

1. Introduction



By 1850, the population of the United States had grown to just over 23 million. This figure included 3.6 million African Americans. The great majority of African Americans lived in slavery. Harriet Powers was one of them.

Powers was born into slavery in Georgia in 1837. Like many slaves, she grew up hearing Bible stories. In her quilts, she used animals and figures from Africa and the United States to illustrate those stories, along with scenes from her life. Hidden in her images were messages of hope and freedom for slaves.

escaped to freedom.

Not all African Americans were slaves. By mid-century, there were about half a million free blacks as well. Many were former slaves who had

Whether African Americans lived in slavery or freedom, discrimination (unequal treatment) shaped their lives. Throughout the country, whites looked down on blacks. Whites ignored the contributions blacks made to American life. They thought of the United States as “their country.” Such racist thinking later prompted African American scholar and reformer [reformer: someone who works to make change in order to bring about improvement, end abuses, or correct injustice] W. E. B. Du Bois to ask,

Your country? How came it to be yours? Before the Pilgrims landed we were here. Here we brought you our three gifts and mingled them with yours; a gift of story and song, soft, stirring melody in an . . . unmelodious land; the gift of sweat and brawn [physical strength] to beat back the wilderness . . . and lay the foundations of this vast economic empire . . . the third, a gift of the Spirit.

In this chapter, you will explore how African Americans faced and endured discrimination and slavery in the mid-1800s. You will also learn more about the gifts that African Americans brought to America.

2. North and South, Slave and Free



The experiences of African Americans in the mid-1800s depended on where they lived and whether they lived in slavery or freedom. Former slave Frederick Douglass toured the North talking to white audiences about slavery. To him, the biggest difference between slaves and free blacks was their legal status. Free blacks had some rights by law. Slaves did not. Whether free or slave, however, the lives of African Americans were shaped by **racism [racism: the belief that one race is superior to another]**, the belief that one race is superior to another.

Slaves' Legal Status The law defined slaves as property. Legally, slaveholders could do almost anything with their slaves. They could buy and sell slaves. They could leave slaves to their children or heirs. They could give slaves away to settle a bet. But in many states, they could not set slaves free.

As property, slaves had none of the rights that free people took for granted. “In law, the slave has no wife, no children, no country, no home,” Douglass said. “He can own nothing, possess nothing, acquire nothing.”

Rural and Urban Slaves Most slaves worked on farms and plantations across the South. By 1860, there were also about 70,000 slaves living in towns and cities. Most were hired out, or sent to work in factories, mills, or workshops. The wages they earned belonged to their owners. Often, urban slaves were allowed to “live out” on their own, rather than under the watchful eyes of their owners. Because of such freedom, observed Douglass, “A city slave is almost a freeman, compared with a slave on the plantation.”

Free Blacks in the South About half of all free African Americans lived in the South. Most worked as laborers, craftsmen, or household servants in towns and cities.

Many white Southerners viewed free blacks as a dangerous group that had to be controlled so that, in the words of South Carolina slaveholders, they would not create “discontent among our slaves.” Free blacks were forbidden to own guns. They could not travel freely from town to town or state to state. Blacks were not allowed to work at certain jobs. Such restrictions led Douglass to conclude, “No colored man is really free in a slaveholding state.”



Free Blacks in the North African Americans in the North lived freer lives. But blacks experienced **discrimination [discrimination: unequal treatment based on a person’s race, gender, religion, place of birth, or other arbitrary characteristic]**, or unequal treatment, everywhere they turned. In many states, African Americans were denied the right to vote. They had trouble finding good jobs. In the 1850s, some 87 percent of free blacks in New York held low-paying jobs. “Why should I strive hard?” asked one young African American. “What are my prospects? . . . No one will employ me; white boys won’t work with me.”

In addition to unequal treatment, policies of **segregation [segregation: the social separation of groups of people, especially by race]** separated blacks from whites in nearly all public places. Black children were often denied entry into public schools. Those states that did educate black children set up separate schools for that purpose. A New Yorker observed around 1860,

Even the noblest black is denied that which is free to the vilest [worst] white. The omnibus, the [railroad] car, the ballot-box, the jury box, the halls of legislation, the army, the public lands, the school, the church, the lecture room, the social circle, the [restaurant] table, are all either absolutely or virtually denied to him.

Douglass discovered how deeply rooted this racism was when he tried to join a church in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and was turned away. “I tried all the other churches in New Bedford with the same result,” he wrote.

African Americans responded to discrimination by organizing to help themselves. In 1816, Richard Allen, a former slave, became the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The AME, which still exists today, quickly became a center of African American life. Allen also created organizations to improve the lives of blacks, such as the African Society for the Education of Youth.

Other Northern blacks started their own schools, churches, and self-help organizations. In 1853, free blacks formed the National Council of Colored People to protest the unequal treatment they received. Such treatment, the council declared, “would humble the proudest, crush the energies of the strongest, and retard the progress of the swiftest.” That blacks were neither humbled nor crushed by prejudice and discrimination was evidence of their courage and spirit.

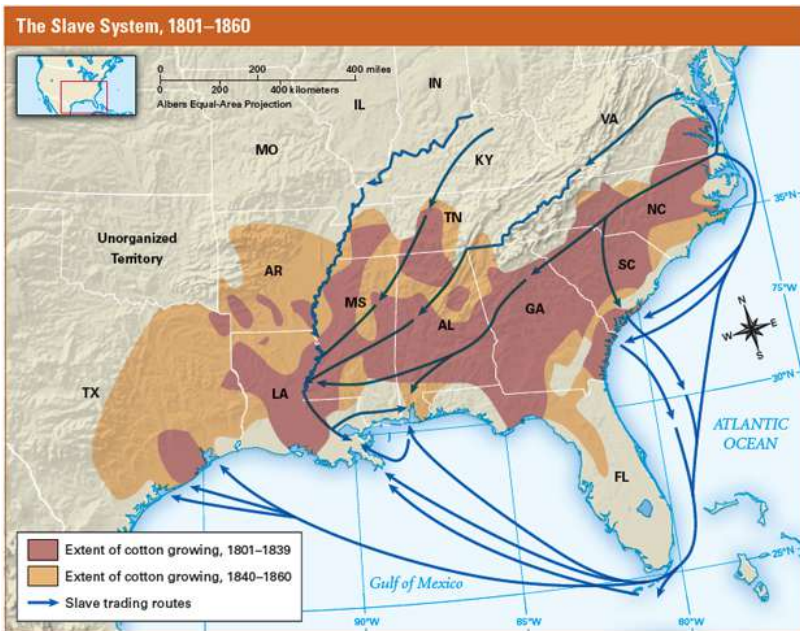
3. The Economics of Slavery



Only wealthier planters could afford to buy slaves. The great majority of white Southerners did not own slaves. Why, then, did the South remain so loyal to slavery? Part of the answer to that question lies in the growth of the Southern economy after the invention of the cotton gin in 1793.

