The region also relied on fishing. New Englanders fished for cod, halibut, crabs, oysters, and lobsters. Some ventured far out to sea to hunt whales for oil and whalebone.

**Colonial Trade**

As the center of the shipping trade in America, northern coastal cities linked the northern colonies with the Southern Colonies, and linked America to other parts of the world. New England ships sailed south along the Atlantic coast, trading with the colonies and with islands in the West Indies. They crossed the Atlantic carrying fish, furs, and fruit to trade for manufactured goods in England and Europe.

These colonial merchant ships followed many different trading routes. Some went directly to England and back. Others followed routes that came to be called the triangular trade because the routes formed a triangle. On one leg of such a route, ships brought sugar and molasses from the West Indies to the New England colonies. In New England, the molasses would be made into rum. Next, the rum and other goods were shipped to West Africa and traded for enslaved Africans. Slavery was widely practiced in West Africa.

Many West African kingdoms enslaved those they defeated in war. Some of the enslaved were sold to Arab slave traders. Others were forced to mine gold or work in farm fields. With the arrival of the Europeans, enslaved Africans also began to be shipped to America in exchange for trade goods. On the final leg of the route, the enslaved Africans were taken to the West Indies where they were sold to planters. The profit was used to buy more molasses—and the process started over.

**The Middle Passage**

The inhumane part of the triangular trade, shipping enslaved Africans to the West Indies, was known as the Middle Passage. Olaudah Equiano, a young African forced onto a ship to America, later described the voyage:

"I was soon put down under the decks, ... The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us.... The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered [made] the whole a scene of horror."
With its trade, shipbuilding, and fishing, New England’s economy flourished. Although good farmland was lacking in much of the region, New England’s population grew and towns and cities developed.

**Reading Check** Explaining Where was the shipping hub in America?

### The Middle Colonies

The Middle Colonies enjoyed fertile soil and a slightly milder climate than New England’s. Farmers in this region cultivated larger areas of land and produced bigger harvests than did New Englanders. In New York and Pennsylvania, farmers grew large quantities of wheat and other cash crops, crops that could be sold easily in markets in the colonies and overseas.

Farmers sent cargoes of wheat and livestock to New York City and Philadelphia for shipment, and these cities became busy ports. By the 1760s New York, with 18,000 people, and Philadelphia, with 24,000 people, were the largest cities in the American colonies.

### Industries of the Middle Colonies

Like the New England Colonies, the Middle Colonies also had industries. Some were home-based crafts such as carpentry and flour
making. Others included larger businesses such as lumbering, mining, and small-scale manufacturing.

One iron mill in northern New Jersey employed several hundred workers, many of them from Germany. Other smaller ironworks operated in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

German Immigrants

Most of the nearly 100,000 German immigrants who came to America in the colonial era settled in Pennsylvania. Using agricultural methods developed in Europe, these immigrants became successful farmers.

The Germans belonged to a number of Protestant groups. Together with the Dutch, Swedish, and other non-English immigrants, they gave the Middle Colonies a cultural diversity, or variety, that was not found in New England. With the diversity came tolerance for religious and cultural differences.

Reading Check  Explaining What are cash crops?

The Southern Colonies

With their rich soil and warm climate, the Southern Colonies were well suited to certain kinds of farming. Southern farmers could cultivate large areas of land and produce harvests of cash crops. Because most settlers in the Southern Colonies made their living from farming the land, they did not have the need to develop commerce or industry. For the most part, London merchants rather than local merchants managed Southern trade.

Economics

Tobacco and Rice

Tobacco was the principal cash crop of Maryland and Virginia. Most tobacco was sold in Europe, where the demand for it was strong. Growing tobacco and preparing it for sale required a good deal of labor. At first planters used indentured servants to work in the fields. When indentured servants became scarce and expensive, Southern planters used enslaved Africans instead.

Slaveholders with large properties became rich on tobacco. Sometimes, however, a surplus or extra amounts, of tobacco on the market caused prices to fall and then the growers’ profits also fell. In time, some tobacco planters switched to growing other crops such as corn and wheat.

The main cash crop in South Carolina and Georgia was rice. In low-lying areas along the coast, planters built dams to create rice fields, called paddies. These fields were flooded when the rice was young and drained when the rice was ready to harvest. Work in the rice paddies involved standing knee-deep in the mud all day with no protection from the blazing sun or the biting insects.
Because rice harvesting required so much strenuous work, rice growers relied on slave labor. Rice proved to be even more profitable than tobacco. As it became popular in southern Europe, the price of rice rose steadily. By the 1750s South Carolina and Georgia had the fastest-growing economies in the colonies.

**Tidewater and Backcountry**

Most of the large Southern plantations were located in the Tidewater, a region of flat, low-lying plains along the seacoast. Plantations, or large farms, were often located on rivers so crops could be shipped to market by boat.

Each plantation was a self-contained community with fields stretching out around a cluster of buildings. The planter's wife supervised the main house and the household servants. A plantation also included slave cabins, barns and stables, and outbuildings such as carpenter and blacksmith shops and storerooms. Even kitchens were in separate buildings. A large plantation might also have its own chapel and school.

West of the Tidewater lay a region of hills and forests climbing up toward the Appalachian Mountains. This region was known as the backcountry and was settled in part by hardy newcomers to the colonies. The backcountry settlers grew corn and tobacco on small farms. They usually worked alone or with their families, although some had one or two enslaved Africans to help.

