

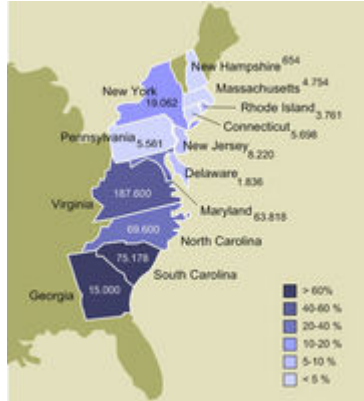


Name _____

The Beginning of Slavery in the Colonies

By Cindy Grigg

Caption: Map shows the number of slaves in 1770 in the 13 English colonies of America.



Colonists in Jamestown learned to grow tobacco. It was a hit in England. In 1640, Virginia exported 670 tons of tobacco to England! Large farms sprang up that grew tobacco. These were the first plantations in America.

A planter needed many workers to grow tobacco. The land had to be cleared. Seeds were planted. When the plants were ready, leaves were picked and dried. Then they were packed in shipping barrels for exporting.

Some of the workers were white indentured servants. Planters paid for their passage to America and gave them a place to live. In return, the servants worked for their masters for seven years. Then they were free.

Other workers were black slaves. In 1619, slave catchers brought the first black slaves to Virginia. They captured Africans, carried them to America on ships, and traded them to the English. Then the slaves were forced to work in the colony. They were given a place to live but no hope of ever being free.

Planters grew richer using this free slave labor. Larger and larger plantations became common. Colonists in the north bought slaves, too. Some slaves worked on farms. Some worked in their master's business. Slaves did many jobs. Some cooked food. They built ships. Some were sailors, barbers, and porters. Slave auctions became common, too. Ship captains put the captured Africans on display. The price depended on their age, size, strength, and skills. They were sold to the person who offered the highest price. Some prices reached \$1,000 for one slave.

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Questions

1. When were the first slaves brought to Virginia?

2. Why were slaves needed in the colonies?

- A. Tobacco was a main export crop. Many workers were needed to clear land, plant, and pick it.
- B. They were needed to cook and care for the English colonists because they did not know how to do many jobs.
- C. Ship captains needed slaves to sail ships.
- D. none of the above

3. Which answer was NOT a difference between indentured servants and slaves?

- A. Indentured servants were not thought of as property, while slaves were.
- B. Slaves were white, and indentured servants were black.
- C. Indentured servants agreed to work, knowing they would be free after seven years. Slaves were taken against their will with no hope of freedom.
- D. Slaves came from Africa; indentured servants came from Europe.

4. An indentured servant came to Virginia when she was twenty years old. How old would she be when she was freed?

