



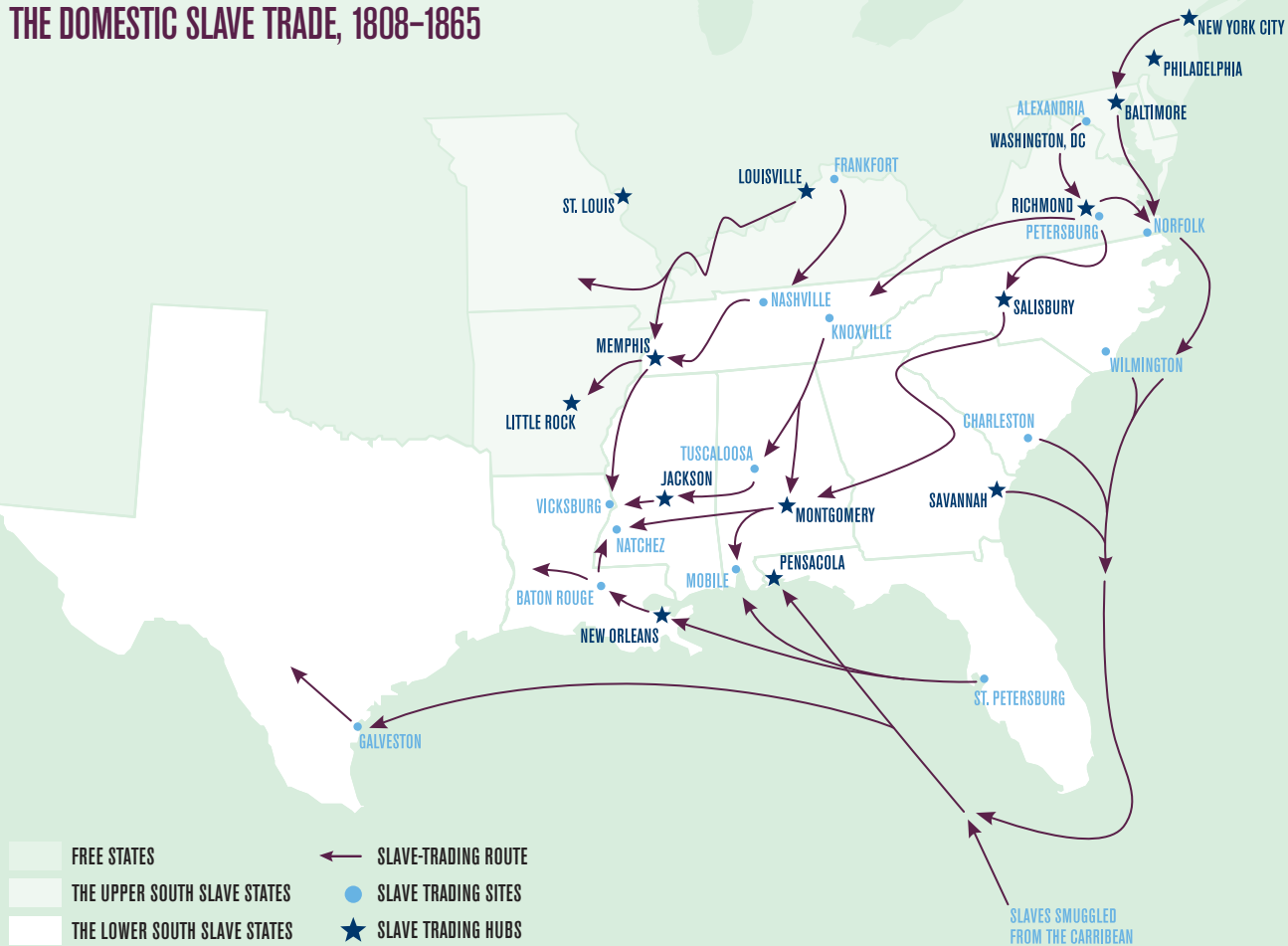
FATE IN HER HANDS

the ECONOMIC and EMOTIONAL EFFECTS of the U.S. SLAVE TRADE

A GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS OF GRADES 5-11

She does not know that she is to be sold. I comfort her; I own all her family, and she leave to be so distressing that I could not. Please say that that was my reason, and that I was compelled to sell her to pay for the horses that I have had to build my stable. I believe I have said all

THE DOMESTIC SLAVE TRADE, 1808–1865



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Design: Design Army
Special Thanks: Bernard, Shirley, and Khalil Kinsey and The Kinsey Foundation for the Arts and Education

This guide is produced by the National Museum of African American History and Culture. All illustrations and text are property of the museum unless otherwise noted. Educators may duplicate materials for educational purposes.

On the cover:

Tintype, c.1860, African American girl and her white charge, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Letter: A Slave Carrying Her Fate in Her Hands, 1854, A.M.F. Crawford, Ink on paper, Courtesy of The Kinsey Collection.

EDUCATION STANDARDS ADDRESSED BY THIS GUIDE

National U.S. History Content Standards—National Center for History in the Schools

Standard 2: How the industrial revolution, increasing immigration, the rapid expansion of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives of Americans and led toward regional tensions

2D: The student understands the rapid growth of “the peculiar institution” after 1800 and the varied experiences of African Americans under slavery.

NATIONAL U.S. HISTORICAL THINKING STANDARDS

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

- Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.
- Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.
- Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses.
- Read historical narratives imaginatively.
- Appreciate historical perspectives.

Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities

- Formulate historical questions.
- Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.
- Identify the gaps in the available records, marshal contextual knowledge and perspectives of the time and place.
- Employ quantitative analysis.
- Support interpretations with historical evidence.

Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

- Identify issues and problems in the past.
- Evaluate alternative courses of action.
- Evaluate the implementation of a decision.

THE NATURE OF THE U.S. SLAVE TRADE



SLAVE SHACKLES
Slave Shackles, c. 1850, Maker unknown, Iron, Courtesy of The Kinsey Collection.

THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY ENDURED for more than 350 years in the Americas, shaping the industry and economy of a new nation. Men, women and children were forced into a life that would ultimately provide the backbone of commerce for the nation, and for large-scale agriculture in the southern states.

Slavery as a labor system was not new when it came to what would become the United States. What made slavery in the Americas distinct was the way it was racialized and industrialized. These two aspects of American slavery began to take full shape in the late 18th century, when this state of bondage came only to apply to people of African descent, and culminated in the middle of the 19th century with the vast expansion of plantation agriculture and the revolution in U.S. industry.

Although the expansion of slavery created the region known as the Deep South, slavery continued to be important to the northern states as a source of labor and income. The enormous profits of the slave trade funded rapid developments in various industries, an era collectively titled “The Industrial Revolution.”

This guide examines the period of slavery in the United States between the 1830s and the 1860s, a time of increased expansion of the domestic slave trade and the rising sectional tensions that would eventually lead to a civil war.

THE EFFECTS OF EXPANSION ON “THE PECULIAR INSTITUTION”

Large-scale plantation agriculture flourished in the southern United States, especially after the introduction of the cotton gin.

Other crops including tobacco, rice, sugar, and indigo had been staples of the southern economy, but the cotton gin, which automated the separation of the cotton fibers from the cotton seeds, made cotton the king of the southern economy.

With the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1793, the process of cleaning and preparing short-staple cotton for market became faster and allowed for more cotton to enter the northern U.S. and English textile mills to create cloth. The introduction of the cotton gin made possible the massive expansion of this crop, which would become America’s chief export.

As cotton production increased, slavery expanded exponentially. There were approximately 700,000 slaves in the U.S. before the cotton gin was introduced. By 1850 that number had increased to 3.2 million.

Meanwhile, the industrial revolution was forcing major changes in textile production. Demand for America’s cotton was high, especially in Britain where cotton was turned into cloth. These conditions led to an insatiable demand for slave labor in the south.

Life on the southern plantations was singularly harsh and was one of the most feared prospects among the enslaved. Being “sold down the river” into these states was traumatic not only because of the hard labor performed there, but because of the way enslaved people were disconnected from their families permanently. We know from primary sources including auction records, bills of sale, letters and personal accounts that slavery was as treacherous as it was profitable.

EFFECT OF FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT ON THE SLAVE TRADE

At the same time that plantation agriculture mushroomed, a national debate broke out over the expansion of slavery into the newest territories created from lands gained in the Mexican War (1846–1848). Now two pressures were feeding the need for slave labor: a booming agricultural economy and new lands, which increased the size of the United States.

An early Fugitive Slave Act was created by the 2nd Congress to give power to Article 4 of the U.S. Constitution which states that fugitive slaves were to be returned to their owners based upon said owners' claim. However, enforcement of this Article was lax in the northern or free states. This frustrated supporters in the slave states who had been advocating for a law with more "teeth."

Concurrently, the ongoing struggle to retain legislative representation between free and slave states was beginning to

heat up with the possibility of new free states and territories entering the union. This compounded the significant tension between the free and slave states and would ultimately lead to civil war.

Prominent statesmen, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were concerned about this conflict. They created a compromise plan which secured temporary sectional harmony. The Compromise of 1850 promised to strengthen the fugitive slave laws in exchange for California entering the union as a free state. Whereas the earlier law simply forbade harboring or assisting an escaped slave, the new Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 resulted in a law that required citizens to assist in recovering escaped slaves. This stronger version of the Act also made it simple for a slaveholder to go into court, swear that any black person was his property and carry them back into slavery. The only evidence a slaveholder needed to claim an escaped slave was the slaveholder's own

A CARD.

BLOUNT & DAWSON,
GENERAL BROKERS

For the Purchase and Sale of NEGROES and OTHER
PROPERTY.

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA.

Having taken the Office and New Jail completed by Wm Wright, Esq., we are
able to afford secure and good accommodations for all negroes left with us for Sale
or Safe-Keeping, would respectfully solicit a share of public patronage.

Office Two Doors East of J. Bryan & Co., opposite
the State Bank.

E. M. BLOUNT. W. C. DAWSON.

Having leased the above gentlemen my office and jail, would take pleasure in
recommending them to my patrons and the public generally.

WM. WRIGHT.

SLAVE DEALER'S BUSINESS CARD

Blount & Dawson, General Brokers for the Purchase and Sale of Negro and Other Property, Savannah, Georgia, circa 1850s, Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Charlotteville April the 3^d 1854

Messers Dickerson & Hill

This will be handed you by my servant Frances. I am told that it is useless to give the capabilities of a servant, that it depends altogether on their personal appearance; be that as it may. I say positively that she is the finest chamber-maid I have ever seen in my life, she is a good washer, but at house cleaning she has perfect slight-of-hand. She is 17 years old the eleventh of this month.

She does not know that she is to be sold. I could not tell her; I own all her family, and the leave taking would be so distressing that I could not. Please say to her that that was my reason, and that I was compelled to sell her to pay for the horses that I have bought, and to build my stable. I believe I have said all that is necessary, but I am so nervous that I hardly know what I have written. Respectfully Yours

A M F Crawford

Messers Dickerson & Hill
Richmond

**LETTER: A SLAVE CARRYING
HER FATE IN HER HANDS**

1854 A.M.F. Crawford, Ink on paper,
Courtesy of The Kinsey Collection.

A SLAVE CARRYING HER FATE IN HER HANDS, 1854

A.M.F. Crawford, Ink on paper

Charlottesville April the 3rd 1854

Messers Dickinson and Hill,

This will be handed you by my servant Frances. I am told that it is useless to give the capabilities of a servant, that it depends altogether on [their] personal appearance; be that as it may. I say positively that she is the finest chamber-maid I have ever seen in my life, she is a good washer, but at housecleaning she has perfect slight-of-hand. She is 17teen years old the eleventh of the month.