In the Southern Colonies, the independent small farmers of the backcountry outnumbered the large plantation owners. The plantation owners, however, had greater wealth and more influence. They controlled the economic and political life of the region.

**Reading Check** Comparing How were the settlers of the Tidewater different from those of the backcountry?
Slavery

Most enslaved Africans lived on plantations. Some did housework, but most worked in the fields and often suffered great cruelty. The large plantation owners hired overseers, or bosses, to keep the slaves working hard.

By the early 1700s, many of the colonies had issued slave codes, strict rules governing the behavior and punishment of enslaved Africans. Some codes did not allow slaves to leave the plantation without written permission from the master. Some made it illegal to teach enslaved people to read or write. They usually allowed slaves to be whipped for minor offenses and hanged or burned to death for serious crimes. Those who ran away were often caught and punished severely.

African Traditions

Although the enslaved Africans had strong family ties, their families were often torn apart. Slaveholders could sell a family member to another slaveholder. Slaves found a source of strength in their African roots. They developed a culture that drew on the languages and customs of their West African homelands.

Some enslaved Africans learned trades such as carpentry, blacksmithing, or weaving. Skilled workers could sometimes set up shops, sharing their profits with the slaveholders. Those lucky enough to be able to buy their freedom joined the small population of free African Americans.

Criticism of Slavery

Although the majority of white Southerners were not slaveholders, slavery played an important role in the economic success of the Southern Colonies. That success, however, was built on the idea that one human being could own another. Some colonists did not believe in slavery. Many Puritans refused to hold enslaved people. In Pennsylvania, Quakers and Mennonites condemned slavery. Eventually the debate over slavery would erupt in a bloody war, pitting North against South.

Checking for Understanding

1. Key Terms Use each of these terms in a sentence that will help explain its meaning: subsistence farming, triangular trade, cash crop.
2. Reviewing Facts Identify the various economic activities carried on in the Middle Colonies.
3. Economic Factors How did New England’s natural resources help its commerce?

Critical Thinking

4. Comparing How did farming in New England compare with farming in the Southern Colonies? Use a chart like the one below to answer the question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>Southern Colonies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Making Inferences How do you think plantation owners in the Southern Colonies justified their use of enslaved Africans?

Analyzing Visuals

6. Geography Skills Study the map on page 103. What goods were traded from the British Colonies to Great Britain? From the West Indies to the British Colonies?

Interdisciplinary Activity

In Informative Writing Imagine you live in New England in the 1750s and are visiting cousins on a farm in the Carolinas. Write a letter to a friend at home describing your visit to the farm.
**Economics**

**Plantation Owners**

The main economic goal for large plantation owners was to earn profits. Such plantations had fixed costs—regular expenses such as housing and feeding workers and maintaining cotton gins and other equipment. Fixed costs remained about the same year after year.

Cotton prices, however, varied from season to season, depending on the market. To receive the best prices, planters sold their cotton to agents in cities such as New Orleans, Charleston, Mobile, and Savannah. The cotton exchanges, or trade centers, in Southern cities were of vital importance to those involved in the cotton economy. The agents of the exchanges extended credit—a form of loan—to the planters and held the cotton for several months until the price rose. Then the agents sold the cotton. This system kept the planters always in debt because they did not receive payment for their cotton until the agents sold it.

**Plantation Wives**

The wife of a plantation owner generally was in charge of watching over the enslaved workers who toiled in her home and tending to them when they became ill. Her responsibilities also included supervising the plantation’s buildings and the fruit and vegetable gardens. Some wives served as accountants, keeping the plantation’s financial records.

Women often led a difficult and lonely life on the plantation. When plantation agriculture spread westward into Alabama and Mississippi, many planters’ wives felt they were moving into a hostile, uncivilized region. Planters traveled frequently to look at new land or to deal with agents in New Orleans or Memphis. Their wives spent long periods alone at the plantation.

**Work on the Plantation**

Large plantations needed many different kinds of workers. Some enslaved people worked in the house, cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, sewing, and serving meals. They were called domestic slaves. Other African Americans were trained as blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, or weavers. Still others worked in the pastures, tending the horses, cows, sheep, and pigs. Most of the enslaved African Americans, however, were field hands. They worked from sunrise to sunset planting, cultivating, and picking cotton and other crops. They were supervised by an overseer—a plantation manager.

**Reading Check**

**Explaining** Why were many slaves needed on a plantation?

**Life Under Slavery**

Enslaved African Americans endured hardship and misery. They worked hard, earned no money, and had little hope of freedom. One of their worst fears was being sold to another planter and separated from their loved ones. In the face of these brutal conditions, enslaved African Americans maintained their family life as best they could and developed a culture all their own. They resisted slavery through a variety of ingenious methods, and they looked to the day when they would be liberated.

**Life in the Slave Cabins**

Enslaved people had few comforts beyond the bare necessities. Josiah Henson, an African American who escaped from slavery, described the quarters where he had lived.
Enslaved workers reached the fields before the sun came up, and they stayed there until sundown. Planters wanted to keep the slaves busy all the time, which meant long and grueling days in the fields. Enslaved women as well as men were required to do heavy fieldwork. Young children carried buckets of water. By the age of 10, they were considered ready for fieldwork.

