



Chapter 6 After You Read

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

Comprehension Review

1. What are three ways that Europeans obtained unpaid labor?
2. What military and labor practices did Africans employ prior to the European Slave Trade?
3. Describe the feudal system of labor practiced in Europe from the 9th century into the late Middle Ages.
4. How did the Dutch profit from the slave trade?
5. Which European industries profited from the enslavement of Africans?
6. How did the slave trade cripple African industry?
7. Why does the author state that the slave trade “removed Africa’s greatest resource?”
8. Why were Africans who had survived smallpox prized by slave traders?
9. What were some of the African industries that were prevented from reaching their full potential due to the slave trade?

Center Your Thinking

10. Point of view refers to the position from which an event is viewed. Variations in point of view lead to differences in the perception of an event. Work with a classmate to make a three-column chart. In the middle column, create a list of five facts regarding the slave trade. In the left column, describe a European’s view of the fact. In the right column, describe an enslaved African’s view of the same fact. Write an essay based on your answers to the following:
 - a. Does a person’s point of view always include the complete facts?
 - b. Does considering multiple points of view enhance or harm one’s understanding of certain facts?
 - c. Give an example from this chapter of an omission that could negatively affect your viewpoint of Africa’s economy.

Vocabulary and Concept Development

1. Why does the author state that the “European Slave Trade was principally a business of European **conquest** and **domination**”?
2. Explain the relationship used to form the following analogy: *Isin* is to *serf* as *eru* is to *slave*.
3. What added meaning did the European definition of **slave** denote, or indicate?
4. Compare the meaning of *budding* as used in the last paragraph of this chapter with its use in a biology class.

Reading a Timeline

Use Unit 2 and Chapter 6 timelines to complete the following:

1. Each of these nations: Portugal, Spain, Holland, and England were ushered into the European Slave Trade process between 1441 and 1808. In chronological order list one event for each nation.
2. Calculate the number of years between Western Africa’s first contact with Portuguese explorers in 1441 and the date when:

Continued

development of any region in the world. For Europeans, Africa was a vast treasure, which they exploited for their own national growth and economic benefit. For Africans, the slave trade undercut the natural economic growth of the continent. It removed Africa's greatest resource, its youth. It also crippled African industry by encouraging a dependence on manufactured goods from Europe.

Many historians estimate that as many as 100 million Africans were uprooted during the slave trade. That number would be equivalent to losing twice the workforce of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, Philadelphia, Detroit, Washington, San Francisco, Seattle, Miami, Atlanta, San Diego, Milwaukee, Baltimore, San Jose, and Dallas. Such a loss of labor as this would have a disastrous effect on the U.S. economy and would set the nation back for many years, if not centuries.



For 300 years, the European Slave Trade prevented Africa's youth, who were skilled in many professions, such as the man shown here working at the loom, from contributing to Africa's economy.



Shipbuilding was one of the European industries that realized great economic benefits from the European Slave Trade.

As Walter Rodney cited in his book:

"The massive loss of the African labor force was made more critical because it was composed of able bodied young men and women."

The slave traders preferred Africans between the ages of 15 and 20. They shipped the healthiest Africans because they were more likely to survive the disease-ridden voyage across the Atlantic. Africans who had already had smallpox, which was one of the greatest killers of the 16th and 17th centuries, were likely to be highly prized because they were immune to the disease.

Vast regions of Africa were depopulated by the slave trade, halting the development of many budding industries, such as mining, tool-making, rice farming, and metallurgy. The slave trade deprived African nations of people who had skills in many professions. Africa was robbed of its future by losing the very segments of the population that may have led the way in science, technology, medicine, and farming; or in the textile, shipping, and financial industries. The European slave trading disaster was so great that many African societies still have not recovered from it today.



This slave fort is one of several fortresses where African captives were held until they could be transported across the Atlantic to the Americas.

which labor was provided by workers called serfs. In this system, serfs were bound to the land owned by a landlord or baron and had to provide the labor. They could work a portion of the land for their own use. The word *slave* is thought to be derived from the Slavic languages of Eastern Europe. The European definition of *slave* denotes a total loss of personal will, authority, autonomy, and humanity. This form of slavery leaves no room for personal ownership of anything, including oneself. *Slave* cannot exist, for example, in the English language, without the concept of “chattel” being included. Serfs were allowed to marry and maintain families. As chattel, slaves had no basic human rights. While in Africa, all people in bondage were considered human beings with rights and varying degrees of political and social freedom.