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AMF Crawford

word. People who had escaped, along with those who had been set free and those who had purchased their own freedom lived with the fear of being kidnapped. Once kidnapped, there was little they could do to avoid being enslaved or re-enslaved. The evidence that a black person could show to demonstrate their free status would mean little in the face of the Fugitive Slave Act since blacks were accorded no civil rights and were unable to bring legal suit against a white person.

The Fugitive Slave Act increased the fragile nature of freedom that some blacks, including those who had never been enslaved or who had been manumitted by family or former slaveholder, held during the antebellum time. Freedom was not always secure. Most slaves, once free, risked to some degree slipping back into the grips of this awful institution. Those who had escaped risked recapture. Those who had been granted freedom and those who had been born into freedom still might be captured by fugitive slave hunters who could pass them off as escaped slaves. Harriet Jacobs, a formerly enslaved woman, described the Act as “a reign of terror to the colored population.”

In the pages that follow, primary source documents including “Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New-York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853” (Primary Source G), provide evidence documenting the impact of the Fugitive Slave Law, the tenuous grasp that blacks had on their freedom, and the larger context of the expanding and volatile period of the slave trade in the United States. Ultimately in 1865, it was the end of the American Civil War and the passage of 13th Amendment to the Constitution that granted freedom to all those who were enslaved.

HOW DO WE KNOW ABOUT EXPERIENCES RELATED TO THE SLAVE TRADE?

Documents created during the time of slavery in the United States by slaveholders, enslaved or formerly enslaved people, and other actors within the society provide direct evidence about this horrific and transformative period. These documents include slave narratives, diary entries, letters, bills of sale, photographs, flyers, advertisements, and business cards. Historians use this evidence to piece together the social, economic, and political effects of slavery.

Slave narratives provide some of the best and most direct evidence about the human face of slavery. This literary form grew out of the personal written accounts published by abolitionists in England and the United States in the early 1800s. One of the most famous of these narratives was written and published by Frederick Douglass, though thousands of others published similar pieces in pamphlets and books. Intended for publication, slave narratives were created to reveal, in detail, the personal lives of the enslaved. “The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass” and other first hand accounts were important pieces of literature that fueled the movement to abolish slavery.

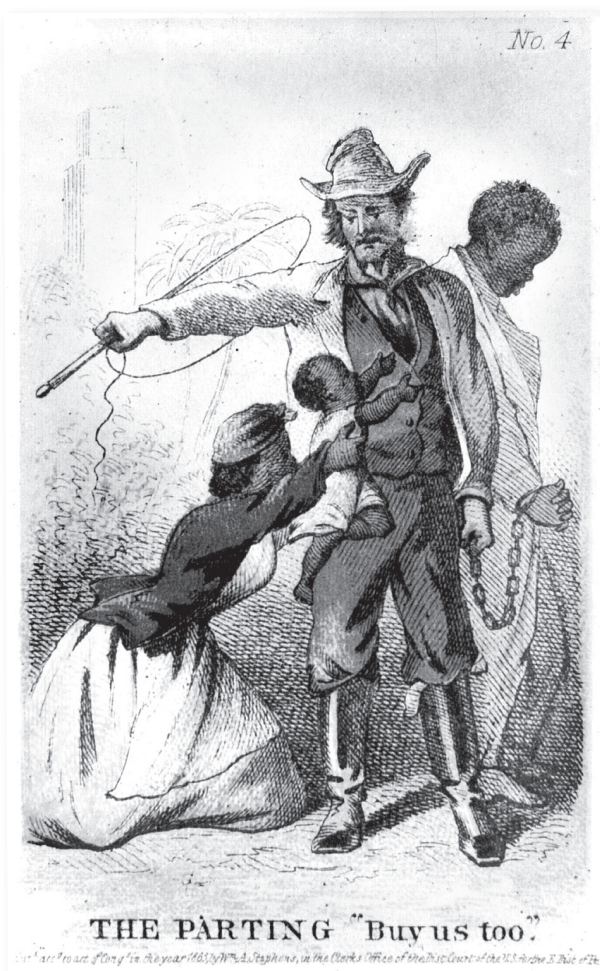
Included in this guide is an excerpt from “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” by Harriet Jacobs (Primary Source E). Published in 1861, this story documents the lives of enslaved women and the author’s own abuse.

FREE STATES

the term commonly used to describe states or territories where slavery or the importation of slaves was banned or prohibited to some degree.

SLAVE STATES

a term used to describe states or territories where slavery was legal and an integral part of the labor system.



“THE PARTING—BUY US TOO”

c.1863, H.L. Stephens, Lithograph, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

In addition to slave narratives, this guide contains letters such as the one featured on the cover. A Slave Carrying her Fate in her Hands, 1854 (Primary Source A) was carried by a 17-year-old enslaved woman named Frances to the event of her own sale. Her owner and the author of the letter, A.M.F. Crawford writes, "She does not know that she is to be sold. I could not tell her; I own all her family, and the leave taking would be so distressing that I could not."

Rich with information, sources such as bills of sale, auction advertisements, and insurance flyers give us a glimpse into the business aspect of the slave trade. These documents bring into stark relief the way in which black people were treated as property items. A crucial source of information are published accounts of slave auctions, like "What Became of the Slaves on

a Georgia Plantation?," published in 1859, which documents the largest single sale of human beings in U.S. history (Primary Source B).

Through the examination of the bill of sale given to a man named Henry Butler when he purchased his own family from a slaveholder (Primary Source F) we can see to what lengths black people would go to keep their families intact.

Taken together, these documents and others provide insight into the lives of those who were enslaved and those who owned slaves. They provide evidence about the tentative grasp that so many had on their freedom. We also gain a deeper understanding of the personal lives of the enslaved and the economic benefits their captors enjoyed.