When rented to other masters, enslaved people wore identification tags.

We lodged in log huts and on the bare ground. Wooden floors were an unknown luxury. In a single room were huddled, like cattle, ten or a dozen persons, men, women and children.

Our beds were collections of straw and old rags, thrown down in the corners and boxed in with boards, a single blanket the only covering. The wind whistled and the rain and snow blew in through the cracks, and the damp earth soaked in the moisture till the floor was miry [muddy] as a pigsty.

Family Life

Enslaved people faced constant uncertainty and danger. American law in the early 1800s did not protect enslaved families. At any given time a husband or wife could be sold away, or a slaveholder’s death could lead to the breakup of an enslaved family. Although marriage between enslaved people was not recognized by law, many couples did marry. Their marriage ceremonies included the phrase “until death or separation do us part”—recognizing the possibility that a marriage might end with the sale of one spouse.
To provide some measure of stability in their lives, enslaved African Americans established a network of relatives and friends, who made up their extended family. If a father or mother were sold away, an aunt, uncle, or close friend could raise the children left behind. Large, close-knit extended families became a vital feature of African American culture.

**African American Culture**

Enslaved African Americans endured their hardships by extending their own culture, fellowship, and community. They fused African and American elements into a new culture.

The growth of the African American population came mainly from children born in the United States. In 1808 Congress had outlawed the slave trade. Although slavery remained legal in the South, no new slaves could enter the United States. By 1860 almost all the enslaved people in the South had been born there.

These native-born African Americans held on to their African customs. They continued to practice African music and dance. They passed traditional African folk stories to their children. Some wrapped colored cloths around their heads in the African style. Although a large number of enslaved African Americans accepted Christianity, they often followed the religious beliefs and practices of their African ancestors as well.

**African American Christianity**

For many enslaved African Americans, Christianity became a religion of hope and resistance. They prayed fervently for the day when they would be free from bondage.

The passionate beliefs of the Southern slaves found expression in the spiritual, an African American religious folk song. The song “Didn’t My Lord Deliver Daniel,” for example, refers to the biblical story of Daniel who was saved from the lions’ den.

“Didn’t my Lord deliver Daniel, deliver Daniel, deliver Daniel, Didn’t my Lord deliver Daniel, An’ why not every man?”

Spirituals provided a way for the enslaved African Americans to communicate secretly among themselves. Many spirituals combined Christian faith with laments about earthly suffering.

**Slave Codes**

Between 1830 and 1860 life under slavery became even more difficult because the slave codes—the laws in the Southern states that controlled enslaved people—became more severe. In existence since the 1700s, slave codes aimed to prevent the event white Southerners dreaded most—the slave rebellion. For this reason slave codes prohibited slaves from assembling in large groups and from leaving their master’s property without a written pass.

Slave codes also made it a crime to teach enslaved people to read or write. White Southerners feared that a literate slave might lead other African Americans in rebellion. A slave who did not know how to read and write, whites believed, was less likely to rebel.

**Resistance to Slavery**

Some enslaved African Americans did rebel openly against their masters. One was Nat Turner, a popular religious leader among his fellow slaves. Turner had taught himself to read and write. In 1831 Turner led a group of followers on a brief, violent rampage in Southampton County, Virginia. Before being captured Turner and his followers killed at least 55 whites. Nat Turner was hanged, but his rebellion frightened white Southerners and led them to pass more severe slave codes.

Armed rebellions were rare, however. African Americans in the South knew that they would only lose in an armed uprising. For the most part enslaved people resisted slavery by working slowly or by pretending to be ill. Occasionally resistance took more active forms, such as setting fire to a plantation building or breaking tools. Resistance helped enslaved African Americans endure their lives by striking back at white masters—and perhaps establishing boundaries that white people would respect.
People In History

Harriet Tubman 1820–1913

Born as a slave in Maryland, Harriet Tubman worked in plantation fields until she was nearly 30 years old. Then she made her break for freedom, escaping to the North with the help of the Underground Railroad. Realizing the risks of being captured, Tubman courageously made 19 trips back into the South during the 1850s to help other enslaved people escape. Altogether she assisted more than 300 individuals—including her parents—to escape from slavery. While she did not establish the Underground Railroad, she certainly became its most famous and successful conductor. Tubman was known as the “Moses of her people.” Despite huge rewards offered in the South for her capture and arrest, Tubman always managed to elude her enemies.

Escaping Slavery

Some enslaved African Americans tried to run away to the North. A few succeeded. Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass, two African American leaders who were born into slavery, gained their freedom when they fled to the North.

Yet for most enslaved people, getting to the North was almost impossible, especially from the Deep South. Most slaves who succeeded in running away escaped from the Upper South. The Underground Railroad—a network of “safe houses” owned by free blacks and whites who opposed slavery—offered assistance to runaway slaves.

Some slaves ran away to find relatives on nearby plantations or to escape punishment. Rarely did they plan to make a run for the North. Moses Grandy, who did escape, spoke about the problems runaways faced:

“They hide themselves during the day in the woods and swamps; at night they travel... [I]n these dangerous journeys they are guided by the north-star, for they only know that the land of freedom is in the north.”

Most runaways were captured and returned to their owners. Discipline was severe; the most common punishment was whipping.

Reading Check Explaining How did the African American spiritual develop?

