

# Slavery in Brazil and the Americas

**Grade Level:** 6

**Subject:** History

**Key Words:** Slavery, Brazil, Americas

**Time Frame:** 3 days

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## Summary:

The following lesson is designed for a sixth-grade history course spanning from 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century and focused on the transatlantic slave trade as it relates to Brazil. However, this lesson can be modified for use in a World Geography course or any other course that examines slavery or Brazil.

**Background information:** In 1585, 10,000 slaves were brought to Bahia, Brazil. Portuguese explorers first landed in northeast Brazil in 1500. In this region, called Bahia, they found large indigenous populations with whom they traded some local commodities, like wood which was used to make dyes. Facing competition from other European nations in the early- to mid-sixteenth century, Portugal began to invest in Brazil as a source of export commodities and imperial wealth. Since Brazil did not appear to have supplies of gold or silver, the Portuguese imported the technology of sugar production (<http://slaveryandremembrance.org/articles/article/index.cfm?id=A0095>) to Bahia from their Atlantic islands (*Madeira and São Tomé, for example*) where the crop had proved successful. This move, in the mid-1500s, launched plantation Brazilian agriculture and large-scale slave [importation](http://slaveryandremembrance.org/articles/article/index.cfm?id=A0096) (<http://slaveryandremembrance.org/articles/article/index.cfm?id=A0096>). By 1600, Brazil was the largest exporter of sugar to Europe. When the North American continent was first colonized by Europeans, the land was vast, the work was harsh, and there was a severe shortage of labor. Men and women were needed to work the land. White bond servants, paying their passage across the ocean from Europe through indentured labor, eased but did not solve the problem. Early in the seventeenth century, a Dutch ship loaded with African slaves introduced a solution—and a new problem—to the New World. Slaves were most economical on large farms where labor-intensive cash crops, such as tobacco, could be grown.

For more information on the Transatlantic Slave Trade as it relates to Brazil, see:

- Araujo, Ana Lucia. (2016) "Slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade in Brazil and Cuba from an Afro-Atlantic Perspective." <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/alm/n12/2236-4633-alm-12-00001.pdf>
- Hebrard, James M. (2013) "Slavery in Brazil: Brazilian Scholars in Key Interpretive Debates." <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/lacs.12338892.0001.002>
- Garcia Navarro, Lulu. (2013) "Photos Reveal Harsh Detail of Brazil's History with Slavery" <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2013/11/12/244563532/photos-reveal-harsh-detail-of-brazils-history-with-slavery>

## Student Objectives:

*Students will be able to*

- Understand how and why almost 3.6 million men and women were uprooted in Africa and forced into slavery in Brazil from 1538 until 1888.
- Understand the harsh working conditions and the cruelty that African slaves endured throughout Portugal's colonization of Brazil.
- Understand the customs, music, and religious beliefs that slaves brought from Africa that remain an integral part of the social order in Northeastern Brazil today.
- Understand that slaves were treated as a piece of property and were bought and sold.
- Understand that slavery in America started in 1619
- Know vocabulary words

*Essential/Driving Questions*

- Why was slavery important to Brazil and USA? Where did the enslaved people come from?
- How many enslaved people came to Bahia? How many enslaved people came to America?
- What were the 5 countries where slaves were abducted?
- Why were African peoples more desirable than indentured servants or Native Americans to enslaved?
- How were the lives of enslaved families different from other Americans?

**Vocabulary words:**

- Middle passage voyage
- Civil War
- Transatlantic Route
- Slavery/enslaved person
- Manumission

**Materials:**

- Video on Youtube "The Actual Voices of Slaves Recorded Now Revealed (United States) <https://www.Youtube.com/watch?v=Ojg4SaMxMny>
- Blank US map
- Blank Brazil map
- *Never Forgotten* by Patricia C McKissak, illustrated by Leo Dillon (Schwartz & Wade, 2011)
- Youtube video: "[The Atlantic Slave](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg)" ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q\\_4JVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg))
- Youtube video: "[Brazil: The Story of Slavery](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXAFHmxW-2Q)" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXAFHmxW-2Q>)
- Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database - <https://www.slavevoyages.org/>

## Learning Plan

### Activity 1: Introduction to System of Slavery

In this activity, students will be able to understand why slavery was an important industry in Brazil and the United States.

