



Chapter 7 After You Read

Read each section carefully, then write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

Comprehension Review

1. Describe the conditions Africans endured during their voyage to the Americas.
2. Why does the author call European trading ships “chambers of horror?”
3. Why was the route of the European Slave Trade called the Triangular Trade?
4. What is the Middle Passage?
5. Compare the cargo of a ship in the Middle Passage with one on the final leg of the Triangular Trade route.
6. What factors affected the length of time a ship needed to travel the Middle Passage?
7. Why were mutinies most frequent between 1750 and 1788? What was the economic effect on the companies who financed and operated the slave ships?
8. What false beliefs are needed in order to dehumanize another?

9. How did oppressors justify their cruel treatment of Africans?

Center Your Thinking

10. With your teacher’s help, work with a small group of classmates to mark off an area that is 55.9 centimeters (22 inches) high and 61 centimeters (24 inches) wide. Assume that the length is 172.7 centimeters (5ft. 8 in.). Calculate the area and volume of the space assigned to each enslaved person aboard the slave ships. Think about the Africans who spent most of their days and nights in this confined area for 40 to 80 days. Imagine what it would have been like to spend that length of time in confinement rather than enjoying freedom. Write an essay describing your reaction to this experience.

Vocabulary and Concept Development

1. How does the meaning of the term *leg*, as used in this chapter, compare with the meaning of the term in a biology class or a geometry class?
2. How are **resilience** and **resistance** alike? How do they differ?
3. During the mid-1700s, insurance premiums charged to slave traders rose steadily. How is this fact evidence of the **resilience** and **resistance** of Africans?
4. Describe the relationship between dehumanization and **racism**.

Reading a Timeline

Use Unit 2 and Chapter 7 timelines to complete the following:

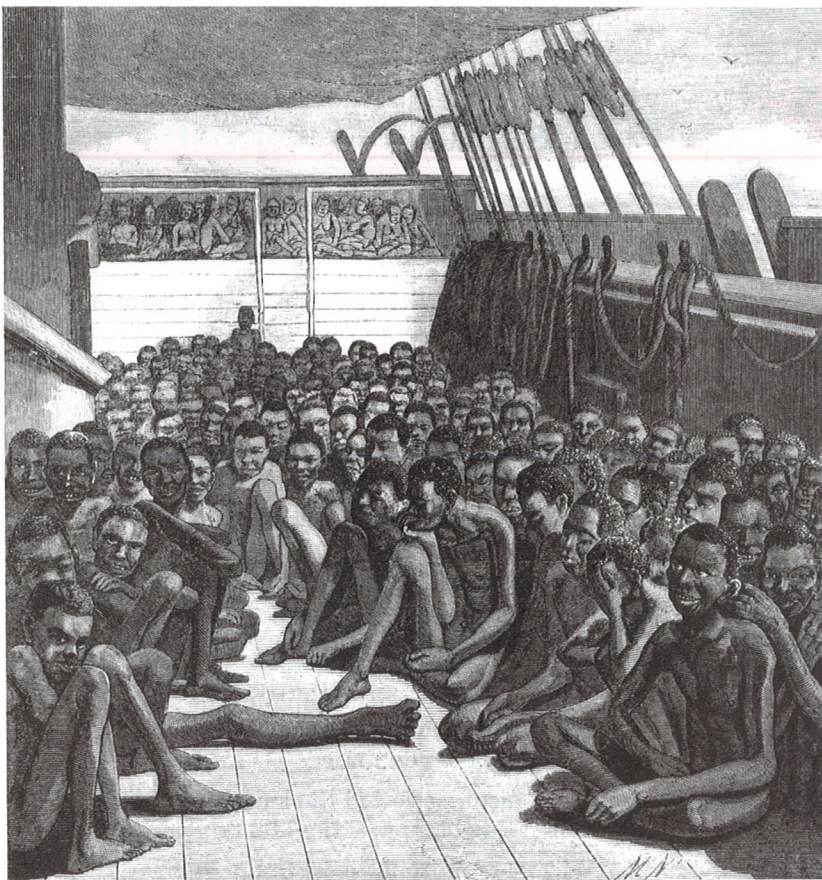
1. Roughly how many years did European ships serve as “chambers of horror” before the Africans began their frequent mutinies?
2. In chronological order, calculate the number of years between the time the Portuguese captured an African from West Africa and the date when
 - a. the European Slave Trade officially began.
 - b. Pedro Cabral opened Brazil to Europe.
 - c. an African was enslaved to Santo Domingo.
3. How long did the European Slave Trade exist before it was outlawed?

