

Unit 2: Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance

Unit 2 runs from the early 1500s to 1865. It covers African explorers in the Americas, the transatlantic slave trade and its impact on West Africa, the legal construction of slavery and race in America, the creation of African American culture, armed resistance and revolts, maroon societies, Black organizing in the North, abolitionism and the Underground Railroad, and the Civil War that ended slavery.

AP African American Studies

Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance

About 15 minutes to read

How to use this guide

Read it in order the first time because the story builds. African presence in the Americas comes before 1619, the trade becomes a legal system of hereditary slavery, that system produces both a distinct culture and constant resistance, and organized resistance eventually meets the Civil War. Exam questions often ask you to connect a specific event, like the Stono Rebellion or the Haitian Revolution, to a larger pattern, like how revolts changed slave law.

After the first read, use the trap boxes and the tables to review the distinctions the exam tests most often: the timelines of Gabriel, Vesey, and Turner; Fort Mose versus maroon societies; and 1619 versus the legal institution of slavery. Finish with the practice questions, then complete the recall check on the last page out loud.

What this unit is worth. Unit 2 carries about 30 to 35 percent of the multiple-choice section of the AP African American Studies exam, the heaviest weighting of any unit in the course. It also anchors the rest of the course, because the debates about freedom, identity, and resistance that begin here run through Units 3 and 4. Learn the dates and the distinctions cold.

African Explorers and the Departure Zones (2.1, 2.2)

African people were in the Americas long before 1619. **Juan Garrido**, a free African, traveled with Spanish expeditions in the early 1500s and is the first person of African descent documented exploring North America. **Estevanico**, born around 1500 in Azemmour, Morocco, was enslaved by the Spanish and became one of only four survivors of the Narvaez expedition of 1528. He crossed what is now the American Southwest and reached Mexico in 1536, and in 1539 he guided a Spanish expedition into Zuni lands in present-day New Mexico, where he died. Africans arrived as explorers, sailors, soldiers, and laborers in Spanish America a century before English colonists brought the first captive Africans to Virginia.

The captives who were brought to British North America came from specific **departure zones** along Africa's Atlantic coast: Senegambia, the Windward Coast and Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, the Bight of Benin, the Bight of Biafra, and West Central Africa, the Congo-Angola region. Traders drew on different zones at different times, which is why the first generations of African Americans carried such a mix of languages, religions, and skills. About 40 percent of all Africans shipped across the Atlantic went to Brazil, and only about 5 percent came to what is now the United States.

The well-known 1619 arrival fits inside this larger picture. In late August 1619, the English privateer **White Lion** landed at Point Comfort, Virginia. Its captain had seized about 20 Africans from the Portuguese slave ship *Sao Joao Bautista*, which was carrying Mbundu people from the Kingdom of Ndongo in present-day Angola. Colony secretary John Rolfe wrote that the ship brought "20 and odd Negroes," who were traded for food. A second ship, the *Treasurer*, arrived days later with more captives. These first Africans were sold as indentured servants, and most had worked off their terms and were free by about 1630. There was not yet a legal system of hereditary, race-based slavery in Virginia. That would be built over the next several decades.

Capture, the Middle Passage, and Shipboard Resistance (2.3, 2.4)

Roughly 12.5 million Africans were forced onto ships bound for the Americas, and about 10.7 million survived the crossing. Capture usually came through warfare and raiding, and European demand for captives intensified conflicts between African states. The trade depopulated whole regions, skewed sex ratios because traders preferred young men, and pulled kingdoms like Dahomey and Asante into economies organized around supplying captives. Communities lost farmers, artisans, and leaders, and the constant threat of raiding reshaped how villages were built and defended.

The **Middle Passage** was the ocean crossing itself: weeks or months chained in the holds of slave ships, with disease, malnutrition, and death as routine conditions. But the ships were also sites of resistance. Captives refused food, jumped overboard, and rose up. In 1803, Igbo captives at St. Simons Island, Georgia, seized their ship and then walked into the water together rather than submit to slavery. In 1839, 53 Mende captives from Sierra Leone led by **Joseph Cinque** revolted aboard the Spanish schooner *Amistad*, killed the captain, and ordered the crew to sail for Africa. The crew sailed north instead, and the ship was seized off Long Island. Abolitionists defended the Africans, former president John Quincy Adams argued their case, and in March 1841 the Supreme Court ruled 7 to 1 that they had been illegally enslaved and were free. They returned to Sierra Leone that November. In 1841, enslaved people led by Madison Washington seized the American brig *Creole* and reached the Bahamas, where British authorities freed them.