City Life and Education

Although the South was primarily agricultural, it was the site of several large cities by the mid-1800s. By 1860 the population of Baltimore had reached 212,000 and the population of New Orleans had reached 168,000. The ten largest cities in the South were either seaports or river ports.

With the coming of the railroad, many other cities began to grow as centers of trade. Among the cities located at the crossroads of the railroads were Columbia, South Carolina; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Montgomery, Alabama; Jackson, Mississippi; and Atlanta, Georgia. The population of Southern cities included white city dwellers, some enslaved workers, and many of the South’s free African Americans.
The Underground Railroad

Some abolitionists risked prison—even death—by secretly helping African Americans escape from slavery. The network of escape routes from the South to the North came to be called the Underground Railroad.

The Underground Railroad had no trains or tracks. Instead, passengers on this “railroad” traveled through the night, often on foot, and went north—guided by the North Star. The runaway slaves followed rivers and mountain chains, or felt for moss growing on the north side of trees.

Songs such as “Follow the Drinkin’ Gourd” encouraged runaways on their way to freedom. A hollowed-out gourd was used to dip water for drinking. Its shape resembled the Big Dipper, which pointed to the North Star.

“Follow the Drinkin’ Gourd, For the Ole Man’s waitin’ for to carry you to freedom. Follow the drinkin’ gourd.”

During the day passengers rested at “stations”—barns, attics, church basements, or other places where fugitives could rest, eat, and hide until the next night’s journey. The railroad’s “conductors” were whites and African Americans who helped guide the escaping slaves to freedom in the North.

In the early days, many people made the journey north on foot. Later they traveled in wagons sometimes equipped with secret compartments. African Americans on the Underground Railroad hoped to settle in a free state in the North.
or to move on to Canada. Once in the North, however, fugitives still feared capture. Henry Bibb, a runaway who reached Ohio, arrived at the place where I was directed to call on an abolitionist, but I made no stop: so great were my fears of being pursued.

After her escape from slavery, Harriet Tubman became the most famous conductor on the Underground Railroad. Slaveholders offered a large reward for Tubman’s capture or death. The Underground Railroad helped only a tiny fraction of the enslaved population. Most who used it as a route to freedom came from the states located between the northern states and the Deep South. Still, the Underground Railroad gave hope to those who suffered in slavery. It also provided abolitionists with a way to help some enslaved people to freedom.

Clashes Over Abolitionism

The anti-slavery movement led to an intense reaction against abolitionism. Southern slaveholders—and many Southerners who did not have slaves—opposed abolitionism because they believed it threatened the South’s way of life, which depended on enslaved labor. Many people in the North also opposed the abolitionist movement.

**Geography Skills**

Many enslaved African Americans escaped to freedom with the help of the Underground Railroad.

1. Movement Which river did enslaved persons cross before reaching Indiana and Ohio?
2. Analyzing Information About how many miles did an enslaved person travel from Montgomery, Alabama, to Windsor, Canada?

*I sometimes dream that I am pursued, and when I wake, I am scared almost to death."

—Nancy Howard, 1855
Opposition in the North

Even in the North, abolitionists never numbered more than a small fraction of the population. Many Northerners saw the antislavery movement as a threat to the nation's social order. They feared the abolitionists could bring on a destructive war between the North and the South. They also claimed that, if the enslaved African Americans were freed, they could never blend into American society.

Economic fears further fed the backlash against abolitionism. Northern workers worried that freed slaves would flood the North and take jobs away from whites by agreeing to work for lower pay.

Opposition to abolitionism sometimes erupted into violence against the abolitionists themselves. In the 1830s a Philadelphia mob burned the city's antislavery headquarters to the ground and set off a bloody race riot. In Boston a mob attacked abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and threatened to hang him. Authorities saved his life by locking him in jail.

Elijah Lovejoy was not so lucky. Lovejoy edited an abolitionist newspaper in Illinois. Three times angry whites invaded his offices and wrecked his presses. Each time Lovejoy installed new presses and resumed publication. The fourth time the mob set fire to the building. When Lovejoy came out of the blazing building, he was shot and killed.

The South Reacts

Southerners fought abolitionism by mounting arguments in defense of slavery. They claimed that slavery was essential to the South. Slave labor, they said, had allowed Southern whites to reach a high level of culture.

Southerners also argued that they treated enslaved people well. Some Southerners argued that Northern workers were worse off than slaves. The industrial economy of the North employed factory workers for long hours at low wages. These jobs were repetitious and often dangerous, and Northern workers had to pay for their goods from their small earnings. Unlike the "wage slavery" of the North, Southerners said that the system of slavery provided food, clothing, and medical care to the workers.

Other defenses of slavery were based on racism. Many whites believed that African Americans were better off under white care than on their own. "Providence has placed [the slave] in our hands for his own good," declared one Southern governor.

The conflict between proslavery and antislavery groups continued to mount. At the same time, a new women's rights movement was growing, and many leading abolitionists were involved in that movement as well.

Reading Check: Explaining Why did many Northerners oppose the abolition of slavery?
The Emancipation Proclamation

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to a nation divided by war. The proclamation stated that all enslaved people in the states controlled by the Confederacy were free.