The cotton gin made cotton a hugely profitable cash crop in the South. In 1790, the South produced just 3,000 bales of cotton. By the 1850s, production had soared to more than 4 million bales a year. Cotton brought new wealth to the South. Robert Fogel, a historian who has studied the economics of slavery, wrote,

If we treat the North and South as separate nations . . . the South would stand as the fourth most prosperous nation of the world in 1860 . . . more prosperous than France, Germany, Denmark, or any of the countries in Europe except England.



Whether they owned slaves or not, white Southerners understood that their economy depended on cotton. They also knew that cotton planters depended on slave labor to grow their profitable crop. For planters with few or no slaves, however, the prospect of owning slaves became less likely as the demand for, and the price of, slaves rose.

High prices were both good and bad for the men and women trapped in slavery. As prices went up, slaves became more valuable to their owners. This may have encouraged slaveholders to take better care of their workers. At the same time, the rising value of their slaves made slaveholders less willing to listen to talk of ending slavery. In their eyes, freeing their slaves could only mean one thing: utter financial ruin.



4. Working Conditions of Slaves

Slaves worked on farms of various sizes. On small farms, owners and slaves worked side by side in the fields. On large plantations, planters hired overseers to supervise their slaves. Overseers were paid to “care for nothing but to make a large crop.” To do this, they tried to get the most work possible out of the slaves who worked in the fields.

About three-quarters of rural slaves were field hands who toiled from dawn to dark tending crops. An English visitor described a field hand’s day:

He is called up in the morning at day break, and is seldom allowed time enough to swallow three mouthfuls of hominy [boiled corn], or hoeecake [cornbread], but is driven out immediately to the field to hard labor . . . About noon . . . he eats his dinner, and he is seldom allowed an hour for that purpose . . . Then they return to severe labor, which continues until dusk.

Even then, a slave’s workday was not finished. After dark, there was still water to carry, wood to split, pigs to feed, corn to shuck, cotton to clean, and other chores to be done. One slave recalled,

I never know what it was to rest. I just work all the time from morning till late at night. I had to do everything there was to do on the outside. Work in the field, chop wood, hoe corn, till sometime I feels like my back surely break.

Not all slaves worked in the fields. Some were skilled seamstresses, carpenters, or blacksmiths. Others worked in the master’s house as cooks or servants. When asked about her work, a house slave replied,

What kind of work I did? . . . I cooked, [then] I was house maid, an' I raised I don't know how many [children] . . . I was always good when it come to [the] sick, so [that] was mostly my job.

No matter how hard they worked, slaves could never look forward to an easier life. Most began work at the age of six and continued until they died. As one man put it, “Slave young, slave long.”

5. Living Conditions of Slaves



Most masters viewed their slaves as they did their land—things to be “worn out, not improved.” They provided only what was needed to keep their slaves healthy enough to work. Slaves lived crowded together in rough cabins. One recalled,

We lodged in log huts, and on 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 . . . We had neither bedsteads, nor furniture of any description. Our beds were collections of straw and old rags, thrown down in the corners.

Slaves seldom went hungry. “Not to give a slave enough to eat,” reported Frederick Douglass, “is regarded as . . . meanness [stinginess] even among slaveholders.” Slaves received rations of cornmeal, bacon, and molasses. Many kept gardens or hunted and fished to vary their diets. The owner described below fed his slaves well:

Marse [master] Alec had plenty for his slaves to eat. There was meat, bread, collard greens, snap beans, 'taters, peas, all sorts of dried fruit, and just lots of milk and butter.

Slaves wore clothing made of coarse homespun linen or rough “Negro cloth.” Northern textile mills made this cloth especially for slave clothes. Douglass reported that a field hand received a yearly allowance of “two coarse linen shirts, one pair of linen trousers . . . one jacket, one pair of trousers for winter, made of coarse Negro cloth, one pair of stockings, and one pair of shoes.” Children too young to work received “two coarse linen shirts per year. When these failed them, they went naked” until the next year.

While slaves were poorly housed and clothed compared to most white Southerners, they were more likely to receive medical care. Slaveholders often hired doctors to treat sick or injured slaves. Given doctors’ limited medical knowledge, this care probably did little to improve slaves’ health.

6. Controlling Slaves



Slavery was a system of forced labor. To make this system work, slaveholders had to keep slaves firmly under control. Some slaveholders used harsh punishments—beating, whipping, branding, and other forms of torture—to maintain that control. But punishments often backfired on slaveholders. A slave who had been badly whipped might not be able to work for some time. Harsh punishments were also likely to make slaves feel more resentful and rebellious.

Slaveholders preferred to control their workforce by making slaves feel totally dependent on their masters. Owners encouraged such dependence by treating their slaves like grown-up children. They also kept their workers as ignorant as possible about the world beyond the plantation. Frederick Douglass’s master said that a slave “should know nothing but to obey his master—to do as it is told to do.”

Slaves who failed to learn this lesson were sometimes sent to slave-breakers. Such men were experts at turning independent, spirited African Americans into

humble, obedient slaves. When he was 16, Douglass was sent to a slave breaker named Edward Covey.

Covey's method consisted of equal parts violence, fear, and overwork. Soon after Douglass arrived on Covey's farm, he received his first whipping. After that, he was beaten so often that "aching bones and a sore back were my constant companions."

Covey's ability to instill fear in his slaves was as effective as his whippings. Slaves never knew when he might be watching them. "He would creep and crawl in ditches and gullies," Douglass recalled, to spy on his workers.

Finally, Covey worked his slaves beyond endurance. Wrote Douglass,

We worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it could never rain, blow, hail, or snow too hard for us to work in the field . . . The longest days were too short for him, and the shortest nights too long for him. I was somewhat unmanageable when I first got there, but a few months of this discipline tamed me . . . I was broken in body, soul, and spirit . . . The dark night of slavery closed in upon me.

