

Lesson 3

Museum Connection: Labor and the Black Experience

Lesson Title: Triangular Trade

Purpose: In this lesson students will read individually for information in order to examine the history of the Atlantic slave trade. In cooperative groups, they will analyze primary and secondary documents in order to determine the costs and benefits of the slave trade to the nations and peoples involved. As an individual assessment, students will write and deliver a speech by a member of the British Parliament who wished to abolish the slave trade.

Grade Level and Content Area: Middle, Social Studies

Time Frame: 3-5 class periods

Correlation to State Social Studies Standards:

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| WH 3.10.12.4 | Describe the origins of the transatlantic African slave trade and the consequences for Africa, America, and Europe, such as triangular trade and the Middle Passage. |
| GEO 4.3.8.8 | Describe how cooperation and conflict contribute to political, economic, geographic, and cultural divisions of Earth's surface. |
| ECON 5.1.8.2 | Analyze opportunity costs and trade-offs in business, government, and personal decision-making. |
| ECON 5.1.8.3 | Analyze the relationship between the availability of natural, capital, and human resources, and the production of goods and services now and in the past. |

Social Studies: Maryland College and Career Ready Standards

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| 3.C.1.a (Grade 6) | Explain how the development of transportation and communication networks influenced the movement of people, goods, and ideas from place to place, such as trade routes in Africa, Asia and Europe, and the spread of Islam. |
| 4.A.1.a (Grade 6) | Identify the costs, including opportunity cost, and the benefits of economic decisions made by individuals and groups, including governments in early world history, such as the decision to engage in trade. |
| 4.A.2.b (Grade 7) | Identify opportunity costs and trade offs in decisions made in the production, distributions, and consumption of goods and services. |

Correlation to State Reading and English Language Arts Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards:

1.E.1.a (Grades 6, 7, and 8)	Listen to critically, read, and discuss texts representing diversity in content, culture, authorship, and perspective, including areas such as race, gender, disability, religion, and socio-economic background.
1.E.3 (Grades 6, 7, and 8)	Use strategies to make meaning from text (during reading).
2.A.1.a (Grades 7 and 8)	Read, use, and identify the characteristics of primary and secondary sources of academic information.

Objective:

- Students will describe the benefits and costs of the Triangular Trade to the nations and peoples involved.

Vocabulary and Concepts:

Abolition – Abolition is the act of putting an end to a condition or cause, as in the abolition of slavery.

Barracoon – An enclosure or barracks used for the temporary confinement of slaves was called a barracoon.

Goods – Tangible objects known as goods can be used to satisfy economic wants. Goods include but are not limited to food, shoes, cars, houses, books, and furniture.

Middle Passage – The term Middle Passage describes the forced transatlantic voyage of slaves from Africa to the Americas.

Slave Coffle – A train of slaves fastened together was called a slave coffle.

Slavery – Slavery is the institution of owning slaves or holding individuals in a condition of servitude.

Triangular Trade – Triangular Trade refers to the shipping routes that connected Africa, the West Indies, and North America in the transatlantic commerce of slaves and manufactured goods.

Voluntary – The term voluntary implies that a person has the power of free choice.

Materials

For the teacher:

Teacher Resource Sheet 1 – An Act for Extending and Improving the Trade to Africa, 1750

Teacher Resource Sheet 2 – An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade

For the student:

- Student Resource Sheet 1a – History of the Atlantic Slave Trade
- Student Resource Sheet 1b – History of the Atlantic Slave Trade target notes
- Student Resource Sheet 2 – The Atlantic Slave Trade
- Student Resource Sheet 3 – Letter from William Fitzhugh (Virginia Planter and Merchant) to Mr. Jackson (of Portsmouth, New Hampshire), 1683
- Student Resource Sheet 4 – An excerpt from “The Trade in Loango” by Abbe Proyart
- Student Resource Sheet 5 – An excerpt from “The Slave Ship” by Heinrich Heine
- Student Resource Sheet 6 – Rum
- Student Resource Sheet 7 – Sugar
- Student Resource Sheet 8 – Saint Domingue (Modern Haiti)
- Student Resource Sheet 9 – The North American Colonies
- Student Resource Sheet 10 – Working in Sugar Cane fields
- Student Resource Sheet 11 – Excerpt of a letter from King Alfonso of Kongo to King John of Portugal
- Student Resource Sheet 12 – Hoeing Rice, Southern United States
- Student Resource Sheet 13 – The Middle Passage

Document Set 1:

- Student Resource Sheet 14 – Slave Coffle, Central Africa
- Student Resource Sheet 15 – Wooden Yokes Used in Slave Coffles, Senegal
- Student Resource Sheet 16 – Slave Barracoon, Congo
- Student Resource Sheet 17 – Captured!

Document Set 2:

- Student Resource Sheet 18 – Plan of the British Slave Ship *Brookes*
- Student Resource Sheet 19 – Africans Forced to Dance on Deck of Slave Ship
- Student Resource Sheet 20 – The Slave Deck on the Bark *Wildfire*
- Student Resource Sheet 21 – The Voyage
- Student Resource Sheet 22 – Africans Thrown Overboard from a Slave Ship, Brazil

Document Set 3:

- Student Resource Sheet 23 – Slave Auction, Richmond, Virginia
- Student Resource Sheet 24 – Advertisement for a Slave Sale, Charleston, South Carolina
- Student Resource Sheet 25 – Sold!
- Student Resource Sheet 26 – Slave Sale, Richmond, Virginia

Resources

Books:

- Christian, Charles Melvin. *Black Saga: The African American Experience*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.

Emert, Phyllis Raybin, ed. *Colonial Triangular Trade: An Economy Based on Human Misery*. Carlisle, Massachusetts: Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1995.

Equiano, Olaudah. "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself." In *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997.

Haskins, James, and Kathleen Benson. *Bound for America: The Forced Migration of Africans to the New World*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1999.

Mannix, Daniel Pratt, and Malcolm Cowley. *Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1518-1865*. New York: The Viking Press, 1969.

Reynolds, Edward. *Stand the Storm: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade*. London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1989.

Wright, Donald R. *African Americans in the Colonial Era: From African Origins Through the American Revolution*. Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1990.

Teacher Background:

The economies of colonial Maryland and Virginia depended on tobacco, and both used tobacco as a medium of exchange. In fact, King Charles I once said that Virginia was "wholly built on smoke." The cultivation of tobacco, however, required considerably more manpower than was available in either colony. In 1619, John Rolfe, secretary and recorder of Virginia reported that "about the last of August there came to Virginia a Dutch man of warre that sold us twenty negers"(Johnson 36). The Africans on the ship were indentured servants, and they were treated as such. Yet both Maryland and Virginia were in need of a more permanent source of labor: slaves. Although Massachusetts was the first colony to recognize slavery, Maryland and Virginia soon followed, with both colonies legalizing slavery during the 1660s. By 1770, every colony except North Carolina and Georgia had legalized slavery, and thereafter the slave trade quickly grew into "the most profitable business" in the colonies.

The growing demand for slaves in the colonies fueled increasingly violent conflict among African tribes. Since some African chiefs or kings could increase their wealth by working closely with slave traders, one tribe might capture the warriors of another tribe and then sell their prisoners of war into slavery. Raiding parties might also kidnap Africans from their villages and sell them as slaves. African slaves were viewed as chattel, and because they had no government to protect them or place to hide in the British colonies, the slave trade flourished.

Triangular Trade receives its name from the shipping routes that connected Europe, Africa, the West Indies, and North America in the transatlantic commerce of slaves and

manufactured goods. These routes began in England, where goods were shipped to Africa. In Africa, the goods were then traded for slaves bound for the Americas. Known as the Middle Passage, the forced voyage from the freedom of Africa to the auction blocks of the Americas was a physical and psychological nightmare that lasted several weeks or months. Having unloaded their cargoes in the colonies, the ships returned to England laden with tobacco, sugar, cotton, rum, and other slave-produced items. This trade pattern continued with some modifications into the early nineteenth century.

In order to maximize profits and offset any losses, most captains packed as many Africans as possible into the holds of their ships. During the late 1600s and throughout the 1700s, most English ships that sailed directly from Africa to the colonies carried about 200 enslaved Africans. Later slave ships could carry as many as 400 slaves with a crew of 47. Slaves were chained in pairs (the right arm and leg of one chained to the left leg and arm of another), and men and women were separated from each other. All of them were forced to lie naked on wooden planks below deck in extremely hot quarters. At times, small groups of slaves were allowed to come on deck for exercise; some of them were forced to dance. Women and children could occasionally roam the deck, but men were allowed on deck for only a short while.

