Freedom and Labor

Compare systems of forced labor and their effects

7.H.6 "Compare and contrast the institution of slavery in its various forms in Africa, Asia, and the Southwest Pacific, and analyze the impact slavery had on different civilizations."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline how people were kept at work in each place. Circle one effect on a community or business in each paragraph, then number the three places to help you compare them.

Three Places, Different Systems

(1) In the 1700s, traders on the West African coast sold captives to European ship captains. Some captives had been seized in wars or raids. Across the Atlantic, buyers treated them as property that could be sold and passed to children. This was chattel slavery. Enslaved people worked on plantations, while profits from their labor helped plantation owners grow wealthy. Raids and the loss of people harmed African communities. African societies were diverse, and their own forms of bondage did not all follow the same rules as Atlantic chattel slavery.

(2) In nineteenth-century South Asia, some families borrowed money from landowners or employers and pledged their labor to repay it. Creditors could control their work, and debts might pass to children. Unlike people sold as property in Atlantic chattel slavery, bonded workers were held through debts that could be hard to clear, especially when employers set the terms. Their labor supported farms and other businesses, while families had less freedom to choose work or leave. Debt bondage did not affect every family or operate the same way in every community.

(3) In the late 1800s, recruiters brought people from islands including Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands to sugar plantations in Queensland, Australia. Some agreed to contracts, but others were kidnapped or deceived. Many faced harsh conditions and limits on their freedom to leave. This coerced labor differed from permanent ownership: workers were supposed to serve for a set term, although that promise was not always honored. Plantation owners gained a workforce, while island communities lost members for years. The three systems differed in law and length, but each let powerful people profit from restricted freedom.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did buyers in Atlantic chattel slavery and creditors in South Asian debt bondage control workers in different ways?

2. How could debt bondage in South Asia and plantation contracts in Queensland each continue to limit a worker's freedom?

3. Compare one effect of the Atlantic trade on African communities with one effect of Queensland recruitment on island communities.

4. What did Atlantic plantation owners and Queensland plantation owners gain from these labor systems? How was the legal status of their workers different?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label comparing all three places. Include one similarity, two differences, and an effect on a community; explain why it would be inaccurate to say every Queensland worker was enslaved.

ANSWER KEY

Freedom and Labor

GRADE 7 · 7.H.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline how people were kept at work in each place. Circle one effect on a community or business in each paragraph, then number the three places to help you compare them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did buyers in Atlantic chattel slavery and creditors in South Asian debt bondage control workers in different ways?	**Atlantic buyers treated people as property they could sell. South Asian creditors held workers through debts that could be difficult to repay.**
2	How could debt bondage in South Asia and plantation contracts in Queensland each continue to limit a worker's freedom?	**A South Asian worker's debt could be hard to clear or pass to children. A Queensland worker was supposed to serve a set term, but that promise was not always honored.**
3	Compare one effect of the Atlantic trade on African communities with one effect of Queensland recruitment on island communities.	**African communities were harmed by raids and the loss of people. Island communities lost members who were taken to Queensland for years.**
4	What did Atlantic plantation owners and Queensland plantation owners gain from these labor systems? How was the legal status of their workers different?	**Both gained labor for plantations. Atlantic buyers treated enslaved people as property, while Queensland workers were supposed to serve for a set term under contracts.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Across these places, powerful people gained labor by restricting other people's freedom. In Atlantic chattel slavery, buyers could own and sell people, while South Asian creditors bound workers through debts that could pass to children. In Queensland, some islanders agreed to contracts for a set term, while others were kidnapped or deceived, so it would be inaccurate to say every worker was enslaved. Raids and the loss of people harmed African communities.

Accept comparisons that distinguish ownership, debt, and contracts while recognizing coercion in all three cases. Students should not describe every Queensland worker as enslaved or every contract as freely chosen.