These revolts fed an antislavery movement that was already growing. Quakers had begun denouncing slavery in the 1600s, Pennsylvania passed the first gradual abolition law in 1780, and in 1772 England's *Somerset* decision held that slavery had no basis in English common law. The American antislavery movement of the 1800s would build directly on the argument the *Amistad* case made in court: that kidnapped Africans had a natural right to fight for their freedom.

Trap. 1619 is the arrival of the first documented Africans in Virginia, not the start of legal slavery. And the *Amistad* victory did not challenge slavery as an institution: the Court ruled that these particular Africans had been kidnapped and illegally enslaved, which freed them without touching the legal status of millions born into slavery in the United States. Read what a date marks and what a case decided before you claim more.

Auctions and the Domestic Slave Trade (2.5)

Enslaved people were sold at public auctions in cities like Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans. Buyers inspected bodies the way they would inspect livestock, checking teeth, limbs, and backs for scars. Sales routinely separated husbands from wives and children from parents, and the threat of sale was itself a tool of control on plantations. After Congress banned the importation of enslaved Africans effective in 1808, the demand for labor did not fall. It rose, driven by cotton, and traders built a massive internal market instead.

This **domestic slave trade**, sometimes called the Second Middle Passage, forcibly moved about one million enslaved people from the Upper South, states like Virginia and Maryland, to the cotton and sugar regions of the Deep South. Traders marched coffles of chained people overland for hundreds of miles and shipped others down the Mississippi to New Orleans, the largest slave market in the country. The firm of Franklin and Armfield, operating out of Alexandria, Virginia from 1828 to 1836, became the largest slave-trading business in the nation, buying people in the Upper South and selling them in New Orleans and Natchez. To be "sold down the river" meant being sent to the harsher labor regimes of Louisiana and Mississippi, and enslaved families understood exactly what the phrase meant.

Trap. The 1808 ban ended the legal importation of enslaved Africans. It did not end slavery, and it did not shrink the enslaved population. Because the domestic trade and forced reproduction replaced imports, the enslaved population of the United States kept growing, and the trade in human beings became an even more visible part of the Southern economy.

Labor, Culture, and Economy (2.6)

What enslaved people did all day depended on the crop. On tobacco, cotton, and sugar plantations, the **gang system** organized workers into groups driven through the fields from dawn to dusk under overseers. In the rice lowcountry of South Carolina and Louisiana, the **task system** assigned each person a daily quota, and the day ended when the task was done, which left some time for gardens and family life. Enslaved people also worked as blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, cooks, and sailors, and their skilled labor built much of the South's physical infrastructure.

That labor made the American economy. Eli Whitney's cotton gin made short-staple cotton profitable across the upland South, cotton became the country's leading export, and Northern textile mills, banks, and shipping firms all profited from it. Inside this system, enslaved people built a culture of their own: spirituals sung in call and response, the ring shout with its counterclockwise circle dance, the banjo with its African roots, foodways built on okra, black-eyed peas, and rice, and the Gullah and Geechee communities of the Sea Islands who preserved more African language and custom than anywhere else in the mainland South. Provision gardens and hunting supplemented rations and gave families small measures of independence.

Slavery and American Law (2.7)

Slavery in America was built by statute, and Virginia built it first. In 1661 Virginia became the first colony to legally recognize slavery. In 1662 the House of Burgesses passed the law of *partus sequitur ventrem*, "that which is born follows the womb": a child's status followed the mother's, so the children of enslaved women were born enslaved regardless of the father's status. This reversed English common law, where status followed the father, and it made slavery hereditary. A 1667 law added that Christian baptism did not free an enslaved person. **Bacon's Rebellion** in 1676, in which white indentured servants and enslaved Africans fought together against the colonial elite, frightened planters into driving a legal wedge between white and Black laborers. In 1705 Virginia consolidated these measures into a comprehensive slave code covering movement, assembly, punishment, and property.

Other colonies followed the same logic. South Carolina's **Negro Act of 1740**, passed after the Stono Rebellion, restricted assembly, literacy, and movement, and paused the importation of enslaved Africans for about a decade. Louisiana's Code Noir of 1724 regulated slavery in the French colony. In the 1800s the courts nationalized the system. *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842) held that the federal Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 overrode state personal liberty laws. The **Fugitive Slave Act of 1850**, part of the Compromise of 1850, required even free states to help capture alleged runaways, denied them jury trials, and paid commissioners more for returning a person than for freeing one. Then *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) ruled that Black people, free or enslaved, could never be American citizens and had no standing to sue, and declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional. Chief Justice Roger Taney's opinion made the law's position plain: Black people had no rights the white man was bound to respect.