Heat, limited sanitary facilities (sometimes buckets for human waste were not emptied for long periods of time), and epidemics from diseases such as smallpox and dysentery together produced an unbearable stench onboard. An outbreak of disease could devastate an entire cargo of enslaved Africans, and an estimated 15 to 20 percent of slaves probably died en route to the colonies, primarily from diseases resulting from overcrowding, spoiled food, and contaminated water. Many also died of starvation and thirst. Yet captains most feared slave mutinies, 250 of which scholars estimate took place. As a result, those slaves who were disruptive or likely to cause a mutiny were thrown overboard or shot to death. Nevertheless, although some enslaved Africans did resist, they had little means either to protect themselves or to escape. Such hopeless misery led many slaves to commit suicide by jumping overboard or by refusing to eat. Because of the stench and disease, many slave ships had to be abandoned after about five years. Eventually ships were built especially for human cargo, with shackling irons, nets, and ropes as standard equipment.

The autobiography of Olaudah Equiano, a former slave who became an antislavery activist, paints a vivid portrait of the horrors of the Middle Passage (from "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself," in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 158, 159-160):

When I . . . saw . . . a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. . . .

The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable. . . . One day, when we had a smooth sea and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made [it] through the nettings and jumped into the sea: immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their example; and I believe many more would very soon have done the same if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew, who were instantly alarmed. Those of us that were the most active were in a moment put down under the deck, and there was such a noise and confusion amongst the people of the ship as I never heard before, to stop her, and get the boat out to go after the slaves. However two of the wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully for thus attempting to prefer death to slavery. In this manner we continued to undergo more hardships than I can now relate, hardships which are inseparable from this accursed trade. Many a time we were near suffocation from the want of fresh air, which we were often without for whole days together. This, and the stench of the necessary tubs [which served as toilets], carried off many.

For some enslaved Africans, the Middle Passage was temporarily interrupted in the West Indies, where they would undergo a process called "seasoning" or "breaking in." During this process, slaves were frequently and harshly flogged, sometimes with a paddle but more often with a whip that had a lead ball sewn on its end. They were also forced to learn how to speak a new language, eat new foods, and obey white masters. In addition, slaves learned what to expect in the colonies. Brutal and intense, the seasoning process could last as long as four years, after which enslaved Africans were shipped to mainland British colonies in order to be sold.

While the slave trade resulted in the economic stagnation and destruction of many African tribes, it greatly benefited both England and the colonies. Since slavery created thousands of jobs (in shipbuilding, shipping, etc.), helped to spur the growth of cities (such as London, Liverpool, New York, and Boston), and created profits for investment, some tried to justify its abuses. For example, James H. Hammond, a slave owner who later became governor of South Carolina, once said that slavery was "the greatest of all the great blessings which a kind providence has bestowed"(Miller 134). Many others like Hammond ignored or refused to respond to the horrors associated with the Middle Passage. Slavery, Hammond claimed, "allowed Whites to tame the southern wilderness and turn it into an agricultural wonderland" and gave a slave owner the "leisure to cultivate his mind and create a society notable for its culture and gentility."

Between 1690 and 1770, as many as 100,000 Africans were brought into the Chesapeake (Maryland and Virginia) region. The cotton they harvested supplied English and French companies with both the product and the profits necessary for initiating the industrial revolution. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 would make cotton the most profitable crop in the country, and the growing demand for labor required direct importation of slaves into the South. At the same time, the slave trade

expanded to include its own brisk internal slave-trading business. Both businesses were abusive, but each brought in large sums of money for the owners of slave pens and the captains of slave ships. A solidly built slave ship that carried 300 to 400 slaves and that had cost the owner about \$35,000, for instance, could make between \$30,000 and \$100,000 per trip.

By the late-17th century, southern colonists, including Marylanders, had become dependent on slave labor, and by 1800, almost one million slaves lived mainly in the cotton belt of the southern states, primarily. In 1808, however, a federal law went into effect that prohibited the importation of new slaves into the United States. Although this law was poorly enforced for several years, it became increasingly evident that both slave trading and the horrors of the Middle Passage were coming to an end.

Lesson Development:

1. **Motivation:** Display Teacher Resource Sheet 1, An Act for Extending and Improving the Trade to Africa, 1750.

Ask:

- In what country was this act passed?
- What goods are being traded? Why?

Explain to students that the slave trade was a very profitable venture for many nations, not just Great Britain.

2. Distribute Student Resource Sheet 1a, History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, and Student Resource Sheet 1b, History of the Slave Trade target notes. Students should read and take notes on the resource sheet.
3. After all students have completed the reading, discuss the article.

Ask: Why do you think so many nations were involved in the slave trade?

Lead students to the conclusion that they were involved because they thought that they would benefit.

4. Tell students that they will be focusing on the slave trade and the benefits that various nations obtained from it. Display a map of the Triangular Trade.

Ask: What shape does this trade route resemble?
 What areas did this trade route involve?
 What goods were involved?

Discuss.

5. Explain to students that they will be examining this exchange of goods in order to illustrate the fact that people trade because they expect to benefit.

6. Distribute Student Resource Sheet 2, The Atlantic Slave Trade, and packets containing Student Resource Sheets 3-12. In pairs or small groups, students should analyze the documents and complete the graphic organizer.
7. Display a transparency of Student Resource Sheet 2, The Atlantic Slave Trade. After students have finished completing their chart, discuss their answers. Ask: Did all nations benefit? If so, how? Discuss.
8. Explain to students that enslaved Africans were traded as property or goods, just like the guns, sugar, tobacco, and other products that were traded. While the Triangular Trade was beneficial to those engaged in it, it was not at all beneficial to the Africans who were enslaved and had unwillingly become a part of the trade route. Explain to students that they will be examining the Middle Passage to learn about the horrible conditions that enslaved Africans faced on their “leg” of the Triangular Trade.
9. Have students return to their partners (or small groups). Distribute Student Resource Sheet 13, The Middle Passage. Divide Document Sets 1-3 among the various groups. Students should analyze the documents and complete the corresponding section of the graphic organizer.
10. After all groups have completed their assigned sections of the graphic organizer, bring the class together as a group. Display a transparency of Student Resource Sheet 13, The Middle Passage. Lead a discussion of the Middle Passage by having groups report on their findings, making sure that students have completely filled in their graphic organizer.
11. Explain to students that the horrific conditions of the Middle Passage and the institution of slavery that followed, caused many people to doubt that the benefits of the slave trade were greater than the cost in human misery. One of the ways that they chose to express their concerns was through the political arena. In that arena, they advocated for the passage of laws that would abolish the slave trade.
12. **Assessment:**
It is 1806. As a member of the British House of Commons, you are trying to pass an act that will abolish the slave trade. Write a 2-3 minute speech to convince your fellow MPs to vote for the act abolishing the importation of slaves. Be sure to:
 - acknowledge the benefits of the trade to the parties concerned
 - accentuate the evils of trading people and the horrors of the Middle Passage
 - consider how the benefits of outlawing that trade far outweigh the benefits of continuing it
13. **Closure:** Display Teacher Resource Sheet 2, An Act for the Prohibition of the Slave Trade. Have students hypothesize the effect of this act on all of the parties concerned in the Triangular Trade. Ask:

- Do you think that this act stopped the participation of British merchants in the slave trade? Why or why not?
- How do you think people in the Americas acquired slaves if they could no longer get them by purchasing them from British merchants?
- What do you think the impact of this act was on the institution of slavery in the Americas?
- Examine the “black market” in slave trading after the 1807 Act.

Thoughtful Application:

Have students compare their hypotheses of the results of the prohibition of the slave trade with what actually happened.

Lesson Extensions:

- Visit the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture.

Teacher Resource Sheet 1

An Act for Extending and Improving the Trade to Africa, 1750

Whereas the Trade to and from Africa is very advantageous to Great Britain, and necessary for supplying the Plantations and Colonies thereunto belonging with a sufficient Number of Negroes at reasonable Rates; and for that Purpose the said Trade ought to be free and open to all his Majesty's Subjects: Therefore be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That it shall and may be lawful for all his Majesty's Subjects to trade and traffick to and from any Port or Place in Africa, between the Port of Sallee in South Barbary, and the Cape of Good Hope, when, and at such Times, and in such Manner, and in or with such Quantity of Goods, Wares or Mechandizes, as he or they shall think fit, without any Restraint whatsoever. . .

