

Plantations and Slavery Spread

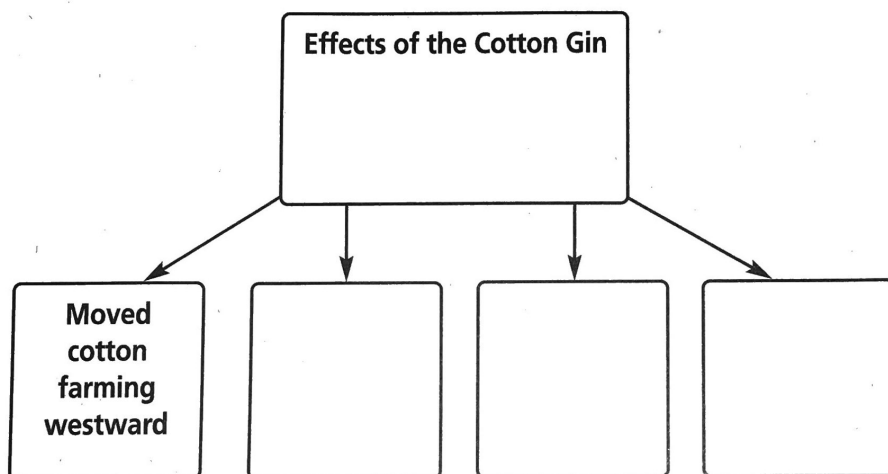
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about how new machines and factories changed the way people lived and worked.

In this section, you will learn how the demand for cotton caused slavery to spread in the South.

AS YOU READ

Use this diagram to take notes on the ways that the cotton gin changed Southern life.



TERMS & NAMES

Eli Whitney Inventor of the cotton gin

cotton gin Invention that made the cotton-cleaning process easier

spirituals Religious folk songs sung by enslaved people

Nat Turner Leader of a famous slave rebellion in 1831

The Cotton Boom (pages 348–349)

Who invented the cotton gin?

Eli Whitney invented the **cotton gin** in 1793. This invention made the cotton-cleaning process much easier and quicker. It allowed one worker to clean as much as 50 pounds of cotton a day. The cotton gin changed Southern life in four ways:

1. Cotton farming moved westward beyond the Atlantic coastal states.
2. Because cotton was such a valuable crop, planters put most of their efforts into growing it.
3. More Native American groups were driven off Southern land as cotton *plantations* took over the land.
4. Slavery continued to be an important source of labor for growing cotton.

1. How did the cotton gin change the cotton-cleaning process?

Slavery Expands; Slavery Divides the South (pages 349–350)

How did cotton production affect slavery in the South?

Cotton production rose greatly between 1790 and 1860. So did the number of enslaved people in the South. As earnings from cotton rose, so did the price of slaves.

Slavery divided white Southerners into those who held slaves and those who did not. Only about

one-third of white families in the South owned slaves in 1840. Of the slaveholding families, only about one-tenth had large plantations with 20 or more slaves. Although most white Southern farmers owned few or no slaves, many supported slavery anyway. They worked their small farms and hoped to buy slaves someday so that they could raise more cotton and make more money.

2. How did slavery divide white Southerners?

African Americans in the South

(pages 350–351)

How did slavery divide black Southerners?

Slavery also divided black Southerners into those who were enslaved and those who were free. About one-third of the South's population in 1840 was enslaved. About half of them worked on large plantations. In cities, enslaved people worked as *domestic* servants, craftsmen, factory workers, and day laborers. About eight percent of African Americans in the South were free. They had either been born free, been freed by an owner, or bought their own freedom. Many free African Americans lived in cities.

Free blacks, however, faced many problems. Some states forced them to leave once they gained freedom. Most states did not allow them to vote or go to school. Many employers would not hire them. Free blacks also had to worry about being captured and returned to slavery.

3. What problems did free blacks face?

Culture and Resistance; Families Under Slavery (pages 351–352)

Why did enslaved African Americans rely on their own culture?

By the early 1800s, African Americans on plantations had developed their own *culture*. They relied on that culture to survive the hardships on plantations. They

especially relied on their religion. Enslaved people expressed their religious beliefs in **spirituals**, or religious folk songs. The songs often contained coded messages. Spirituals later influenced blues, jazz, and other forms of American music.

One of the cruelest parts of slavery was the selling of family members away from one another. When enslaved people ran away, they often did so to find other family members. Family members that did stay together took comfort in their family lives. They married, although their marriages were not legally recognized. Most slave children lived with their mothers, who tried to protect them from punishment. Parents who lived away from their children often stole away to visit their children, even though they could be whipped for doing so. Disobedience was one way of resisting slavery. Another way was escaping. Some people chose more violent ways to resist slavery.

4. What was one of the cruelest parts of slavery?

Slave Rebellions (page 353)

What was Nat Turner's rebellion?

Several armed *rebellions* took place in the early 1800s. The most famous rebellion was led by **Nat Turner** in 1831. Turner and 70 followers killed 55 white men, women, and children. Most of Turner's followers were captured and 16 were killed. When Turner was caught, he was tried and hanged.

Turner's rebellion spread fear in the South. Whites killed more than 200 African Americans in revenge. States passed laws that kept free blacks and slaves from having weapons or buying liquor. They could not hold religious services unless whites were present. Tensions over slavery increased between the South and the North.

5. How did whites react to Nat Turner's rebellion?