The Social Construction of Race (2.8)

Race is not a biological fact that produced slavery. It is a set of categories that slavery produced. Before the 1600s, Europeans described human difference mostly by religion, nation, or rank. As plantation slavery grew, colonial law needed a way to mark who could be enslaved for life and whose children would inherit that status, and the answer it built was race. The 1662 Virginia statute tied inherited enslavement to African mothers. The Naturalization Act of 1790 limited American citizenship to "free white persons." Over time, custom hardened into the **one-drop rule**, the idea that any African ancestry made a person Black, which served the plantation economy by keeping the enslaved population as large as possible.

The framework's essential knowledge statement puts it directly: there is more genetic variation within racial groups than between them, and classifications of racial types emerged in tandem with systems of enslavement. That is why the exam treats race as socially constructed. The categories were legal and economic tools first, and only later did pseudo-science arrive to justify them.

Trap. Do not describe race as the cause of slavery. The exam's framing runs the other way: systems of enslavement came first, and the concept of race was built to sustain them. Any answer choice that treats racial categories as natural or ancient is working against the framework.

Creating African American Culture (2.9)

Enslaved people did not simply absorb the culture around them. They made a new one, blending African practices with American conditions. The **Black church** became the center of community life: invisible institutions of secret prayer meetings in the woods grew into independent congregations wherever law and distance allowed. Spirituals carried double meanings, with songs about Moses and the River Jordan speaking about escape as well as salvation. Extended kin networks took in children whose parents had been sold, and naming practices preserved family memory across separations that the law refused to recognize.

This culture was also literary from early on. **Phillis Wheatley**, brought from West Africa to Boston as a child, published *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* in 1773, the first book published by a Black woman in America. Her poem "On Being Brought from Africa to America" answered readers who doubted that an African could write, and it placed Black authorship at the center of American letters while slavery still held nearly all Black people in bondage. Food, music, worship, and language all worked the same way her poetry did: they asserted a full humanity the law denied.

Black Pride, Identity, and the Question of Naming (2.10)

What Black Americans called themselves has always been a political decision. In 1787, Richard Allen and Absalom Jones named their Philadelphia mutual aid organization the **Free African Society**, claiming both freedom and African identity at a moment when the new nation offered Black people neither. Through the 1800s, "colored" was the common public term, and Black conventions debated it. In the early 1900s, W. E. B. Du Bois and others campaigned to capitalize "Negro" as a mark of respect. The Black Power era of the 1960s made "Black" the proud term, and in 1988 Jesse Jackson urged Black Americans to adopt "African American," tying identity to a homeland the way other hyphenated American identities did.

Each name change was an argument about belonging. "African" looked back across the Atlantic. "Colored" and "Negro" were the terms of public life under segregation. "Black" was a rejection of shame. "African American" claimed both heritage and citizenship. The exam wants you to see naming as an act of self-definition, one more way Black people resisted a system that tried to define them as property.

Trap. Treat each identity term as belonging to its own era. Calling an 1830s activist "African American" is not wrong in a modern summary, but a primary source from 1830 would say "colored" and one from 1920 would say "Negro." Match the term to the time period when a question quotes or dates a source.

The Stono Rebellion and Fort Mose (2.11)

On Sunday, September 9, 1739, about twenty enslaved people led by a literate man named **Jemmy**, called Cato in some reports, broke into a store near the Stono River in South Carolina and seized weapons. They were likely Kongolesse, Catholic, and Portuguese-speaking, and some may have been soldiers before their capture. Marching south with drums and banners and shouting "Liberty," they recruited others until they numbered between sixty and one hundred. Their destination was **Spanish Florida**, where the Spanish had promised freedom to people escaping British slavery. The South Carolina militia caught them near the Edisto River and crushed the rising. Most of the rebels were killed, and the survivors were sold to the West Indies.

Stono was the largest slave rebellion in the colonial South, and the colony answered it with law. The **Negro Act of 1740** restricted enslaved people's assembly, movement, and literacy, required legislative approval for manumissions, and placed a ten-year moratorium on importing enslaved Africans, because lawmakers feared that newly arrived Africans would organize the next revolt.

The Florida the rebels marched toward was real. In 1693 the Spanish king had decreed that fugitives from British slavery who converted to Catholicism and served in the militia would be free, and in 1738 Governor Manuel de Montiano established **Fort Mose**, the town of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, about two miles north of St. Augustine. Led by **Francisco Menendez**, a Mandinga man born in the Gambia region who had escaped slavery in Carolina and risen to captain of the free Black militia, Mose held about one hundred free Black residents. It was the first legally sanctioned free Black settlement in what would become the United States. When the British attacked in 1740 during the War of Jenkins' Ear, Menendez's militia retook the fort in a dawn raid the English called Bloody Mose. The town survived until 1763, when Spain ceded Florida to Britain and Mose's residents chose exile in Cuba over life under British slave law.

Trap. Fort Mose was not a maroon society. Maroon communities were self-liberated settlements hidden from colonial authorities. Mose was established by the Spanish colonial government, its residents were legally free under Spanish law, and they served as an armed militia defending St. Augustine. The distinction is legal sanction versus self-liberation.