#### Objectives:

- Students will understand that slaves were owned like property
- Understand that slavery's sole purpose was to sell and buy people in order to generate money for slaveholders.

#### Procedure:

1. Please preview all videos before they are shown to students. There's brief nudity in some of the photographs.
2. In a large group setting allow the students to complete the first two sections of a K-W-L chart. K- What do they know about slavery in Brazil? What do they know about slavery in the USA? W- What do they want to know?
3. After the first two sections have been filled in, display the chart on the wall. Later, when all activities are done, fill out the last section (L- What did they learn?).
4. Show the video on Youtube "The Actual Voices of Slaves Recorded Now Revealed" (United States); <https://www.Youtube.com/watch?v=Ojg4SaMxMny> (Brazil).
5. The teacher will lead a discussion based on the video and write down responses on chart paper using the following question:
  - a) What important facts do you remember?
6. Independent Practice
  - a) Students will complete a think pair and share activity in teacher-selected groups.
  - b) Based on the information that has been discussed, the students will work with their group members to discuss why slavery was important to Brazil and the United States of America. After discussing, their results should be written on chart paper to be displayed in the classroom.

**Assessment:** The teacher will check for understanding by asking the students to write a paragraph on what they learned about slavery from today's lesson.

## **Activity 2: The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage**

In this activity, students will identify the areas of the world involved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the rationale behind their involvement.

### **Objectives:**

- Locate African countries targeted for enslavement of people
- Generate informed predictions and discuss the reasons why certain countries may have been targeted for slave trade.

### **Procedure:**

1. Prior to teaching this lesson, teacher should bookmark all of the websites, preview video to make sure that they're appropriate for students, and download a blank U.S Map and a blank map of Brazil.
2. The teacher will ask the following questions:
  - a) What happened to the number of imported slaves to the United States between 1805 and 1808? Explain the change.
  - b) How many voyages were made to the mainland of North America after the abolition of the slave trade? (Remember Florida is technically Spanish territory until 1821).
3. The students will locate the following countries on the map of Africa: Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ivory Coast.
4. Ask the following: "Why do you think these countries were chosen?" The students should arrive at the conclusion that the countries were on the coast, which made it easy to capture people and get them on the ships. Bahia, Brazil was chosen because it was on the coast, too.
5. Independent Practice: The students will use a blank map of Africa and use the markers to write the name of the countries where the enslaved peoples were kidnapped. The teacher should supervise and assist students who are having trouble completing the task.

**Assessment:** Have students do a free-write in their notebook where they make predictions about what could have been some of the challenges that enslaved peoples experienced during the Middle Passage voyage and what might have been some elements that helped them survive. Have students share and discuss entries as a class.

### **Activity 3: The Extent of the Slave Trade**

Through a short story and videos, students will learn about the Transatlantic Slave Trade from different sources.

#### **Objectives:**

- Students will review and discuss for reading comprehension
- Students will generate informed predictions

#### **Procedure:**

1. Teacher will read the excerpt story *Never Forgotten* by Patricia C. McKissack (see materials) to class and ask open-ended questions about the father in the story and about his son being taken away from him.
2. Allow the students to work in groups and write their answers on the paper and share the results.
3. Allow the students to brainstorm and write down with their groups how many slaves they thought were brought to Brazil and America.
4. Write the answers on the board.
5. Show the video on Youtube: *Brazil: The Story of Slavery*. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXAFHmxW-2Q>)
6. Show the short video on Youtube: *The Atlantic Slave Trade*. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q\\_4JVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg))
7. Have each group share what they wrote in groups and teacher should follow up with higher-order thinking questions, such as “How do you think they felt leaving everything they owned and being taken against their will to a new land far away from their homes?”