"If my name ever goes into history, it will be for this act."
—Abraham Lincoln, 1863

"The Emancipation Proclamation is the greatest event of our nation's history."
—Frederick Douglass, 1864

The Legacy of Freedom

Where America stands today on the issues of human freedom was fueled by the Emancipation Proclamation.

1863 ➔ Emancipation Proclamation issued
1865 ➔ Thirteenth Amendment abolishes slavery
1868 ➔ Fourteenth Amendment guarantees citizens equal protection
1870 ➔ Fifteenth Amendment strengthens voting rights
1954 ➔ Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas ruling on laws school segregation

Although Lincoln considered slavery immoral, he hesitated to move against slavery because of the border states. Lincoln knew that making an issue of slavery would divide the people and make the war less popular. In August 1862, Abraham Lincoln responded to pressure to declare an end to slavery.

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

That was his official position. His personal wish was "that all men everywhere could be free."

As the war went on, attitudes toward slavery began to change. More Northerners believed that slavery was helping the war effort in the South. Enslaved people in the Confederacy raised crops used to feed the armies and did the heavy work in the trenches at the army camps. In the North's view, anything that weakened slavery struck a blow against the Confederacy.

As early as May 1861, some African Americans in the South escaped slavery by going into territory held by the Union army. In 1861 and 1862, Congress passed laws that freed enslaved people who were held by those active in the rebellion against the Union.

Citizenship

The Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln was keenly aware of the shift in public opinion. He also knew that striking a blow against slavery would make Britain and France...
As news of the proclamation spread throughout the Confederacy, thousands of enslaved people fled to freedom. About 200,000 freed African Americans served as soldiers, sailors, and laborers for the Union forces.

The proclamation established that the war was being fought not only to preserve the Union, but to end slavery. Few enslaved people were freed by the action, however.

Lincoln also had political reasons for taking action on slavery. He believed it was important that the president rather than the antislavery Republicans in Congress make the decision on ending slavery. Lincoln told the members of his cabinet, "I must do the best I can, and bear the responsibility."

By the summer of 1862, Lincoln had decided to emancipate—or free—all enslaved African Americans in the South. He waited for the right moment so that he would not appear to be acting in desperation when the North seemed to be losing the war. On September 22, 1862, five days after the Union forces turned back the Confederate troops at the Battle of Antietam, Lincoln announced his plan to issue an order freeing all enslaved people in the Confederacy. On January 1, 1863, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which said that

"...all persons held as slaves within any state...in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

**Effects of the Proclamation**

Because the Emancipation Proclamation applied only to areas that the Confederacy controlled, it did not actually free anyone. Lincoln knew, however, that many enslaved people would hear about the proclamation. He hoped...
that knowledge of it would encourage them to run away from their slaveholders. Even before the Emancipation Proclamation, some 100,000 African Americans had left slavery for the safety of Union lines.\footnote{See page 617 of the Appendix for the text of the Emancipation Proclamation.}

Despite the limitations of the Emancipation Proclamation, African Americans in the North greeted it joyfully. On the day it was signed, a crowd of African Americans gathered at the White House to cheer the president. Frederick Douglass wrote, "We shout for joy that we live to record this righteous decree."

The proclamation had the desired effect in Europe as well. The Confederacy had been seeking support from its trading partners, Britain and France. However, the British took a strong position against slavery. Once Lincoln proclaimed emancipation, Britain and France decided to withhold recognition of the Confederacy.

In 1864 Republican leaders in Congress prepared a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery in the United States. In 1865 Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, which was ratified, or approved, the same year by states loyal to the Union. It was this amendment that truly freed enslaved Americans.\footnote{See page 246 for the complete text of the Thirteenth Amendment.}

\section*{African Americans in the War}

Early in the war, Lincoln opposed enlisting African Americans as soldiers. The Emancipation Proclamation announced Lincoln’s decision to permit African Americans to join the Union army. In the South, as well as in the North, the Civil War was changing the lives of all African Americans.

\section*{In the South}

When the war began, over 3.5 million enslaved people lived in the Confederacy. Making up more than 30 percent of the region’s population and the bulk of its workforce, enslaved workers labored on plantations and in vital iron, salt, and lead mines. Some worked as nurses in military hospitals and cooks in the army. By the end of the war, about one-sixth of the enslaved population had fled to areas controlled by Union armies.

The possibility of a slave rebellion terrified white Southerners. For this reason most Southerners refused to use African Americans as soldiers—for then they would be given weapons.

Near the end of the war, however, the Confederate military became desperate. Robert E. Lee and some others supported using African Americans as soldiers and believed that those who fought should be freed. The Confederate Congress passed a law in 1865 to enlist enslaved people, although the law did not include automatic freedom. The war ended before any regiments could be organized.

\section*{Helping the North}

The story was different in the North. At the start of the war, African Americans were not permitted to serve as soldiers in the Union army. This disappointed many free African Americans who had volunteered to fight for the Union.

Yet African Americans who wished to help the war effort found ways to do so. Although the army would not accept them, the Union navy
African American Soldiers

African American soldiers were organized into regiments separate from the rest of the Union army. Most commanding officers of these regiments were white. African Americans received lower pay than white soldiers at first, but protests led to equal pay in 1864.