Legacies of the Haitian Revolution (2.12)

The **Haitian Revolution** of 1791 to 1804 was the only successful slave revolt in history to create an independent nation. It began with a mass uprising in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, was organized into a revolutionary army by **Toussaint Louverture**, and after Toussaint's capture and death in a French prison, was carried to victory by **Jean-Jacques Dessalines**. At the Battle of Vertieres on November 18, 1803, Haitian forces defeated Napoleon's army, and on January 1, 1804, Dessalines declared independence. Haiti became the first independent Black republic and the first nation in the hemisphere to abolish slavery permanently.

The consequences reached far beyond the island. Napoleon's defeat in Saint-Domingue destroyed his plans for a French empire in the Americas, and in 1803 he sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States, doubling the size of the young nation. The revolution terrified American slaveholders and inspired enslaved people: news of Haiti circulated through Black Atlantic networks and helped spark Gabriel's Rebellion in 1800 and Denmark Vesey's plot in 1822. France did not recognize Haitian independence until 1825, and then only in exchange for a crushing indemnity. The United States, fearing the example Haiti set, refused recognition until 1862, in the middle of the Civil War.

Resistance and Revolts in the United States (2.13)

Three names anchor American slave resistance, and the exam expects you to keep them in order.

Gabriel, an enslaved blacksmith in Richmond, Virginia, planned a rising for August 30, 1800. Literate and inspired by both the American Revolution's language of liberty and the revolution in Saint-Domingue, he organized hundreds of enslaved people to seize Richmond's arsenal. A violent rainstorm washed out bridges on the appointed night, and two enslaved men betrayed the plot to Governor James Monroe. Gabriel was hanged on October 10, 1800, along with twenty-five conspirators. Virginia answered by restricting free Black people's rights and banning the education, assembly, and hiring out of enslaved people.

Denmark Vesey was a free Black carpenter in Charleston, South Carolina, who had bought his own freedom with lottery winnings and helped found the city's independent African Methodist Episcopal church in 1818. In 1822 he was accused of organizing a rising planned for July 14, after which the rebels would sail to Haiti. Betrayed before it began, Vesey was executed on July 2, 1822, and dozens of others were hanged or exiled. Charleston burned the AME church and outlawed independent Black churches.

Nat Turner, an enslaved preacher in Southampton County, Virginia, led about seventy followers through the county on the night of August 21 to 22, 1831, killing about fifty-five to sixty white people. Turner hid for more than two months before his capture on October 30. He dictated his account to the lawyer Thomas R. Gray, and he was hanged on November 11, 1831. The Virginia legislature briefly debated gradual emancipation, then rejected it and passed harsher laws against Black assembly, literacy, and preaching.

REVOLT	LEADER'S STATUS	WHAT HAPPENED
Gabriel's Rebellion, 1800	Enslaved	Richmond plot betrayed before it began; rainstorm blocked the march; 26 hanged.
Vesey's plot, 1822	Free Black man	Charleston plot betrayed before it began; Haiti was the planned refuge; Vesey hanged July 2.
Turner's Rebellion, 1831	Enslaved	Southampton County rising carried out; about 55 to 60 whites killed; Turner hanged November 11.

Trap. Students scramble these three constantly. Fix them by status and outcome: Gabriel was enslaved and his plot never launched, Vesey was free and his plot never launched, Turner was enslaved and his revolt actually happened. Haiti connects to the first two as inspiration and planned refuge. Stono (1739) belongs to an earlier century and a different colony entirely.

Maroon Societies, Brazil, and Indigenous Territory (2.15, 2.16, 2.17)

Across the Americas, people who escaped slavery built **maroon societies**, from the Spanish *cimarron*, meaning wild or untamed. The Great Dismal Swamp on the Virginia-North Carolina border sheltered generations of fugitives. In Jamaica, Maroon communities fought the British to a standstill and won treaties recognizing their freedom. In Suriname, Maroon peoples built societies that survive to this day. These were autonomous Black communities with their own farms, defenses, and governments, and they proved that freedom could be held, not just dreamed about.

The largest maroon society of all was **Palmares** in northeastern Brazil. Founded by people escaping Portuguese sugar plantations, it lasted about a century and grew to ten thousand or more residents

with farms, forges, and palisaded towns. Its leader **Zumbi** rejected a peace treaty that would have limited Palmares' freedom, and after a terrible siege destroyed the capital in 1694, he was killed on November 20, 1695. Brazil received far more enslaved Africans than any other American destination, and it was the last nation in the hemisphere to abolish slavery, in 1888. November 20 is still observed in Brazil as a day of Black consciousness.

