Copyright and Permissions

This document is licensed for single-teacher use. The purchase of this curriculum unit includes permission to make copies of the Student Text and appropriate student handouts from the Teacher Resource Book for use in your own classroom. Duplication of this document for the purpose of resale or other distribution is prohibited.

Permission is not granted to post this document for use online. Our Digital Editions are designed for this purpose. See www.choices.edu/digital for information and pricing.

The Choices Program curriculum units are protected by copyright. If you would like to use material from a Choices unit in your own work, please contact us for permission.
Faculty Advisers

Faculty at Brown University and other institutions provided advice and carefully reviewed this curriculum. We wish to thank the following scholars for their invaluable input to this curriculum:

**Geri Augusto**
Visiting Associate Professor of International & Public Affairs and Africana Studies, Brown University

**Anthony Bogues**
Asa Messer Professor of Humanities and Critical Theory, Professor of Africana Studies, Brown University

**Pepijn Brandon**
Assistant Professor in Social and Economic History, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

**Zach Sell**
Visiting Assistant Professor of History, Drexel University

**Workshop Participants**

We wish to thank the following students and educators for their participation in the workshops that shaped the development of this curriculum:

**Teachers & Administrators**
Kathleen Johnston, Genevieve Allard, Carol Amaya, Jenny Li, Matt Lim, Denise Muller, Kelley McKee, Eldridge Gilbert

**Students**
We wish to thank students from the following Rhode Island schools: Hope High School, 360 High School, Central High School, Shea High School, Central Falls High School

**Contributors**

The curriculum developers at the Choices Program write, edit, and produce Choices curricula. We would also like to thank the following people for their essential contributions to this curriculum:

**Heather Sanford**
Lead Author

**Aidan Wang**
Curriculum Assistant

**Gustaf Michaelsen**
Cartographer

**Noam Bizan**
Editing Assistant

**The Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice**

**Anthony Bogues**
Inaugural Director

**Catherine Van Amburgh**
Center Coordinator

**Maiyah Gamble-Rivers**
Manager of Programs and Public Engagement

**Shana Weinberg**
Assistant Director

**The Choices Program**

**Susannah Bechtel**
Assistant Director, Curriculum Development

**Jo Fisher**
Marketing and Communications Specialist

**Andy Blackadar**
Curriculum Development Director

**Kevin Hoskins**
Curriculum Developer

**Kathleen Magiera**
Administrative Manager

**Christine Seguin**
Administrative Assistant

**Naoko Shibusawa**
Faculty Director

**Emilia Figliomeni**
Video Producer

**Mimi Stephens**
Professional Development Director

This curriculum resource project, *Racial Slavery in the Americas: Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies*, would not be possible without the generous support of a gift from Mary and Jerome Vascellaro. We wish to recognize this generous funding. We also wish to thank the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice at Brown University for their generous support of this curriculum, especially Maiyah Gamble-Rivers who managed CSSJ’s work on this project. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the Choices Program.

Cover images: Marc Ferrez. Instituto Moreira Salles. Used with permission; Kristina Just, Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 2.0.); William H. Townsend, “Sketches of the Amistad Captives” General Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Used with permission; Johnny Silvercloud (CC BY-SA 2.0).
## Contents

**Introduction: Racial Slavery in the Americas—Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies** .......................... 1

**Part I: Colonization and the Creation of Racial Slavery** ............................................................ 5

- Colonization of the Americas ................................................................. 6
- Cash Crops and the Plantation System ................................................. 11
- Labor ........................................................................................................ 14

**Part II: The Slave Trade** ......................................................................................... 19

- European and African Involvement .................................................... 19
- The Middle Passage ............................................................................. 24
- Arrival in the Americas ........................................................................ 26
- The Slave Trade within the Americas .................................................. 30

**Part III: Life in the Americas** .............................................................................. 35

- Enslaved Labor ..................................................................................... 35
- Methods of Domination and Control ................................................ 36
- Gendered Experiences of Enslavement ............................................... 40
- Adaptation, Survival, and Resistance .................................................. 41
- Free People of Color ............................................................................ 48

