Paths to Freedom

How people challenged slavery in colonial America

SS24.6.6c "Describe how enslaved people and abolitionists sought to oppose slavery in colonial America."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways enslaved people opposed slavery and circle two ways abolitionists opposed it. Use your marks to compare their methods.

Opposing Slavery in the Colonies

1 In colonial North America, slavery was enforced by laws and violence. Enslaved people still found ways to oppose it. Some escaped to seek freedom, even though capture could bring severe punishment. Others refused orders or slowed their work, risking punishment to challenge a system that treated them as property. People also kept family ties, languages, and beliefs alive when enslavers tried to control their lives. These choices did not end slavery, but they showed that enslaved people resisted its power in both open and less visible ways.

2 Some enslaved people organized collective resistance. In 1739, a group near the Stono River in South Carolina rose up, seeking freedom. Colonial forces stopped the uprising, and many people died. Other people used the colonies' own political system. In 1773, enslaved people in Massachusetts sent petitions to the colonial legislature asking for freedom. Their petitions argued that slavery went against the idea of liberty. Both the uprising and the petitions challenged slavery, but one used force while the other asked lawmakers to change the law.

3 Abolitionists wanted to end slavery, and some spoke out during the colonial period. In 1688, four Quakers in Germantown, Pennsylvania, signed a protest against slavery. They asked their religious community to consider how it would feel to be enslaved. Decades later, Anthony Benezet, a Philadelphia teacher, wrote against slavery and taught Black children. His writing urged readers to question the slave trade and the treatment of enslaved people. Abolitionists tried to change minds through words and teaching, while enslaved people also fought for freedom through their own actions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe two different ways enslaved people opposed slavery in the passage. How did the methods differ?

2. How could keeping family ties, languages, and beliefs alive be a way to oppose slavery?

3. How did the Stono uprising and the Massachusetts petitions challenge slavery in different ways?

4. How did the Germantown Quakers and Anthony Benezet each try to turn others against slavery?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a museum display called "Opposing Slavery." Write a four-sentence label featuring one action by enslaved people and one by abolitionists from the passage; explain how each action challenged slavery and end by comparing their methods.

ANSWER KEY

Paths to Freedom

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.6c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways enslaved people opposed slavery and circle two ways abolitionists opposed it. Use your marks to compare their methods. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe two different ways enslaved people opposed slavery in the passage. How did the methods differ?	**For example, some escaped to seek freedom, while others petitioned lawmakers to change the law. Accept any two distinct methods from the passage with an accurate difference.**
2	How could keeping family ties, languages, and beliefs alive be a way to oppose slavery?	**It resisted enslavers' attempts to control people's lives and erase important parts of who they were.**
3	How did the Stono uprising and the Massachusetts petitions challenge slavery in different ways?	**The Stono group rose up using force to seek freedom. The Massachusetts petitioners asked lawmakers for freedom and argued that slavery conflicted with liberty.**
4	How did the Germantown Quakers and Anthony Benezet each try to turn others against slavery?	**The Quakers signed a protest asking their religious community to imagine being enslaved. Benezet wrote against slavery and taught Black children.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In colonial Massachusetts, enslaved people petitioned lawmakers in 1773 to ask for freedom. Their petitions challenged slavery by arguing that it went against liberty. In Pennsylvania, the Germantown Quakers signed a protest in 1688 that asked their religious community to consider how it would feel to be enslaved. Both groups used written arguments, but the petitioners sought action from lawmakers while the Quakers tried to change the minds of their religious community.

Accept other accurate methods named in the passage. For the museum label, look for one action by enslaved people, one by abolitionists, an explanation of each, and a comparison.