PRINTED SLAVE SALE ANNOUNCEMENT

on wood pulp paper, January 29, 1855. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Image courtesy of Swann Auction Galleries.

56 VERY CHOICE Cotton Plantation SLAVES, MECHANICS, SEAMSTRESSES, COOKS, &C.

By J. A. BEARD & MAY.

J. A. BEARD, Auctioneer.

WILL BE SOLD AT AUCTION,
ON MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 1855,
At 12 o'Clock, at Banks' Arcade,
WITHOUT RESERVE,

The following list of Choice and Valuable SLAVES, from the Plantation of Gen. W. BAILEY, Lake Providence, La., viz:

ONE FAMILY.

- 1.—BIG HENRY, aged about 21 years, a superior field hand, fine servant, and first rate cotton picker; and his wife—
- 2.—AMY, aged about 18, superior cotton picker and fine servant.
- 3.—LITTLE HENRY, aged about 16, slightly near-sighted, a superior cotton picker and fine servant.

ONE FAMILY.

- 4.—BOSTON, aged about 26 years, a complete ostler and field hand, and superior cotton picker, and an invaluable servant.
- 5.—LITTLE MILLY, his wife, aged about 19, a superior cotton picker, and a most valuable hand.

ONE FAMILY.

- 6.—STEPHEN, aged about 24 years, a fine ox driver and superior cotton picker, etc.
- 7.—BIG FANNY, aged about 24, his wife, a good seamstress, and superior cotton picker and field hand; his child—
- 8.—WIRT HENRY, aged about 20 months.

ONE FAMILY.

- 9.—CASWELL, ox driver, aged about 30, very slightly ruptured, a fine field hand, and an invaluable servant.
- 10.—AGGY, his wife, aged about 30, a superior cook, washer

- 22.—DOLLY, his wife, aged about 21 years; can pick from 420 to 500 lbs. of cotton per day; a superior field hand, sews well.
- 23.—NELSON, aged about 28, slightly ruptured; a most valuable field hand and superior cotton picker; has never lost an hour's work from his rupture.
- 24.—JORDEN, aged about 19, a very valuable field hand, a fine cotton picker and ginner.
- 25.—ADDISON, aged about 18, an invaluable field hand and cotton picker, one of the best.
- 26.—SAM, aged about 18, a fine cotton picker, and as valuable a boy as can be found.
- 27.—WASHINGTON, aged about 15 or 16, a fine cotton picker and valuable boy.
- 28.—DICK, aged about 20, a fine cotton picker and superior gin hand.
- 29.—CHARLES, aged about 19, field hand, a good boy.
- 30.—JOHN, aged about 23 years, fine cotton picker and field hand.

ONE FAMILY.

- 31.—EDWARD, aged about 19, one amongst the best cotton pickers and field hands in the State.
- 32.—MARGARET, his wife, aged 18, a valuable cotton picker; and her two children—
- 33 and 34.—JENNY LIND, aged 2 years, and Infant 3 mos.

THE ECONOMICS OF THE U.S. SLAVE TRADE



A SLAVE AUCTION AT THE SOUTH/ FROM AN ORIGINAL SKETCH BY THEODORE R. DAVIS

Illustration from *Harper's Weekly*, v.5, no 237, July 13, 1861, p. 442, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE SLAVE TRADE IN THE UNITED STATES are well documented. Newspaper advertisements, letters, bills of sale and even insurance schedules show us the value placed on enslaved Africans. In this activity, students interpret three such primary sources all from within a one-year period (1859–1860).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

During the U.S. slave trade . . .

What was an enslaved person worth?

How and why did that value change over time?

How did slaveholders value those that they enslaved?

STEP ONE

Distribute the Vocabulary Quiz (pg. 18) in class. Give students several minutes to complete the quiz. Then have them grade each other's work. The terms in the quiz are based on the primary source reading and will prepare students to read historical documents that contain unfamiliar language.

STEP TWO

Distribute Primary Source B to each student. Invite a student to read aloud the excerpt describing a large slave auction that took place in 1859.

Note to educators: *You may wish to share the whole page which includes the background with your students or you may choose to separate the excerpt background and introduce it later within the discussion.*

As a whole class, discuss the excerpt using the following questions:

According to the excerpt, what might be the price for an unskilled enslaved male?

What could the price be for the same enslaved male if he had a skill or trade?
What are the valued skills named in the excerpt?
What do those skills tell you about the economy in 1859?

As students answer these questions, record key dates, figures, terms and concepts on the board.

STEP THREE

Break students into small groups and have them study these two documents:

- Primary Source A: A Slave Carrying Her Fate in Her Hands, 1854.
- Primary Source C: A Letter from Hutson Lee to C.T. Pollard, Esq., 1860, Hutson Lee.

Use the Document Analysis Worksheet (inside back cover) to explore the documents.

After the small group activity, generate a conversation guided by the following questions:

What is the name of the person being sold?
What price did s/he fetch?
What skills did s/he have?
What other factual information can you gather from this document?
How many years would it be before slavery would end?
What evidence does this document provide about the past?

STEP FOUR

Using the questions below, lead your students in a discussion about insurance and its role in the institution of slavery.

Why do we insure things?
What is insurance?
What dangers might an enslaved person face? What could hurt them?
Why would an enslaver insure an enslaved person?
What do we insure today? Do we insure people?

As a group, examine the document "Slave Insurance, Albemarle Co. ca. 1859" (Primary Source F).

What does "rates of premium for one year on \$100" mean?

Revisit the letter, A Slave Carrying Her Fate in her Hands (Primary Source A).

If Frances' purchase price was \$1200, for how much would Frances have been insured?

Ask students, working individually, to calculate the "value" of George in today's dollars using the Currency Conversion Worksheet (pg.18) in the back of this booklet.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Encourage a group reflection on the lesson based on the following questions:

How does it make you feel to talk about human beings as possessions?
What insights do you have into the economic aspect of the slave trade after talking about enslaved people in terms of purchase price and insurance premiums?
If you could go back in time and ask one question of a slaveholder or an enslaved person, what would that question be?



