

**CHAPTER 20** Section 3 (pages 566–570)

# The Atlantic Slave Trade

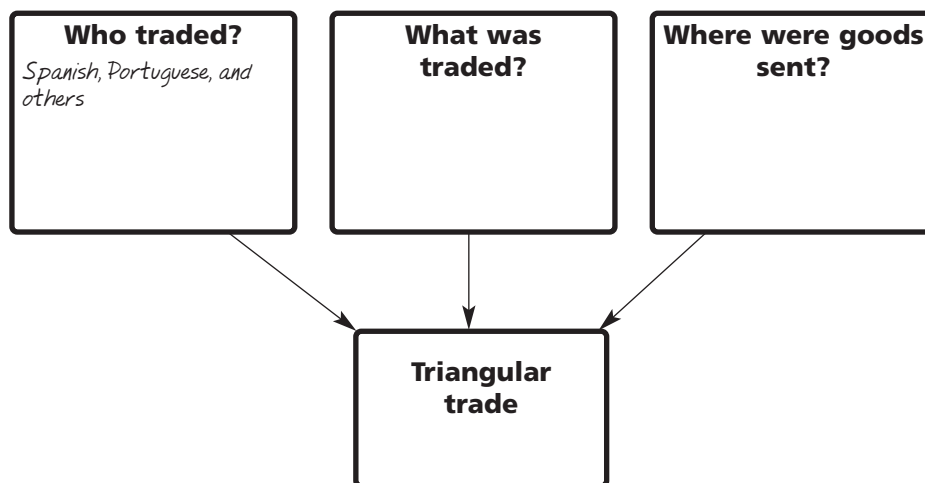
## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you saw how different European nations settled in North America.

In this section, you will read about the slave trade that brought Africans to the Americas.

## AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on the triangular trade system.



### TERMS AND NAMES

**Atlantic slave trade** Buying and selling of Africans for work in the Americas

**triangular trade** European trade between the Americas, Africa, and Europe involving slaves and other goods

**middle passage** Voyage that brought captured Africans to the West Indies and the Americas

## The Causes of African Slavery

(pages 566–567)

### *What was the Atlantic slave trade?*

Slavery has had a long history in Africa and in the world. For most of that history in Africa, though, large numbers of people had not been enslaved. That changed in the 600s, when Muslim traders started to take many slaves to Southwest Asia.

Most worked as servants, and they did have certain rights. Also, the sons and daughters of slaves were considered to be free. The European slave trade that began in the 1500s was larger. The enslaved Africans also were treated far more harshly.

In the Americas, Europeans first used Native Americans to work farms and mines. When the native peoples began dying from disease, the Europeans brought in Africans. The buying and selling of Africans for work in the Americas became known as the **Atlantic slave trade**. From 1500 to 1870, when the slave trade in the Americas finally ended, about 9.5 million Africans had been *imported* as slaves.

The Spanish first began the practice of bringing Africans to the Americas. However, the Portuguese increased the demand for slaves. They were looking for workers for their sugar plantations in Brazil.

## 1. Why were slaves brought to the Americas?

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### Slavery Spreads Throughout the Americas (pages 567–568)

#### *What sorts of plantations existed in the Americas?*

Other European colonies also brought slaves to work on tobacco, sugar, and coffee plantations. About 400,000 slaves were brought to the English colonies in North America. Their population had increased to about 2 million in 1830.

Many African rulers joined in the slave trade. They captured people inland and brought them to the coast to sell to European traders.

## 2. How did some African rulers participate in the slave trade?

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### A Forced Journey (page 568–569)

#### *What kinds of trade included human beings?*

Africans taken to the Americas were part of a **triangular trade** between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. European ships brought manufactured goods to Africa, trading them for people. They carried Africans across the Atlantic to the Americas, where they were sold into slavery. The traders then bought sugar, coffee, and tobacco to bring back to Europe.

Another triangle involved ships sailing from the northern English colonies in North America. They

carried rum to Africa, people to the West Indies, and sugar and molasses back to the colonies to make more rum.

The part of the voyage that brought people to the Americas was called the **middle passage**. It was harsh and cruel. People were crammed into ships, beaten, and given little food. About 20 percent of the people on these ships died.

## 3. What was the triangular trade?

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### Slavery in the Americas; Consequences of the Slave Trade (pages 569–570)

#### *What was life like for the slaves?*

Life on the plantations was harsh as well. People were sold to the highest bidder. They worked from dawn to dusk in the fields. They lived in small huts and had little food and clothing. Africans kept alive their traditional music and beliefs to try to maintain their spirits. Sometimes they rebelled. From North America to Brazil, from 1522 to the 1800s, there were small-scale slave revolts.

The Atlantic slave trade had a huge impact on both Africa and the Americas. In Africa many cultures lost generations of members. Africans began fighting Africans over the control of the slave trade.

The Africans' labor helped build the Americas. They brought skills and culture too. Many of the nations of the Americas have mixed race populations.

## 4. How did Africans change the Americas?

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