One of the most famous African American regiments was the 54th Massachusetts, led by white abolitionists. On July 18, 1863, the 54th spearheaded an attack on a Confederate fortification near Charleston, South Carolina. Under heavy fire, the troops battled their way to the top of the fort. The Confederates drove them back with heavy fire. Nearly half of the 54th were wounded, captured, or killed. Their bravery won respect for African American troops.

Lincoln’s political opponents criticized the use of African American soldiers. Lincoln replied by quoting General Grant, who had written to Lincoln that “[they] will make good soldiers and taking them from the enemy weakens him in the same proportion they strengthen us.”

Many white Southerners, outraged by African American soldiers, threatened to execute any they captured. In a few instances, this threat was carried out. However, enslaved workers were overjoyed when they saw that the Union army included African American soldiers. As one African American regiment entered Wilmington, North Carolina, a soldier wrote, “Men and women, old and young, were running throughout the streets, shouting and praising God. We could then truly see what we have been fighting for.”

Reading Check
Comparing How were African American soldiers treated differently than white soldiers?
but only white males who swore they had never taken up arms against the Union could vote for delegates to this convention. Former Confederates were also denied the right to hold public office. Finally, the convention had to adopt a new state constitution that abolished slavery. Only then could a state be readmitted to the Union.

Lincoln refused to sign the bill into law. He wanted to encourage the formation of new state governments so that order could be restored quickly. Lincoln realized that he would have to compromise with the Radical Republicans.

The Freedmen's Bureau

More progress was made on the other great issue of Reconstruction—helping African Americans freed from slavery. In March 1865, during the final weeks of the war, Congress and the president established a new government agency to help former enslaved persons, or freedmen. Called the Freedmen's Bureau, this agency was actually part of the war department.

In the years following the war, the Freedmen's Bureau played an important role in helping African Americans make the transition to freedom. The agency distributed food and clothing, and also provided medical services that lowered the death rate among freed men and women.

The Freedmen's Bureau achieved one of its greatest successes in the area of education. The bureau established schools, staffed mostly by teachers from the North. It also gave aid to new African American institutions of higher learning, such as Atlanta University, Howard University, and Fisk University.

The bureau helped freed people acquire land that had been abandoned by owners or seized by Union armies. It offered African Americans free transportation to the countryside where laborers were needed, and it helped them obtain fair wages. Although its main goal was to aid African Americans, the bureau also helped Southerners who had supported the Union.

Reading Check

Examining Why did Lincoln offer his plan for Reconstruction before the Civil War was over?

Lincoln Assassinated!

A terrible event soon threw the debates over Reconstruction into confusion. On the evening of April 14, 1865, President and Mrs. Lincoln attended the play Our American Cousin at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. It was just five days after the surrender of Lee's army and four years to the day after the fall of Fort Sumter.

As the Lincolns watched the play from a private box in the balcony, John Wilkes Booth, an actor and Confederate sympathizer, entered the box without anyone seeing him. Booth shot the president in the back of the head, then leaped to the stage and escaped during the chaos that followed the shooting. Aides carried the wounded president to the nearby house of William Petersen, a tailor. Lincoln died there a few hours later, without ever regaining consciousness.

After escaping from Ford's Theater, Booth fled on horseback to Virginia. Union troops tracked him down and on April 26 cornered him in a barn near Port Royal, Virginia. When Booth refused to surrender, he was shot to death.

Booth was part of a small group that plotted to kill high officials of the United States government. A military court convicted eight people of taking part in the plot. Four were hanged and the others imprisoned for life.
representatives arrived in Washington, D.C., Congress refused to seat them. Many Republicans refused to readmit the Southern states on such easy terms and rejected Johnson's claim that Reconstruction was complete.

To many in the North, it seemed that Johnson's plan for Reconstruction was robbing the Union of its hard-won victory. In addition Northerners realized that the treatment of African Americans in Southern states was not improving.

Black Codes
In 1865 and early 1866, the new Southern state legislatures passed a series of laws called black codes. Key parts of these laws aimed to control freed men and women and to enable plantation owners to exploit African American workers.

Modeled on laws that had regulated free African Americans before the Civil War, the black codes of each Southern state trampled the rights of African Americans. Some laws allowed local officials to arrest and fine unemployed African Americans and make them work for white employers to pay off their fines. Other laws banned African Americans from owning or renting farms. One law allowed whites to take orphaned African American children as unpaid apprentices. To freed men and women and many Northerners, the black codes reestablished slavery in disguise.

Challenging the Black Codes
In early 1866 Congress extended the life of the Freedmen's Bureau and granted it new powers. The Freedmen's Bureau now had authority to set up special courts to prosecute individuals charged with violating the rights of African Americans. These courts provided African Americans with a form of justice where they could serve on juries.

Congress also passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866. This act granted full citizenship to African Americans and gave the federal government the power to intervene in state affairs to protect their rights. The law overturned the black codes. It also contradicted the 1857 Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court, which had ruled that African Americans were not citizens.

President Johnson vetoed both the Freedmen's Bureau bill and the Civil Rights Act, arguing that the federal government was overstepping its proper authority. He also said that the laws were unconstitutional because they were passed by a Congress that did not include representatives from all the states. By raising the issue of representation, Johnson indirectly threatened to veto any law passed by this Congress.

Republicans in Congress had enough votes to override, or defeat, both vetoes, and the bills became law. As the split between Congress and the president grew, the possibility of their working together faded. The Radical Republicans abandoned the idea of compromise and drafted a new Reconstruction plan—one led by Congress.