SPECIAL SECTION

KINSEY COLLECTION TRADING CARDS

THE KINSEY COLLECTION: *THE SHARED TREASURES OF BERNARD AND SHIRLEY KINSEY—WHERE ART AND HISTORY INTERSECT* was organized by the Bernard and Shirley Kinsey Foundation for the Arts and Education in collaboration with the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture.

With items dating from 1632, this exhibition spotlights moments in African American history through rare books, sculptures, paintings, manuscripts and vintage photographs, many of which appear on the following cards. Please paste the following pages together, back to front, to explore the eleven significant objects on these trading cards. Enjoy!



GORÉE ISLAND ROCK

Gift of Sculptor Ed Dwight to Bernard and Shirley Kinsey

Gorée Island today is a part of Dakar, Senegal. During the time of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, it was a launching point for ships carrying slaves and other cargo. Today it is an important touchstone for those investigating the history of slavery, especially the House of Slaves and the infamous Door of No Return there. The House was originally constructed in 1776, and is now a museum about the history of slavery.

QUESTION How is the Gorée Island rock similar to Plymouth rock?

THE CULTIVATORS

The Cultivators, 2000, Samuel L. Dunson, Jr., Oil on Canvas, 2000

Samuel L. Dunson, Jr. is an American painter who was born in 1970. This painting was commissioned by Bernard and Shirley Kinsey, who are collectors of African American art. Mr. and Mrs. Kinsey also collect manuscripts, cultural objects and other materials that span four centuries of the hardships and triumphs of the African American experience.

Many of their objects can be seen in an exhibition called The Kinsey Collection: *The Shared Treasures of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey—Where Art and History Intersect*. To get to know their collection please explore the eleven significant objects on these trading cards. Enjoy!

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Frederick Douglass, 2003, Tina Allen (1955-2008), Bronze

Born into slavery in 1818, Frederick Douglass escaped the peculiar institution when he was 20 and became a leader in abolitionist movement. *The Narrative of the Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, is one of the most important works documenting this period in American history.

QUESTION What are the characteristics of a leader today?

SLAVE TAGS

Slave Tags, 1841, 1862, Metal, copper, 1½ x 1½ in., each

Enslaved Africans in some areas of the country were required to wear slave tags. These tags often showed an identification number, date, the person's occupation like "chamber maid," "servant," "farm hand." The tags had to be worn at all times by the enslaved person as proof that his or her owner had the right to hire him out to others. Frequently a portion of the wages obtained were split with the enslaved person.

QUESTION How would others in society view the wearers of the tags?

DRINKING FOUNTAIN SIGN

Separate Drinking Fountain, Montgomery, Alabama, 1941
Maker Unknown, Painted bronze plaque

Even as late as the 1960s, legal segregation kept African Americans from sitting at the same tables, standing in the same lines, or riding in the same part of a city bus as white people. Signs like this one were common in public spaces throughout the South. Inferior facilities were a constant humiliation and a pervasive reminder of inequality.

QUESTION Imagine a setting where this sign might have originally hung and describe it.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS

Parade Flag, Ninth Buffalo Soldiers, c. 1889
Maker unknown, Fabric

The illustrious history of the Buffalo Soldiers began in 1866 when two regiments of the black Civil War veterans were mustered to fight the Indian Wars on the American frontier. They earned a reputation for bravery and daring both out West and later in the Spanish-American War.

QUESTION Look at this flag and identify at least three visual symbols. What might they stand for?

SLAVE SHACKLES

Slave Shackles, c. 1850, Maker Unknown, Iron

Enslaved Africans were often placed in shackles when they were being transported by ship as was the case during the Middle Passage. The small openings suggest that these shackles were probably worn by a woman or child.

QUESTION How do these shackles remind us of the past? Why is it important that we remember slavery?

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

"Poems on Various Subjects Religious and Moral," 1773
Phillis Wheatley, Book

Phillis Wheatley, the first enslaved African woman to publish in Colonial America, and the first to earn money from writing, was born in West Africa. She became the property of John Wheatley of Boston, Massachusetts in 1761. Wheatley and his wife educated and nurtured her talent as a poet. One of Phillis' most famous works was a poem she dedicated to George Washington, which so touched the future president that he invited Ms. Wheatley to his home. Phillis received her freedom when John Wheatley died.

QUESTION How do you think John Wheatley and his wife justified "owning" Phillis?

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE CIVIL WAR

United States Soldiers at Camp William Penn, 1863, Supervisory Committee for recruiting Colored Regiments, Chromolithograph print

Although banned from military service until late 1862, approximately 180,000 blacks served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Many of these people felt that military service would provide a pathway to greater participation in the country and lead to full U.S. citizenship.

QUESTION Do you think that military service leads to a greater sense of citizenship? Why or why not?

FREE BLACKS

Well-to-do Black Couple, c. 1860, Photographer Unknown
Hand-Colored Tintype

"Free black" was the term for African Americans who, before the Emancipation Proclamation, were not slaves. People obtained their freedom by escaping or by being purchased by family members. Some were freed by their owners. Philadelphia was one of several northern cities where middle- and upper-class African American communities prospered in the 1800's.

QUESTION Why would the couple have had this picture taken?

FACES OF MY PEOPLE

Faces of My People, 1990, Margaret Burroughs
(1917–2010), Woodcut

Margaret Burroughs was an artist from Chicago. She created this woodcut in 1990. She has said of her work that she wants her "art speak not only for my people—but for all humanity," explaining that her "subject matter . . . seeks to improve the condition of life for all people."

QUESTION In this woodcut, Burroughs used two contrasting colors, black and white. What meaning could be drawn from the use of these colors?

UNTITLED

Untitled, 1951, Hughie Lee-Smith (1915–1999), Oil on Masonite

Hughie Lee-Smith is known for his haunting dreamscapes that invite the viewer to imagine what stories they tell.

