

Atlantic Lives and Labor

Trace why the trade grew, how it operated, and what it changed.

SS.68.AA.1 "Understand the causes, courses, and consequences of the slave trade in the colonies."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Mark a C beside two causes of the slave trade, a P beside two details about its course, and an E beside two consequences. These marks will help you trace how the system developed and affected colonial society.

The Colonial Slave Trade

- ① During the 1600s and 1700s, European colonies in North America expanded plantations that grew tobacco, rice, indigo, and later other cash crops. Plantation owners sought large, controlled workforces to produce goods for Atlantic markets. English colonial laws and racial ideas increasingly treated Africans and their descendants as property for life. These choices created demand for enslaved labor, although slavery also existed in many colonies outside plantations, including towns, farms, and ports where shipping connected buyers and sellers.
- ② Captive Africans were forced from their homes, marched to coastal trading sites, and imprisoned before the Middle Passage across the Atlantic. Conditions aboard slave ships were crowded, violent, and deadly. Many people resisted by refusing food, rebelling, or trying to escape, despite severe punishment. In colonial ports, traders sold survivors, separating families and assigning people to labor. This system linked Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, and mainland colonies in an Atlantic trade network that moved goods, wealth, and people.
- ③ Enslaved people built communities, preserved and adapted cultural traditions, and resisted oppression in daily and organized ways. Their forced labor generated wealth for many merchants and plantation owners, while colonial economies became dependent on slavery. The consequences were lasting: families suffered separation and violence, racial slavery became deeply rooted in law, and wealth and power were distributed unequally. The slave trade also connected colonial prosperity to human suffering and shaped the United States long after the colonial era.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What two forces created demand for enslaved labor in the colonies?

2 Describe two parts of the course of the slave trade before or after the Middle Passage.

3 What does the passage show about how captive Africans resisted the slave trade?

4 Name two lasting consequences of the slave trade in the colonies.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write 4 or 5 sentences that explain a cause, a step in the course, and a consequence of the colonial slave trade. Use at least one detail from the passage for each part of your explanation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Mark a C beside two causes of the slave trade, a P beside two details about its course, and an E beside two consequences. These marks will help you trace how the system developed and affected colonial society. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two forces created demand for enslaved labor in the colonies?	Expanding cash-crop plantations needed large workforces, and colonial laws and racial ideas treated Africans and their descendants as property for life.
2	Describe two parts of the course of the slave trade before or after the Middle Passage.	Before the crossing, captive Africans were forced from their homes, marched to coastal trading sites, and imprisoned. After the crossing, survivors were sold in colonial ports and separated from family members.
3	What does the passage show about how captive Africans resisted the slave trade?	Many resisted by refusing food, rebelling, or trying to escape, even though they faced severe punishment.
4	Name two lasting consequences of the slave trade in the colonies.	Accept two: family separation and violence, racial slavery rooted in law, unequal distribution of wealth and power, colonial economic dependence on slavery, or long-term effects on the United States.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Plantation owners wanted a large workforce to grow cash crops for Atlantic markets. This demand led traders to force captive Africans through the Middle Passage and sell survivors in colonial ports. Enslaved labor then generated wealth for merchants and plantation owners. At the same time, families faced separation and violence, and colonial economies became dependent on slavery.

Accept equivalent answers supported by the passage. In the open response, look for a logical connection among a cause, a course detail, and a consequence, with accurate historical language.