**Assessment:** Have students go on a virtual museum visit on the following website: <https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/slavery/teachers/virtual.html>. Students must jot down three things they found interesting and why.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

### Texts

Jacobs, H. and Child, M. (2017). *Incidents in the life of a slave girl*. Chump Change Songs

The African Slave Trade and Slave Life: <https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-2/african-slavery/>

*Life in Brazil; or, A Journal of a Visit to the Land of the Cocoa and the Palm* by Thomas Ewbank; (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1856)

### Videos

Follow the Drinking Gourd (song): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pw6N\\_eTZP2U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pw6N_eTZP2U)

### Compare and Contrast Chart: Slavery in Brazil and the United States

	Brazil	United States
African Slave Trade	The development of slavery in the Americas was conditioned by the volume, timing, and destination of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. About 4.8 Million imported. Slave importation lasted from 1530 to 1850.	About 400,000 African slaves imported. Slave importation lasted from 1620-1808.

<p>Slave Population</p>	<p>Slave population could only be sustained through continued importation. When Thomas Ewbanks visited Brazil in the 1850s, he commented on the short lives of the Brazilian slaves. The 1872 census counted 1.5 million slaves. Multiple negative factors include poor diet and tropical climate in many areas (such as Bahia). Substantial disease factors including chronic and infectious disease and substantial gender imbalance. Prompted lower birth rate and higher death rate. Backbreaking and deadly nature of sugar production in some areas. High manumission rate and the comparative greater number of slaves fleeing captivity lessened numbers.</p>	<p>Slave population grew through natural reproduction as early as 1724. The 1810 census right after slave importation ended counted 1.1 million slaves. The 1860 census counted 4 million slaves. Multiple factors included better diet, subtropical or temperate climate, fewer disease factors, and greater gender balance. Prompted higher birth rate and lower death rate. Slave population concentrated in one region of the country (South).</p>
<p>Manumission Rate</p>	<p>Significant manumission encouraged declining slave population. Free blacks made up 58% Afro-Brazilian population in 1872.</p>	<p>Free blacks made up 10% African-American population in 1860 census.</p>

**K-W-L chart strategy**

1. Choose a text. This strategy works best with expository texts.
2. Create a K-W-L chart. The teacher should create a chart on the blackboard or on an overhead transparency. In addition, the students should have their own chart on which to record information. (Below is an example of a K-W-L chart.)

K	W	L
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3. Ask students to brainstorm words, terms, or phrases they associate with a topic. The teacher and students record these associations in the K column of their charts. This is done until students run out of ideas.

### Timeline of when the slaves came to Bahia and America

	Europe	Mainland North America	Caribbean	Spanish Mainland Americas	Brazil	Africa	Other	Totals
1501-1525	624	0	683	0	0	0	0	1,307
1526-1550	0	0	6,092	14,926	0	0	2,234	23,252
1551-1575	0	0	9,280	34,996	388	0	300	44,964
1576-1600	266	0	19,907	158,965	931	399	35,891	216,359
1601-1625	359	0	15,216	195,846	1,670	0	11,157	224,248
1626-1650	0	0	11,150	103,788	39,981	240	5,857	161,016
1651-1675	1,306	1,675	117,945	23,605	8,431	3,368	5,431	161,761
1676-1700	1,437	10,279	325,061	16,632	81,492	92	6,863	441,856
1701-1725	377	39,406	479,998	40,378	241,128	1,063	12,807	815,157
1726-1750	3,589	98,354	681,843	15,407	424,141	473	37,880	1,261,687
1751-1775	1,151	122,141	1,108,974	2,589	353,404	1,144	24,618	1,614,021
1776-1800	18	23,829	1,147,044	12,993	453,519	1,680	11,907	1,650,990
1801-1825	0	63,233	536,326	27,382	1,044,939	34,412	12,806	1,719,098
1826-1850	0	585	363,074	3,849	882,067	103,723	9,081	1,362,379
1851-1875	0	1,922	190,056	0	9,798	18,340	0	220,116
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9,127</b>	<b>361,424</b>	<b>5,012,649</b>	<b>651,356</b>	<b>3,541,889</b>	<b>164,934</b>	<b>176,832</b>	<b>9,918,211</b>