From *Colonial Triangular Trade: An Economy Based on Human Misery*, edited by Phyllis Raybin Emert (Carlisle, Massachusetts: Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1995), p. 13.

**An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade
Great Britain
March 25, 1807**

'Whereas the Two Houses of Parliament did, by their Resolutions of the Tenth and Twenty-fourth days of June One Thousand eight hundred and six, severally resolve, upon certain Grounds therein mentioned, that they would, with all practicable Expedition, take effectual Measures for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade in such Manner, and at such Period as might be deemed advisable, And whereas it is fit upon all and each of the Grounds mentioned in the said Resolutions, that the same should be forthwith abolished and prohibited, and declared to be unlawful';

Be it therefore enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the First Day of May One thousand eight hundred and seven, the African Slave Trade, and all and all manner of dealing and trading in the Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer of Slaves, or of Persons intended to be sold, transferred, used, or dealt with as Slaves, practiced or carried on, in, at, to or from any Part of the Coast or Countries of Africa, shall be, and the same is hereby utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful; and also that all and all manner of dealing, either by way of Purchase, Sale, Barter, or Transfer, or by means of any other Contract or Agreement whatever, relating to any Slaves, or to any Persons intended to be used or dealt with as Slaves, for the Purpose of such Slaves or Persons being removed or transported either immediately or by Transshipment at Sea or otherwise, directly or indirectly from Africa, or from any Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, in the West Indies, or in any other part of America, not being in the Dominion, Possession, or Occupation of His Majesty, to any other Island, Country, Territory, or Place whatever, is hereby in like Manner utterly abolished, prohibited, and declared to be unlawful; and if any of His Majesty's Subjects, or any Person or Persons resident within this United Kingdom, or any of the Islands, Colonies, Dominions, or Territories thereto belonging, or in His Majesties Occupation or Possession, shall from and after the Day aforesaid, by him or themselves, or by his or their Factors or Agents or otherwise howsoever, deal or trade in, purchase, sell, barter, or transfer, or contract or agree for the dealing or trading in, purchasing, selling, bartering, or transferring of any Slave or Slaves, or any Person or Persons intended to be sold, transferred, used, or dealt with as a Slave or Slaves contrary to the Prohibitions of this Act, he or they so offending shall forfeit and pay for every such Offence the Sum of One hundred Pounds of lawful Money of Great Britain for each and every Slave so purchased, sold, bartered, or transferred, or contracted or agreed for as aforesaid, the One Moiety thereof to the Use of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and the other Moiety to the Use of any Person who shall inform, sue, and prosecute for the same.

Text available online at http://www.pdavis.nl/Legis_06.htm

History of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Introduction

The origins of the African slave trade can be traced back to the Age of Exploration in the 15th century. Europeans had become quite addicted to the luxuries of exotic spices, silks, and porcelain that could only be found in Asia. Unfortunately for them, Muslim traders had a complete monopoly over the trade routes to the Far East. Unsuccessful in the attempt to break that monopoly, they started to explore water routes that would enable them to bypass the Muslims. The Portuguese took the lead in that exploration and sent voyages down the west coast of Africa in hopes of finding a new route to the source of traded goods. On those voyages they found a new type of good: human beings.

Portugal

Trafficking of human beings did not begin with the Portuguese in the 1400s. Indeed, slavery had existed throughout the world since ancient times. When the Portuguese arrived in West Africa, they found a flourishing slave trade; one that existed between the sub-Saharan African states, as well as one that existed between sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. Those slaves often found their way as far as the Middle East. Recognizing the potential profit in such a trade, the Portuguese initially tried to capture Africans through raiding expeditions along the coast. Faced by tremendous opposition from the natives, the Portuguese decided to develop a trading system with the Africans in which they traded as equals. Using the Africans' already successful and time-tested trading patterns, the Portuguese soon established a thriving commerce in slaves as well as gold and ivory. By the end of the 15th century, they had built a fort on Africa's Gold Coast and been granted exclusive rights to the slave trade by the Pope. They supplied the Spanish and Portuguese settlements in Central and South America and the Caribbean with African slaves throughout the 16th century.

Spain

Spain, which was excluded from colonizing Africa by a Papal Act of 1493 and the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, was only able to carry slaves to the colonies. By 1518 the demand for slaves in the Spanish New World was so great that King Charles I of Spain sanctioned the direct transport of slaves from Africa to the American colonies. In 1538 the Spanish Government began to issue individual licenses to traders in order to supply slaves to their colonies. This process became too cumbersome, and Spain soon changed its method and instead sold the right to import slaves (*asiento*) to a single contractor.

Holland

After Holland became independent of Spain in the late 16th century, it concentrated on seizing control of commercial routes to the New World. The Dutch West India Company was organized in 1621 and held a monopoly over the African trade and the trade with Dutch Colonies in the New World. Because the English were preoccupied with a Civil

War at home, the Dutch were able to provide a real challenge to the Portuguese. Most of the Africans that went to the American colonies during the 17th century were taken on Dutch Ships. Dutch slave traders were able to make tremendous profits before their influence declined by the end of the 17th century.

England

English participation in the slave trade came later. It wasn't until Captain John Hawkins made several voyages to Africa in the mid-16th century that they began to see the real benefit of participation. Despite his initial success, the English did not become fully active in the slave trade until the Spanish Armada was defeated and the Spanish stranglehold over the Atlantic broken.

In many European nations, the monarch had to give formal permission (a Royal Charter) for overseas trade to be considered legal. England was no different. There, merchants petitioned the King to form joint companies that would have sole rights to trade with a particular area. In 1618, the Company of Adventurers of London was established, which had a monopoly over the gold and ivory trade on the West African Coast. Despite her interest in the profits that the trade could bring the country, political instability kept England's participation minimal until 1692, when the king chartered the Royal African Company.

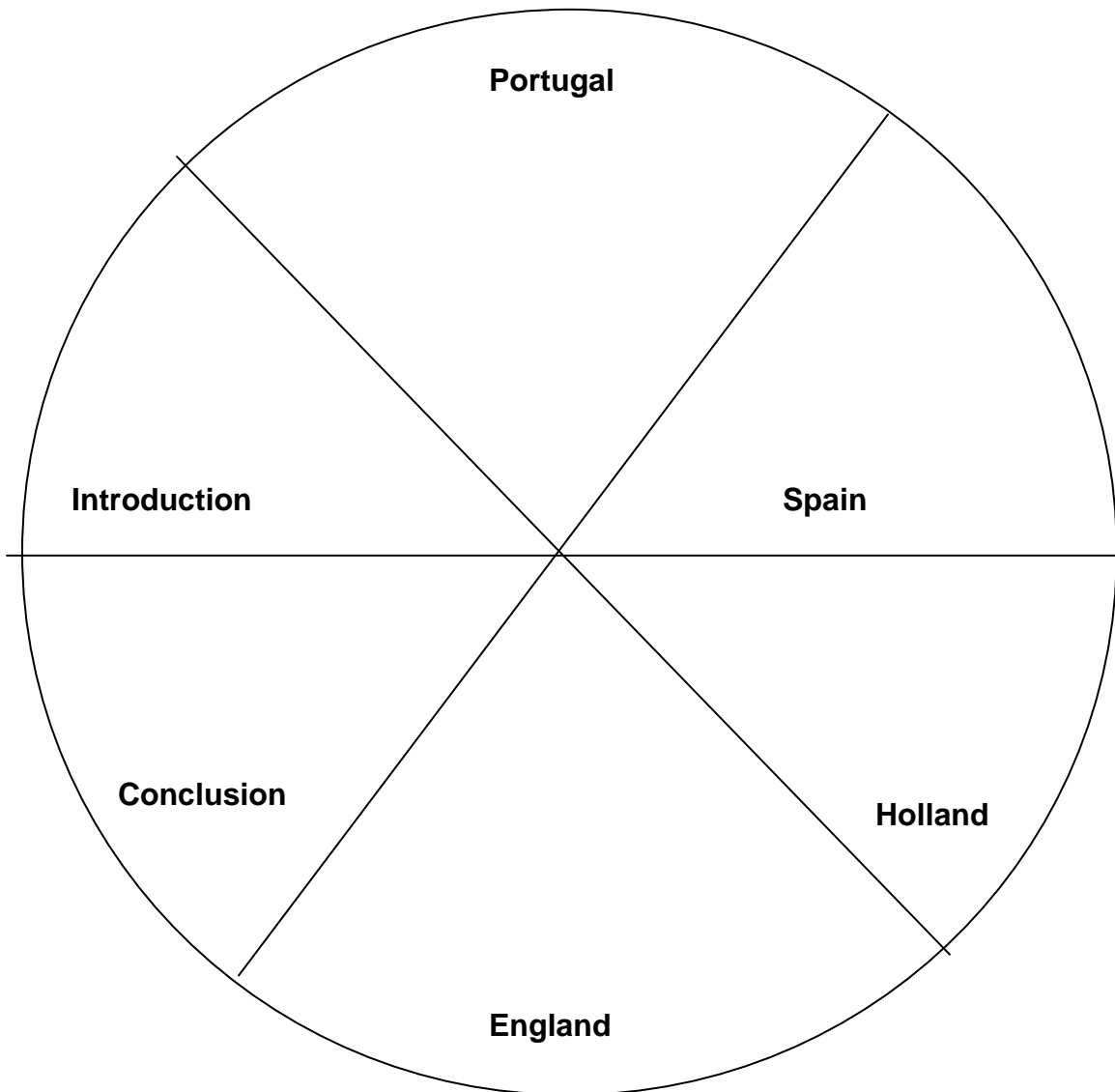
The company that had the most influence and participation in the African slave trade was the Royal African Company. The Royal African Company jealously guarded its monopoly over the trade and successfully drove the French and Dutch out of West Africa. As the sole legal provider of slaves to the colonies, the Royal African Company established and administered trading posts on the West African coast and was authorized to seize English ships, other than its own, involved in the trade. The Royal African Company's monopoly was ended in 1698. From then on private traders were allowed to operate freely in and out of Africa on the basis of a 10 percent duty on the value of their cargoes. England obtained the *Asiento* through the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht that negotiated the end of the War of Spanish Succession and gained the right to take slaves to the Spanish Colonies for 30 years. With this, England completely dominated the African slave trade.