7. Resistance to Slavery

Despite the efforts of slaveholders to crush their spirits, slaves found countless ways to resist slavery. As former slave Harriet Jacobs wrote after escaping to freedom, "My master had power and law on his side. I had a determined will. There is might [power] in each."

Day-to-Day Resistance For most slaves, resistance took the form of quiet, or **passive [passive: not active]**, acts of rebellion. Field hands pulled down fences, broke tools, and worked so sloppily that they damaged crops. House slaves sneaked food out of the master's kitchen.

Slaves pretended to be dumb, clumsy, sick, or insane to get out of work. One slave avoided working for years by claiming to be nearly blind, only to regain his sight once freed.

In some instances, resistance turned deadly when house servants put poison into slave owners' food. So many slaves set fire to their owners' homes and barns that the American Fire Insurance Company refused to insure property in the South.

Open Defiance Quiet resistance sometimes flared into open defiance. When pushed too hard, slaves refused to work, rejected orders, or struck back violently. Owners often described slaves who reacted in this way as "insolent" (disrespectful) or "unmanageable."

Frederick Douglass reached his breaking point one day when the slave breaker Covey began to beat him for no particular reason. Rather than take the blows, as he had so many times before, Douglass fought back. He wrestled Covey to the ground, holding him "so firmly by the throat that his blood followed my nails." For Douglass, this moment was "the turning point in my career as a slave."

My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place; and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed when I could be a slave in fact. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the whiteman who expected to succeed in whipping, must also succeed in killing me.

Covey knew this and never laid a hand on Douglass again.



Running Away Some slaves tried to escape by running away to freedom in the North. The risks were enormous. Slaveholders hired professional slave catchers and their packs of bloodhounds to hunt down runaway slaves. If caught, a runaway risked being mauled by dogs, brutally whipped, or even killed. Still, Douglass and countless other slaves took the risk.

Slaves found many ways to escape bondage. Some walked to freedom in the North, hiding by day and traveling at night when they could follow the North Star. Others traveled north by boat or train, using forged identity cards and clever disguises to get past watchful slave patrols. A few runaways mailed themselves to freedom in boxes or coffins.



Thousands of runaways escaped to free states and to Canada with the help of the **Underground Railroad [Underground Railroad: a secret network of free blacks and whites who helped thousands of slaves escape to free states and Canada]**, a secret network of free blacks and **sympathetic [sympathetic: understanding or agreeing with the feelings or situation of another person]** whites. The members of the Underground Railroad provided transportation and “safe houses” where runaways could hide. A number of guides, or “conductors,” risked their lives to help escaping slaves travel the “freedom train.” One of the most successful was Harriet Tubman. Having escaped slavery herself, Tubman courageously returned to the South approximately 20 times between 1850 and 1860, guiding more than 300 men, women, and children to freedom.

Rebellion At times, resistance erupted into violent rebellion. Slave revolts occurred in cities, on plantations, and even on ships at sea. Fear of slave uprisings haunted slaveholders. Planters, wrote one visitor to the South, “never lie down to sleep without . . . loaded pistols at their sides.”

In 1822, authorities in Charleston, South Carolina, learned that Denmark Vesey, a free black, was preparing to lead a sizable revolt of slaves. Vesey, along with more than 30 slaves, was arrested and hanged.

Nine years later, in 1831, a slave named Nat Turner led a bloody uprising in Virginia. In what became known as **Nat Turner’s Rebellion [Nat Turner’s Rebellion: a slave rebellion led by Nat Turner that took place in Virginia in 1831]**, Turner and his followers set out to kill every white person they could find. Armed with axes and guns, they killed at least 57 people over a period of two days.



Vesey’s and Turner’s rebellions panicked white Southerners. In response, Southern states passed strict slave codes that tightened owners’ control of their slaves and provided for harsher punishment of slaves by authorities. As one frightened Virginian remarked, “A Nat Turner might be in any family.”

8. Slave Families and Communities

Slavery made community and family life difficult. Legally, slave families did not exist. No Southern state recognized slave marriages. Legal control of slave children rested not with their parents, but with their masters. Owners could break up slave families at any time selling a father, a mother, or a child to someone else. Of all the things they endured, slaves most feared being sold away from their loved ones.

Most slaves grew up in families headed by a father and mother. Unable to marry legally, slaves created their own weddings, which often involved the tradition of jumping over a broomstick. One slave recalled,



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The preacher would say to the man, “Do you take this woman to be your wife?” He says, “Yes.” “Well, jump the broom.” After he

jumped, the preacher would say the same to the woman. When she jumped, the preacher said, "I pronounce you man and wife."

Caring for children was never easy. Booker T. Washington's mother "snatched a few moments for our care in the early morning before her work began, and at night after the day's work was done." Still, parents found time to teach the lessons children would need to survive.

Silence around whites was one such lesson. Elijah Marrs recalled that "Mothers were necessarily compelled to be severe on their children to keep them from talking too much." Obedience was another lesson. William Webb's mother taught him "not to rebel against the men that were treating me like some dumb brute, making me work and refusing to let me learn."

Parents also taught their children other essential lessons about caring, kindness, pride, and hope. They taught them to respect themselves and other members of the slave community, especially older slaves. "There is not to be found, among any people," wrote Douglass, "a more rigid enforcement of the law of respect to elders."

These were the lessons that helped slaves, under the most difficult conditions, to create loving families and close communities. In doing so, they met the most basic of human needs—the need for a place to feel loved, respected, and safe.

9. Leisure Time Activities

These simple words capture the constant weariness that slaves endured:

*Come day,
Go day,
God send Sunday.*

Slaves toiled all week in fields that seemed to stretch "from one end of the earth to the other." But, on Saturday night and Sunday, their time was their own.

Saturday nights were a time for social events, like corn-husking or pea-shelling parties. These social events combined work and fun. One slave recalled,

I've seen many a corn huskin' at ole Major's farm when the corn would be piled as high as the house. Two sets of men would start huskin' from opposite sides of the heap. It would keep one man busy just getting the husks out of the way, and the corn would be thrown over the husker's head and filling the air like birds. The women usually had a quilting at those times, so they were pert and happy.

A quilting bee was one of the rare times when slave women could gather to work and talk. In those few precious hours, they were free to express themselves with needle and cloth. The quilts they created were not only beautiful, but also very much needed as bedding for their families.