**Citizenship**

**The Fourteenth Amendment**

Congress wanted to ensure that African Americans would not lose the rights that the Civil Rights Act granted. Fearing it might be
African Americans in Government

African Americans played an important role in Reconstruction politics both as voters and as elected officials. In states where African American voters were the majority, they contributed heavily to Republican victories.

African Americans did not control the government of any state, although they briefly held a majority in the lower house of the South Carolina legislature. In other Southern states they held important positions, but never in proportion to their numbers.

At the national level, 16 African Americans served in the House of Representatives and 2 in the Senate between 1869 and 1880. Hiram Revels, one of the African American senators, was an ordained minister. During the Civil War he had recruited African Americans for the Union army, started a school for freed African Americans in St. Louis, Missouri, and served as chaplain of an African American regiment in Mississippi. Revels remained in Mississippi after the war and was elected to the Senate in 1870. He served a year in the Senate, where he declared he received "fair treatment."

Blanche K. Bruce, the other African American senator, also came from Mississippi. A former runaway slave, Bruce had taught in a school for freed African Americans in Missouri when the war began. In 1869 he went to Mississippi, entered politics, and became a superintendent of schools. He was elected to the Senate in 1874, serving there for six years.

Scalawags and Carpetbaggers

Some Southern whites supported Republican policy throughout Reconstruction. Many were nonslaveholding farmers or business leaders who had opposed secession in the first place. Former Confederates despised them for siding with the Republicans and called them scalawags, a term meaning "scoundrel" or "worthless rascal."

Many Northern whites who moved to the South after the war also supported the Republicans and served as Republican leaders during Reconstruction. Critics called these Northerners carpetbaggers because they arrived with all their belongings in cheap suitcases made of carpet fabric. Although some of the carpetbaggers were greedy and took advantage of the situation in the South, most did not. Many carpetbaggers were former Union army soldiers or members of the Freedmen's Bureau who liked the South and wanted to settle there. Others were reformers from the North—including lawyers, doctors, and teachers—who wanted to help reshape Southern society.

Many Southerners ridiculed the Reconstruction governments and accused them of corruption—dishonest or illegal actions—and financial mismanagement. While some officials made money illegally, the practice was hardly widespread. Indeed, there was probably less corruption in the South than in the North.

Resistance to Reconstruction

Most white Southerners opposed efforts to expand African Americans' rights. Carl Schurz, a Republican from Missouri who toured the South right after the war, reported:

"Whatever I go—the street, the shop, the house, the hotel, or the steamboat—I hear the people talk in such a way as to indicate that they are yet unable to conceive of the Negro as possessing any rights at all."

Plantation owners tried to maintain control over freed people in any way they could. Many told African Americans they could not leave the plantations. Most white land owners refused to rent land to freedmen.

Other white Southerners also made life difficult for African Americans. Store owners refused them credit, and employers refused to give them work. Some whites also used fear and force to keep freedmen in line.

The Ku Klux Klan

Violence against African Americans and their white supporters became commonplace during Reconstruction. Much of this violence was directed at preventing their political advancement.

Klu Klux Klan The Ku Klux Klan was a secret society of former Confederates and others who were white南方e
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HISTORY Online Visit t/avoli. Glencoe.com and click on Chapter 17—Student Web Activities for an activity on the first African American members of Congress.
Frederick Douglass escaped slavery in 1838 and quickly emerged as a leader of the movement for liberty for African Americans. During the Civil War, he urged President Lincoln to free the enslaved people, and he helped organize African American troops to fight for freedom.

After Lincoln was assassinated, Douglass opposed President Johnson's Reconstruction program. Instead he supported the Radical Republican plan. A skilled and powerful speaker, Douglass traveled throughout the nation insisting on full equality for African Americans. He was particularly outspoken in support of the Fifteenth Amendment, guaranteeing African American men the right to vote. To Douglass, the vote meant that African Americans would not only be full citizens but would also have a weapon to protect their rights.

was committed by secret societies organized to prevent freed men and women from exercising their rights and to help whites regain power.

The most terrifying of these societies, the Ku Klux Klan, was formed in 1866. Wearing white sheets and hoods, members of the Klan launched "midnight rides" against African Americans, burning their homes, churches, and schools. The Klan killed as well. In Jackson County, Florida, the Klan murdered more than 150 people over a three-year period. Klan violence often increased before elections, as the group tried to scare African Americans to keep them from voting. The Klan also attacked white supporters of Reconstruction.

The tactics of the Klan and other violent groups had the support of many Southerners, especially planters and Democrats. These Southerners, who had the most to gain from the reestablishment of white supremacy, saw violence as a defense against Republican rule.

Taking Action Against Violence

Southerners opposed to terrorism appealed to the federal government to do something. In 1870 and 1871, Congress passed several laws to try to stop the growing violence of the Klan. These laws had limited success. Most white Southerners refused to testify against those who attacked African Americans and their white supporters. Still, enough arrests were made to restore order for the 1872 presidential election.

/Reading Check Explaining Why did laws to control the Ku Klux Klan have little effect?

Some Improvements

Despite the violence, Reconstruction brought important changes throughout the South. This was especially true in education.

Education improved for both African Americans and whites. African Americans saw education as an important step to a better life. In many regions they created their own schools, contributing both labor and money to build the schools.