In North America, freedom seekers also found refuge among Native nations. Gullah people escaping Carolina slavery fled south into Spanish Florida and built communities alongside the Seminoles, becoming the **Black Seminoles**. They fought beside Seminole warriors in the First Seminole War of 1818 and the Second Seminole War of 1835 to 1842, which the American commander General Jesup called "a negro, not an Indian war." When the United States removed the Seminoles to Indian Territory in 1842, Black Seminoles were removed with them, still fighting to keep the freedom they had won. In 1842, enslaved people also rose in the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory, a reminder that slavery existed inside Native nations too.

Black Organizing in the North (2.14)

Free Black communities in the North built institutions that carried the freedom struggle for generations. In 1787, **Absalom Jones** and **Richard Allen** founded the **Free African Society** in Philadelphia, a mutual aid organization that cared for the sick, buried the dead, and supported widows and orphans. Allen went on to found the **African Methodist Episcopal Church** in 1816, the first independent Black denomination in America. **Prince Hall** secured a charter for African Lodge No. 1 in Boston in 1784, creating Black Freemasonry. Beginning in 1830, national Black conventions met in Philadelphia and other cities to debate strategy, education, and emigration. Black Northerners built schools, founded newspapers, and fought for the vote, and Black women organized for both abolition and women's rights. **Mary Ann Shadd Cary** published the *Provincial Freeman* in Canada starting in 1853, making her one of the first Black women publishers in North America, and **Frances Ellen Watkins Harper** became one of the most popular lecturers and poets of the abolitionist movement.

Debates About Emigration, Colonization, and Belonging (2.18)

Not all Black leaders agreed that the fight should stay in America. The wealthy Black shipowner **Paul Cuffe** financed a voyage of Black settlers to Sierra Leone in 1815. The **American Colonization Society**, founded in 1816 by white politicians including Henry Clay, proposed removing free Black people to Africa, and in 1822 it established the colony of **Liberia**, with its capital Monrovia named for President James Monroe. About fifteen thousand Black Americans migrated there, and Liberia became independent in 1847.

Most Black leaders rejected colonization. **David Walker** attacked the Colonization Society in his 1829 *Appeal* as a scheme to strengthen slavery by removing free Black people. **Frederick Douglass** called it a racist exile that blamed Black people for the prejudice directed at them. Martin Delany supported emigration on Black terms, as a nationalist project rather than a white-managed removal. The debate was really about belonging: whether Black people's future was in America as citizens, or elsewhere as a separate nation.

Trap. Colonization and abolition were opposing positions, not allies. Abolitionists wanted to end slavery where it existed. Colonizationists wanted to remove free Black people from the country, and many supported slavery itself. If a question asks which position a Black abolitionist held, colonization is almost never the answer.

Radical Resistance and the Underground Railroad (2.19, 2.20)

Some Black thinkers argued that slavery would not end without force. David Walker's *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, published in Boston in 1829, denounced slavery and colonization alike and warned that enslaved people would rise if justice were not done. Southern states made distributing the *Appeal* a crime. In 1843, **Henry Highland Garnet** delivered his "Address to the Slaves of the United States," openly calling on enslaved people to revolt; the Black convention he addressed rejected it as too radical, but Garnet republished it with Walker's *Appeal* in 1848. **John Brown**, the white abolitionist who consulted with Black leaders including Harriet Tubman, acted on this logic at Harpers Ferry in 1859.

The **Underground Railroad** was not a railroad and mostly ran above ground: a network of safe houses, guides, and free Black communities stretching from the South to the North and, after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, to Canada. **Harriet Tubman**, who escaped from Maryland in 1849, made about thirteen

return missions and guided roughly seventy people to freedom, never losing a passenger. **William Still** of Philadelphia chaired the Vigilance Committee, sheltered hundreds of freedom seekers, and kept the detailed records he published in 1872 as *The Underground Rail Road*, one of the richest sources on how the network actually worked. During the Civil War, Tubman served the Union Army as a scout, spy, and nurse, and in 1863 she guided the Combahee River raid that freed more than seven hundred enslaved people.

Resistance in Art and Photography (2.21)

Black Americans used image-making as a form of resistance. **Frederick Douglass** was the most photographed American of the nineteenth century, sitting for more than 160 portraits. He did it deliberately: at a time when racist caricatures pictured Black people as foolish or degraded, Douglass presented himself serious, dignified, and formally dressed, using the camera to insist on Black humanity and citizenship. **Sojourner Truth** sold photographic portraits of herself to fund her speaking tours, captioning them "I Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance." **Harriet Powers**, born enslaved in Georgia, sewed story quilts in the 1880s and 1890s that narrated Bible scenes and local events in applique, preserving history in a medium the art world long refused to recognize. Each of these artists answered erasure with self-representation.