After the sewing, men joined the party for a "quilting feast" and dancing. Slaves made music out of almost anything. "Stretch cowhides over cheese-boxes and you had tambourines," one former slave recalled. "Saw bones from off a cow, knock them together, and call it a drum. Or use broom-straws, on fiddle-strings, and you had your entire orchestra."

Sunday was a day for religion and recreation. Slaves spent their Sundays going to church, eating, hunting, fishing, dancing, singing, telling tales, naming babies, playing games, and visiting with friends. In New Orleans, hundreds of slaves gathered on Sunday afternoons in public spaces to dance, sing, and talk. All of these activities helped African Americans forget the sorrows of slavery.

Section 10 - Slave Churches

Many slaveholders encouraged their slaves to attend church on Sunday. Some read the Bible to their workers and prayed with them. Owners and white ministers preached the same message: “If you disobey your earthly master, you offend your heavenly Master.”

Not surprisingly, this was not a popular lesson among slaves. “Dat ole white preacher [just] was telling us slaves to be good to our marsters,” recalled Cornelius Garner. “We ain’t kerr’d a bit ’bout dat stuff he was telling us ’cause we wanted to sing, pray, and serve God in our own way.”

Instead, slaves created their own “invisible church” that brought together African roots and American needs. This invisible church met in slave quarters or secret forest clearings known as “hush arbors.” One slave reported that,

When [slaves] go round singing, “Steal Away to Jesus” that mean there going to be a religious meeting that night. The masters . . . didn’t like them religious meetings, so us naturally slips off at night, down in the bottoms or somewheres. Sometimes us sing and pray all night.

Rather than teach about obedience, black preachers told the story of Moses leading his people out of slavery in Egypt. Black worshipers sang spirituals that expressed their desire for freedom and faith in a better world to come. One black preacher wrote,

The singing was accompanied by a certain ecstasy of motion, clapping of hands, tossing of heads, which would continue without cessation [stopping] about half an hour . . . The old house partook of their ecstasy; it rang with their jubilant shouts, and shook in all its joints.

Whites sometimes criticized the enthusiasm of black worshipers, saying they lacked true religious feeling. Many slaves, however, believed it was their masters who lacked such feeling. “You see,” explained one man, “religion needs a little motion—specially if you gwine [going to] feel de spirit.”

Religion helped slaves bear their suffering and still find joy in life. In their prayers and spirituals, they gave voice to their deepest longings, their greatest sorrows, and their highest hopes.

Section 11 - African American Culture

Africans arrived in the United States speaking many languages and following many cultural traditions. To survive, they had to learn a new language—English—and adopt a new way of life. Yet they did not forget their African roots. Across the South, slaves combined their old traditions and new realities to create a distinctive African American culture.

This combining of cultures is **evident [evident: easily seen or understood]** in Harriet Powers’s story quilt. In square after square, Powers used animals from Africa and America to illustrate Bible stories that she learned as a slave on a Georgia plantation. The doves in her quilt are symbols of a slave’s yearning for freedom. As one spiritual expressed, “Had I the wings of a dove, I’d fly away and be at rest.”

You can also hear this combining of cultures in the songs and spirituals sung by slaves. These songs throb with the rhythms and harmonies of Africa, but speak about the realities of slavery. Slaves sang about faith, love, work, and the kindness and cruelty of masters. They also expressed their **oppression [oppression: the feeling of being weighed down or held back by severe and unfair force]**, as in this song recorded by Frederick Douglass:

*We raise the wheat, dey gib [they give] us the corn;
We bake the bread, dey gib us the cruss;
We sif the meal, dey gib us the huss;*



*We peel the meat, dey gib us the skin;
And dat's the way dey takes us in.*

Slave dances were based on African traditions as well. Dancing helped slaves to put aside their cares, express their feelings, and refresh their spirits. According to one former slave, good dancers “could play a tune with their feet, dancing largely to an inward music, a music that was felt, but not heard.”

African legends and folktales survived in the stories and jokes told by slaves. For example, Br'er Rabbit, the sly hero of many slave tales, was based on the African trickster Shulo the Hare. In these stories, the small but clever brother rabbit always managed to outwit larger, but duller, brother bear or brother fox—just as slaves hoped to outwit their more powerful masters.

Summary



In this chapter, you learned what life was like for African Americans during the 1800s.

North and South, Slave and Free African Americans had a great impact on the development of American life. The South's economy was built on slave labor. Some blacks lived in freedom in the North and South, but nowhere could they escape racism and discrimination.

The Economics of Slavery Most white Southerners did not own slaves. Whether they owned slaves or not, whites understood that the South's economy depended on cotton and the slave labor needed to grow it.



Working and Living Conditions of Slaves All slaves worked constantly—in the fields, as house servants, or at skilled trades. Most slaves lived in simple, dirt-floor cabins.

Controlling Slaves and Resistance to Slavery Some slave owners used harsh punishments to control slaves. Most slaves resisted slavery using quiet acts of rebellion, while some fought back openly. At great risk, many tried to run away. Some slaveholders would rather kill runaways than allow them to escape.

Slave Families, Leisure, and Churches Enslaved African Americans created families and communities under the most difficult conditions. Slaves

spent Saturday nights at social events and worshiped in their own churches on Sundays. They prayed and sang spirituals to help themselves find joy and hope in their hard lives.

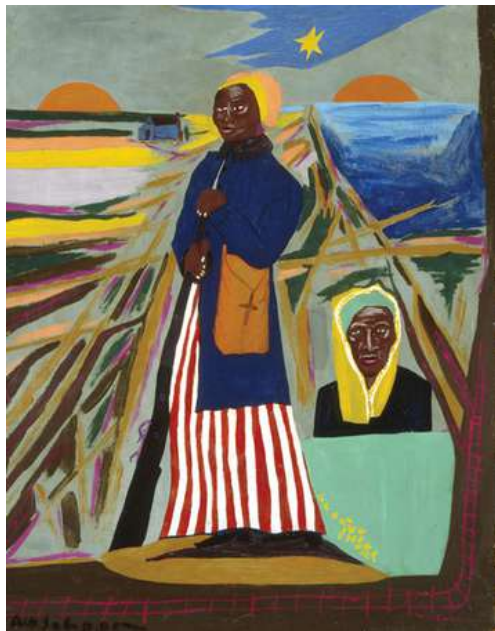
African American Culture Africans brought many languages and cultural traditions to the United States. The combination of old and new cultural traditions was expressed through their quilts, songs, dances, and folktales.