"the pangs of death came like balm to their wounds."

Nameless and Stateless

It was here on these ships during the dark and sometimes stormy nights on the ocean that African captives became nameless, stateless, and countryless people. Few people have shown the courage of the Africans who refused to die in the midst of the horrifying experience of the Middle Passage.

When Africans landed in the Americas after weeks at sea, they believed that nothing could be so dehumanizing as the trip across the ocean. They were wrong. The process of dehumanization had only begun.

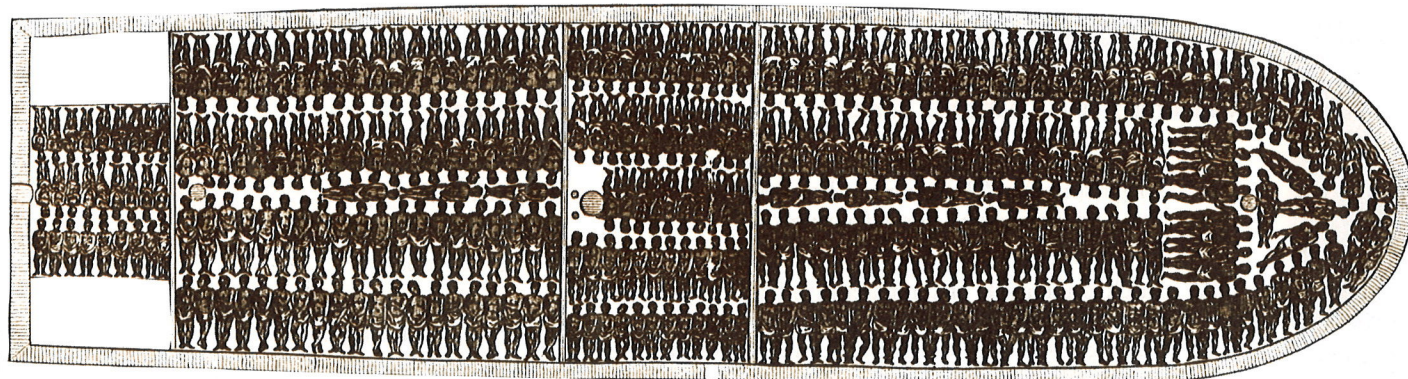


Malnourished, mistreated, and dislocated, many Africans died during the dreadful sea voyage to permanent enslavement in the Americas.

others down by cruel or unjust use of power. In order to justify their cruel treatment of Africans, the oppressors depicted them as a people of lower standing, lacking in cultural development. Whenever human beings define others as inferior or bad because of their physical or cultural differences, **racism** (prejudice against one race by another) thrives.

Dehumanization

Dehumanization, the idea of reducing humans to things, had become the special weapon of the slave-ship captains. The colonists soon adopted this practice. Europeans who participated in the trade convinced themselves that Africans were **inferior** and **uncivilized**. To dehumanize another person, you have to believe in your own **superiority** and the other person's **inferiority** and be willing to inflict pain and suffering to such a degree that it separates the sufferer from the **oppressor**. Oppressors keep



his diagram shows the dehumanization of Africans during the Middle Passage. eated like cargo instead of humans, they were jammed into the dark, airless ave hold and shackled there for most of the 40-to-80-day trip.

middle leg of the route crossed the Atlantic and delivered the captives to various points in the Americas. It is known as the **Middle Passage**. The final leg in the **Triangular Trade** was the return to the original European destination with the goods, such as rum or money, received from trading the Africans.

The Middle Passage in the Triangular Trade between Europe, Africa, and the Americas was a most dreadful experience for the captives. Depending on the weather, destination, current, or wind, a voyage across the Atlantic could take from 40 to 80 days. Charles Johnson and Patricia Smith in their book, *Africans in America*, wrote that the triangle was:

“a terse, efficient triangle, unaffected by the mournful wails of those forever lost. Or by the moans of the dying.”

Theodore Canot, a slave trader, documented the high death rate associated with the trade. During one voyage, he lost nearly 50 percent of the Africans on board to disease:

“The eight hundred beings we had shipped in high health [from Africa] had dwindled to four hundred and ninety-seven skeletons.”