QUESTION Pick three words that describe the setting? Now pick three words that describe the figure in the picture? What do you imagine is happening in this picture?

A LOOK AT THE EMOTIONAL TOLL OF SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

During the U.S. slave trade . . .

What emotional impact did the slave trade have on those involved?

How do we know the stories of those who were affected?

STEP ONE

Invite a student to read Primary Source F: Henry Butler Buys Freedom of his Wife and Four Children for \$100. As a class, analyze the document using Worksheet III and have a brief discussion about the document using these questions:

How much did Butler pay for his family?

Why would a father purchase his family?

What do you think the family did after this transaction?

Based on your knowledge of U.S. society at this time, what do you imagine life was like for them as a family?

STEP TWO

Have a student read aloud Primary Source A: A Slave Carrying her Fate in her Hands. As the student reads, record names, dates, figures and other details from the letter using Worksheet III.

Generate a conversation about the letter using the following discussion questions:

What is A.M.F. Crawford, Frances' enslaver, afraid of?

Why didn't she tell Frances about the letter?

How is Frances described?

Why was Frances sold?

STEP THREE

Have students write a journal entry from the point of view of Frances. What might Frances feel as she carries the letter? Imagine the family she would have left behind. What would her options be once she finds out the contents of the letter? What power does Frances have?

STEP FOUR

Working in small groups, have students compare and contrast the following texts. Use the Document Analysis Worksheet:

- Primary Source E: Excerpt from "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" by Harriet Jacobs.
- Primary Source G: Excerpt from "Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New-York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853."

Note to educators: *You may wish to share the whole page which includes the background with your students or you may choose to separate the excerpt background and introduce it later within the discussion.*

Supplementary Student Activity: Have students research Harriet Jacobs and Solomon Northup to find more about their lives.

STEP FIVE

Facilitate a group discussion about Primary Source E and G using the themes and questions below:

What can we say about the authorship of each document?

What do their experiences tell us about slavery? What evidence do you find in the source? Use 1-2 sentences from the documents to support your findings.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Encourage a group reflection on the lesson based on the following questions:

What insights do you have into the emotional impact of the slave trade on the enslaved and the enslavers after reading the documents?

If you could go back in time and ask one question of a slaveholder or an enslaved person, what would that question be?

EXCERPT FROM “WHAT BECAME OF THE SLAVES ON A GEORGIA PLANTATION?”

Great auction sale of slaves, at Savannah, Georgia, March 2d & 3d, 1859. A sequel to “Mrs. Kemble’s Journal” by Q.K. Doesticks.

Library of Congress

PIERCE BUTLER INHERITED HALF of the cotton plantation of his grandfather Major Pierce Butler, a South Carolina senator and framer of the Constitution. Mr. Butler, the younger, spent half of his time in Philadelphia and the other half at the Georgia cotton plantation. By the mid 1800s, Butler was in thousands of dollars in debt and to repay his creditors, he placed his portion of the cotton plantation and its enslaved people up for sale.

In March of 1859, 436 men, women and children spent two rainy days under the scrutinizing eyes of prospective buyers. This would become known by the enslaved as “the weeping time.”

These people were being sold away from the only home that many of them had ever known and the community that they created together in spite of bondage. The sale of these persons netted \$303,850 for Pierce Butler, who once again wealthy, shortly thereafter took a trip to southern Europe.

This excerpt comes from an article written by an undercover reporter from the anti-slavery newspaper, the New York Tribune. The writer, Mortimer Thomson, under his assumed name of Q.K. Philander Doesticks, attended what has been called the “largest single sale of human beings in U.S. history.”



WHERE THE NEGROES CAME FROM

There were coopers, carpenters, shoemakers and blacksmiths, each one equal, in his various craft, to the ordinary requirements of a plantation; thus, the coopers could make rice-tierces, and possibly, on a pinch, rude tubs and buckets; the carpenter could do the rough carpentry about the negro-quarters; the shoemaker could make shoes of the fashion required for the slaves, and the blacksmith was adequate to the manufacture of hoes and similar simple tools, and to such trifling repairs in the blacksmithing way as did not require too refined a skill. Though probably no one of all these would be called a superior, or even an average workman, among the masters of the craft, their knowledge of these various trades sold in some cases for nearly as much as the man—that is, a man without a trade, who would be valued at \$900, would readily bring \$1,600 or \$1,700 if he was a passable blacksmith or cooper.

EXCERPT FROM “What became of the slaves on a Georgia plantation?: Great auction sale of slaves, at Savannah, Georgia, March 2d & 3d, 1859.” A sequel to “Mrs. Kemble’s Journal.”



57 Broad St
Feb'y 23rd 1860

C. T. Pollard Esq
Montgomery Ala

Dear Sir

I have just informed you by telegraph of the Purchase of George. He is capable, & intelligent & represented as honest.

Please inform me at your earliest convenience how I shall send him to you.

His price is	\$1700
Commission for buying @ 2 1/2 %	42,50
Travelling expenses about	15
	<u>\$1757,50</u>

Awaiting your answer I am
Very Respectfully Yours
Hutson Lee

LETTER
TO C.T.
POLLARD,
ESQ., 1860

Hutson Lee, Ink
on paper, Courtesy
of The Kinsey
Collection.

LETTER TO C.T. POLLARD, ESQ., 1860

Hutson Lee, Ink on paper

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	<hr/>
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	<hr/>

Awaiting Your Answer I am
Very Respectfully Yours
Hutson Lee

SLAVE INSURANCE!
Albemarle Insurance Company,
KNOWLES & WALFORD, Agents.

RATES OF PREMIUM FOR ONE YEAR ON \$100.