Write a paragraph answering the Essential Question: *How did African Americans face slavery and discrimination in the mid-1800s?*

Support your answer with at least one piece of evidence from three of these topics:
living conditions

- 1) working conditions
- 2) resistance efforts
- 3) slave communities and families
- 4) leisure time activities
- 5) slave churches

Reading Further - Harriet Tubman, Moses of the Underground Railroad



No one did more to help enslaved African Americans escape slavery than Harriet Tubman. People began to call her Moses for her role in guiding people to freedom in the North. But first, she had to get there herself.

In the fall of 1849, Harriet Tubman decided to escape her life as a slave. She had been born into slavery in eastern Maryland, sometime around 1820. When she heard that she would be sold to a new owner farther south, she decided to flee.

It was not an easy decision. She would have to leave her family behind, including her husband, who refused to go. She also knew that women rarely managed to escape on their own. If she were caught, she would be severely punished and perhaps killed. But she felt she had no choice. “I had reasoned this out in my mind,” she later recalled. “There was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other.”

Like most slaves, Tubman had led a hard life. She had been whipped repeatedly and forced to labor in the fields. She once suffered a near-fatal injury when an overseer struck her in the head with a lead weight. For the rest of her life, she would periodically and unexpectedly fall into a deep sleep.

But her experiences also gave her strength and taught her how to survive. She would need that strength on her flight north.

Tubman left at night, under cover of darkness. She had no idea where to go, but fortunately there were people to help her. They were part of the Underground Railroad, the name people gave to a network of safe houses and escape routes leading to the North. The safe houses were known as “stations” and the people who ran them as “stationmasters.” These men and women—and sometimes children—put their lives at risk to help slaves escape to freedom.

Not wanting to endanger those who helped her, Tubman never revealed the details of her escape. But she probably took a route heading northeast to Delaware and then to Pennsylvania. It was a journey she would take many times later, when she had become the most famous “conductor” on the Underground Railroad.

Crossing to Freedom

Tubman’s first stop was the home of a sympathetic white woman who lived nearby. This woman told her how to find the nearest safe house. Tubman walked through the night to get there. When she arrived, a woman opened the door, handed her a broom, and told her to sweep the yard. This puzzled Tubman until she realized that playing the part of a black servant would help avoid suspicion.

When the woman’s husband came home that evening, he hid Tubman in his wagon, drove her out of town, and dropped her off with directions to the next safe house. For the rest of her journey, Tubman went from one “station” to the next at night and hid during the day.



Most of the time she traveled on foot, staying out of sight. Slave catchers were a real danger, so she avoided roads and listened for the sound of bloodhounds on her trail. She knew that one careless mistake could lead to her capture.

She left Maryland and crossed into Delaware. But she was still not safe. Although Delaware was a free state, slave catchers worked there, and many people would turn over a fugitive for the reward money.

Finally, after two or three weeks on the run, Tubman crossed the Pennsylvania border, a dividing line between North and South. Now she was truly free. Years later she recalled that moment:

I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything. The sun came like gold through the trees and over the fields, and I felt like I was in heaven.



Refuge in Philadelphia

Tubman went to Philadelphia, which was then home to thousands of African Americans, including many escaped slaves. The city had a strong abolitionist community and was a center of the Underground Railroad. Tubman soon found work and settled into her new life.

But she would not remain at rest for long. She missed her family in Maryland and could not bear the idea that they were still living in slavery. "I was free," she said, "and they should be free."

Riding the Liberty Lines



By the fall of 1850, Tubman decided to act. She had learned that one of her sister's daughters, a niece named Kizzy, was going to be sold south. Kizzy had two children, and Tubman was determined to rescue all three of them. No one knows exactly how she did it, but Harriet managed to slip into Maryland and bring all of them north.

The following spring, she made another trip, this time to get one of her brothers. A few months later, she brought back a second brother, along with ten other people. Eventually she would rescue most of her family, including her elderly parents. She took most of them to Canada, where they could not be seized by slave catchers and returned to their owners.

Tubman could not have made these trips without the help of the Underground Railroad. She followed routes, known as "liberty lines," and made use of Underground Railroad safe houses. Some of these houses had tunnels and secret closets where fugitives could hide.

She also relied on "agents" such as Thomas Garrett and William Still. Garrett was a white stationmaster in Wilmington, Delaware, who helped more than 2,500 slaves escape from the South. Still, an African American, was an important leader of the antislavery movement in Philadelphia. These and other members of the Underground Railroad were critical to Tubman's success over the years.

Another secret to her success was her methods. She usually made her trips in the fall and winter, when the nights were long and people tended to stay indoors. She always set out on a Saturday night. Sunday was usually a slave's only day off, so slave owners might not miss absent slaves until Monday morning. When nearing a hiding place where fugitives were waiting, Tubman would sing a special song. These songs were a kind of code to signal her presence or to provide instructions.

Sometimes she wore disguises, such as men's clothing. Once, when she ran into a former owner, she pulled her hat over her face and pretended to read a newspaper. The man, who assumed his former slave could not read, never realized who she was.

One admirer recalled, "She could elude patrols and pursuers with as much ease and unconcern as an eagle would soar through the heavens." She was also fearless. When she developed a bad toothache during one escape, she used a pistol to knock her teeth out and ease the pain.

The Rescue of Joe Bailey

Between 1852 and 1860, Tubman made one or more trips a year into the South. Blacks soon began calling her Moses, the leader who guided her people to freedom. As Moses's reputation grew, slave owners demanded the capture of this mysterious person who was leading their slaves away. But they did not know who Moses was or even that she was a woman.

On one trip in November 1856, Tubman brought five people north, including a man named Joe Bailey. Bailey was highly valued by his owner, who offered \$1,500 for his return. A \$12,000 bounty was also placed on the head of "Moses."



After a risky escape from Maryland, Tubman and her party reached the outskirts of Wilmington. There, Thomas Garrett hid them under a wagonload of hay and helped them get through the city. From there, they went to Philadelphia and New York, on their way to Canada.

Bailey got a shock in New York, however. There, a man identified him from a poster advertising a reward for his capture. Fortunately, the man was an abolitionist. Nonetheless, Bailey was plunged into gloom, fearing he would never make it out of the country without getting caught. He failed to cheer up for the rest of the journey, even refusing to look as he passed by Niagara Falls and crossed into Canada.