Gender and Resistance in Slave Narratives (2.22)

Slave narratives were weapons of the abolitionist movement: first-person accounts that made slavery's cruelty impossible to ignore. **Olaudah Equiano's** *Interesting Narrative* (1789) described the Middle Passage for a British audience. **Frederick Douglass's** *Narrative* (1845) showed how slavery corrupted enslavers as well as the enslaved. **William Wells Brown's** narrative (1847) and **Henry Box Brown's** (1849), the man who mailed himself in a wooden box from Richmond to Philadelphia, dramatized the ingenuity of escape. **Solomon Northup's** *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853) told of a free Black New Yorker kidnapped into Louisiana slavery. And **Harriet Jacobs's** *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) exposed what the others could not fully say: the sexual exploitation of enslaved women. Jacobs hid for years in a tiny attic crawlspace to protect her children, and her book made the defense of Black womanhood central to abolition.

Gender shaped resistance throughout the system. Enslaved women resisted forced reproduction with herbal medicines, protected children at enormous personal cost, and used the few legal and social tools available to keep families together. When **Sojourner Truth** stood before the 1851 women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio, and asked "Ain't I a Woman?", she was claiming a place in both the abolitionist and women's movements that neither had fully granted Black women. Black women's organizing, from church societies to antislavery fairs to the Colored Women's conventions, ran on its own track alongside men's.

The Civil War and Black Communities (2.23)

Black Americans forced emancipation onto the war's agenda. From the start, enslaved people fled to Union lines, where the Army called them "contraband" and put them to work. In 1862 Black men began enlisting, and after the **Emancipation Proclamation** took effect on January 1, 1863, about 180,000 Black soldiers served in the Union Army, along with thousands more in the Navy. The **54th Massachusetts** regiment's assault on Fort Wagner in July 1863 became the most famous proof of Black courage under fire. Black women served as nurses, spies, and scouts, including Tubman. The war that began to preserve the Union ended by destroying slavery: Congress passed the **13th Amendment** in January 1865, and it was ratified that December.

Freedom Days (2.24)

Freedom arrived on different days in different places, and Black communities commemorated each one. On June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger reached Galveston, Texas, and announced that enslaved people there were free, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Black Texans began celebrating **Juneteenth** the next year, and the holiday spread across the country with the

Great Migration until it became a federal holiday in 2021. Other communities marked January 1, the Proclamation's effective date, or local emancipation days. In May 1865, formerly enslaved people in Charleston, South Carolina, gave Union war dead a proper burial in what became one of the first Decoration Day observances. And in 1966, Maulana Karenga created **Kwanzaa**, celebrated December 26 to January 1 around the seven principles of the Nguzo Saba, as a cultural holiday affirming African heritage and community values.

Trap. Juneteenth marks June 19, 1865, when the news of emancipation reached Texas. The Emancipation Proclamation took effect January 1, 1863. Kwanzaa, created in 1966, is a modern cultural holiday, not a commemoration of emancipation. Keep each date attached to its own event.

Confusions That Cost Points

PAIR	HOW TO KEEP THEM STRAIGHT
1619 arrival vs legal slavery	The White Lion captives were sold as indentured servants. Hereditary chattel slavery was built later: Virginia 1662, 1667, and the 1705 code.
Stono (1739) vs Vesey (1822) vs Turner (1831)	Stono was a colonial South Carolina march toward Spanish Florida. Vesey was a free Black man's Charleston plot aimed at Haiti. Turner was an enslaved man's Virginia revolt that actually happened.
Fort Mose vs maroon societies	Mose was legally sanctioned by Spain, with free residents serving in the militia. Maroon societies were self-liberated communities hidden from colonial power.
Haitian Revolution vs Louisiana Purchase	Haiti's victory (1791 to 1804) caused the Purchase (1803): Napoleon's defeat destroyed his American plans. Cause first, then effect.
Colonization vs abolition	Abolition meant ending slavery. Colonization meant removing free Black people from America. Black abolitionists overwhelmingly opposed colonization.
Underground Railroad vs literal railroad	A network of people and safe houses, not tracks and trains. After the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, most routes ran to Canada.

Practice Questions

Original questions written for this guide in the style of the AP exam. Answers and explanations are on page 12, so complete the questions before checking them.

1. Which statement about the Africans who arrived in Virginia in 1619 is accurate?

1. They were the first Africans to reach the Americas.
2. Their arrival immediately established hereditary slavery in Virginia law.
3. They arrived aboard the Mayflower as indentured servants from the Caribbean.
4. They were seized from the Portuguese ship *Sao Joao Bautista* and sold as indentured servants, not as legally defined chattel slaves.

