films to teach about representations of the Civil War and Reconstruction. [t-t.site/slavery217](#)

Equity Matters: Confronting Implicit Bias is a teacher-facing webinar that includes many tools and resources that can be used with students. [t-t.site/slavery218](#)

An article from the Fall 2018 issue of Teaching Tolerance’s magazine explains the nature and persistence of white privilege and suggests useful resources for confronting it. [t-t.site/slavery219](#)

Episode 14 of Teaching Tolerance’s *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery* podcast makes connections to modern practices of slavery in the United States and around the world. [t-t.site/slavery220](#)

KEY CONCEPTS

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