**Part IV: The Abolition of Slavery and Its Legacies** ................................................ 51

- Abolitionism and Self-Emancipation .................................................. 51
- Armed Rebellion, the Haitian Revolution, and Black Abolitionism ....... 55
- Abolition of the Slave Trade and the Emancipation of Enslaved People ................................................................................. 57
- Racial Slavery and Modern Inequalities .............................................. 63
- Movements for Racial Justice in the Atlantic World Today ................ 72

**Supplementary Resources** ................................................................................. 77

**Videos** ........................................................................................................ online
Enslaved people working during the coffee harvest in Brazil, 1882. The economy of Brazil—both as a Portuguese colony and a newly independent country—was based on the labor of enslaved people. Coffee became a key export for Brazil in the 1800s. Slavery in Brazil ended in 1888, six years after this image was taken.

This 1967 statue by Albert Mangonès, *Le Marron Inconnu*, commemorates the Haitian Revolution, which ended slavery in the French colony of Saint-Domingue.
Introduction: Racial Slavery in the Americas—Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies

On May 25, 2020, Minneapolis, Minnesota police officers killed George Floyd, an African American man. Floyd’s death—which was recorded by bystanders—sparked outrage from millions in the United States, leading to what was the largest and most widespread wave of sustained protests since the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Soon after, protests against the killing spread around the globe. Protestors everywhere were united by their condemnation of police brutality and anti-black racism and their declaration that “Black Lives Matter.”

Black Lives Matter was founded as a social and political movement by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi in 2013 after the killing of Trayvon Martin, a black teenager, in Florida. It has since grown into an organization based in the United States dedicated to eliminating white supremacy and building local power in black communities as well as a global rallying cry to combat anti-black racism.

“As we mourn the senseless and brutal murder of another Black life we are standing up #InDefenseofBlackLife and calling to #DefundPolice as we fight against police brutality, systemic racism, and white supremacy in America and around the world.”


Floyd’s death—along with the killing of Breonna Taylor, an African American woman, by Louisville, Kentucky police twelve days earlier—inspired such a sweeping movement for change because it illustrated how deeply ingrained anti-black racism remains within the U.S. criminal justice system. African Americans make up 40 percent of those incarcerated (held in jail or prison) in the United States, despite representing only 13 percent of the U.S. population. Black men are 2.5 times more likely than white men to be killed by police, while black women are 1.4 times more likely than white women to be killed by police. These statistics reveal just a sliver of the overwhelming evidence of anti-black racial bias in the U.S. criminal justice system. Anti-black bias in the criminal justice system represents just a segment of the broader anti-black racism that affects employment, housing, health care, political power, and many other aspects of U.S. society. Violence and oppression against black people in the United States—and throughout the Atlantic World—is not new. It began hundreds of years ago when European slave traders first brought African captives to the shores of the Americas.

The protest wave that erupted in the United States originated as a response to police violence against African Americans. It transformed into a global movement because Floyd and Taylor’s deaths symbolized for many people how much systemic racism continues to impact the world today. Systemic racism (sometimes called institutionalized or structural racism) means that overarching structures (such as governments and economies), leading institutions (like corporations, banks, news media organizations, schools, and hospitals), and major systems (such as criminal justice systems, financial systems, housing, health care, and employment systems) within societies have been developed in ways that put particular racial groups at an advantage and others at a disadvantage. In the Americas, and throughout much of the world, these structures, institutions, and systems have provided advantages to white people.

Introduction Definitions

Americas—North and South America, including the Caribbean.

Atlantic World—The lands of Europe, the Americas, and Africa that border the Atlantic Ocean and are linked by their interactions of people, economies, and cultures.

Capitalism—Capitalism is a social and economic system in which resources and businesses are all or mostly owned by individuals and operated for profit.
How has systemic racism come to define much of the modern world?

To understand how systemic racism has come to define so much of the modern world, we must investigate its origins. Historians have shown that white supremacy and anti-black racism—the building blocks of systemic racism in the world today—originated with Europeans’ creation, maintenance, and extension of racial slavery in the Atlantic World beginning in the sixteenth century.

