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Period 3

### The Evils of Slavery

Due to the Industrial Revolution and the invention of Eli Whitney's cotton gin, slavery increased to 4 million slaves in the 1860's. The cotton gin prompted a high demand for cotton, which increased the need for slaves to pick the cotton. Before the Civil War, African slaves were treated badly, being treated like property, not humans and suffered many hardships. However, a growing number of Americans were working on bringing slavery to an end.

Some of the hardships the slaves faced were punishments and poor living conditions. Slaves could be accused by their masters of disrespect, or eating more than their allowed amount of food. This could happen for any reason, whether the slave was wrong or not. They would sometimes be fitted with an iron muzzle as punishment, which did not allow them to talk, eat or drink (Document three). They would be weak from not eating and could be punished more for not doing enough work. Each month the slaves got their allowed amount of food-eight pounds of pork and one bushel of cornmeal. They also got their yearly clothing, which consisted of two shirts, one pair of trousers, one pair of stockings and one pair of shoes. If the clothes got dirty, they could be washed, but if they got torn and could not be repaired, the slave would not have any clothing to wear. They got a bed and blanket, but the slaves had little time to sleep and were beaten if they did something wrong like a mere look, word or motion—a mistake or accident (Document four). Some of the slaves would be sold away from their families. Slave

marriages were illegal, and it was also illegal to teach a slave to read and write. Slaves were only seen as property, to be handled however the master saw fit. They were not treated as humans.

Some anti-slavery Americans tried to help the slaves by using the Underground Railroad system or speaking out about the evils of slavery. The Underground Railroad was a system that hid slaves that escaped and clothed, fed, bathed and sheltered them. It helped get the slaves to the North safely, where slavery was not in common practice (Document six). The Underground Railroad was a network of abolitionists who secretly helped slaves reach freedom in the North. It was a form of the Freedom Seekers, who were slaves that wanted independence from their white masters. As many as 50,000 slaves were freed via the Railroad and Harriet Tubman and her fellow abolitionists. Frederika Bremer, a social reformer, went to a slave auction and wrote down her feelings and thoughts. She saw an African woman with a small child in her arms be sold for \$700 to the dark figures in front of her. She thought about whether he was good or bad, whether he would treat her and her child well or poorly (Document five). Some slaves had many ways of escaping. One person, Henry "Box" Brown, shipped himself in a box to the north. He was later lost in the mail, but eventually made it to the North. Some people like Harriet Tubman, escaped herself and over time went back for over 300 slaves. Some were scared to go with her. She would point a gun in their face and say "be free or die". William Lloyd Garrison started an abolitionist newspaper called "The Liberator". Nat Turner led the most famous slave revolt in 1831, leaving 60 white people dead. In 1829, David Walker published a pamphlet called "Appeal: to the Coloured Citizens of the World". It suggested that slaves should rebel to gain their freedom.

Slave life was hard and there were many punishments for wrongdoings prior to the Civil War. Anti-slavery Americans helped slaves get free from their masters and go north where they could live a free people. Slaves tried to escape in many different ways. Many succeeded, but some did not. Slavery still exists in other parts of the world today, but in the United States, it is not tolerated and is illegal due to it being abolished after the Civil War.