

Two Kinds of Labor

Sort two very different labor systems in colonial British North America.

VS.4.c "distinguishing between indentured servants and enslaved people, including how European countries traded for, transported, and sold Africans to be enslaved in British North America beginning in the 17th century;"

NAME _____ DATE _____

INDENTURED SERVANT

An indentured servant worked under a contract for a limited time. After completing the contract, the person could become free.

Samuel had a legal paper that set a temporary obligation to serve.

ENSLAVED PERSON

An enslaved person was forced to labor and treated as property, with no contract ending the labor. Beginning in the 1600s, European traders transported many kidnapped African people across the Atlantic and sold them in British North America.

Amina did not agree to her condition and was denied freedom.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each statement, circle SERVANT or ENSLAVED, then for Part 2 choose two item numbers and explain which clues helped you sort them.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Signed an agreement to labor for four years in exchange for travel to Virginia. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 2. | Was captured in Africa and forced onto a ship across the Atlantic Ocean. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 3. | A planter bought this person as property, and no work end date existed. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 4. | After completing contracted years, could become free. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 5. | Owed labor for a stated period, then the contract ended. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 6. | A written indenture named six years of labor. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 7. | European traders traded African captives to be sold in British North America. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |
| 8. | This person's enslaved status could pass to their children. | ☐ SERVANT | ☐ ENSLAVED |

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new example of an indentured servant and one new example of an enslaved person.

SERVANT

ENSLAVED

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences explaining why a person who completed an indenture had a different future from an enslaved person.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Signed an agreement to labor for four years in exchange for travel to Virginia.	SERVANT	A fixed agreement for labor identifies an indentured servant.
2	Was captured in Africa and forced onto a ship across the Atlantic Ocean.	ENSLAVED	Forced capture and transport were part of the enslavement of Africans.
3	A planter bought this person as property, and no work end date existed.	ENSLAVED	Enslaved people were treated as property and did not have a contract end date.
4	After completing contracted years, could become free.	SERVANT	Completing a limited contract could lead to freedom for an indentured servant.
5	Owed labor for a stated period, then the contract ended.	SERVANT	A stated period of labor is an indenture.
6	A written indenture named six years of labor.	SERVANT	An indenture was a contract requiring labor for a set number of years.
7	European traders traded African captives to be sold in British North America.	ENSLAVED	European traders participated in the forced trade and sale of African people into enslavement.
8	This person's enslaved status could pass to their children.	ENSLAVED	In colonial British North America, laws made enslavement hereditary.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **SERVANT:** Indentured servant: A young man worked under a contract for a fixed term, then could leave service.
- **ENSLAVED:** Enslaved person: A woman was forced to work without a contract that gave her freedom.

Challenge: An indentured servant could become free after meeting the terms of a contract. An enslaved person was forced to labor and did not receive freedom when a contract ended.

Answers: 1 SERVANT, 2 ENSLAVED, 3 ENSLAVED, 4 SERVANT, 5 SERVANT, 6 SERVANT, 7 ENSLAVED, 8 ENSLAVED. For Part 2, accept explanations that cite a limited contract for servants or forced labor, property status, or no end date for enslaved people.