European nations, especially Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands, invaded the Americas starting in the late fifteenth century. They conquered territory from a diverse array of Indigenous inhabitants in the Americas and sought to acquire as much wealth as possible. Within a century, Europeans had killed almost all of the Indigenous populations of the Caribbean and severely diminished the Indigenous populations of North and South America—all through a combination of warfare, violent enslavement, and disease. In the sixteenth century, European colonizers began forcibly relocating African captives to the Americas and enslaving them. Colonizers enslaved Africans to work the mines and plantations they built in order to extract even more wealth from their conquered territories in the Americas.

The European trade in enslaved Africans and the system of racial slavery itself enriched various sectors of European empires. Sailors, merchants, farmers, investors, plantation owners, and government officials were just some of the wide array of people who benefitted from the slave system, which was constructed in territories conquered from Indigenous people in the Americas. Governments and institutions, such as banks, universities, and manufacturing companies, profited as well. Racial slavery led to the growth of capitalism, the expansion of powerful empires, and the creation of great wealth for nations and individuals. All of this was made possible through violence against black people and justified through the creation of anti-black racism. Europeans constructed anti-black racism as a system of beliefs, values, and assumptions that insisted white people were naturally superior to black people. At the same time, they created laws, policies, and practices that preserved white people’s domination over black people. These served as the basis for the development of the political, economic, and social systems that have given shape to our modern world.

How did black people experience and resist racial slavery?

People taken captive in Africa and forcibly transported to the Americas on slave ships could not escape the tremendous psychological and emotional burden of enslavement. Narratives written by survivors of slavery often include painful recollections of being permanently separated from family and friends. Enslaved people also faced daily physical and psychological abuse from slaveholders.

“Our sufferings were our own, we had no one to share in our troubles, none to care for us, or even speak a word of comfort to us.”
—Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, recounting his enslavement and forced relocation to Brazil from the East Coast of Africa in his autobiography, 1854.
It is important to understand the violent system that enslaved people faced, and equally essential to recognize the resilience of enslaved communities. Enslaved people did not passively accept these oppressive conditions. They created and preserved communities through food, gardens, games, storytelling, music, and religion—often maintaining and adapting aspects of their African heritage. They demonstrated creative resilience in the face of devastating violence and forced separation from homes and loved ones. They often mocked their enslavers behind their backs, intentionally broke tools, set fires, engaged in work slowdowns, and carved out as much time for independent cultural activity as they could. In many cases, they resisted slavery by running away, forming independent communities, or rebelling against slaveholders. Enslaved people even organized revolutions that led to the downfall of slavery.

In the coming days, you are going to read a history of racial slavery in the Americas. Black people’s experiences of captivity and enslavement—and the countless ways in which they resisted the slave system—are at the center of this account. The history of racial slavery covers hundreds of years and the entirety of the Atlantic World. It would be impossible to cover every element of this important history, but this reading will provide you with a representative introduction to racial slavery and its role in creating the modern world. You will examine the rise of racial slavery in North America, South America, and the Caribbean and read about a wide variety of experiences of enslaved people. You will see how racial slavery took root in the Americas and explore the effects it had upon the

Race, Racism, and White Supremacy

The concepts of race, racism, and white supremacy appear throughout these readings and lessons. It is important to understand and keep these concepts in mind as you explore the history of racial slavery.

**Race**—The idea of race is seemingly based in biology, but it lacks a scientific basis. The DNA differences within a race can be wider than DNA differences among races. For instance, the DNA of an African American can be more similar to that of a Chinese American than to another African American. Overall, race is a concept that rests on physical differences in skin color, hair texture, etc., that comprise only 0.1% of the total of each human’s DNA. White Europeans created ideas about race and racial differences in order to explain and justify their enslavement of black Africans and colonial domination of Indigenous and Asian peoples. Since then, these physical differences have been used to classify people into unequal hierarchies, often to exploit the labor of some groups and allow other groups to profit from that exploitation.

Ideas about race reflect the political, economic, cultural, and social circumstances of a society. These ideas can change over time. For example, the common understanding of who was considered “white” in the United States once excluded Eastern and Southern Europeans.

**Racism**—A system of social structures (laws, policies, practices, and attitudes) that creates inequalities by either providing or denying power, resources, opportunities, and safety based on racial categories. Racism is more than prejudice or bigotry. Racism is having the institutional or structural power to harm, commit violence against, or deny opportunities to those facing racial prejudice or bigotry. Racism exists in the attitudes and actions of individuals as well as in the larger institutions and structures of which they are a part. There are different forms of racism—this reading will focus mostly on anti-black racism.

