

# TRIANGULAR TRADE OUT (Opening up the textbook)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Block: \_\_\_\_\_

## Textbook Entry

### A Forced Journey

After being captured, African men and women were shipped to the Americas as part of a profitable trade network. Along the way, millions of Africans died.

**The Triangular Trade** Africans transported to the Americas were part of a transatlantic trading network known as the **triangular trade**. Over one trade route, Europeans transported manufactured goods to the west coast of Africa. There, traders exchanged these goods for captured Africans. The Africans were then transported across the Atlantic and sold in the West Indies. Merchants bought sugar, coffee, and tobacco in the West Indies and sailed to Europe with these products.

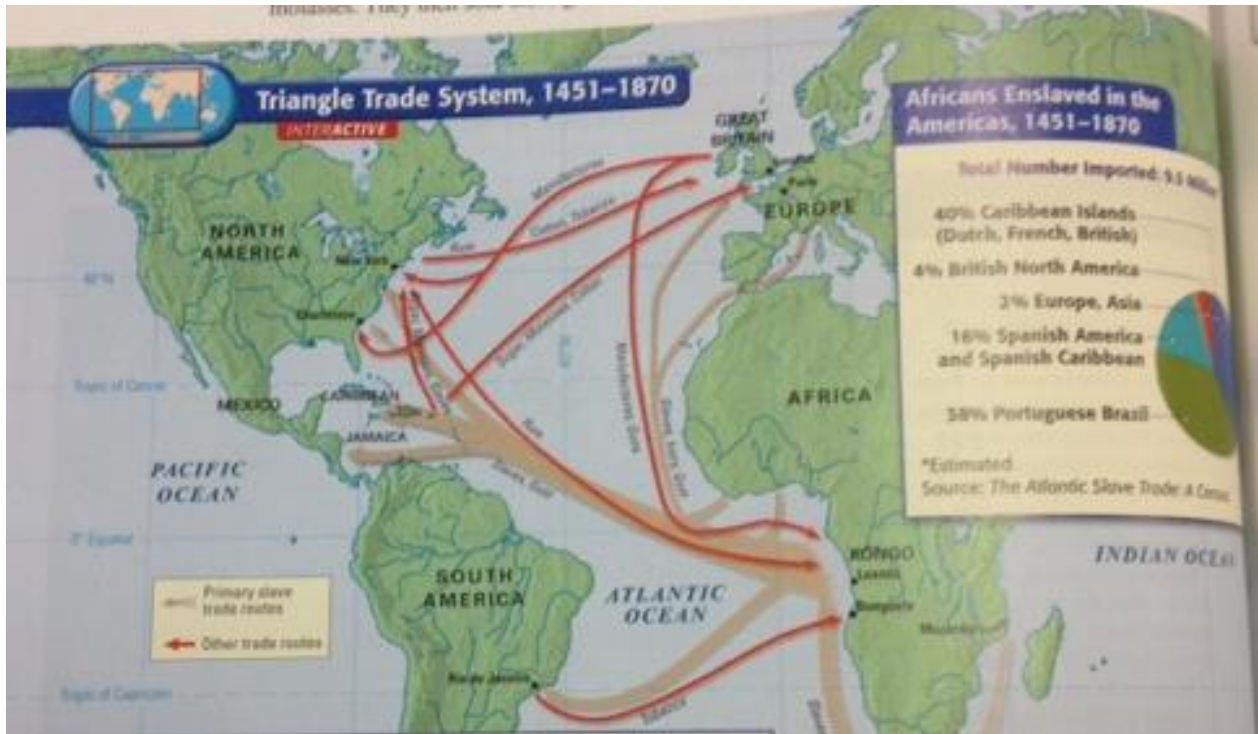
On another triangular route, merchants carried rum and other goods from the New England colonies to Africa. There they exchanged their merchandise for Africans. The traders transported the Africans to the West Indies and sold them for sugar and molasses. They then sold these goods to rum producers in New England.

Various other transatlantic routes existed. The “triangular” trade encompassed a network of trade routes crisscrossing the northern and southern colonies, the West Indies, England, Europe, and Africa. The network carried a variety of traded goods.

**The Middle Passage** The voyage that brought captured Africans to the West Indies and later to North and South America was known as the **middle passage**. It was considered the middle leg of the transatlantic trade triangle. Sickening cruelty characterized this journey. In African ports, European traders packed Africans into the dark holds of large ships. On board, Africans endured whippings and beatings from merchants, as well as diseases that swept through the vessel. Numerous Africans died from disease or physical abuse aboard the slave ships. Many others committed suicide by drowning. Scholars estimate that roughly 20 percent of the Africans aboard each slave ship perished during the brutal trip.

## Questions

1. What was the Triangular Trade?
2. What was the Middle Passage?
3. Describe the conditions on the Middle Passage.
4. How many Africans perished on each ship during the trip?



### Questions

1. What items were transported to Africa and traded for captured Africans?
2. According to the graph, which region of the Americas imported the most Africans? Which imported the second most?

### Primary Source Questions


1. Why might the white men have forced Equiano to eat?
2. What else happened to Equiano?
3. What can you say about the reliability of the Equiano source?

**The Horrors of the Middle Passage**  
One African, Olaudah Equiano, recalled the inhumane conditions on his trip from West Africa to the West Indies at age 12 in 1762.

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation [greeting] in my nostrils as I 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 . . . 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 laid me across . . . the windlass, while the other flogged me severely.

**OLAUDAH EQUIANO**, quoted in *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*



**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.

## Questions

1. Who wrote the document and in what year?
2. Describe the tone of the letter.
3. According to the document, what were conditions on the Middle Passage like?
4. Why does the author think the purpose of the Triangular Trade is?



**Secondary Source: Amistad**

**Note:** This video contains scenes of violence that depict actual historical events. If you do not wish to view the video, just let the teacher know.

**Answer the following questions while viewing the video:**

1. Once the African man was captured and brought to the slave fortress to be shipped overseas, what were Europeans trading with Africans that were not captives? Why?
2. Once on board the slave ship, how were they treated? What are some things that were done to the slaves in the video?
3. Once the slaves arrived to the Americas what were some things that happened to them there?
4. Impact: Based on the video clip, what were some European motivations for slavery?