AGE.	RATES.	AGE.	RATES.	AGE.	RATES.
8 to 15 years,	\$ 1 30	31 years,	\$ 1 62	46 years,	\$ 2 45
16 "	1 35	32 "	1 65	47 "	2 57
17 "	1 35	33 "	1 70	48 "	2 70
18 "	1 36	34 "	1 73	49 "	2 85
19 "	1 37	35 "	1 77	50 "	3 00
20 "	1 38	36 "	1 80	51 "	3 21
21 "	1 39	37 "	1 85	52 "	3 41
22 "	1 41	38 "	1 88	53 "	3 62
23 "	1 44	39 "	1 92	54 "	3 86
24 "	1 45	40 "	1 97	55 "	4 16
25 "	1 47	41 "	2 00	56 "	4 50
26 "	1 50	42 "	2 07	57 "	4 85
27 "	1 52	43 "	2 15	58 "	5 00
28 "	1 55	44 "	2 22	59 "	5 33
29 "	1 58	45 "	2 33	60 "	5 66
30 "	1 59				

Rates for \$100, with privilege of Renewing the Policy 2, 3 or 4 years, without further Examination or Increase of Rates.

AGE.	RATES.	AGE.	RATES.
14 to 19 years,	\$ 1 50	35 to 39 years,	\$ 2 50
20 to 24 "	1 75	40 to 44 "	2 75
25 to 29 "	2 00	45 to 50 "	3 00
30 to 34 "	2 25		

Dr. F. W. HANCOCK, - - - **Medical Examiner.**

N. B.—Office, No. 21 Pearl Street. January next (1860) we shall remove to the store occupied by C. D. YALE & Co., No. 130 MAIN STREET, a few doors above Governor Street.
KNOWLES & WALFORD.

3800
10

EXCERPT FROM “INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SLAVE GIRL”

by Harriet Jacobs

HARRIET ANN JACOBS WAS BORN INTO SLAVERY IN 1813. After decades of avoiding attempted abuse, Jacobs went into hiding, escaping from her owners, but before she made her way north, she hid for seven years in friends’ homes and her grandmother’s attic. Finally, in 1842 she escaped to freedom. She is the first known woman to write a narrative of her time in slavery. After escaping, she became an abolitionist speaker and reformer.

Jacobs’ narrative, “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” was published in 1861 under the assumed name Linda Brent. This publication helped fuel the abolitionist movement in the United States. Her story is blunt and unapologetic as it reveals the situation of enslaved women. In this excerpt, she describes how her grandmother came to be free.



THE SALE OF AUNT MARTHY

My grandmother’s mistress had always promised her that, at her death, she should be free; and it was said that in her will she made good the promise. But when the estate was settled, Dr. Hint told the faithful old servant that, under existing circumstances, it was necessary she should be sold.

On the appointed day, the customary advertisement was posted up, proclaiming that there would be a “public sale of negroes, horses, etc.” Dr. Flint called to tell my grandmother that he was unwilling to wound her feelings by putting her up at auction, and that he would prefer to dispose of her at private sale. My grandmother saw through his hypocrisy; she understood very well that he was ashamed of the job. She was a very spirited woman, and if he was base enough to sell her, when her mistress intended she should be free, she was determined the public should know it. She had for a long time supplied many families with crackers and preserves; consequently, “Aunt Marthy,” as she was called, was generally known, and every body who knew her respected her intelligence and good character. Her long and faithful service in the family was also well known, and the intention of her mistress to leave her free. When the day of sale came, she took her place among the chattels, and at the first call she sprang upon the auction-block. Many voices called out, “Shame! Shame! Who is going to sell you, Aunt Marthy? Don’t stand there! That is no place for you.” Without saying a word, she quietly awaited her fate. No one bid for her. At last, a feeble voice said, “Fifty dollars.” It came from a maiden lady, seventy years old, the sister of my grandmother’s deceased mistress. She had lived forty years under the same roof with my grandmother; she knew how faithfully she had served her owners, and how cruelly she had been defrauded of her rights; and she resolved to protect her. The auctioneer waited for a higher bid; but her wishes were respected; no one bid above her. She could neither read nor write; and when the bill of sale was made out, she signed it with a cross. But what consequence was that, when she had a big heart overflowing with human kindness? She gave the old servant her freedom.

EXCERPT FROM “Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl” by Harriet Jacobs, 1853.

This Indenture made & concluded at the City of Washington on this twelfth day of August, in the year of our Lord eighteen Hundred and thirty nine, between Mary Ann Graham of the same place on the one part, and Henry Butler of said City on the other part Witnesseth That the said Mary Ann Graham, for and in consideration of the sum of One hundred Dollars to her in hand paid the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, hath granted & sold and by these presents doth grant and sell unto him the said Henry Butler the following slaves belonging to her the said Mary Ann Graham, being the Wife and children of said Henry, that is to say, Susan aged about twenty eight years of age, and her four children Ann, about seven years old, Mary about six years, George about four years & Henry about one year old, to Have and to hold the same, free of all claim or right of her the said Mary Ann Graham for ever. In Witness whereof the said Mary Ann Graham, hath hereunto set her hand and ^{her} seal the day & year above written -

Signed, Sealed and delivered } Mary Ann Graham. *Seal*
in the presents of. — }
Joseph Horrest

BILL OF SALE: HENRY BUTLER
BUYS THE FREEDOM OF HIS WIFE
AND FOUR CHILDREN FOR \$100

1839, Ink on paper, Courtesy of The Kinsey Collection.