At that point, Tubman shook him, saying, “Joe, you’re free!” Bailey looked up, saw where he was, and burst into tears. Then he began to sing:

*Glory to God and Jesus too;
One more soul is safe!
Oh, go and carry the news;
One more soul got safe!*

Tubman’s Legacy

It is said that Harriet Tubman made almost 20 trips on the Underground Railroad and freed more than 300 people. In all of her journeys, she said, “I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger.” She made her last trip shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1861.

During the war, she joined the Union cause as a nurse and a spy. On one raid into South Carolina, she helped free several hundred slaves from captivity.

After the war, Tubman became a strong voice in the fight for women’s rights and racial justice. But it was her daring work with the Underground Railroad that made her a great hero and liberator of her people.

Preparing to Write: Taking Notes

Thanks to the work of people like William Still, we have information about the life and work of Harriet Tubman. When and why did Harriet Tubman escape from slavery?

- 1) List three facts that are known about Tubman’s escape.
- 2) What led Tubman to become a conductor on the Underground Railroad?
- 3) List four facts about how Tubman operated as a conductor.
- 4) Why did people call Harriet Tubman “Moses”?

Writing a Short Biography

Suppose you have been asked to write a short biography of Harriet Tubman (about 1820–1913) for a Web site about famous American women. Your biography should include factual information from the reading. Limit opinions to quotations from primary sources. Cite each source you use. Give details on Harriet Tubman’s life and accomplishments.

Use this rubric to evaluate your biography. Make changes in your biography if you need to.

Score	Description
3	The biography gives many details about Tubman's life based on facts from the reading. It includes no personal opinions. There are no spelling or grammar errors
2	The biography gives some details about Tubman's life based on facts from the reading. It includes no personal opinions. There are some spelling or grammar errors.
1	The biography does not give details about Tubman's life based on facts from the reading. It includes personal opinions. There are many spelling or grammar errors.

Enrichment Essay - African Americans Fight Slavery

For African American slaves, resistance was extraordinarily difficult. Some slaves carried out courageous acts of quiet resistance, such as gathering in groups when forbidden by law or teaching one another to read. Some slaves rose up in open rebellion. Thousands ran to freedom in the North and West.

Many African Americans who had escaped slavery, or who had been born free, fought slavery on a larger scale. Let's take a look at some of the ways African Americans took part in the fight against slavery.

Speaking and Writing Against Slavery

Both black and white abolitionists spoke out against slavery in speeches, sermons, articles, books, and pamphlets. In 1829, David Walker, an African American, published a pamphlet called *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*. Walker passionately attacked prejudice and the cruel injustice of slavery. Referring to whites, he wrote:

They think because they hold us in their infernal chains of slavery, that we wish to be white, or of their color—but they are dreadfully deceived—we wish to be just as it pleased our Creator to have made us, and no avaricious and unmerciful wretches, have any business to make slaves of, or hold us in slavery. How would they like for us to make slaves of, and hold them in cruel slavery, and murder them as they do us?

Walker urged slaves to fight for their own freedom. His fierce attack on slavery alarmed authorities in the South. Officials in several states responded by forbidding anyone from distributing abolitionist literature.

Other abolitionists sought peaceful ways to end slavery. In the 1830s, organizations such as the American Anti-Slavery Society were created to promote emancipation. One of the society's tactics was to send speakers throughout the North to talk about the evils of slavery. Some speakers were former slaves who spoke of their experiences. Others were professional public speakers.

Charles Lenox Remond, the son of free parents in Massachusetts, was the first African American public speaker for the society. A talented speaker, Remond traveled all over the North, arguing for immediate emancipation of the slaves. When he wasn't able to find a meetinghouse, he simply stopped on the street and gathered a crowd. This was a dangerous thing to do. Even in the North, his views sometimes provoked violence.

Many other African Americans supported emancipation through their writings. Jermain Wesley Loguen, a former slave, published articles in a newspaper called the *Weekly Anglo-African*. Frederick Douglass ran a newspaper called the North Star. He also wrote an influential book called *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. Other first-person accounts of slavery were dictated to abolitionists. The American Anti-Slavery Society used mass mailings to distribute these accounts.

Taking Direct Action: The Underground Railroad

Both black and white abolitionists were active in the Underground Railroad. As you have learned, the "railroad" was a secret network of people who helped runaway slaves escape to freedom. Robert Purvis, an African American abolitionist, was extremely important to the success of the Underground Railroad.

Purvis was born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1810. His father was a successful white cotton merchant. His mother was part African American. When Purvis was nine, his parents brought him and his two brothers north to Philadelphia. There he attended the Pennsylvania Abolition Society's school.

When Purvis was 16, his father died, leaving him a fortune. Purvis used his wealth to further the cause of freedom for African Americans. He was a cofounder of the American Anti-Slavery Society. He also gave both money and time to help runaway slaves.

In 1831, Purvis married Harriet Forten, the daughter of an African American businessman and abolitionist. Together they threw themselves into the antislavery struggle. Their home was a well-known stop on the Underground Railroad. A trapdoor in their house concealed a secret room where runaway slaves could hide. They helped thousands of slaves escape to freedom.

Petitioning Congress

Abolitionists, including African Americans, also fought slavery by sending petitions to Congress. A petition is a document signed by a large number of people asking for some action to be taken.

In 1836, the House of Representatives voted a "gag rule" to prevent all consideration of slavery in Congress. Under the rule, Congress set aside all petitions and letters on the subject of slavery for the indefinite future.

The American Anti-Slavery Society fought the rule with a flood of petitions. By 1838, abolitionists had overwhelmed Congress with petitions including more than 400,000 signatures. Many of the petitioners were African Americans. Abolitionists argued that the gag rule violated their First Amendment right to petition their elected representatives.

The petitioners found a champion in former president and Massachusetts representative John Quincy Adams. Adams led the fight against the gag rule in Congress. He finally defeated it in 1844.

Seeking Freedom from Courts

Many African Americans looked to the courts to grant their freedom. In St. Louis, Missouri, African Americans filed nearly 300 “freedom lawsuits” between 1814 and 1860.