The Freedmen's Bureau and private charities played a major role in spreading education. Northern women and free African Americans came South to teach in these schools. By 1870 about 4,000 schools had been established, with 200,000 students. More than half the teachers in these schools were African American.
Public Schools

In the 1870s Reconstruction governments began creating public school systems for both races, which had not existed in the South before the war. Within a few years, more than 50 percent of the white children and about 40 percent of African American children in the South were enrolled in public schools. Northern missionary societies also established academies offering advanced education for African Americans. Some academies developed into colleges and universities, such as Morehouse College and Atlanta University.

Generally, African American and white students attended different schools. Only Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida required that schools be integrated—include both whites and African Americans—but the laws were not enforced.

Farming the Land

Along with education, most freed people wanted land. Some African Americans were able to buy land with the assistance of the Freedmen’s Bank, established in 1865. Most, however, failed to get their own land.

The most common form of farmwork for freed individuals was sharecropping. In this system a landowner rented a plot of land to a sharecropper, or farmer, along with a crude shack, some seeds and tools, and perhaps a mule. In return sharecroppers shared a percentage of their crop with the landowner.

After paying the landowners, sharecroppers often had little left to sell. Sometimes there was barely enough to feed their families. For many, sharecropping was little better than slavery.

Reading Check Explaining How did sharecroppers get land to farm?

TAKS Practice

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

1. Key Terms Define each term using a complete sentence: scalawag, carpetbagger, corruption, integrate, sharecropping.

2. Reviewing Facts How did some Southerners try to maintain control over freed people?

Reviewing Themes

3. Continuity and Change How did the state governments under Reconstruction reform education?

Critical Thinking

4. Drawing Conclusions Why was voting and owning land so important to newly freed African Americans?

5. Organizing Information Re-create the diagram below and identify the three groups that made up the Southern Republican Party.

Analyzing Visuals

6. Picturing History Study the picture above. Write a paragraph that explains who the people are and why reading is important to them.

Interdisciplinary Activity

Reading Bring newspapers to class and search for stories that show groups of people struggling for their rights throughout the world. After reading the articles aloud in class, post the items on the bulletin board with the heading “Let Freedom Ring.”
As Reconstruction ended, African Americans’ dreams for justice faded. In the last 20 years of the 1800s, racism became firmly entrenched, and individuals took steps to keep African Americans separated from whites and to deny them basic rights.

**Voting Restrictions**

The Fifteenth Amendment prohibited any state from denying an individual the right to vote because of race. Southern leaders, however, found ways to get around the amendment and prevent African Americans from voting.

Many Southern states required a **poll tax**, a fee that people had to pay before voting. Because many African Americans could not afford the tax, they could not vote. The tax also prevented many poor whites from voting. Another approach was to make prospective voters take a **literacy test** in which they had to read and explain difficult parts of state constitutions or the federal Constitution. Because most African Americans had little education, literacy tests prevented many from voting.

Literacy tests could also keep some whites from voting. For this reason some states passed **grandfather clauses**. These laws allowed individuals who did not pass the literacy test to vote if their fathers or grandfathers had voted before Reconstruction. Because African Americans could not vote until 1867, they were excluded.

Georgia enacted a poll tax and other limits as early as 1870. Such laws, however, did not become widespread until after 1889. African Americans continued to vote in some states until the end of the 1800s. Then, voting laws and the constant threat of violence caused African American voting to drastically decline.

**Jim Crow Laws**

Another set of laws hurt African Americans. By the 1890s **segregation**, or the separation of the races, was a prominent feature of life in the South.

The Southern states formed a segregated society by passing so-called **Jim Crow laws**. Taking their name from a character in a song, Jim Crow laws required African Americans and whites to be separated in almost every public place where they might come in contact with each other.

In 1896 the Supreme Court upheld Jim Crow laws and segregation in **Plessy v. Ferguson**. The case involved a Louisiana law requiring separate sections on trains for African Americans. The Court ruled that segregation was legal as long as African Americans had access to public facilities or accommodations equal to those of whites. (See page 626 of the Appendix for a summary of Plessy v. Ferguson.)

The problem, however, was that the facilities were separate but in no way equal. Southern states spent much more money on schools and other facilities for whites than on those for African Americans. This “separate but equal” doctrine provided a legal foundation for segregation in the South that lasted for more than 50 years.
Reconstruction was both a success and a failure. It helped the South recover from the war and begin rebuilding its economy. Yet economic recovery was far from complete. Although Southern agriculture took a new form, the South was still a rural economy, and that economy was still very poor.

Under Reconstruction African Americans gained greater equality and began creating their own institutions. They joined with whites in new governments, fairer and more democratic than the South had ever seen. This improvement for African Americans did not last long, however. In the words of African American writer and civil rights leader W.E.B. Du Bois, "The slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery."

The biggest disappointment of Reconstruction was that it did not make good on the promise of true freedom for freed African Americans. The South soon created a segregated society.

Violence Against African Americans

Along with restrictions on voting rights and laws passed to segregate society, white violence against African Americans increased. This violence took many terrible forms, including lynching, in which an angry mob killed a person by hanging. African Americans were lynched because they were suspected of committing crimes—or because they did not behave as whites thought they should.

Reconstruction’s Impact

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Reading Check Describing What is segregation?