

Study Guide



Chapter 7, Section 3

For use with textbook pages 251–256

THE LAND OF COTTON

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

cotton gin machine for removing cotton seeds from cotton bolls (page 252)

planter plantation owner (page 253)

yeoman farmers ordinary Southern farmer who owned four or fewer slaves, but usually worked the land themselves (page 253)

task system labor system used in the South on farms and small plantations in which enslaved workers were given a set of specific jobs to accomplish every day and worked until these were complete (page 254)

gang system labor system on large plantations in which enslaved persons were organized into work gangs that labored from sunup to sundown (page 254)

driver director of a work gang on large plantations (page 254)

Frederick Douglass former slave who became a prominent leader of the antislavery movement (page 254)

slave codes state laws that limited the legal rights of enslaved persons (page 254)

Denmark Vesey free African American who operated a woodworking shop in South Carolina and planned an armed revolt to free the region's slaves (page 256)

Nat Turner enslaved minister who led an armed uprising in Virginia to free slaves (page 256)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

What kinds of jobs or chores are you expected to do on a daily basis? Do you have any leisure time? If so, how do you spend that time?

The last section described the beginning of industrialization in the United States. This section discusses the social structure that developed in the South during the 1800s.

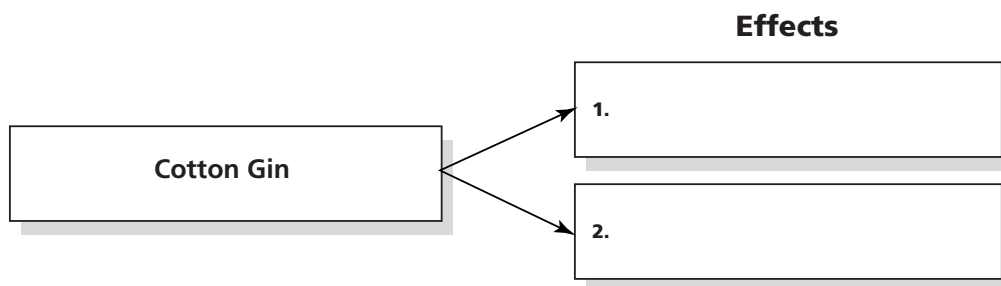
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ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the diagram below to help you take notes. The cotton gin affected both the economy and the society of the South. Describe each effect.



READ TO LEARN

- **The Southern Economy** (page 251)

The economy of the South was based on the farming of several major cash crops. The cash crops included tobacco, rice, and sugarcane. The major cash crop was cotton. It was grown in a wide area stretching from inland South Carolina, west through Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, and into eastern Texas.

In 1793 Eli Whitney invented the **cotton gin**, which removed the seeds from cotton bolls. The cotton gin greatly increased the production of cotton in the South. At this same time, textile mills in Europe were expanding and wanted all the cotton they could get. The cotton gin made Southern planters rich. In 1860 Southern cotton made up almost two-thirds of the total export trade for the United States. This demand for cotton also created a huge demand for slave labor. Between 1820 and 1860, the number of enslaved people in the South rose from 1.5 million to nearly 4 million.

With its focus on agriculture, the South did not industrialize as quickly as the North. The South remained a region of rural villages and plantations. It had only three large cities.

The South had some industry. This included coal, iron, salt, and copper mines, as well as ironworks and textile mills. The South had to import most of its manufactured goods, however.

3. What were the major cash crops of the South?

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- **Society in the South** (page 253)

The South developed a class structure based on social attitudes. At the top of Southern society were the **planters**, or owners of the larger plantations. This group made up less than half of one percent of the white population, but they ran the region's economy and political and legal systems.

Most of the white population of the South were **yeoman farmers** and their families. Yeoman farmers were ordinary farmers who may have had four or fewer enslaved persons but usually worked the land themselves.

Near the bottom of Southern society were the rural poor. These people mostly hunted, fished, gardened, and raised a few hogs and chickens. African Americans, most of whom were enslaved, made up the bottom of Southern society.

A small urban class of professionals also made up part of Southern society. Many of these professionals invested in or owned farms.

4. Who was in charge of the economy and political and legal systems in the South?

- **Slavery** (page 253)

Rice and cotton plantations depended on slave labor to exist. Most enslaved African Americans worked in the fields. Some worked as factory workers, as skilled workers, or as house servants.

There were two basic labor systems for enslaved African Americans who worked in the fields. The **task system** was used on farms and small plantations. Under this system, workers were given certain jobs to finish every day. They worked until their tasks were done, and then they were allowed to do other things. Some enslaved people earned money as artisans. Others gardened or hunted for extra food. Large plantations used the **gang system**. Under this system, enslaved persons were put in work gangs that worked in the fields the entire day. The director of the work gang was called the **driver**.

Frederick Douglass was a former slave who became a leader of the antislavery movement. Enslaved persons had few legal rights. State **slave codes** forbade enslaved persons from owning property or from leaving their owner's land without permission. They could not own guns or testify in court against a white person. They were not allowed to learn to read and write.

Some African Americans living in the South were free. Most of them lived in towns and cities of the upper Southern states. Some were descendants of Africans brought to the United States as indentured servants in the 1700s. Others earned their freedom by fighting in the American Revolution. Some were half-white children of slaveholders, who had given them freedom.

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Others had bought their freedom or had been freed by their slaveholders. Free African Americans also lived in the North where slavery had been outlawed.

5. What two labor systems were used in the plantation fields?

• **Coping With Enslavement** (page 255)

To cope with enslavement, African Americans developed a culture that provided them with a sense of unity, pride, and support.

Field workers often used song to pass the long workday and to enjoy their leisure time. Some songs expressed the despair of enslaved African Americans. Other songs expressed hope for freedom. Songs played an important role in African American religion. Many African Americans believed in Christianity. Their beliefs sometimes included African religious traditions.

Many enslaved persons resisted and rebelled against their enslavement. They held work slowdowns, broke tools, set fires, or ran away.

In 1821 **Denmark Vesey**, a free African American who had a woodworking shop in Charleston, South Carolina, was accused of planning a revolt to free the slaves in the area. Before the revolt, however, Vesey was tried, convicted, and hanged.

In 1831 **Nat Turner**, an enslaved minister who believed that God chose him to free his people, led a group of African Americans in an uprising in Virginia. Turner and his group killed more than 50 white people before he was arrested and hung.

6. How did songs help African Americans cope with enslavement?