The case of “Winnie versus Phoebe Whitesides” was similar to many of the lawsuits filed during this time. Winnie was the slave of Phoebe Whitesides. Winnie based her claim to freedom on the fact that Whitesides had taken her and her children to live in Illinois, a free state, before coming to Missouri, a slave state. The jury agreed and declared Winnie and her children free persons.

The most well-known freedom lawsuit was the Dred Scott case. Like Winnie, Dred Scott claimed he should be free because he had lived in a free state. A St. Louis court granted Scott his freedom. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, overruled this decision in 1857. The Court held that the Constitution did not recognize slaves as citizens. Consequently, the Court said, Scott had no right to bring a legal case. The Dred Scott case fueled people’s anger over slavery and helped pave the way for the Civil War.

Create a vertical timeline that tells the story of African American resistance to slavery. Include no fewer than five key dates on the timeline. In your captions for your key dates, include at least five people or organizations discussed in the Enrichment essay.

Enrichment Essay - Documents on the Slave Rebellions of Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner

Historians weigh different kinds of evidence to reconstruct the past. Documents are one type of evidence. The fact that a document exists doesn’t mean that its contents are all true. Historians must decide how reliable and factual a particular document is.

This essay presents several documents on two famous slave rebellions in the United States. Read the documents carefully and then answer the questions in the Enrichment Activity at the end of the essay.

Documents Related to the Denmark Vesey Rebellion

In 1822, Denmark Vesey was tried and convicted of planning a slave revolt in and around Charleston, South Carolina. A prosperous free black, Vesey was married to a slave woman. He was turned in before the revolt could be carried out. Here are two documents about Denmark Vesey.

Document 1: A Magazine Article

An article from the *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1861, by Thomas Wentworth Higginson

Denmark Vesey had come very near figuring as a revolutionist in Hayti [Haiti], instead of South Carolina. Captain Vesey, an old resident of Charleston, commanded a ship that traded between St. Thomas and Cape François, during our Revolutionary War, in the slave-transportation line. In the year 1781 he took on board a cargo of three hundred and ninety slaves, and sailed for the Cape. On the passage, he and his officers were much attracted by the beauty and intelligence of a boy of fourteen, whom they unanimously adopted into the cabin as a pet. They gave him new clothes and a new name, Télémaque, which was afterwards gradually corrupted into Telmak and Denmark. They amused themselves with him until their arrival at Cape François, and then, “having no use for the boy,” sold their pet as if he had been a macaw or a monkey. Captain Vesey sailed for St. Thomas, and presently making another trip to Cape François, was surprised to hear from his consignee [the person receiving the delivery] that Télémaque would be returned on his

hands as being “unsound,”—not in theology nor in morals, but in body,—subject to epileptic fits, in fact. According to the custom of that place, the boy was examined by the city physician, who required Captain Vesey to take him back; and Denmark served him faithfully, with no trouble from epilepsy, for twenty years, travelling all over the world with him, and learning to speak various languages. In 1800, he drew a prize of fifteen hundred dollars in the East Bay Street Lottery, with which he bought his freedom from his master for six hundred dollars,—much less than his market value.

From that time, the official report says, he worked as a carpenter in Charleston, distinguished for physical strength and energy. “Among those of his color he was looked up to with awe and respect. His temper was impetuous and domineering in the extreme, qualifying him for the despotic rule of which he was ambitious. All his passions were ungovernable and savage; and to his numerous wives and children he displayed the haughty and capricious cruelty of an Eastern bashaw [pasha, a Turkish official].

“For several years before he disclosed his intentions to any one, he appears to have been constantly and assiduously engaged in endeavoring to embitter the minds of the colored population against the white.” He rendered himself perfectly familiar with all those parts of the Scriptures which he thought he could pervert to his purpose; and would readily quote them, to prove that slavery was contrary to the laws of God—that slaves were bound to attempt their emancipation, however shocking and bloody might be the consequences—and that such efforts would not only be pleasing to the Almighty, but were absolutely enjoined [demanded] and their success predicted in the Scriptures.... One witness testified that Vesey had read to him from the Bible about the deliverance of the Children of Israel...

“It is difficult to imagine,” says the sentence finally passed on Denmark Vesey [by the judge in the case], “what infatuation could have prompted you to attempt an enterprise so wild and visionary. You were a free man, comely [good-looking], wealthy, and enjoyed every comfort compatible with your situation. You had, therefore, much to risk and little to gain.” Is slavery, then, a thing so intrinsically detestable, that a man thus favored will engage in a plan thus desperate merely to rescue his children from it?

Source: Thomas Wentworth Higginson, “Denmark Vesey,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, volume 7, number 44 (June 1861), pages 728–744.

Document 2: A Report

Negro Plot: An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection Among a Portion of the Blacks of the City of Charleston, South Carolina, by James Hamilton

On Thursday, the 30th of May last, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the intendant [an official] of Charleston was informed by a gentleman of great respectability... that a favourite and confidential slave of his had communicated to him, on his arrival in town, a conversation which had taken place at the market on the Saturday preceding, between himself and a black man; which afforded strong reasons for believing that a revolt and insurrection were in contemplation among a proportion at least of our black population. The corporation [a group of city officials] was forthwith summoned to meet at 5 o'clock, for the purpose of hearing the narrative of the slave who had given this information to his master.... “On Saturday afternoon last (my master being out of town) I went to market; after finishing my business, I strolled down the wharf below the fish-market, from which I observed a small vessel in the stream with a singular flag; whilst looking at this object, a black man (Mr. Paul's William) came up to me and remarking the subject which engaged my attention, said, I have often seen a flag with the number 76 on it, but never with 96, before. After some trifling [insignificant] conversation on this point, he remarked with considerable earnestness to me, Do you know something serious is about to take place? To which I replied, No. Well, said he, there is, and many of us are determined to right ourselves! I asked him to explain himself; when he remarked, why, we are determined to shake off our bondage.

Source: James Hamilton, *Negro Plot: An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection Among a Portion of the Blacks of the City of Charleston, South Carolina* (published in Boston by Joseph W. Ingraham, 1822).

Documents Related to the Nat Turner Rebellion

In 1831, Nat Turner led the most famous slave revolt in American history. Turner was a slave in Southampton County, Virginia. He and his recruits killed nearly 60 whites before the revolt was put down.