**White Supremacy**—White supremacy is based on the belief that white people are superior to people of other races. In the United States, white Americans also idealized biological white purity to such an extreme that they established the “one drop” rule. This meant having even “one drop” of black blood or any black ancestry meant the individual was considered black even if outwardly, the individual looked white. White supremacy is thus an ideology, a deeply ingrained system of beliefs, values, and assumptions. White people developed it over time to explain not only racial slavery and colonial domination, but also why they should have power over nonwhite people overall. White supremacy is also more than an ideology. It is a social structure created to keep people of color in lower political, economic, and social positions through laws, social expectations, and denial of economic and educational opportunities.
Racial Slavery in the Americas: Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies

Introduction

The lives of enslaved people in these places. You will examine its role in creating the modern global capitalist economy and consider how it continues to affect all of us today. As you work through these issues, consider the following questions:

- Why did racial slavery begin in the Americas?
- What were the lives of enslaved people like in different places?
- What are the legacies and effects of racial slavery today?
- What should be done to address the past and present effects of systemic racism?

The most prominent example of a successful slave rebellion began in the French colony of Saint-Domingue in 1791. Under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture, enslaved people freed themselves from French colonial control and established Haiti in 1804. As the first black republic, Haiti’s founding issued a warning shot to slaveholders, and it became a beacon of hope for enslaved people throughout the Americas. The self-liberating activities of Haitians and other enslaved people throughout the Americas shaped the abolitionist (anti-slavery) movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Note about Disturbing Content

This period in history is marked by oppression and violence and has had lasting repercussions for many groups. Please be advised that this text includes descriptions of physical and psychological abuse, firsthand accounts of violence, and a brief discussion of sexual assault. It is important to be sensitive to your classmates and the ways in which this history might be a difficult topic to study.

Note on Terminology

When the first Europeans arrived in the Americas in the fifteenth century, they called the Native peoples they met “Indians” because they believed they were in India. Some Indian communities in the United States began to use the term “Native American” in the mid-twentieth century, in part to counter the negative and racist stereotypes that had become associated with the word “Indian.” But this term is also problematic because the term “America” is also a European invention. Indigenous peoples outside of the United States also do not use the term “Native American” to describe themselves. There is no Indigenous name for all of the Native peoples of the Americas because before Europeans arrived, there was no need for such a term. With thousands of distinct nations and languages, the Native peoples of the Americas were not a unified group. Some Indigenous people in the Americas today see themselves as unified, however, due in large part to their treatment by white people. In this reading, the terms “Indian” and “Indigenous” will be used interchangeably. Whenever possible, groups will be referred to by their specific names.

This unit also uses the term “enslaved person” instead of “slave.” “Slave” repeats slaveholders’ terminology, and presents the enslaved as property rather than as human beings. This term also implies that slavery existed as a natural status, rather than as a condition that slaveholders created and enforced. The term “enslaved people” highlights the involuntary nature of slavery as a status imposed by slaveholders and lawmakers, and reminds us of the humanity of people subjected to this cruel system.
Racial Slavery in the Americas: Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies

Teacher Resource Book
Art Analysis—Portrayals of Plantations and Enslavement

Objectives:

Students will: Analyze artistic depictions of enslavement.

Identify the artists’ point of view and place in its historical context.

Consider the benefits and limitations of art as a source for understanding history.

Synthesize information from multiple sources.

Required Reading:


Handouts:

“Three Steps for Analyzing an Image of Slavery” (TRB 56-57)

Note: This lesson requires the ability to project or print the slideshow of “Images of Plantations and Enslavement.”

Resources:

The slideshow of the images used with this lesson is available at <choices.edu/racial-slavery/>.

