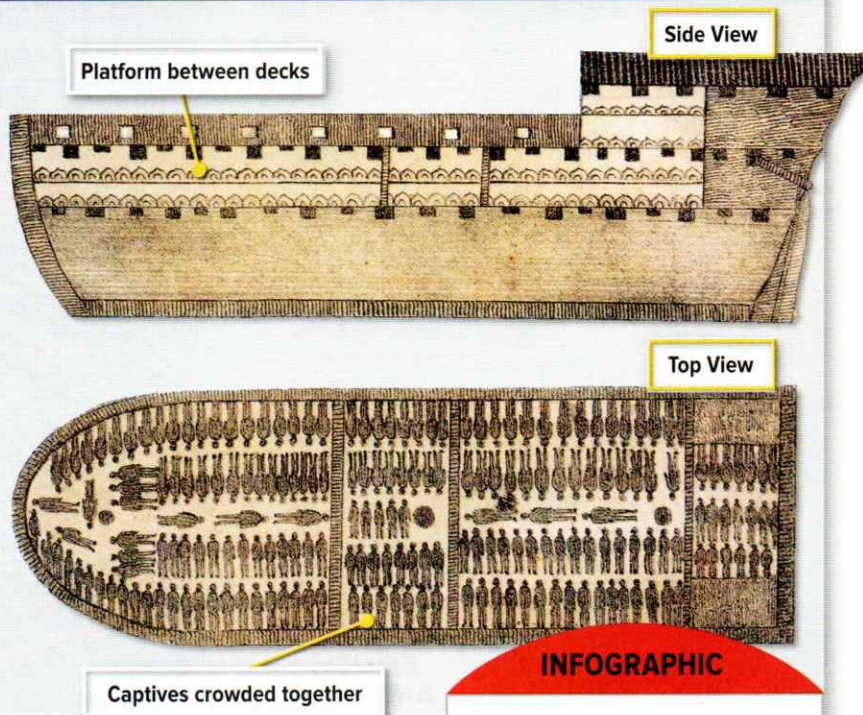


AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE 1450–1870

Destination	Total
British America/United States	427,000
Mexico and Central America	224,000
West Indies	4,040,000
Spanish South America	522,000
Guianas	531,000
Brazil	3,647,000
Europe	175,000

Captains of slave ships added platforms between decks to fit more captives onto their ships. In the filthy, crowded compartments, disease—and rebellion—spread rapidly. On some ships, as many as half of the Africans died. Abolitionist groups used the diagram of the slave ship to show the cruelty of the slave trade. First published in 1789, this powerful image was reprinted many times in the years that followed.



INFOGRAPHIC

Millions of Africans were victims of the slave trade.

- 1 CALCULATING** What was the total number of Africans taken from Africa and sent to the countries and regions shown?
- 2 CRITICAL THINKING**
Drawing Conclusions What do you think was the impact of the slave trade on African cultures?

reclaimed from areas that were covered in swamps. Snakes, alligators, and disease-carrying insects were a constant threat to the enslaved workers. Working in the rice paddies was very hard. Enslaved workers had to stand knee-deep in mud with no protection from the blazing sun, animals, or insects. Rice proved to be a profitable crop. Prices rose steadily as rice became popular in Europe. By the 1750s, South Carolina and Georgia had the fastest-growing economies in the colonies.

PROGRESS CHECK

Summarizing Why was agriculture so important to the economy of the Southern Colonies?

The Growth of Slavery

READING QUESTION Why were enslaved Africans brought to the colonies?

By the time Europeans were sailing to the Americas, slavery was widely practiced in West Africa. Many West African kingdoms enslaved those they defeated in war. Slave traders from Arab lands bought some of these enslaved people. Others were forced to work in gold mines or farm fields.

The arrival of Europeans in the Americas created a huge new demand for enslaved workers. Colonists needed a large labor force to work on their plantations. West African slave traders sold captives they gained through wars and raids. Slavery and the slave trade became major parts of the colonial economy.