Alabama on the Move

How migration shapes where Alabamians live

SS24.AS.3 "Describe the demographic characteristics of Alabama's population, and explain how both historic and current migration patterns have shaped these characteristics."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two historic migration patterns and circle two current ones. Number each pattern and the population characteristic it helps explain with the same number.

Who Lives Where in Alabama?

(1) Alabama's population is not spread evenly. Birmingham and Huntsville anchor large metro areas, while many rural counties have fewer residents. Alabama has a substantial Black population, especially in parts of the Black Belt. Its Hispanic population has grown in recent decades. Age also varies: some rural counties have older populations as younger adults move away.

(2) These patterns have deep roots. During the 1800s, enslavers forced many African Americans into Alabama to work on cotton plantations. Their descendants helped shape the state's large Black communities. In the 1900s, the Great Migration carried many Black Alabamians to northern and western cities, reducing population in some Alabama communities, especially in the Black Belt.

(3) Migration still changes Alabama. Jobs in places such as Huntsville draw people from other states, adding residents to growing metro areas. Immigrants from Mexico and Central America have also settled in Alabama, contributing to growing Hispanic communities. Meanwhile, when young adults leave rural counties for work or school, those counties may have a higher share of older residents.

MIGRATION AND POPULATION PATTERNS

Place	Pattern
Black Belt	Historic outmigration; many Black residents remain
Huntsville area	Workers arrive from other states
Some rural counties	Young adults leave; older age profile

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did forced migration in the 1800s shape a demographic characteristic of Alabama today?

2. How did the Great Migration affect some Black Belt communities?

3. Compare how migration affects the Huntsville area and some rural counties today.

4. How has immigration from Mexico and Central America affected Alabama's population?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 55 to 75 word museum label explaining why a Black Belt community and the Huntsville area might have different population characteristics today. Include one historic and one current migration pattern, and explain a demographic effect of each.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.AS.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two historic migration patterns and circle two current ones. Number each pattern and the population characteristic it helps explain with the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did forced migration in the 1800s shape a demographic characteristic of Alabama today?	**Enslavers forced African Americans into Alabama, and their descendants helped shape its substantial Black population.**
2	How did the Great Migration affect some Black Belt communities?	**Many Black residents left for northern and western cities, reducing population in some Black Belt communities.**
3	Compare how migration affects the Huntsville area and some rural counties today.	**People moving to the Huntsville area for jobs add to its population. As young adults leave some rural counties, older residents may make up a larger share there.**
4	How has immigration from Mexico and Central America affected Alabama's population?	**It has contributed to the growth of Alabama's Hispanic communities.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Black Belt community may have a substantial Black population partly because enslaved African Americans were forced into Alabama during the cotton era. Later, the Great Migration took many Black residents to other regions. Today, some young adults leave rural counties, so older residents may make up a larger share. The Huntsville area follows a different pattern: jobs attract people from other states, helping its metro population grow.

Accept labels that accurately connect a historic migration and a current migration to demographic characteristics. Students may use the Great Migration instead of forced migration as their historic example.