“Additional Information for Teachers about Each Image” (TRB 53-55)

Videos:

- “What were the daily hardships faced by enslaved people in the Mississippi Valley?” (Professor Walter Johnson)
- “Why did enslavers withhold provisions from enslaved people?” (Professor Tony Perry)
- “What can art reveal about history or current events?” (Professor Ian Alden Russell)
- “How do you go about analyzing a work of art?” (Professor Ian Alden Russell)

In the Classroom:

1. Establish Historical Context—Ask students to recall from their reading the conditions for enslaved people on plantations. What was daily life like? How did enslaved people resist the conditions? Play the short video “What were the daily hardships faced by enslaved people in the Mississippi Valley?” by Professor Walter Johnson. You may wish to show “Why did enslavers withhold provisions from enslaved people?” by Professor Tony Perry as well. Have students record three details from each video on a piece of paper.

2. Introduce the Lesson—Tell students they are going to examine depictions of enslaved people created by artists of the time period. Play the short video “What can art reveal about history or current events?” by Professor Ian Alden Russell. Ask students to explain what Russell means when he says, “And those images weren’t truthful representations. They were interpretations.”

3. Examine Sources—Tell students they are going to analyze artists’ interpretations of plantations and enslavement. You may wish to play the video “How do you go about analyzing a work of art?” by Professor Ian Alden Russell to introduce students to a framework for analysis.

Form small groups of students and share the slideshow “Images of Plantations and Enslavement” and the handout “Three Steps for Analyzing an Image of Slavery” to all students. Assign each group one image from “Romanticized Plantation Scenes” (images 1-4) and one image from “Abolitionist Critiques” (images 5-8). Review the terms “romanticized” and “critiques” as needed.

Suggestions for Pairing of Images

Images 1 & 6 compare erasure of violence with the exploitative nature of slavery.

Images 2 & 8 compare “obedient” enslaved people and passive overseers with the coercive nature of labor.

Images 3 & 5 provide portrayals of women.

Images 4 & 7 show very different depictions of groups of enslaved people.
Direct students to read the instructions carefully and answer the questions that follow the sources. You may want to consult “Additional Information for Teachers about Each Image” as you guide students through the process of analyzing these depictions.

4. Make Connections—After the groups have completed the handouts, have them share some of their answers. How did the two images that students analyzed compare to each other? Why do students believe there were such sharply different artistic portrayals of slavery? Based on what students have learned about the history of slavery in the Americas, how do the romanticized depictions misrepresent the realities of slavery?

Ask students whether they believe analyzing these images helped increase their understanding of the history of slavery. How?

What pitfalls might there be in relying on artwork as sources for historical inquiry? Why might using artwork be helpful? Have students identify the benefits and limitations of using artwork as a source for learning about the past.

Remind students to use evidence and concrete examples from the images, their readings, and other sources to support their claims during discussion.

Extra Challenges:

1. Persuasive Writing: Have students draft a short, evidence-based, persuasive essay about the romanticized plantation scenes in response to the prompt: “Each of these images misleads more than it enlightens.” Students should write in the third person, and gather and cite evidence from the readings and other sources.

2. Art Analysis: Have students find three additional images from the abolitionist perspective. You may wish to direct students to <https://wwwabolitionseminar.org/images/>. Students should prepare a short presentation for the class in which they provide a very brief overview of the images. To describe the images, students should use the method of “description, deduction, and speculation,” as explained by Professor Ian Alden Russell in the video, “How do you analyze a work of art?”

Homework:

**Additional Information for Teachers about Each Image**


English architect James Hakewill drew this illustration of a plantation yard in Jamaica during a visit to the island between 1820 and 1821. The landscape is green and full of life, and the plantation adjoins the sea where products can be transported to and from awaiting ships. All of this conveys a sense of abundance and perhaps wrongfully implies that enslaved people shared in this bounty. Near the center of the drawing, we can see the various plantation buildings in the distance. Hakewill portrays the plantation as a picturesque and peaceful space, without acknowledging the violence of slavery. Enslaved people are literally pushed to the margins of the drawing—on the left, we see (presumably enslaved) shepherds watching over livestock, and on the far right, we see the small houses where enslaved people lived. The drawing is full of life—of vegetation, animals, and brief glimpses of enslaved people walking the roads near the plantation—but shields the viewer from the horrors of slavery. Such attractive portrayals of plantation landscapes helped to downplay opposition to slavery in Europe.

**Image 2:** Frédéric Mialhe, “Plate XXVII” in *Album pintoresco de la isla de Cuba* (Havana[?]: B. May y Ca., 1851[?]). “Vista de una vega de tabaco.”