The fact that more Africans did not die is a miracle. The miracle of the survival of so many Africans might be attributed to their **resilience** and their **resistance**. Resilience is the ability to bounce back and resistance is the ability to fight back.

RESISTANCE

While millions died or submitted to capture during the Middle Passage, many others fought back. A significant number of revolts led by the African captives occurred on the slave ships. The frequency of these **mutinies**, or uprisings on the ships, was reflected in the steadily rising insurance premiums charged to the enslavers by insurance companies such as Lloyds of London.

The mutinies were most frequent from 1750 to 1788, when merchants tried to save money by reducing the size of the slave ships' crew. A small crew weakened by disease or fever was sometimes no match for the captives.

Many times, brave Africans would escape and leap overboard, preferring death to the inhuman indignities aboard the ships. In that brief moment of freedom as their bodies plunged through the air, many rejoiced. In the words of one captive:



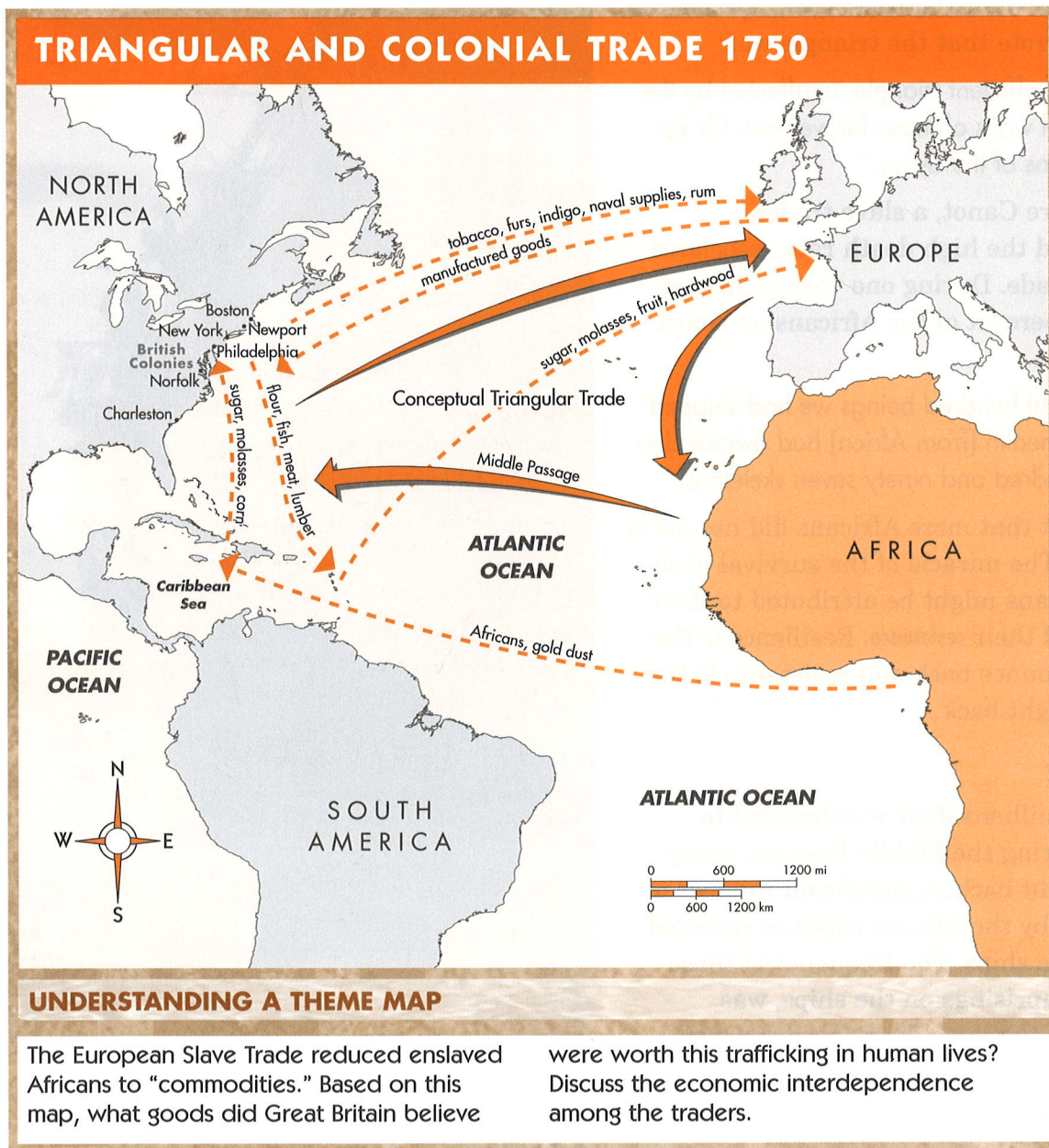
Africans often fought against their enslavers in mutinies aboard the slave ships, especially from 1750 to 1788. Sometimes the enslaved jumped overboard rather than endure a life of bonda

