Captives and Markets

Tracing how warfare and trade sustained slavery before 1500

MWH.C.1.2.B "Describe the institution of slavery prior to the 15th century as a widespread result of warfare and economic practices."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline where warfare led to enslavement, circle where people were bought or sold, and number the kinds of work enslaved people performed. Use your marks to compare how slavery operated in different places.

Slavery Before the Fifteenth Century

1 Long before 1500, slavery existed in many societies, although its rules differed from place to place. In ancient Rome, armies captured people during wars of conquest and forced many into slavery. Some captives worked on farms or in mines, while others served in households. Roman buyers also purchased enslaved people in markets, making captivity part of an economy in which human labor was bought and sold. Enslaved people could be separated from family and could not freely leave their owners. War supplied captives, and demand for labor gave owners and traders a reason to keep buying them.

2 In medieval Egypt, rulers purchased enslaved boys and young men through long-distance trade. Many were trained as soldiers, and some later gained power as military leaders. This system differed from the Roman examples of farm and mine labor: rulers wanted trained fighters. The movement of these young people through markets shows an economic practice that sustained slavery, but a purchase alone does not tell us how each person first became enslaved. Traders moved people across regions because buyers would pay for them. Later opportunities for some soldiers did not make their initial enslavement voluntary.

3 In the Mali Empire of West Africa, between the 1200s and 1400s, warfare could produce captives who were enslaved. Enslaved people also moved through regional trade networks, and some worked in households or agriculture. Capturing people and trading them were not identical acts: a captive might be seized during a conflict, then sold later. Enslavement was not the same everywhere, and the work people did depended on local needs. Yet Rome, medieval Egypt, and Mali all show how people could be treated as property within organized systems. Warfare created captives in some settings, while markets and demand for labor or soldiers helped sustain slavery.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did warfare and demand for labor work together to sustain slavery in ancient Rome?

2. How did trade and rulers' military needs sustain slavery in medieval Egypt?

3. How could warfare and trade be connected in the Mali Empire without being the same act?

4. How were enslaved people acquired in ancient Rome and medieval Egypt? What does the passage leave unknown about the Egyptian youths?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence museum label comparing slavery in two places from the passage. Explain a link to warfare and a link to an economic practice, then identify one difference between the places or one limit to what the passage tells us.

ANSWER KEY

Captives and Markets

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.1.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline where warfare led to enslavement, circle where people were bought or sold, and number the kinds of work enslaved people performed. Use your marks to compare how slavery operated in different places. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did warfare and demand for labor work together to sustain slavery in ancient Rome?	**Roman armies captured people in wars. Demand for labor on farms, in mines, and in households encouraged owners and traders to buy enslaved people.**
2	How did trade and rulers' military needs sustain slavery in medieval Egypt?	**Rulers bought enslaved youths through long-distance trade and trained many as soldiers. Buyers' demand gave traders a reason to move and sell people.**
3	How could warfare and trade be connected in the Mali Empire without being the same act?	**A person could be captured during a conflict and later sold through a trade network. Capture and sale were separate acts.**
4	How were enslaved people acquired in ancient Rome and medieval Egypt? What does the passage leave unknown about the Egyptian youths?	**Roman armies captured people in war, and Roman buyers also purchased enslaved people in markets. Egyptian rulers purchased enslaved youths through trade, but the passage does not say how each youth first became enslaved.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In ancient Rome, wars produced captives who could be forced into slavery. Owners also bought enslaved people to work on farms, in mines, and in households. In medieval Egypt, rulers purchased enslaved youths through trade and trained many as soldiers. The passage does not say how each youth sold to an Egyptian ruler first became enslaved.

Accept responses that accurately connect warfare to captives and economic practices to buying, selling, or demand for labor or soldiers. Do not accept a claim that the passage identifies warfare as the source of the youths purchased in Egypt.