The Profit Motive

The enormous financial rewards for Europeans involved in the slave trade sustained the system for more than 300 years. Using the wealth accumulated from the European Slave Trade, several nations in Europe made huge investments in their industries. Britain, a country without any cotton, was to become one of the world’s leading textile producers. The Dutch would become leading shipbuilders by virtue of the demand for ships for the slave trade. In Portugal, the financial institutions would become

rich on the basis of the slave trade. The nations of Europe reaped great profits from the investments they made in funding the slave trade.

Advantages to Europe

Walter Rodney’s famous book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, describes how the slave-trading companies of Europe created economic opportunities for merchants and entrepreneurs. After acquiring the *asiento* and dominating the slave trade, Britain made a way for its colonial administrators to enter and control the local economy. For example, the famous Cadbury Chocolates of England can be traced back to the time when the Englishman John Cadbury served as head of the Ghana Cocoa Company in West Africa. Britain used its entry into the slave-trading business as a way to control the local government of Ghana. It succeeded and Cadbury was put in charge of cocoa. Many companies find their origins in the slave trade. The European Slave Trade financed numerous business enterprises. Among the European industries that profited from the enslavement of Africans, were shipbuilding, insurance, textile, and banking. The production of agricultural crops such as sugar, rice, tobacco, cotton, and rubber also prospered due to slave labor and the slave trade. The mining of gold and diamonds became a profitable business. From the ships that were used to sail down the coast of Africa, to the discovery of minerals on the continent itself, the slave trade was of immense importance to European nations. Europeans built ships, sold insurance on the ships and their voyages, gave financial backing to the captains, outfitted the sailors, armed traders, and used the money generated by the enslavement of Africans for investments in other businesses in Europe.

Disadvantages to Africa

As Europe was gaining an economic advantage from the slave trade, Africa was undergoing one of the greatest declines in

him, and hold him by force in a slave fortress or holding pen along the coast. When your fortress is full, you load your ship with captives and transport them to the Americas.

You could trick the people into boarding your ship by a promise to pay them for their labor. Then you could sail away, kidnapping the people. Or you might attack other ships on the high seas, take their enslaved Africans, and sail to the Americas.

Finally, you could employ others to capture Africans for you. They could be paid according to how many captives they brought to the ships. There were many cases where Africans sold other Africans to Europeans. Internal rivalries and greed may have played a part in the decision of some Africans to sell others. However, the European Slave Trade, which began in 1515, was principally a business of European **conquest** and **domination** of the Africans along the west coast of Africa. Africans were taken over and controlled by the European invaders who sought their labor.

AFRICAN LABOR AND WAR PRACTICES

Some military and labor practices that had worked well for Africans prior to the European Slave Trade worked against them in their trade with Europeans.

Africans had established routines for dealing with the people they captured during war. When a people were defeated in warfare, they were often reduced to working for the people who had conquered them. **War captives** served the winning king as laborers and became a part of the social and political life of the village. Some even



The trade in goods, such as these carved pieces of ivory, made up the early trade between Africa and Europe. It was soon overshadowed by the trade in humans as Europeans' need for labor grew with each conquest in the Americas.

became leaders in the society. Incorporating people into the society rather than enslaving them was often the way Africans dealt with their captives.

Before the European Slave Trade began, the Yoruba people of Africa referred to the work the prisoners of war did as **isin** (ah-SEN), which means "servitude." This was slightly different from **eru** (eh-ROO), meaning "slavery." Yet, because the Yoruba language of Nigeria did not have to deal with the European idea of chattel slavery, which reduced a slave to property that could be bought or sold and did not allow for eventual freedom, they sometimes used the words *isin* and *eru* interchangeably. This was also the case in other African languages.