2. Virginia's 1662 law of *partus sequitur ventrem* is most significant because it

1. required legislative approval for all manumissions
2. freed any enslaved person who converted to Christianity
3. made the legal status of a child follow the status of the mother, making slavery hereditary
4. banned the importation of enslaved Africans for ten years

3. The domestic slave trade of the early to mid-1800s is best described as

1. the forced movement of about one million enslaved people from the Upper South to the Deep South after the 1808 ban on importation
2. a program that reunited enslaved families separated by sale
3. a Northern effort to buy the freedom of enslaved people in the South
4. a small illegal market that operated only in New Orleans

4. Fort Mose is best distinguished from maroon societies elsewhere in the Americas because Fort Mose

1. was hidden from all colonial authorities and governed itself in secret
2. was a legally sanctioned free Black settlement established by the Spanish, whose residents served in the colonial militia
3. was founded by formerly enslaved people after the Haitian Revolution
4. existed only during the Civil War as a contraband camp

5. Which of the following is the best evidence of the Haitian Revolution's influence on the United States?

1. The Haitian Revolution ended slavery in the American South.
2. American slaveholders welcomed Haitian refugees and adopted their labor system.
3. The United States immediately recognized Haitian independence in 1804.
4. Napoleon's defeat in Saint-Domingue led directly to the Louisiana Purchase, and news of Haiti inspired Gabriel's and Vesey's plots.

6. Denmark Vesey differs from Gabriel and Nat Turner in that Vesey

1. planned his rising for Spanish Florida
2. was inspired by the American Revolution rather than Haiti
3. was a free Black man when he was accused of organizing a revolt
4. led a revolt that was actually carried out

7. Harriet Tubman's work on the Underground Railroad is best summarized by which statement?

1. She made about thirteen return missions to the South and guided roughly seventy people to freedom, never losing a passenger.
2. She operated a literal underground railway with tracks and stations beneath Maryland.
3. She freed more than three hundred enslaved people in a single year.
4. She worked alone and kept no contact with other abolitionists.

8. The Supreme Court's decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) held that

1. enslaved people who reached free territory automatically became free
2. Black people, whether free or enslaved, could never be American citizens, and Congress could not ban slavery in the territories
3. the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was unconstitutional
4. states could override federal slave law with personal liberty laws

Answer Key

1. D. The White Lion seized about twenty Mbundu captives from the Portuguese ship *Sao Joao Bautista*, and they were sold in Virginia as indentured servants. C is wrong on both counts: the Mayflower carried English settlers in 1620, and the captives came from Angola, not the Caribbean. A ignores a century of African presence in Spanish America before 1619, including Juan Garrido and Estevanico. B is the central trap of this unit: no hereditary slavery law existed in 1619; the legal institution was built later, through statutes like Virginia's 1662 law and the 1705 code.

2. C. *Partus sequitur ventrem*, "that which is born follows the womb," made a child's status follow the mother's, so the children of enslaved women were born enslaved. This reversed English common law, where status followed the father, and it made slavery hereditary. B describes the opposite of Virginia's 1667 law, which held that baptism did not free an enslaved person. D describes South Carolina's Negro Act of 1740, not Virginia in 1662. A also belongs to the Negro Act of 1740.

3. A. After the 1808 ban on importing enslaved Africans, traders moved about one million enslaved people from the Upper South to the cotton and sugar regions of the Deep South, a forced migration sometimes called the Second Middle Passage. D understates it wildly: New Orleans was the largest market, but the trade ran through Richmond, Charleston, Natchez, and overland coffle routes across the South. B reverses the trade's effect, which was the routine separation of families. C describes no historical program; the trade enriched traders like Franklin and Armfield, it did not buy anyone's freedom.

4. B. Fort Mose was established by Spanish Governor Montiano in 1738 as a legally sanctioned free Black town, and its residents, led by Francisco Menendez, served in the Spanish colonial militia. A describes maroon societies like those in the Great Dismal Swamp or Suriname, which is exactly the distinction the question tests. C is wrong on the date: Mose predates the Haitian Revolution by more than fifty years. D is wrong on the century: Mose was abandoned in 1763 when Spain ceded Florida to Britain.

5. D. Napoleon's defeat in Saint-Domingue destroyed his plans for a French empire in the Americas, leading to the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and news of the Haitian Revolution circulated through Black Atlantic networks and helped inspire Gabriel's Rebellion (1800) and Vesey's plot (1822). C is false: the United States refused to recognize Haiti until 1862. A is false: the Haitian Revolution did not end slavery anywhere outside Haiti. B reverses the historical reaction: American slaveholders feared Haitian refugees and the revolution's example, and Southern states tightened slave laws in response.

