



TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
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Introduction

In these videos, scholars and historians explore the Key Concepts of the Teaching Hard History framework by discussing slavery's impact on the lives of enslaved people in the United States and the nation's development around the institution. They also explain how enslaved people influenced the nation, its culture and its history.

The resources below can help you analyze each video's content and its connection to the related Key Concept with your students or with colleagues. You can also use them to help build your own content knowledge.

Resources

For each video, we have included the following:

- the **Key Concept** that the video explores
- an **essential question** to help viewers explore the connection between the video and its related Key Concept
- **vocabulary** words that students may need defined to better understand the video
- **text-dependent questions** that can help viewers understand and analyze the videos

Note: There are two sets of text-dependent questions for each video. **Set A** focuses on *identifying* key ideas and details in each video. **Set B** focuses on *analyzing* key ideas and details in each video. Select whichever set is better suited for your classroom.



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TEACHING HARD HISTORY: AMERICAN SLAVERY

Text-Dependent Questions

ADAM ROTHMAN | KEY CONCEPT 2

Key Concept 2

Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

Essential Question

How did enslaved labor in the South fuel a global economic system during the 19th century?

Vocabulary

☞ **broker** (n.) [broh-ker]

an agent who negotiates contracts of purchase and sale

☞ **capital** (n.) [kap-i-tl]

the wealth, whether in money or property, owned or employed in business by an individual, firm, corporation, etc.

☞ **diplomacy** (n.) [dih-ploh-muh-see]

the conduct by government officials of negotiations and other relations between nations

☞ **expulsion** (n.) [ik-spuhl-shuh n]

the act of driving out

☞ **frontier** (n.) [fruhn-teer]

the land or territory that forms the furthest extent of a country's settled or inhabited regions

☞ **indigenous** (adj.) [in-dij-uh-nuhs]

originating in a particular region or country; native

☞ **insurance** (n.) [in-shoo r-uh ns]

coverage by contract in which one party agrees to reimburse another for the loss that occurs under the terms of the contract

☞ **transplant** (v.) [trans-plant]

to move from one place to another

Sources

Dictionary.com, Merriam-Webster.com

Text-Dependent Questions

Set A

1. What factors made the expansion of the slave economy of the 19th century possible?
2. How does the story of John Palfrey reflect the new economic opportunities that territorial expansion and slavery offered to white Americans?
3. What businesses in the North and in England depended on the cotton grown and harvested by enslaved Africans in the South?

Set B

1. How does the story of John Palfrey demonstrate the importance of slavery and the slave trade to the cotton economy of the 19th century?
2. Rothman traces the likely movement of cotton from the Palfrey plantation. How does this movement complicate the notion that slavery was a southern institution?

TEACHING HARD HISTORY: AMERICAN SLAVERY

Text-Dependent Questions

ADAM ROTHMAN | KEY CONCEPT 2

RESPONSES

Set A

1. What factors made the expansion of the slave economy of the 19th century possible?

Several factors made the expansion of the slave economy of the 19th century possible. These factors included territorial expansion through diplomacy and the expulsion of Indigenous populations, the transfer of enslaved Africans to this new territory, and the migration of planters and capital.

2. How does the story of John Palfrey reflect the new economic opportunities that territorial expansion and slavery offered to white Americans?

Palfrey transitioned from a struggling Boston merchant to a successful southern planter through access to land in Louisiana and the labor of enslaved Africans.

3. What businesses in the North and in England depended on the cotton grown and harvested by enslaved Africans in the South?

Many businesses in the North and Europe developed around transporting, selling and processing the cotton picked by enslaved people in the South. Shipping companies transported cotton from the South to the North and also to England. Brokers in the North sold the cotton. Factories in England processed the cotton into textiles. Insurance companies in the North protected planters from the losses that might result from the death or illness of enslaved people.

Set B

1. How does the story of John Palfrey demonstrate the importance of slavery and the slave trade to the cotton economy of the 19th century?

Palfrey purchased 21 enslaved people and moved them to the Louisiana frontier, and their knowledge and labor turned this “wilderness” into a profitable cotton plantation. It’s only through the forced migration of enslaved people via the slave trade and their arduous labor, especially that of women and children, that Palfrey was able to benefit from the economic opportunities that territorial expansion made possible for white Americans.

2. Rothman traces the likely movement of cotton from the Palfrey plantation. How does this movement complicate the notion that slavery was a southern institution?

Rothman explains how the cotton cultivated and harvested by enslaved Africans moved out of the South to be sold and processed. Brokers and shippers in the North generated profit by transporting and selling the cotton. Textile manufacturers in England made products from the cotton. Insurers in the North protected the financial investments southerners made in enslaved Africans. Even though these businesses did not directly use the labor of enslaved Africans, they would not have been able to operate without the institution of slavery.