Even in European languages, there is a slight difference in meaning between the words **serf** and **slave**. From the 9th century into the late Middle Ages, Europe maintained a feudal system in



The Economics of the European Slave Trade

Chapter Outline

- **Conflicts in Trading and Labor Practices**
- **The Profit Motive**
- **Advantages to Europe**
- **Disadvantages to Africa**

Vocabulary

- labor ● conquest ● domination ● war captives ● isin
- eru ● serf ● slave

AS YOU READ

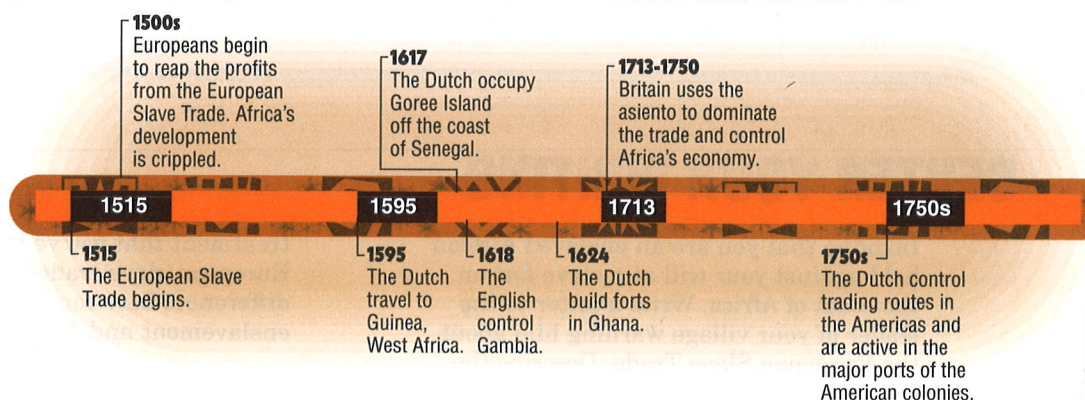
- How did the European Slave Trade change the way that trade was conducted in Africa?
- Why did many European nations provide funding for the slave trade?
- How did European nations benefit from the slave trade?
- What effect did the slave trade have on African industry?

Conflicts in Trading and Labor Practices

When Europeans first started to trade with Africans, they traded items such as cheap fabric, guns, and gold for spices, beads, and ivory. However, as the Europeans conquered and captured territories in the Americas and the Caribbean, this simple system of trade was soon complicated by the Europeans' need for **labor**. The Europeans needed men and women to do the heavy, dirty work in the colonies. The products of this labor would greatly increase their economic wealth.

There are two ways to acquire labor. You either pay wages to people for their work, or you do not. If you do not pay for labor, there are several other ways to secure it. Human labor can be volunteered or it can be taken by cunning or force. If you choose to take the labor, as many Europeans did, there are several ways to proceed.

You could steal the labor. Imagine yourself hiding in the bushes, watching a young man tending cattle. You creep up behind him, capture



Reading a Timeline *cont'd*

Column A

1. The Magna Carta
2. Elmina
3. The Treaty of Tordesillas
4. asiento
5. The Treaty of Utrecht



When in distress, people of all cultures call on spiritual and philosophical beliefs and inner strength to help them understand life and to have faith in their deliverance from despair. Beginning in 1977, one of the most popular TV mini-series ever shown was *Roots*, based on the book by African American author Alex Haley. The movie tells the story of African enslavement in early America. It traces the life of Kunta Kinte, a young African boy who is captured in Africa, transported on a slave ship, and enslaved in the colonies. Arrange with your teacher to

Column B

- a. continue the asiento
- b. divides Americas between Portugal and Spain
- c. Spain and Catholic Church approve enslaving Africans
- d. establishes pattern of European colonization
- e. Ghanaian castle city becomes an occupied prison and fort

view the tape of this series, or rent a copy from your local video store. Write a one-page essay which describes Kunta Kinte's emotions as he was captured and dragged aboard the slave ship. What inner spiritual values do you feel sustained him through this terrible ordeal and his long years of enslavement?

End your writing by contrasting Kunta Kinte's reactions with those of a person from a less spiritually disciplined background. How might that person have borne those terrible years?

Multiple Perspectives

The *Did You Know?* section of this chapter states that John Newton was a cruel slave trader who converted to Christianity and wrote famous Christian hymns. Using encyclopedias, biographies, or other reference material, find out if Newton's

conversion to Christianity ended his cruelty as a slave trader. Write a conversation that two Africans might have had about Newton's conversion and how it changed or didn't change his actions as a slave trader.

CENTER YOUR WRITING

Imagine that you are an enslaved African held against your will at a slave fort on the coast of Africa. Write a letter to the leader of your village warning him about the European Slave Trade. Describe the

treatment that you've received from European slave traders and explain the differences between European enslavement and African slavery.