

Racial Slavery in the Americas: Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies

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STUDENT READINGS

Part I: Colonization and the Creation of Racial Slavery (c. 1500-1740)

- Defines fundamental terms such as racism, white supremacy, and enslaved people.
- Sketches the regions claimed by European empires; compares models of imperialism.
- Shows why systems of racial slavery were established to confront labor shortages; sugar plantations serve as a case study.
- Quantifies the impact of disease and violence upon Indigenous people.

Part II: The Slave Trade (1500-1775)

- Overviews the social, political, and trade systems in Africa prior to the fifteenth century.
- Places the growth of the slave trade at the core of the Atlantic World's wealth.
- Explains financial terms like multinational corporation, commodity, charter companies, insurance, and stock markets in relation to the trade of enslaved people.
- Details the Middle Passage, arrival in the Americas, and intra-American slave trade.

Part III: Life in the Americas (1600-1844)

- Compares and contrasts daily life and work across regions and commodities.
- Illustrates the gendered experiences of enslavement.
- Shows how enslaved people adapted for survival, resisted enslavement, and emancipated themselves.
- Explains the importance of free people of color.

Part IV: The Abolition of Slavery and Its Legacies (1700-today)

- Explains the critical role of the Haitian Revolution.
- Shows how Black rebellions, flight, and efforts for abolition were organized; Maroon communities are highlighted.
- Uses short case studies in Suriname, Jamaica, etc., to illustrate how emancipation was achieved.
- Illuminates specific legacies of racial slavery throughout the Atlantic World.

PRIORITIZING UNDER-REPRESENTED HISTORIES

(Specific to the U.S. History Series; see forthcoming World History Series summaries)

- Documents the genocide of Indigenous groups in the Americas; uses the Pequot War and King Philip's War to illustrate resistance among Indigenous peoples.
- Contextualizes English activity in North America by illustrating the social and economic structures of plantation agriculture.
- Illustrates how essential the slave trade was to the entire U.S. economy.

- Provides descriptions of daily life, slave narratives, maps, and other resources for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. "Enslaved People's Perspectives on Life and Labor" excerpts Solomon Northup, Harriet Jacobs, Peter Randolph, and Louisa Picquet.
- Places Black Lives Matter and current movements for equality in the context of the longer struggle for racial justice.
- Makes connections to mass incarcerations and redlining as examples of legacies.
- Provides context and considers perspectives for the movement for reparations.
- Compares and contrasts Juneteenth in the United States with other emancipation days around the Atlantic World.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LESSONS

A short description of each lesson can be found on the unit webpage [here](#).

Students will:

Sharpen data analysis and basic math skills by analyzing graphs and data sets on Saint-Domingue's exports to France.

Apply map reading protocols to understand enslaved peoples' journeys.

Apply image analysis protocols to consider various artists' depictions of enslavement and life on plantations.

Analyze first-person accounts of enslavement through personal narratives.

Weigh the merits of selected primary and secondary sources on the Haitian Revolution.

Compare and contrast Juneteenth in the United States with other emancipation days around the Atlantic World.

Identify the challenges of memorializing the history of slavery.

Reflect on the role of public memorials in society.

Understand the concept of historical memory in the context of racial slavery legacies.

Consider historical examples of reparative justice and create a model of reparative justice that addresses the legacies of slavery.

LINKS FOR FURTHER CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Videos - A free online [video collection](#) accompanies this unit, and the videos are incorporated throughout the Digital Editions. These selected videos highlight under-represented voices:

- [Why should we use the term "enslaved people" instead of "slaves"?](#)
- [What is the history of Indigenous slavery in Mexico?](#)
- [What is the connection between slavery and capitalism?](#)

Print Format - This unit [preview](#) includes the table of contents, a reading excerpt, and a sample lesson plan.

Digital Editions Format - Interested in what the Digital Editions format looks like? Check out our web-based curriculum [here](#).