French landscape painter Frédéric Mialhe (1810-c. 1861) created this image of a picturesque Cuban tobacco plantation between 1838 and 1854. Overseers can be seen mounted on horses, while enslaved laborers at the center and left of the painting cultivate tobacco. While Miahle depicts enslaved labor and the overseers who ensured its completion, the painting primarily showcases harmony. The overseers are engaged in conversation, while the enslaved people at the center of the painting perform their assigned tasks without resistance. The lush landscape conveys a sense of abundance, wrongfully implying that enslaved people received plentiful food and resources. The rolling hills and verdant landscape further distance the viewer from the violent coercion that propelled cash crop production.

**Image 3:** Engraved print of painting by Agostino Brunias, published by John P. Thompson (London), October 6, 1804.

Italian artist Agostino Brunias painted this scene of a linen market in Saint-Domingue in the 1770s. Brunias foregrounds free women and men of color at the center of the image, and pushes enslaved people to the background (left). He created this painting at a time when abolition debates grew more intense, and used such images to promote the amelioration (rather than the elimination) of slavery. Brunias is known for romanticizing West Indian slave societies as wealthy and self-sufficient, often in an attempt to encourage migration to the colonies. It is important to note that the patrons who commissioned Brunias’s work were often British individuals who made great profits from slavery. This idealization is evident in this image, as the free people of color are dressed in colorful clothing typically reserved for elite members of society, and are in the act of purchasing more (expensive) linen. Enslaved people, likely placed at the margins of the image to minimize the exploitative nature of slavery in these territories, also appear well-clothed and healthy. Overall, Brunias presents a harmonious scene as a snapshot of a vibrant colonial society.

**Image 4:** William Clark, “Planting the Sugar Cane, Antigua,” color drawing, in *Ten Views in the Island of Antigua, in which are represented the process of sugar making, and the employment of the negroes* (London: Thomas Clay, 1823).

Plantation owners invited English artist William Clark to Antigua to paint local scenes. Here, Clark presents a colorful portrait of enslaved laborers of all ages planting sugarcane. An enslaved driver carries a whip toward the left side of the image. In the background, we can see the mill that would crush juice from harvested cane, which would then be used to make sugar. A type of fortress is visible in the distance. Though Clark
highlights enslaved labor and the management system introduced to maximize productivity, he does not show the violence or other forms of coercion used to achieve these goals. The plantation owners who asked Clark to create this image most likely sought portrayals that would paint slavery in a positive light.

**Image 5:** “Enslaved Woman, British West Indies,” Female Society for Birmingham, West-Bromwich...and Their Respective Neighborhoods, for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, established 1825 (Birmingham, 1826).

This engraving, circulated by a women’s anti-slavery society in England in 1826, shows an enslaved woman pleading with God to protect her and her children from the horrors of slavery. We can see the woman’s hoe on the ground, seemingly hastily thrown down so that she could pray. In the distance, an overseer carries a child, presumably her son or daughter, toward a slave ship that will carry the child to another colony. Unlike images that romanticize plantation scenes through the portrayal of well-clothed and healthy enslaved people, the enslaved woman looks malnourished and lacks a shirt. Her gaunt face and lack of clothing allude to her vulnerability and were likely meant to convey the depravity of slaveholders in at least one of two ways: because they failed to respect gender norms of the time that held up the dignity of womanhood as an ideal; or, even worse, perhaps the partial nudity and strained expression implies slaveholders violated women through sexual assault. The engraving appeals to viewers’ Christian sensibilities, calling upon their consciences to act to save this woman, a fellow Christian, her children, and other enslaved people from the physical and emotional violence of slavery.

**Image 6:** Print made by John Raphael Smith, 1752–1812, “The Slave Trade,” 1791, Mezzotint, printed in color, published state on medium, slightly textured, cream laid paper.