Document 3: A Newspaper Report

The Richmond Enquirer Reports on Nat Turner's Rebellion

Richmond, Virginia
August 30, 1831

So much curiosity has been excited in the state, and so much exaggeration will go abroad, that we have determined to devote a great portion of this day's paper to the strange events in the county of Southampton.... What strikes us as the most remarkable thing in this matter is the horrible ferocity of these monsters. They remind one of a parcel of blood-thirsty wolves rushing down from the Alps; or rather like a former incursion of the Indians upon the white settlements. Nothing is spared; neither age nor sex is respected—the helplessness of women and children pleads in vain for mercy. The danger is thought to be over, but prudence still demands precaution. The lower country should be on the alert. The case of Nat Turner warns us. No black man ought to be permitted to turn a Preacher through the country. The law must be enforced or the tragedy of Southampton appeals to us in vain....

A fact or two, before we continue our narrative. These wretches are now estimated to have committed sixty-one murders! Not a white person escaped at all the houses they visited except two. One was a little child at Mrs. Waller's, about 7 or 8 years of age, who had sagacity [intelligence] enough to Creep up a chimney.

Source: Henry Irving Tragle, *The Southampton Slave Revolt of 1831: A Compilation of Source Material* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1971).

Document 4: A Government Proclamation

Proclamation by John Floyd, Governor of Virginia, September 17, 1831

Whereas the slave Nat, otherwise called Nat Turner, the contriver and leader of the late Insurrection in Southampton, is still going at large: Therefore I, John Floyd, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia have thought proper, and do hereby offer a reward of five hundred dollars to any person or persons who will apprehend [seize] and convey to the Jail of Southampton County, the said slave Nat: and I do moreover require all officers civil and military, and exhort the good people of the Commonwealth to use their best endeavors to cause the said fugitive to be apprehended, that he may be dealt with as the law directs.

Given under my hand as Governor, and under the lesser Seal of the Commonwealth at Richmond, this 17th. day of Septemr: 1831.

John Floyd

Source: State Library of Virginia.

Document 5: A Letter

A Description of Nat Turner

Nat is between 30 & 35 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, weighs between 150 and 160 lbs. rather bright complexion but not a mulatto [having one white and one black parent]—broad shouldered—large flat nose—large eyes—broad flat feet—rather knock-kneed—walks brisk and active—hair on the top of the head very thin—no beard except on the upper lip, and the tip of the chin—a scar on one of his temples produced by the kick of a mule—also one on the back of his neck by a bite—a large knot on one of the bones of his right arm, near the wrist, produced by a blow.

Source: Governor's Office, Letters Received, John Floyd, Record Group 3, Library of Virginia.

Document 6: Trial Document

Statement of Nat Turner to His Attorney, November 1831

And about this time I had a vision—and I saw white spirits and black spirits engaged in battle, and the sun was darkened—the thunder rolled in the Heavens, and blood flowed in streams—and I heard a voice saying, "Such is your luck, such you are called to see, and let it come rough or smooth, you must surely bear it."... Shortly afterwards, while

labouring in the field, I discovered drops of blood on the corn, as though it were dew from heaven—and I communicated it to many, both white and black, in the neighbourhood—and I then found on the leaves in the woods hieroglyphic characters and numbers, with the forms of men in different attitudes, portrayed in blood, and representing the figures I had seen before in the heavens. And now the Holy Ghost had revealed itself to me, and made plain the miracles it had shown me—For as the blood of Christ had been shed on this earth, and had ascended to heaven for the salvation of sinners, and was now returning to earth again....

After this I rejoiced greatly, and gave thanks to God. And on the 12th of May, 1828, I heard a loud noise in the heavens, and the Spirit instantly appeared to me and said the Serpent was loosened, and Christ had laid down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent, for the time was fast approaching, when the first should be last and the last should be first.

Source: *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (published in Baltimore, Maryland, 1831).

Document 7: A Letter to a Government Official

“Citizens” to Governor John Floyd, August 28, 1831

Richmond Aug. 28, 31.

To: His Excellency John Floyd, Governor of Virginia

Sir

There is at this moment a numerous meeting of the blacks from this place & the surrounding country, at the Rural Shades, for the purpose, as they allege, of Religious worship, the propriety of countenancing [allowing] such a meeting at this time is respectfully submitted to your consideration by several

Citizens

Source: Governor’s Office, Letters Received, John Floyd, Record Group 3, Library of Virginia.

Document 8: A Public Document

Resolutions of Inhabitants of Chesterfield County, Virginia, circa autumn 1861

We the inhabitants of the upper end of Chesterfield County having amongst us an enemy that is restless in their disposition; and savage in their nature; and feeling alarmed at the fate of the Females and children of Southhampton, and not knowinig how soon a like Tradeegy may take place amongst us. We therefore enter into the following resolutions. Viz.

Resolution the 1st: We resolve that if any attempt should be made; that we will as soon thereafter as possible remove our Families to the Following places.; Viz. To the House of William L. Overton. John Spear. and John Bass.

Resolution the 2th: We also resolve that we will petition the Governer of the State for a Sufficiency of arms and ammunition to arm the men in the Neighbourhood—say probably five Muskets.

Resolution the 3rd: We resolve also that we will keep a strict patrole and we all agree that we will each bear his part of fatigue.

Resolution the 4th: We also resolve that William Goode and William L. Overton be appointed to wait on the Governor for the purpose of Stating the Situation of the Neighbourhood, and request the arms &c. as before named, and we also agree to be equally bound with them for the return of the said arms.

Source: Governor’s Office, Letters Received, John Floyd, Record Group 3, Library of Virginia.

For each document in this Enrichment Essay, answer each question listed:

Document 1: A Magazine Article

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance? Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant. (Information is relevant if it helps you answer the question). Do not record information that is irrelevant. (Details are irrelevant if they do not help you answer the question.)
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable (that is, they cannot be checked against other evidence)?

Document 2: A Report

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance? Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 3: A Newspaper Report

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance? Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 4: A Government Proclamation

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance? Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 5: A Letter

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance? Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 6: Trial Document

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance?
Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 7: A Letter to a Government Official

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance?
Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?

Document 8: A Public Document

- 1) Who might have written the document?
- 2) What kind of document is it? What is its purpose?
- 3) What can you learn from the document about the Vesey or Turner slave revolt and its historical significance?
Record at least one piece of information that is highly relevant.
- 4) Something can be written or published and not be factual. There might be errors or falsehoods in any document. What kind of information would you need to verify that the evidence in the document is true? Is it likely that this information is available? Or are key statements in the document unverifiable?