As the profitability of the slave trade became more apparent, independent British merchants began to clamor for their right to participate in it. In 1750, Great Britain passed an act allowing for free and open trade in Africa.

Conclusion

By the 18th century, European merchants controlled over 1,000 miles of the West African coast and the transatlantic slave trade that accompanied it. Between the 14th and 18th centuries, at least 10 million African captives were transported across the Atlantic. Half of the slaves transported in the 18th century alone were on ships owned by the Portuguese, British, and French. Brazil and the Caribbean islands took receipt of approximately 90 percent of the Africans who survived the Middle Passage.

History of the Atlantic Slave Trade



Student Resource Sheet 2a

The Atlantic Slave Trade

Source	Who is involved?	What is being traded?	What is the benefit to the Exporter?	What is the benefit to the Importer?
Letter from William Fitzhugh				
The Trade in Loango				
The Slave Ship				
Rum				
Sugar				
Saint Domingue				

Student Resource Sheet 2b

The Atlantic Slave Trade

Source	Who is involved?	What is being traded?	What is the benefit to the Exporter?	What is the benefit to the Importer?
The North American Colonies				
Slaves in a Caribbean Sugar Cane Mill				
King Alfonso of Kongo				
Hoeing Rice				

Student Resource Sheet 3

**Letter from William Fitzhugh (Virginia Planter and Merchant)
to Mr. Jackson (of Portsmouth, New Hampshire), 1683**

Mr. Jackson: As to your proposal about the bringing in Negroes next fall, I have this to offer and you may communicate the same to your owners and Employers, that I will deal with them for so many as shall amount to 50,000 lbs of Tob'o [tobacco] and cask [rum] which will be about 20 hhds. [hogsheads, which are large containers] under the condition and at these ages and prices following, to say—to give 3000 lbs Tob'o for every Negro boy or girl, that shall be between the age of Seven and Eleven years old; to give 4000 lbs Tob'o for every youth or girl that shall be between the age of 11 to 15 and to give 5000 lbs Tob'o for every young man or woman that shall be above 15 years of age and not exceed 24, the said Negroes to be delivered at my landing some time in September next, and I to have notice whether they will so agree some time in August next. And I do assure you and so you may acquaint them that upon your delivery and my receipt of the Negroes, according to the ages above mentioned and that they be sound and healthfull at their Delivery, I will give you such sufficient caution for the payment of the Tob'o accordingly by the 20th Decr. then next following as shall be approved of. The ages of the Negroes to be judg'd and detemin'd by two or three such honest and reasonable men here as your self shall nominate and appoint . . .

From Colonial Triangular Trade: An Economy Based on Human Misery, edited by Phyllis Raybin Emert (Carlisle, Massachusetts: Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1995), p. 16.

Student Resource Sheet 4

**From “The Trade in Loango”
by Abbe Proyart**

For resource, go to the link below:

<http://tinyurl.com/njnrvv6>

Open book and scroll down to pages 27-29

From Colonial Triangular Trade: An Economy Based on Human Misery, edited by Phyllis Raybin Emert
(Carlisle, Massachusetts: Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1995), p. 27-29.

Student Resource Sheet 5

**An excerpt from
“The Slave Ship”
by Heinrich Heine**

For resource, go to the link below:

<http://davidsbuendler.freehostia.com/slaveship.htm>

Scroll down to versus 3 and 4

From The Slave Ship by Heinrich Heine, Translated by Davids Buendler

Rum

In 1770, just before the American Revolution, rum represented over four-fifths of New England's exports. About eleven million gallons of Rhode Island rum were exchanged for slaves in Africa between 1709 and 1807, with about 800,000 gallons being the annual average marketed in the last few years before 1807. Each slave ship might carry fifty to a hundred hogsheads. A specially strong "Guinea rum" was distilled in Newport for the Africa market. The rum trade on the coast of West Africa was by then a "virtual monopoly of New England." In 1755, Caleb Godfrey, a slave captain from Newport, Rhode Island, bought four men, three women, three girls, and one boy for 799 gallons of rum, two barrels of beef, and one barrel of pork, together with some smaller items; . . . The Africans with whom Rhode Island captains had traded, especially along the Gold and Windward coasts, had also become addicted to North American rum, a fact which gave captains from Rhode Island a definite advantage . . .

<http://tinyurl.com/o4akvgo>

From *The Slave Trade. The Story of the Atlantic Trade: 1440-1870*, by Hugh Thomas (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), p. 328-329.

Sugar

Sugar had been widely known and consumed in medieval Europe, but its high price and exotic origin meant that it was considered as either a spice or a drug . . . It had reached Christian Europe via the Islamic world, and it had been a crusader dynasty . . . who had made the first attempt to domesticate it for production on Cyprus. But sugar cane is native to the tropical monsoon regions of southeast Asia from New Guinea to the Bay of Bengal, and to reach its mature height of 8 feet (2 metres) it needs the combination of drenching, daily rainfall and hot temperatures. It was precisely the difficulty of establishing it in the drier Mediterranean region, under optimal growing conditions, that kept yields relatively low and prices comparatively high. So for centuries sugar remained a drug or a spice, in both cases an exotic luxury rather than a daily commodity. But its Portuguese shippers and growers, abetted by Dutch and Jewish traders and refiners, were constantly moving west, out into the warmer . . . latitudes of the Atlantic . . . in search of the perfect combination of heat and rain. Famously . . . they found what they were looking for in the former Portuguese colony of Brazil.

But there was something else that sugar cane needed if its golden juice was going to pay off, and that was intensive, highly concentrated, task-specific applications of manpower. For the cane was an unforgiving and volatile crop. It could not be farmed and harvested in a single growing year since it took at least fourteen months to ripen. But once it had reached maturity, the cumbersome grass needed to be harvested quickly to prevent the sugar going starchy. Once stripped and cut, the cane in its turn had to be speedily taken to the ox-powered vertical crushing rollers before the sucrose concentration of the juice self-degraded. Every subsequent stage of production—the boiling of the juice, the arrest of the boiling process at the precise moment for optimum crystallization, the partial refining in clay-stopped inverted cone moulds, the lengthy drying process—demanded the kind of strength, speed and stamina in tropical conditions that indentured white Europeans or captive Native Americans were ill equipped to provide...

From *A History of Britain. Volume II: The Wars of the British, 1603-1776* by Simon Schama (New York: Hyperion, 2001), p. 410.