English engraver John Raphael Smith produced this print, based on an oil painting by artist George Morland, in 1791. It is believed that Morland based the painting on an abolitionist poem that described the separation of an African leader and his wife. The image shows an African man forcibly separated from his wife and child by European slave traders, while another man weeps in the boat next to them. Towards the right of the image, we can see a European slave trader speaking with a man and child who appear to be African slave traders. In the center of the print, in the background, a slave trader marches two enslaved men. The print is emotionally evocative, and highlights the theme of forced family separation that was common in abolitionist art and literature. The young European boy actively participates in the trade, pulling the boat carrying an enslaved captive closer. The artist apparently used the complicity of a European child to underscore the pervasive and long-term moral effects of slavery and the slave trade. In this way, slavery and the slave trade appear damaging not only to enslaved Africans, but to Europeans as well.

**Image 7:** Eyre Crowe, “Slaves Waiting for Sale, Richmond, Virginia,” 1861. Oil, 20¾ x 31½ inches. Wikimedia Commons.

British artist Eyre Crowe painted this portrait from a sketch he created while watching an auction of enslaved people in Richmond, Virginia. Richmond was the center of the internal slave trade in the Upper South at this time. Crowe witnessed and sketched this sale in 1853, circulated a wood engraving in 1856, and first exhibited the portrait in Great Britain in 1861. The painting is unique from other portrayals of auctions of enslaved people in its timing: Crowe shows the anxious moment before the sale, while most other artists represented the sales themselves. To the left, a group of clamoring white men, likely potential buyers, enter the room. At the center, we can see the slave trader watching as they enter. The waiting enslaved people appear to be a family, including three small children. The women anxiously survey the room, while the man sits distant, perhaps feeling ashamed and angry that he cannot protect his family. Crowe’s rendering of this man nodded to the possibility of resistance, and deviated from popular portrayals of the “complacent” and “obedient slave.” Scholars credit this and Crowe’s other paintings with raising antislavery sentiment in Great Britain and the United States.

This illustration is from a children’s book written by British abolitionist author Amelia Opie. First published in London in 1826, *The Black Man's Lament; or How to Make Sugar* showed the exploitation of enslaved people throughout the various stages of sugar production.

The book begins with the horrors of the Middle Passage, and concludes with the packing of sugar barrels destined for European consumers. Amelia Opie and other British abolitionists at this time tried to remind Europeans that the sugar they craved had been produced by enslaved people. As such, they attempted to convince European consumers that they were complicit in the perpetuation of slavery, and hoped to win their support for the abolitionist cause. Some British abolitionists, led by women who would have prepared foods using sugar, even boycotted the item at this time. In this watercolor, the anonymous artist offers a much different version of plantation life than emerges from the idyllic scenes portrayed in pro-slavery paintings. A group of enslaved women and men, many of whom show expressions of fear and anguish, hold hoes for use in the cane fields. Behind them, a white overseer yells and holds a whip above his head, ready to inflict violence upon the enslaved laborers at any moment. This visual serves as a reminder of the constant state of fear and violence that enslaved people endured at the hands of white plantation owners and managers.
Three Steps for Analyzing an Image of Slavery

Instructions: Look closely at the two images that your teacher has assigned you. Answer the questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

Part I
First Image
Artist’s name: 
Title and date of work:

1. Description: What do you see? Provide at least six details about the image.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 
   f. 

2. Deduction:
   a. What do the details you have noticed in the image make you think about or feel?
   b. How do the details connect to what you know about plantations and enslavement at the time?

3. Speculation:
   a. What do you think the artist is trying to make you think about or feel?
   b. What political, cultural, or social ideas do you think the image is trying to show? What do you think the artist’s message is?

Second Image
Artist’s name: 
Title and date of work:

1. Description: What do you see? Provide at least six details about the image.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

Part III: Artistic Portrayals of Plantations and Enslavement

2. Deduction:
   a. What do the details you have noticed in the image make you think about or feel?

   b. How do the details connect to what you know about plantations and enslavement at the time?

3. Speculation:
   a. What do you think the artist is trying to make you think about or feel?

   b. What political, cultural, or social ideas do you think the image is trying to show? What do you think the artist's message is?

Part II

1. Compare the two depictions of slavery in the two images your teacher assigned you. Briefly summarize each artist's message about slavery. Provide two details from the image to support your answer about the artist's message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist's Message About Slavery</th>
<th>Two Details from the Image that Suggest the Artist's Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Image</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Image</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Contrast the two images' depictions of slavery. How does the first image “romanticize” slavery? How does the second image “critique” slavery? Explain.