

Terms of Freedom

Sort the clues, then pick two and tell how you knew.

VS.4 "The student will apply history and social science skills to understand life in the Virginia colony by explaining the importance and influence of agriculture..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

INDENTURED SERVANT

An indentured servant agreed to work for a set number of years, often in exchange for passage to Virginia, food, or shelter. After the agreed term, the servant could become free.

Thomas agrees to help a carpenter for two years in return for a place to live.

ENSLAVED PERSON

An enslaved person was forced to work and was denied freedom. In colonial Virginia, race-based laws made enslavement permanent and passed it to children through their mothers.

Nia is not allowed to leave an owner's farm or decide when her work ends.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Read each clue and circle SERVANT or ENSLAVED.

1. A worker agreed to labor for four years to pay for a trip from England. SERVANT ENSLAVED
2. A man was forced onto a ship from Africa and sold in Virginia. SERVANT ENSLAVED
3. Virginia law said that an enslaved child's status followed the mother's status. SERVANT ENSLAVED
4. Jonas expected to become free after completing the work time in his contract. SERVANT ENSLAVED
5. A girl was forced to work for life because she was African. SERVANT ENSLAVED
6. A servant received freedom dues after finishing an agreed work term. SERVANT ENSLAVED
7. A worker signed papers promising five years of labor for food and shelter. SERVANT ENSLAVED
8. A man and his children were legally kept enslaved. 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 that explain one difference between an indentured servant and an enslaved person.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A worker agreed to labor for four years to pay for a trip from England.	SERVANT	The worker made an agreement for a set term.
2	A man was forced onto a ship from Africa and sold in Virginia.	ENSLAVED	He was forcibly transported and sold.
3	Virginia law said that an enslaved child's status followed the mother's status.	ENSLAVED	Race-based laws made enslavement pass from mother to child.
4	Jonas expected to become free after completing the work time in his contract.	SERVANT	His contract had an end date and he expected freedom afterward.
5	A girl was forced to work for life because she was African.	ENSLAVED	She was forced into lifelong, race-based enslavement.
6	A servant received freedom dues after finishing an agreed work term.	SERVANT	Freedom dues could be given after an indenture ended.
7	A worker signed papers promising five years of labor for food and shelter.	SERVANT	The worker agreed to labor for a specific period.
8	A man and his children were legally kept enslaved.	ENSLAVED	Enslavement was enforced by law and could affect children.

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:** A traveler signs a contract to work for six years after arriving in Virginia.
- **ENSLAVED:** A woman is forced to work for life and cannot choose to leave.

Challenge: An indentured servant had an agreement with an end date. An enslaved person was forced to work and was not promised freedom after a set time.

Accept equivalent wording that identifies an agreed, limited work term for indentured servants. For enslaved people, students should identify forced labor, lack of freedom, lifelong status, or race-based laws.