Saint Domingue (Modern Haiti)

By the middle of the eighteenth century, it was clear that Saint Domingue was the dominant island in the Caribbean. It was the greatest sugar-producing colony in America, it now held the largest West Indian slave population, and it was also quickly becoming the world's largest producer of coffee, which had only been introduced into the island in 1723. By the late 1780s Saint Domingue planters were recognized as the most efficient and productive sugar producers in the world. The slave population stood at 460,000 people, which was not only the largest of any island but represented close to half of the 1 million slaves then being held in all the Caribbean colonies . . . In any one year well over 600 vessels visited the ports of the island to carry its sugar, coffee, cotton, indigo, and cacao to European consumers...

From *The Atlantic Slave Trade* by Herbert S. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 33.

The North American Colonies

The Chesapeake became the primary tobacco producer for the world, exporting some 38 million pounds by 1700 and effectively liquidating English West Indian production. It was also the most important slave zone in continental North America, holding some 145,000 slaves (or 60 percent of the total in the thirteen colonies) by 1750. The Georgia-South Carolina region became a major rice producer on coastal plantations, with some slave-produced indigo in the backland areas. These slave-based rice plantations absorbed 40,000 slaves by mid-century. By 1790 there were an impressive 698,000 slaves in what was now the United States, 94 percent of whom were in the so-called southern states from Maryland south. . . .

But rice and tobacco would soon pale in significance to the production of cotton. Although long- and short-staple cotton had been grown in the southern region for some time, . . . only the introduction of mechanical cleaning of the short-staple and heavily seeded cotton in the 1790s with the cotton gin permitted cotton planting to penetrate into the interior of the country and also to become a competitive crop on the world market. Starting in the rice regions, cotton spread inland quickly, and as early as the 1830s half of the cotton was being produced in the newly settled regions of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana . . . By the middle of the nineteenth century this was the largest single export from the United States, more valuable than all other exports combined, and it was an overwhelmingly slave-produced crop...

From *The Atlantic Slave Trade* by Herbert S. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 43-44.

Working in Sugar Cane fields



"Working in Sugar Cane Fields, 19th Century; Image Reference cass3, sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the University of Virginia Library."

<http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/details.php?categorynum=7&categoryName=New%20World%20Agriculture%20and%20Plantation%20Labor&theRecord=13&recordCount=114>

**Excerpt of a Letter from
King Alfonso of Kongo to
King John of Portugal**

No king in all these parts esteems Portuguese goods as much as we do. We favour the trade, sustain it, open . . . roads, and markets where the pieces [slaves] are traded.

Excerpt from a letter from King Afonso I to King João III of Portugal in 1540
in *The African-American Slave Trade* by R. G. Grant (New York: Barrons, 2002).

Hoeing Rice Southern United States



Illustration from *Building the Nation* by Charles C. Coffin (New York, 1883), p. 76.

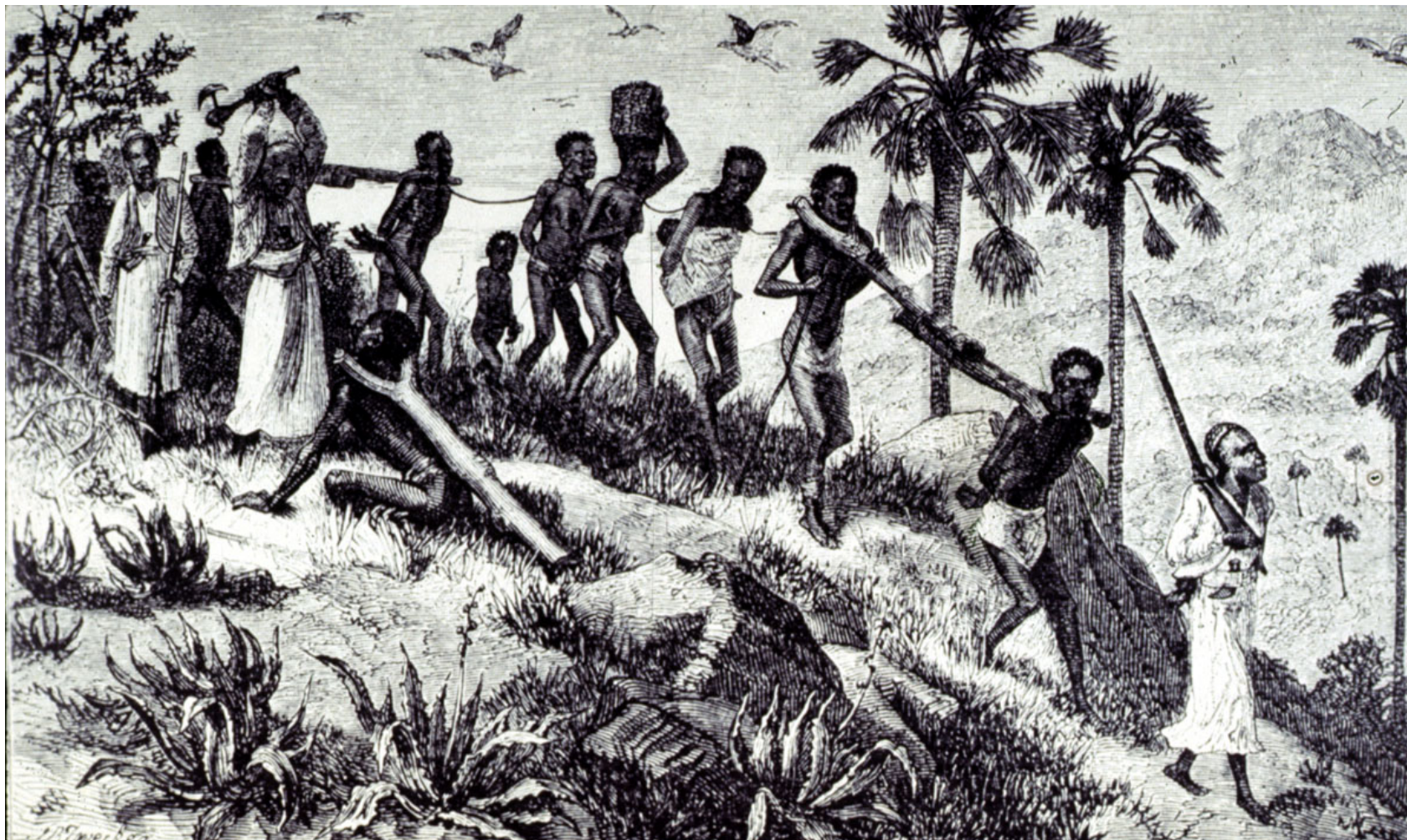
From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.etc.virginia.edu/Slavery/>

Student Resource Sheet 13

The Middle Passage

Enslavement in Africa		Voyage Across the Atlantic		Arrival in the Americas	
Source	Conditions	Source	Conditions	Source	Conditions

Slave Coffle, Central Africa



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-36323].

Wooden Yokes Used in Slave Coffles, Senegal

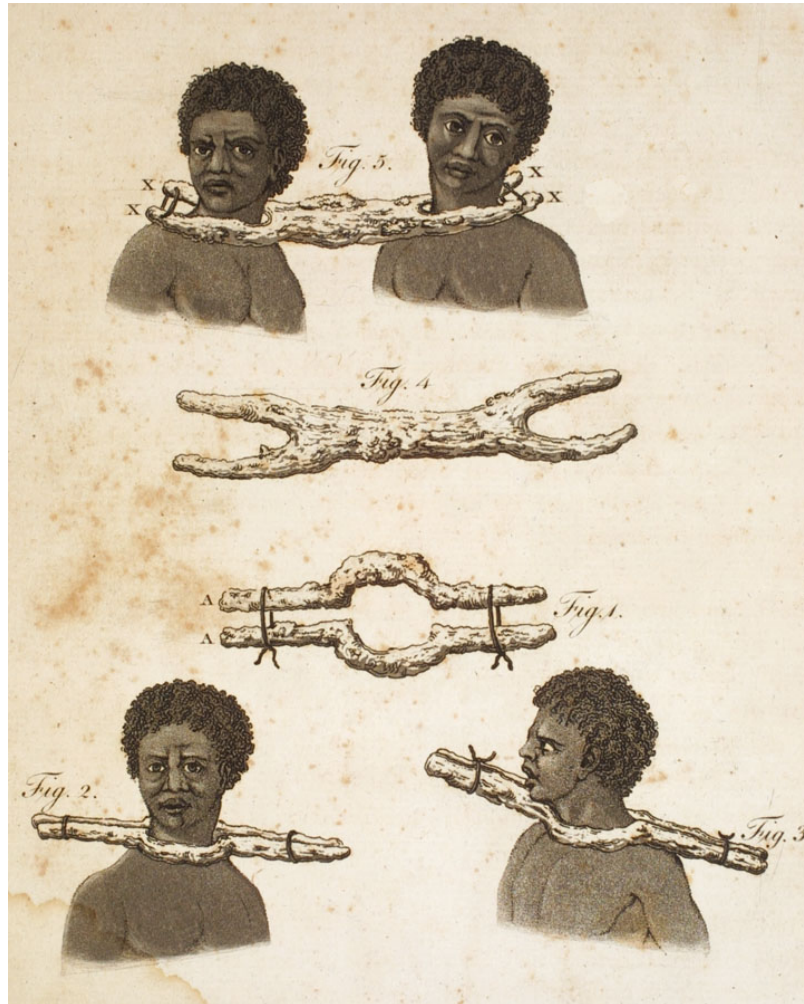


Illustration from *Letters on the slave-trade, and the state of the natives in those parts of Africa, . . . contiguous to Fort St. Louis and Goree* by Thomas Clarkson (London, 1791), plate 2, facing p. 36, figures 1-5.