6. C. Vesey was a free Black carpenter in Charleston who had purchased his own freedom with lottery winnings before he was accused of plotting the 1822 rising. D describes Nat Turner, whose 1831 rebellion was actually carried out. A describes the Stono rebels of 1739, who marched toward Spanish Florida; Vesey's planned refuge was Haiti. B is wrong for all three in different ways, but most clearly for Vesey: his plot looked to Haiti, the Black republic, as its model and destination.

7. A. Tubman escaped in 1849, made about thirteen missions back to Maryland between 1850 and 1860, guided roughly seventy people to freedom, and never lost a passenger. B is the literal-railroad misconception: the Underground Railroad was a network of people and safe houses, not tracks. C inflates her numbers; the "three hundred" figure is a myth historians have corrected. D is false: Tubman worked closely with other abolitionists, including William Still in Philadelphia, and met with John Brown in 1858.

8. B. Chief Justice Taney's opinion held that Black people could never be American citizens and therefore had no standing to sue, and it declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional, meaning Congress could not ban slavery in the territories. A states the position the Court rejected: Scott had lived in free

Illinois and Wisconsin Territory, and the Court ruled he was still enslaved. C is backwards: the Court upheld the Fugitive Slave Act framework; it was the 1850 Act's opponents who called it unconstitutional. D describes the argument *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842) had already rejected, when the Court held that federal fugitive slave law overrode state personal liberty laws.

When you check your answers, note which distinction each miss came from. Make a flashcard for that distinction and drill it spaced out over the next few days instead of rereading the whole section. If you missed one of these questions, the same distinction is worth practicing again in Rycal, where the AP African American Studies deck has flashcards for it and more practice questions use the same kinds of traps.

One-Page Recall Check

Say each answer out loud before you look back, and mark the ones you cannot finish. Anything you cannot say out loud yet belongs in your flashcard deck. In Rycal, add those items to the AP African American Studies deck and let spaced review bring them back over the next few days.

- Name two African explorers of the Americas and explain why their stories matter for the question of when Black history in the Americas begins.
- List the major departure zones of the transatlantic slave trade and explain what share of captives came to British North America versus Brazil.
- Explain why 1619 marks an arrival, not the start of legal slavery, and name the laws that built the legal institution.
- Describe how the slave trade affected West African societies, beyond the number of people taken.
- Give two examples of resistance on slave ships and explain what the *Amistad* case did and did not decide.
- Explain how the domestic slave trade worked after 1808 and what "sold down the river" meant.
- Compare the task system and the gang system, and name the crops tied to each.
- Explain what *partus sequitur ventrem* changed and why Bacon's Rebellion mattered to Virginia's lawmakers.
- Trace the law from *Prigg v. Pennsylvania* (1842) through the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to *Dred Scott* (1857).
- Explain the framework's claim that race is socially constructed, using the 1662 statute as evidence.
- Distinguish Stono (1739), Gabriel (1800), Vesey (1822), and Turner (1831) by leader, place, and outcome.
- Explain what made Fort Mose different from a maroon society, and why Stono's rebels marched toward Florida.
- Describe the Haitian Revolution's dates, outcome, and two specific effects on the United States.
- Compare Palmares and the Black Seminoles as autonomous Black communities.
- Explain the difference between colonization and abolition, and name one Black leader who opposed colonization and why.
- Describe the Underground Railroad as a network, with Tubman's and Still's roles.
- Explain how slave narratives functioned as abolitionist weapons, and what Jacobs's narrative added about gender.
- Give the dates and meanings of Juneteenth and Kwanzaa, and explain why Black communities created freedom commemorations.

Where to go next. Turn every missed item above into flashcards and drill them spaced out over several days rather than in one sitting. In Rycal, open the AP African American Studies deck. The deck covers the terms in this guide, and its practice questions target the same traps named here. If you have a test date, add it in the Test Planner. You can also start your next review with a Brain Dump, then check what you missed against this guide.

Key terms for this unit

Juan Garrido, Estevanico, Departure zones, White Lion, Point Comfort, Middle Passage, *Amistad*, Joseph Cinque, Domestic slave trade (Second Middle Passage), *Partus sequitur ventrem*, Bacon's Rebellion, Slave codes, Negro Act of 1740, *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*, Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, Social construction of race, One-drop rule, Task system, Gang system, Spirituals, Ring shout, Gullah and Geechee, Phillis Wheatley, Free African Society, Stono Rebellion, Jemmy (Cato), Fort Mose, Francisco Menendez, Haitian Revolution, Toussaint Louverture, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Louisiana Purchase, Gabriel's Rebellion, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, Maroon societies, Palmares, Zumbi, Black Seminoles, American Colonization Society, Liberia, David Walker, Henry Highland Garnet, Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, William Still, Slave narratives, Harriet Jacobs, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, 54th Massachusetts, Emancipation Proclamation, 13th Amendment, Juneteenth, Kwanzaa.

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