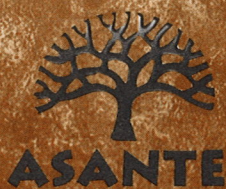
Uprooting Africans from their homes and forcing them to sail across the sea to a strange land was a terrible crime against humanity. For 300 years, European ships became chambers of horror for millions of Africans. The separation, pain, brutality, and death that resulted from this inhumane practice is truly impossible to comprehend. These horrors continued until

1808, when the European Slave Trade was outlawed.

TRIANGULAR TRADE

The route of the European Slave Trade can be seen as a triangle which began in Europe. The next point on the triangle was in Africa, where the captives were loaded onto the ships. The



**AS YOU READ**

- What inhumane conditions did Africans endure as they were transported to the Americas?
- How did Africans demonstrate resilience and resistance?
- How does dehumanization lead to racism?

The Dreaded Middle Passage

Chapter Outline

- **The Middle Passage**
- **Nameless and Stateless**
- **Dehumanization**

Vocabulary

- Middle Passage • Triangular Trade • resilience • resistance • mutinies
- inferior • uncivilized • superiority • inferiority • oppressor • racism

The Middle Passage

To get even a basic understanding of enslavement, it is important to feel the pain and experience the horror that millions of human beings endured as they were ripped from their homeland, packed into overcrowded ships, and transported halfway around the world.

Imagine crossing the ocean aboard a small ship, built to hold 200 people, packed with 1,000 weeping and terrified men, women, and children. Each African was forced to fit into a space of no more than 55.9 centimeters (22 inches) high, roughly the height of a single gym locker, and 61 centimeters (24 inches) wide, scarcely an arm's length. There were no lights aboard the ships, little food, and no toilet facilities. Sarah Weldon, a former enslaved African, said that the horror was so dreadful that when an African died, others cried out:

"Gone she to her own country, gone she to her own friends."



Reading a Timeline *cont'd*

- a. the first African captives were brought to Portugal.
 - b. Africans were captured and brought to Spain.
 - c. Christopher Columbus traveled to the Americas for Spain.
3. Approximately how many years elapsed between the time Africa's economy was crippled and the time Britain controlled Africa's economy?
 4. How is Dutch activity in the Americas in the 1750's similar to Portuguese activity in West Africa in 1441?

GLOBAL connection

Using books, the Internet, and magazine articles, research the history of slavery in ancient Egypt, including the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms, lasting to 332 B.C.E., and the history of enslavement in the United States from colonial times to the Civil War (1861–65). Summarize your data in chart form. Include such headings as reasons for slavery/enslavement, number and place of origin of the slaves enslaved, destination, transportation to destination, work performed, general treatment,

revolts, and any key figures in the history of slavery and enslavement in both areas. Write a paragraph summarizing the differences and similarities between slavery in ancient Egypt and the enslavement of Africans in the colonies. Compare and contrast the manner in which slaves and the enslaved were treated and regarded in each society. What does that say about each society as a whole?

Multiple Perspectives

Contact your chat room friends and discuss the differences between labor practices during enslavement and current labor practices. Do people produce more when they are forced to work?

Does productivity increase with paid labor and humane labor practices? Discuss the difficulties in raising the minimum wage. How far have we really come in the treatment of laborers?

CENTER YOUR WRITING

One of the themes of the National Council for the Social Studies is Production, Distribution, and Consumption. With these three concepts in mind in the context of the European Slave Trade, write an essay about a bag of rice that you can buy in the supermarket. Using references, books, and Web sites, begin the essay by explaining how rice is planted, cultivated, harvested, and distributed to stores in modern-day America. How many people are involved in getting that rice to

you? Contrast this method of production with growing rice under the American system of enslavement. What are the similarities and differences in the planting, cultivation, harvesting, and distribution? Which method do you think was more profitable for the rice farmer? Why? Does the profit from the production and distribution of products justify the dehumanization of a people? Why or why not?