From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slav>

Slave Barracoon, Congo

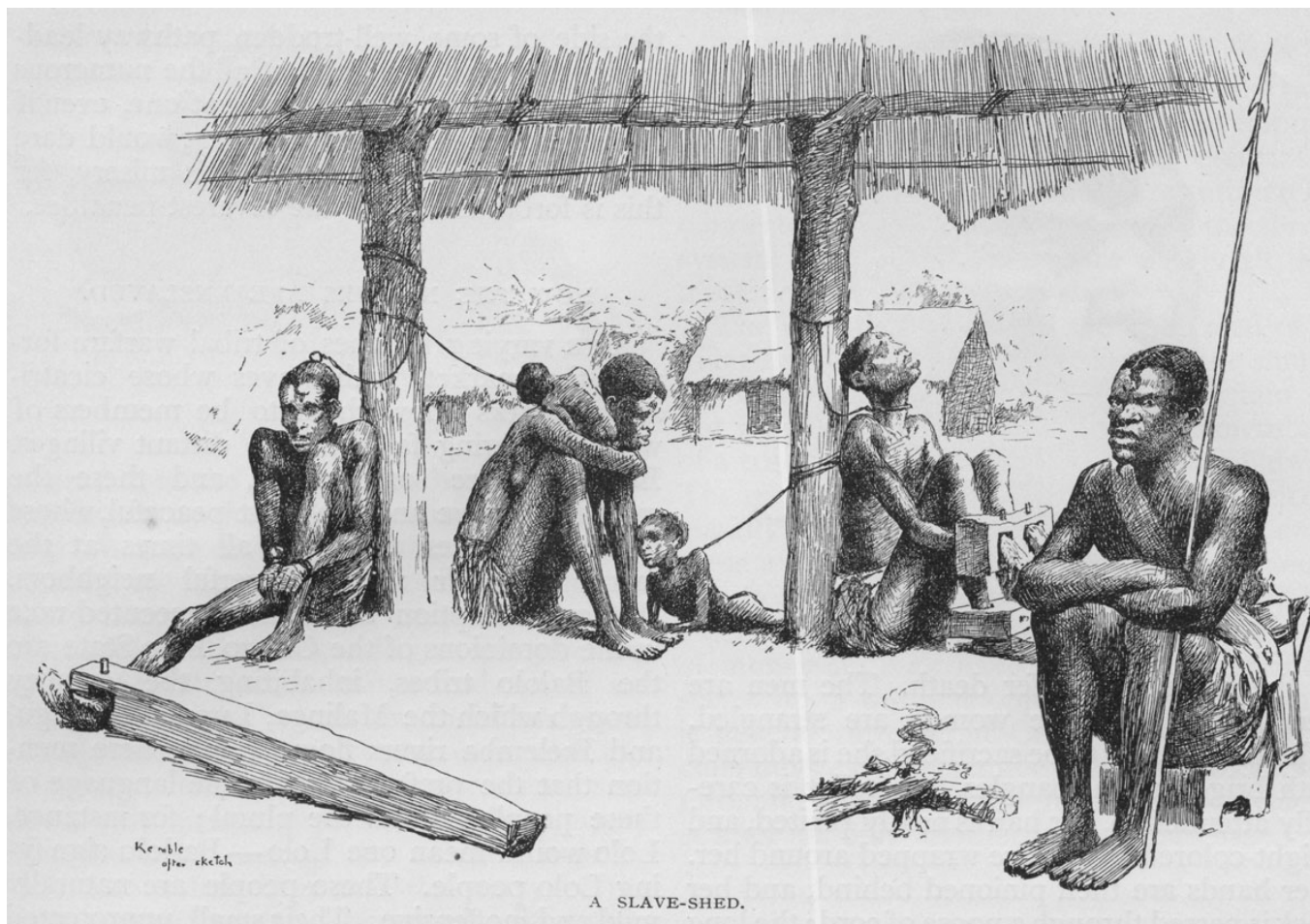


Illustration from *The Slave-Trade in the Congo Basin* by E. J. Glave. Illustrated after sketches from life by the author.
[*The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, vol. 39 (1889-1890), p. 824-838.]

From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/>.

Captured!
(From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano . . .”)

. . . I was born, in the year 1745, in a charming fruitful vale, named Essaka. . . .*

My father was one of [the] elders or chiefs . . .

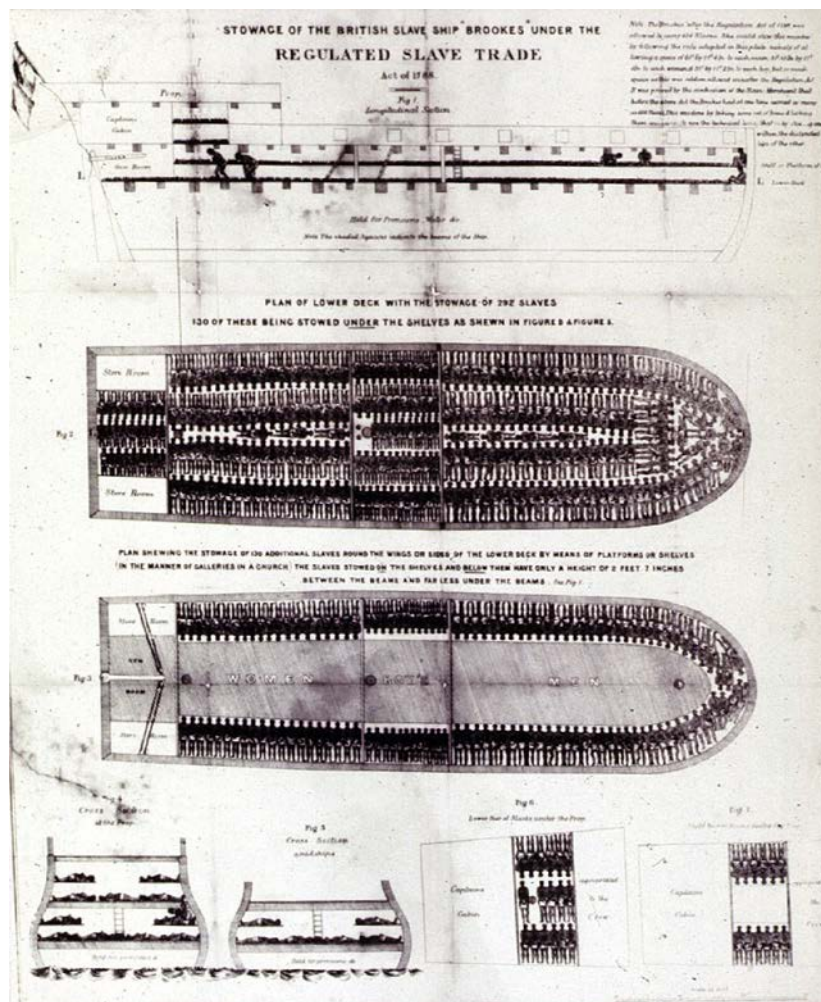
As I was the youngest of the sons, I became, of course, the greatest favourite with my mother, and was always with her; and she used to take particular pains to form my mind. . . . In this way I grew up till I was turned the age of eleven, when an end was put to my happiness in the following manner . . .

