

Name: _____

Age of Discovery and Expansion: The Atlantic Slave Trade and the Columbian Exchange

The Atlantic Slave Trade

Key Terms and People

Indentured servitude a system of labor by which a person could work to pay off the cost of coming to the Americas

Triangular Trade European trade between the Americas, Africa, and Europe involving slaves and other goods

Middle Passage voyage that brought captured Africans to the West Indies and the Americas

Atlantic slave trade buying and selling of Africans for work in the Americas

THE CAUSES OF AFRICAN SLAVERY

What was the Atlantic slave trade?

Slavery has had a long history in Africa and in the world. In the seventh century, Muslim rulers in North Africa enslaved non-Muslim Africans. Muslim traders also started to take many slaves to Southwest Asia.

Most worked as servants, and they did have certain rights. Also, the sons and daughters of slaves were considered to be free. The European slave trade that began in the 1500s was larger. The enslaved Africans also were treated far more harshly

In the Americas, Europeans first used Native Americans to work farms and mines. When the native peoples began dying from disease, the Europeans brought in Africans. The buying and selling of Africans for work in the Americas became known as the [1]. From 1500 to 1870, when the slave trade in the Americas finally ended, about 9.5 million Africans had been imported as slaves. The African slave trade differed from another colonial system of labor called [2]. Indentured servants came to the Americas voluntarily and worked for an employer for a certain period. African slaves were brought to the Americas against their will and were slaves for life.

The Spanish first began the practice of bringing Africans to the Americas. However, the Portuguese increased the demand for slaves. They

were looking for workers for their sugar plantations in Brazil.

SLAVERY SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE AMERICAS; A FORCED JOURNEY

What kinds of trade included human beings?

Other European colonies also brought slaves to work on tobacco, sugar, and coffee plantations. About 400,000 slaves were brought to the English colonies in North America. Their population had increased to about 2 million in 1830.

Many African rulers joined in the slave trade. They captured people inland and brought them to the coast to sell to European traders.

Africans taken to the Americas were part of a [3] between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. European ships brought manufactured goods to Africa, trading them for captured Africans. They carried the Africans across the Atlantic to the Americas, where they were sold into slavery. The traders then bought sugar, coffee, and tobacco to bring back to Europe.

Another triangle involved ships sailing from the northern English colonies in North America. They carried rum to Africa, Africans to the West Indies, and sugar and molasses back to the colonies to make more rum.

The part of the voyage that brought captured Africans to the Americas was called the [4]. It was harsh and cruel. Africans were crammed

into ships, beaten, and given little food. About 20 percent of the people on these ships died.

SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAS; CONSEQUENCES OF THE SLAVE TRADE

What was life like for the slaves?

Life on the plantations was harsh as well. People were sold to the highest bidder. They worked from dawn to dusk in the fields. They lived in small huts and had little food and clothing. Africans kept alive their traditional music and beliefs to try to maintain their spirits. Sometimes they rebelled.

From North America to Brazil, from 1522 to the 1800s, there were small-scale slave revolts.

The Atlantic slave trade had a huge impact on both Africa and the Americas. In Africa many cultures lost generations of members. Africans began fighting Africans over the control of the slave trade.

The Africans' labor helped build the Americas. They brought skills and culture, too. Many of the nations of the Americas have mixed-race populations.

5. Why were slaves brought to the Americas?

6. What was the triangular trade?

7. How did Africans change the Americas?

The Columbian Exchange and Global Trade

Key Terms and People

Capitalism economic system based on private ownership and the investment of wealth for profit

Mercantilism economic policy of increasing wealth and power by obtaining large amounts of gold and silver and selling more goods than are bought

Joint-stock company company in which people pooled their wealth for a common purpose

Columbian Exchange global transfer of foods, plants, and animals during the colonization of the Americas

Favorable balance of trade condition resulting from selling more goods than are bought

BEFORE YOU READ

Above you read about the Atlantic Slave Trade, below you will read about other kinds of trade.

THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

What was the Columbian Exchange?

There was constant movement of people and products from Europe and Africa to the Americas. The large-scale transfer of foods, plants,

and animals was called the [8]. Important foods such as corn and potatoes were taken from the Americas to Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Some foods moved from the Old World to the New. Bananas, black-eyed peas, and yams were taken from Africa to the Americas. Cattle, pigs, and

horses had never been seen in the Americas until the Europeans brought them. Deadly illnesses also moved to the Americas. They killed a large part of the Native American population.

GLOBAL TRADE

How did business change?

The settling of the Americas and the growth of trade started an economic revolution. This revolution led to new business practices still followed today. One was the rise of an economic system called [9]. It is based on private ownership and the right of a business to earn a profit on money invested.

Another new business idea was the [10]. In this type of company, many investors pool their money to start a business and share in the profits.

THE GROWTH OF MERCANTILISM

Why were colonies important in mercantilism?

During the Commercial Revolution, European governments began to follow an idea called [11]. According to this theory, a country's power depended on its wealth. Getting more gold and silver increased a country's wealth; so did selling more goods than it bought. Selling more than it buys results in a [12] for a country. Colonies played an important role because they provided goods that could be sold in trade.

The American colonies changed European society. Merchants grew wealthy and powerful. Towns and cities grew larger. Still, most people lived in the countryside, farmed for a living, and were poor.

13. What did the Columbian Exchange take from the Americas, and what did it bring?

14. What is capitalism?

15. Why were colonies important to European mercantilism?