BILL OF SALE: HENRY BUTLER BUYS THE FREEDOM OF HIS WIFE AND FOUR CHILDREN FOR \$100, 1839

Ink on paper

Mary Ann Graham
To
Henry Butler
Bill of Sale

Received
August 1839

To be Recorded and the same day was recorded in (files) W.B. No 76 folio 280 one of the land Records for Washington County in the District of Columbia and examined by WBrentblk

This indenture made + concluded a the City of Washington on this twelfth day of August, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and thirty nine, between Mary Ann Graham of the same place on the one part, and Henry Butler of said city on the other part Witnesseth That the said Mary Ann Graham, for and in consideration of the sum of One hundred Dollars to her hand paid the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, hath granted + sold and by these presents doth grant and sell unto him the said Henry Butler the following slaves, belonging to her the said Mary Ann Graham, being the wife and children of said Henry, that's to say, Susan aged about twenty eight years of age, and her four children Ann, about seven years old, Mary about six years George about four years + Henry about one year old. To have and to hold the same, free of all claim Or right of her the said Mary Ann Graham forever. In Witness where the said Mary Ann Graham, Hath hereunto set by her hand and her seal the + year above written

Signed, sealed and delivered
In the [presence] of
Joseph Forrest

Mary Ann Graham

EXCERPT FROM “TWELVE YEARS A SLAVE”

“Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853.” by Solomon Northup

Library of Congress

A FREE-BORN BLACK, Solomon Northup lived and worked in upstate New York. He was a trained violinist who used his music career to support his family. In 1841, Solomon was approached by two men who offered him a job in a traveling circus. He believed the job was going to be a short one so he did not leave word for his wife and family. The two men took Solomon to Washington, D.C., where he was drugged and sold into slavery in the Deep South. Solomon remained enslaved for 12 years before he was able to convince a sympathetic white man to convey a letter to his family informing

them of his location. A New York state law, passed in 1840, made it possible for a lawyer to secure Solomon’s release and gave Solomon grounds to sue the individuals who held him in bondage but he was unable to give evidence in court and secure a ruling as he was black. “Twelve Years a Slave” documents the experiences that Solomon Northup had as he was kidnapped, sold, and enslaved in the Deep South. In the following excerpt Northup recounts the sale of a small child who, along with his mother, was being enslaved under circumstances similar to Solomon Northup.



PARTING OF RANDALL AND ELIZA

“The same man also purchased Randall. The little fellow was made to jump, and run across the floor, and perform many other feats, exhibiting his activity and condition. All the time the trade was going on, Eliza was crying aloud, and wringing her hands. She besought the man not to buy him, unless he also bought herself and Emily. She promised, in that case, to be the most faithful slave that ever lived. The man answered that he could not afford it, and then Eliza burst into a paroxysm of grief, weeping plaintively. Freeman turned round to her, savagely, with his whip in his uplifted hand, ordering her to stop her noise, or he would flog her. He would not have such work—such sniveling [sic]; and unless she ceased that minute, he would take her to the yard and give her a hundred lashes. Yes, he would take the nonsense out of her pretty quick—if he didn’t, might he be d--d. Eliza shrunk before him, and tried to wipe away her tears, but it was all in vain. She wanted to be with her children, she said, the little time she had to live. All the frowns and threats of Freeman, could not wholly silence the afflicted mother. She kept on begging and beseeching them, most piteously not to separate the three. Over and over again she told them how she loved her boy. A great many times she repeated her former promises—how very faithful and obedient she would be; how hard she would labor day and night, to the last moment of her life, if he would only buy them all together. But it was of no avail; the man could not afford it. The bargain was agreed upon, and Randall must go alone. Then Eliza ran to him; embraced him passionately; kissed him again and again; told him to remember her—all the while her tears falling in the boy’s face like rain.

Freeman d--d her, calling her a blubbering, bawling wench, and ordered her to go to her place, and behave herself; and be somebody. He swore he wouldn’t stand such stuff but a little longer. He would soon give her something to cry about, if she was not mighty careful, and that she might depend upon.

The planter from Baton Rouge, with his new purchases, was ready to depart.

“Don’t cry, mama. I will be a good boy. Don’t cry,” said Randall, looking back, as they passed out of the door. What has become of the lad, God knows. It was a mournful scene indeed.”

EXCERPT FROM “Twelve Years a Slave: Narrative of Solomon Northup, a Citizen of New-York, Kidnapped in Washington City in 1841, and Rescued in 1853” by Solomon Northup.

VOCABULARY QUIZ

DIRECTIONS: Match the vocabulary words on the left with the definitions on the right.

1. Plantation

2. Cooper

3. Insurance

4. Premium

5. Auction

6. Chattel
- A. A slave or bondsman.

B. A contract that protects something you purchase.

C. A person who makes casks, barrels, and other wooden vessels.

D. A large farm that was worked by 20 or more enslaved people.

E. A public sale where property goes to the highest bidder.

F. Money paid to purchase insurance.

Answer Key: 1=D, 2=C, 3=B, 4=F, 5=E, 6=A



CURRENCY CONVERSION ACTIVITY

USE THE FOLLOWING PRIMARY SOURCE TO COMPLETE THE TABLE:

- Primary Source C: Letter to C.T. Pollard, Esq., 1860, Hutson Lee

	1860	Today
Value of a dollar:	\$1.00	\$270.00
Purchase price for George:		

Can you think of something that costs about the same amount as George’s purchase price today?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

What kind of document is this? / Type of Document (Check one)

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Map | <input type="checkbox"/> Census |

When was this document written? / Date of Source

Who created this document? / Author

Why do you think the document was written? What tells you this? Use one quote from the primary source.

List two things that you know about U.S. society during this time period.

1.

2.

What can you determine about the slave trade from this document?

What questions do you have after reading this primary source?



Smithsonian
*National Museum of African American
History and Culture*

Capital Gallery
600 Maryland Avenue SW
Suite 7001
Washington, DC 20013-7012

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The National Museum of African American History and Culture was established in 2003 by an Act of Congress, making it the 19th Smithsonian Institution museum. It is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, art, history, and culture.

Construction of the NMAAHC is scheduled to begin on the Mall in 2012 and be completed in 2015. Currently, during the pre-building phase, the museum is producing publications, hosting public programs, and building collections. It is presenting exhibitions at other museums across the country and at its own gallery located on the second floor of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

For more information visit the museum at
<http://nmaahc.si.edu>