One day, when all our people were gone out to their works as usual, and only I and my dear sister were left to mind the house, two men and a woman got over our walls, and in a moment seized us both, and, without giving us time to cry out, or make resistance, they stopped our mouths, and ran off with us into the nearest wood. Here they tied our hands, and continued to carry us as far as they could, till night came on, when we reached a small house, where the robbers halted for refreshment, and spent the night. We were then unbound, but were unable to take any food . . . The next morning we left the house, and continued traveling all the day. For a long time we had kept the woods, but at last we came into a road which I believed I knew. I had now some hopes of being delivered; for we had advanced but a little way before I discovered some people at a distance, on which I began to cry out for their assistance: but my cries had no other effect than to make them tie me faster and stop my mouth, and then they put me into a large sack.

* Essaka was a village in the ancient Benin Kingdom, a powerful African kingdom located in present-day Nigeria.

From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself,” in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 141, 142, 151-152.

Plan of the British Slave Ship *Brookes*



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, [LC-USZ62-44000].

Africans Forced to Dance on Deck of Slave Ship

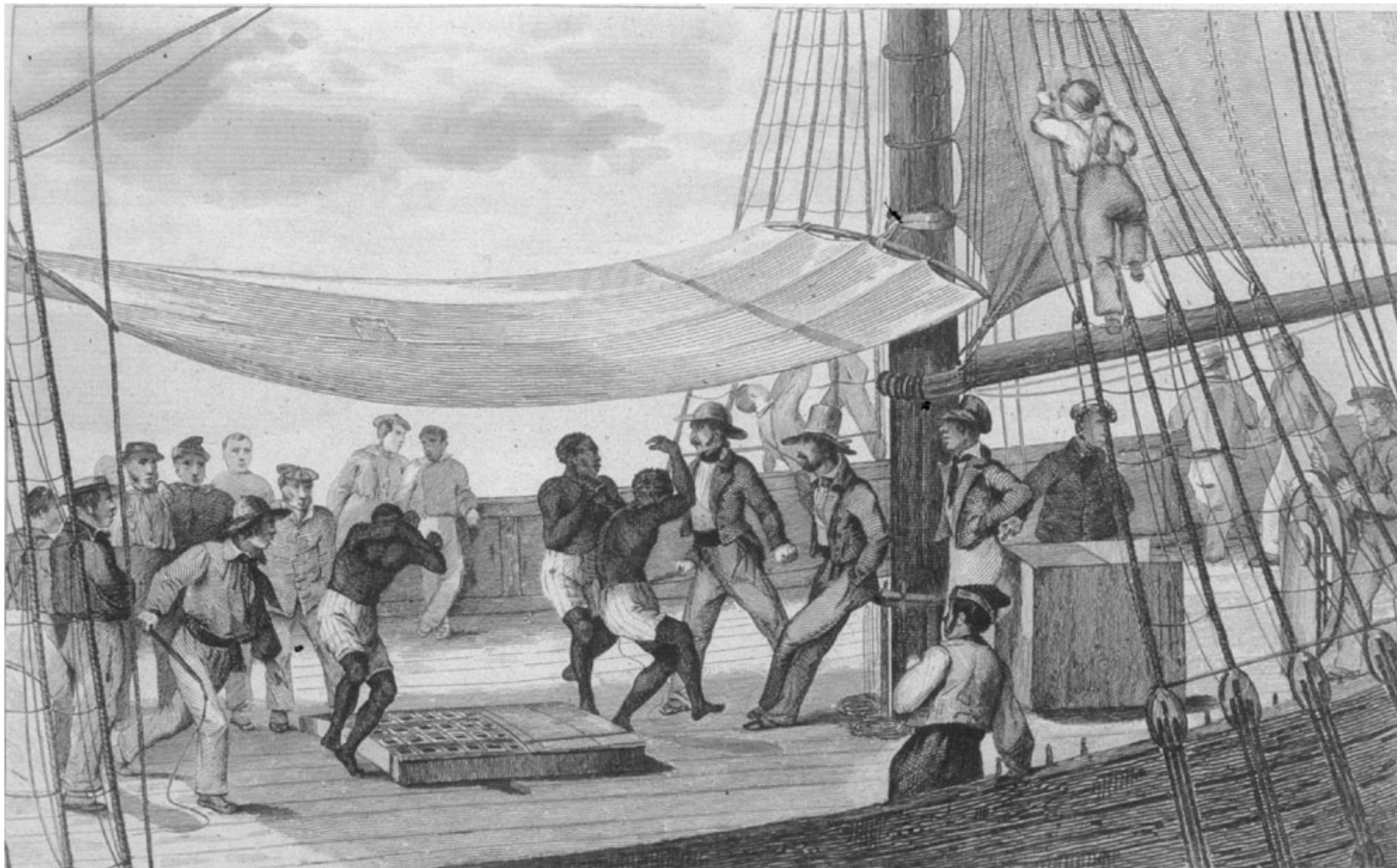
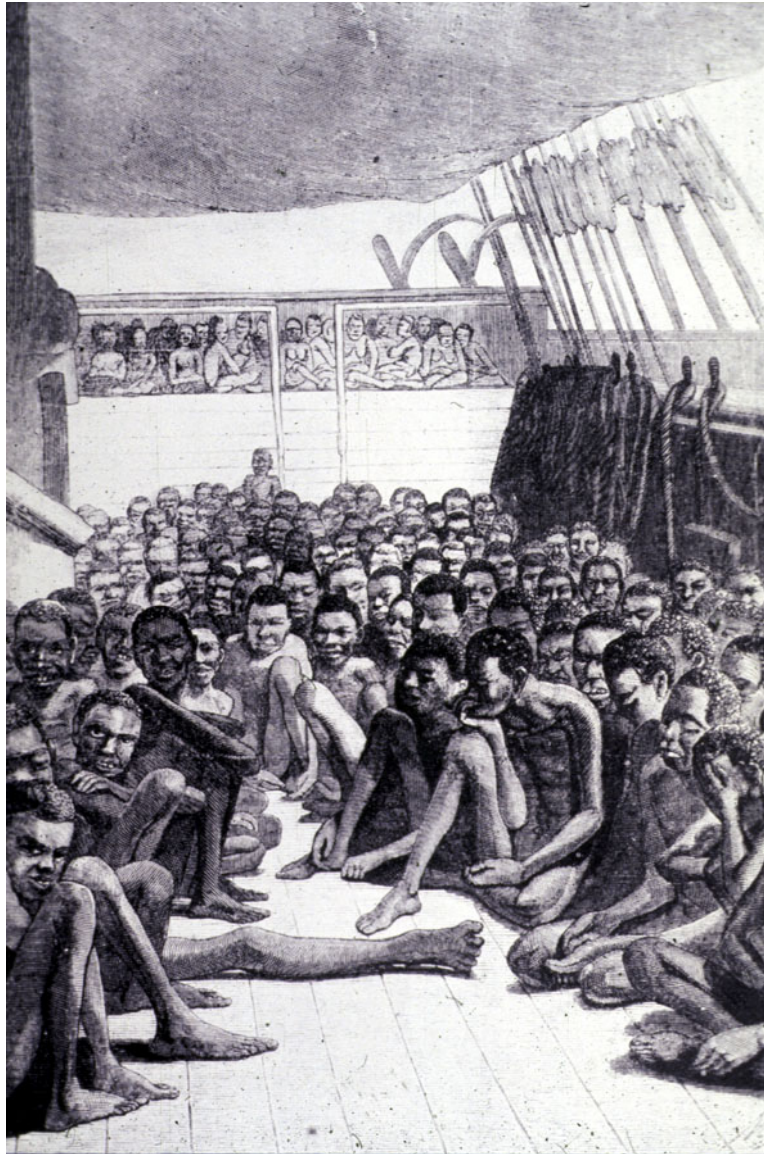


Illustration from *La France Maritime*, edited by Amédée Grehan, vol. 3 (1837), facing p. 179.

From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/>.

The Slave Deck on the Bark *Wildfire*



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-41678].

The Voyage
(From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano . . .”)

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was . . . waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled and tossed up . . . When I looked round the ship too and saw a large furnace of copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate; and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. . . .

I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands . . . and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. . . .

The stench of the hold . . . was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died . . . This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains . . . and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated.

From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself,” in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 157, 159.

Africans Thrown Overboard from a Slave Ship, Brazil



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-30833].

