

Pre-Visit Activity #3

The Slave Trade



Background Information:

Mobile was a Southern port that imported slaves from 1721 until the last illegal slave ship smuggled slaves into Mobile Bay in 1860. The history of slavery in Mobile is detailed in our permanent exhibit, *Old Days, New Ways: The Story of Mobile*. The goal of this lesson is to familiarize your students with the origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Objectives:

After reading "The Slave Trade" handout, participating in a class discussion, and completing the map activities, students will be able to:

- Locate and identify West Africa.
- Label in the correct locations the names of tribal nations/cultural groups of West Africa.
- Understand that the continent of Africa has many different nations and cultures

The completion of this activity also supports the objectives of the Alabama Course of Study listed below.

Social Studies

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| 4th Grade | 6. | Describe cultural, economic, and political aspects of the lifestyles of early nineteenth-century farmers, plantation owners, slaves, and townspeople. |
| 5th Grade | 6. | Describe colonial economic life and labor systems in the Americas. |

Materials required:

Pencils, colored pencils or crayons or markers, rulers, copy of copies of the finished and unfinished outline maps of Africa for each student

The Lesson:

Hand out copies of "The Slave Trade" to students. Read aloud or have students take turns reading aloud. Have a discussion about what it would be like to be kidnapped, put on a ship for weeks in horrible conditions, and then forced to live out the rest of one's life as a slave with other people whose languages and cultural traditions are not your own. Then have students complete the map activity by reading the directions and using the legend to write in the present day names of the nations of West Africa and then the tribal nation names from the list on the Africa. They will then color in the countries containing the tribe names.

A good follow up activity for students with library or internet access would be to divide the class into teams and assign each group a West African culture to research. Have them write down 6 facts or cultural traditions of each group. Then have the groups do short presentations about their cultural group.

The Slave Trade

The slave trade is also called the Atlantic slave trade, or Transatlantic slave trade because slaves were shipped across the Atlantic ocean to the Americas. The slave trade took place from the 1500s to the early 1800s.

Slavery has existed in Africa since the time of the ancient Egyptians. However, slavery in Africa was somewhat different than the type of slavery that went on in the Americas during the years of the slave trade. In Africa, prior to the slave trade, people could become enslaved during warfare, or by not being able to pay their debts. People could usually earn their freedom through work, or become free after a certain number of months or years, or family members could buy the person's freedom. In the Americas, most slaves were never allowed to earn their freedom, and many slaves died from being overworked.

Millions of Africans became slaves during the slave trade. This was not normal in Africa prior to this time period. Beginning in the 1500s, Europeans visiting the coast of West Africa began to purchase slaves from slave traders. Slavery soon became a big business for slave traders that went from kingdom to kingdom and nation to nation purchasing slaves. Men, women, and even children were captured in wars or kidnapped and sold into slavery. They were then branded, chained, and sold to European slave traders who shipped them across the ocean in the holds of slave ships. The conditions on board most of the slave ships were terrible, and the journey took 6 to 8 weeks. It is estimated that 1/5 of the Africans died on these voyages.

Most slaves were sent to the Caribbean islands and North and South America. Some were even sent to Europe. Once sold, many were put to work on plantations where they would farm sugar cane, coffee, cotton, cocoa or other agricultural crops. Some slaves were made to work in mines, or as servants, or craftspeople.

Enslaved Africans came from many different cultural groups in Africa. The names of just some of these groups in the West African region are: the Ashanti, the Dahomey, the Oyo or Yoruba, the Ewe, the Ibo, and the Fon. Each group has a different language, different ways and traditions, and different beliefs. After the slaves arrived in the Americas, many lost some of their traditions, language and other things unique to their culture because they were forced to live among people whose language and cultural traditions they did not know.

Great Britain and other nations began outlawing the transatlantic slave trade in the early 1800s. This made it illegal for ships to take slaves from Africa. At this time in history, Great Britain had a very large Navy with many ships. They used these ships to patrol the coastline of Africa to make sure that ships leaving Africa were not carrying slaves. In spite of the patrols, many slave ships still smuggled slaves into the Americas until the mid-1800s.

Though slaves could no longer be brought from Africa, slavery did not end in the United States until the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War in 1863. Many slaves in the Confederate states, however, were not free until the end of the war in 1865 when the proclamation could be enforced.

Map Activity: The Slave Trade

Name _____

Many slaves that came to the Americas were from the central region of West Africa. You are going to label that region on your unfinished map of Africa. Use the finished map of Africa to help you with this activity. On the unfinished map, write in the names of the following countries in black: Sierra Leone, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria. Then write the name of the tribal nations listed below on the map in red. Use the list below as your key. Most countries actually had many nations. These are some of the more well known. When you are done writing, lightly color in the countries that you the wrote names in.

Country Name	Tribal Nations
Cote D'Ivoire	Ashanti
Ghana.....	Dahomey, Ewe
Togo.....	Dahomey, Ewe
Benin.....	Dahomey, Oyo or Yoruba, Ewe
Nigeria.....	Benin, Oyo or Yoruba, Ibo



