

Key Concepts and Summary Objectives

The Key Concepts are important ideas that students must truly understand if they are to grasp the historical significance of slavery. They also serve as tools educators can use to structure their teaching.

Summary Objectives are broad student learning outcomes related to each chronological era in the framework. Each of the 21 Summary Objectives maps to at least one Key Concept.

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Slavery, which was practiced by Europeans prior to their arrival in the Americas, was important to all of the colonial powers and existed in all of the European North American colonies.

2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the economy across British North America and, later, the United States.

3. Protections for slavery were embedded in the founding documents; enslavers dominated the federal government, Supreme Court and Senate from 1787 through 1860.

4. "Slavery was an institution of power," designed to create profit for the enslavers and break the will of the enslaved and was a relentless quest for profit abetted by racism.*

5. Enslaved people resisted the efforts of their enslavers to reduce them to commodities in both revolutionary and everyday ways.

6. The experience of slavery varied depending on time, location, crop, labor performed, size of slaveholding and gender.

7. Slavery was the central cause of the Civil War.

8. Slavery shaped the fundamental beliefs of Americans about race and whiteness, and white supremacy was both a product and legacy of slavery.

9. Enslaved and free people of African descent had a profound impact on American culture, producing leaders and literary, artistic and folk traditions that continue to influence the nation.

10. By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

* Ira Berlin, "Foreword: The Short Course for Bringing Slavery into the Classroom in Ten Not-So-Easy Pieces" in *Understanding and Teaching American Slavery*, ed. Bethany Jay and Cynthia Lyerly (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016), xviii.

SUMMARY OBJECTIVES

PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL ERA | TO 1763

KEY CONCEPT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1. Students will recognize that slavery existed around the world prior to the European settlement of North America.	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. Students will be able to describe the slave trade from Africa to the Americas.	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	●
3. Students will be able to discuss the labor and culture of enslaved people during the colonial era.	○	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○
4. Students will be able to demonstrate the impact of slavery on the economies of French, British and Spanish North America.	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●	○

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD AND THE CONSTITUTION | 1763-1787

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Students will identify ways that slavery was a key component of the escalating conflicts between England and the North American colonies in the period from 1763 to 1776.	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	●
6. Students will describe the ways African Americans participated in the Revolutionary War in support of both sides.	○	●	●	○	●	○	○	○	●	●
7. Students will demonstrate the ways that the Constitution provided direct and indirect protection to slavery and imbued enslavers and slave states with increased political power.	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	●

SLAVERY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC | 1787-1807

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Students will examine the way the Revolutionary War affected the institution of slavery in the new nation. Students will examine the ways that slavery shaped domestic and foreign policy in the early Republic.	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
9. Students will examine the rapid expansion of cotton slavery across the southern United States.	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	○	○	●

THE EXPANSION OF SLAVERY | 1807-1848

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Students will understand the contours of the domestic slave trade as part of the nation's economic and geographic expansion.	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●
11. Students will be able to describe the principle ways the labor of enslaved people was organized and controlled in the antebellum United States.	○	●	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	●
12. Students will understand the growth of the abolitionist movement in the 1830s and the slaveholding states' view of the movement as a physical, economic and political threat.	○	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
13. Students will understand that enslaved people resisted slavery in ways that ranged from violence to smaller, everyday means of asserting their humanity and opposing the wishes and interests of their enslavers.	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●
14. Students will be able to discuss the culture of enslaved Americans and its impact on American culture in general.	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●

THE SECTIONAL CRISIS AND CIVIL WAR | 1848-1877

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

15. Students will examine the expansion of slavery as a key factor in the domestic and foreign policy decisions of the United States in the 19th century.	○	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●
16. Students will discuss the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln and the subsequent decision that several slave states made to secede from the Union to ensure the preservation and expansion of slavery.	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	●
17. Students will examine the evolving Union policies concerning slavery and African-American military service and understand how free black and enslaved communities affected the Civil War.	○	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
18. Students will examine the ways that people who were enslaved claimed their freedom after the Civil War.	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
19. Students will examine the ways that the federal government's policies affected the lives of formerly enslaved people.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●
20. Students will examine the ways that white Southerners attempted to define freedom for freedpeople.	○	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	○	●
21. Students will examine the impact of the Compromise of 1877 and the removal of federal troops from the former Confederacy.	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○