Slave Auction, Richmond, Virginia

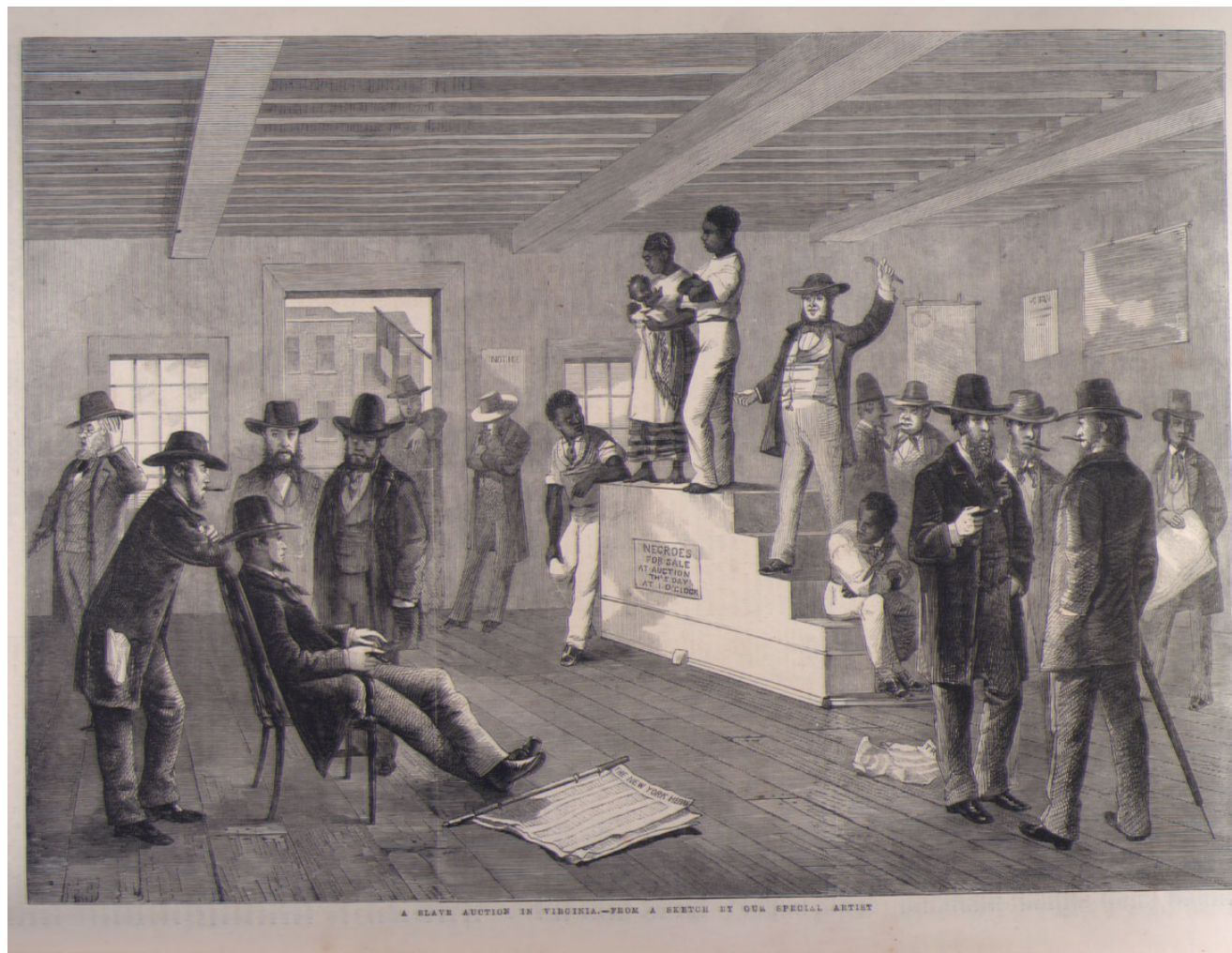


Illustration from *The Illustrated London News*, vol. 38 (Feb. 16, 1861), p.139.

From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/>.

Advertisement for Slave Sale, Charleston, South Carolina

TO BE SOLD, on board the
Ship *Bance-Yland*, on tuesday the 6th
of *May* next, at *Afbley-Ferry*; a choice
cargo of about 250 fine healthy

NEGROES,

just arrived from the
Windward & Rice Coast.
—The utmost care has
already been taken, and

shall be continued, to keep them free from
the least danger of being infected with the
SMALL-POX, no boat having been on
board, and all other communication with
people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Austin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the
SMALL-POX in their own Country..

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-10293].

Sold!
(From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano . . .”)

We were conducted immediately to the merchant’s yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. . . .

We were not many days in the merchant’s custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this:---On a signal given, (as the beat of a drum) the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended, and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the apprehensions of the terrified Africans . . . In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again.

From “The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself,” in *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 160-161.

Slave Sale, Richmond, Virginia

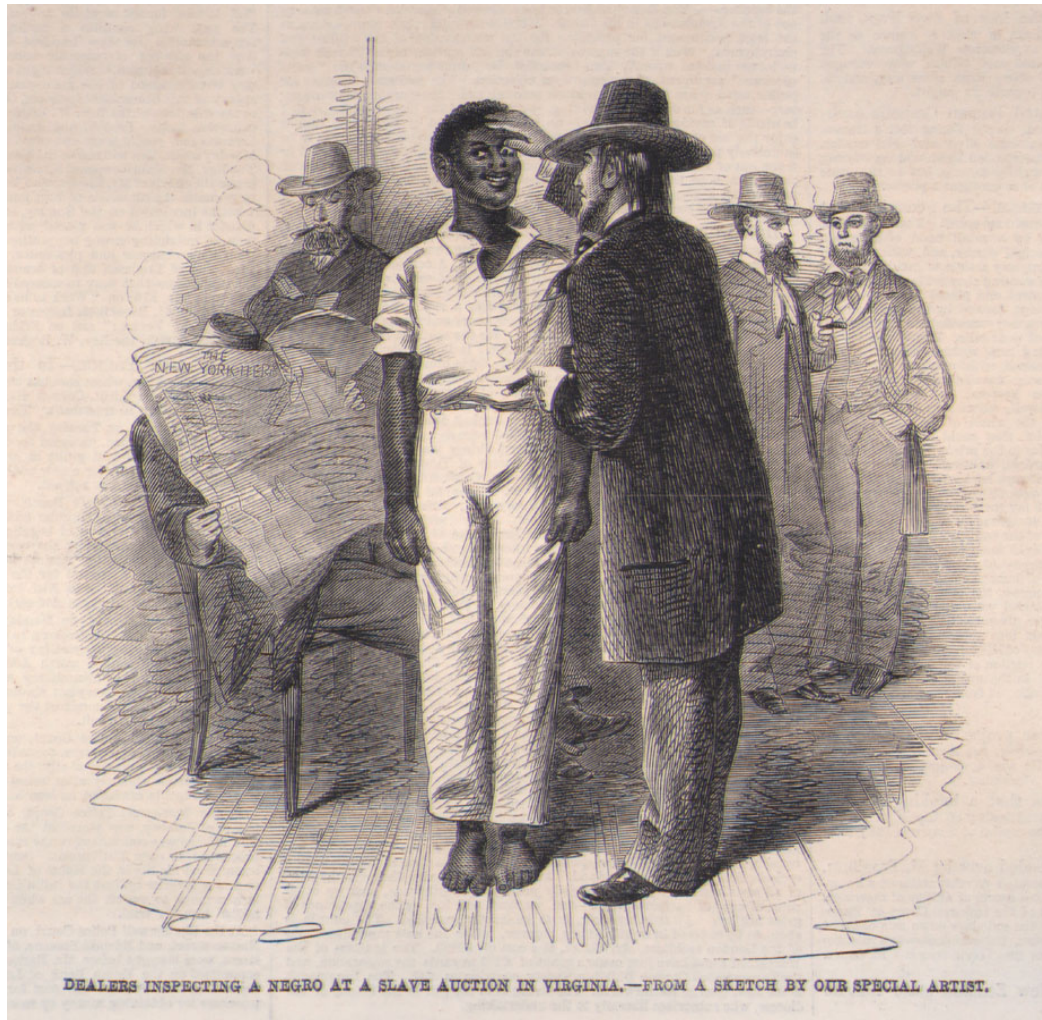


Illustration from *The Illustrated London News*, vol. 38 (Feb. 16, 1861), p. 138.

From "The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record," by Jerome S. Handler and Michael L. Tuite Jr., an online exhibition available at <http://hitchcock.its.virginia.edu/Slavery/>.