

Resources for an Interdisciplinary African American World History and Social Justice Curriculum
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Middle School: World History (Beginnings to 1500 C.E.)

Determine the role of slavery in the economic and social structures of early river valley civilizations. 6.2.8.CivicsHR.2.a

6.2.8.A.3.a Determine the role of slavery in the economic and social structures of early river valley civilizations.

6.2.8.C.1.a Describe the influence of the agricultural revolution (e.g., the impact of food surplus from farming) on population growth and the subsequent development of civilizations.

6.2.8.C.1.b Determine the impact of technological advancements on hunter/gatherer and agrarian societies.

6.2.8.A.2.b Compare and contrast the methods (i.e. autocratic rule, philosophy, and bureaucratic structures) used by the rulers of Rome, China, and India to control and unify their empires.

6.2.8.A.3.b Compare and contrast the rights and responsibilities of free men, women, slaves, and foreigners in the political, economic, and social structures in classical civilizations.

6.2.8.D.4.a Analyze the role of religion and economics in shaping each empire’s social hierarchy, and evaluate the impact these hierarchical structures had on the lives of various groups of people.

6.2.8.D.4.g Evaluate the importance and enduring legacy of the major achievements of the people living Asia, Africa (Islam), Europe and the Americas over time.

Era 1 The Beginnings of Human Society

Era 2 Early Civilizations and the Emergence of Pastoral People (4000–1000 BCE)

Illustrate the trade networks and identify technological innovations (i.e. inclined plane)

Emphasize the importance of African people to influence of religion, including excerpts from the Book of the Dead and Epic of Gilgamesh.

Explain the contributions by Africans to polytheistic religions and Ethiopia’s acceptance of Christianity.

Analyze the contributions of Africans to the food supply over time, living conditions, and the role of slaves in the different civilizations.

Essential Question

1. How were slaves treated in the ancient world?
2. How significant were the contributions of people from Africa to world civilizations today?

Digital Resources

[Technology Achievements](#) (American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology)

[Agriculture](#) (Khan Academy)

[Slavery](#) (Free the Slaves)

[Kush](#) (Black Past)

[Kush](#) (Ancient History Encyclopedia)

[Pianky and the Conquest of Egypt \(721 B.C\)](#) (Adventures in History Land)

[Agriculture](#) (Farm Project)

[Was Trading by Nomads Crucial to the Development of Early Cities?](#) (Science Magazine)

Era 3 The Classical Civilizations of the Mediterranean World, India, and China (1000 BCE–600 CE)

Describe the daily life of slaves in each civilization, including peasants and farmers.

Analyze excerpts from Code of Hammurabi and documents from Greece and Rome about the treatment of people.

Identify one or more “Claims” regarding the life or contributions of Africans, slaves and provide evidence supporting the claim or argument.

Investigate the interactions the Greeks had with people of color (Carthage, Phoenicia, Ethiopia, Kish, India, etc.) and excerpts from Plato’s Republic on slaves, workers, economic exploitation of slaves, etc.

Analyze the role of slaves in Greece and Rome and Compare labor in Greece and Rome with the civilizations of ancient India and China.

Explain the motives for slave rebellions in Rome (Spartacus) and how slavery changed over time.

Research information on the daily life of slaves, the number of slaves in the Roman Empire (or per household), and the difference between slaves and conquered people (i.e. Gaul).

Design an inquiry lesson on the contacts between Rome and other places (Carthage, Phoenicia, Kush, Nubia, etc.), and the contributions of slaves in Rome.

Read excerpts from the Twelve Tables about the rights of slaves in Rome.

Essential Questions

1. Why did Greece and Rome have slaves?
2. How did the Greeks and Romans interact with civilizations in Africa and Asia?

Digital Resources

[In the Land of the Kush](#) (Smithsonian)

[Ancient Nubia](#) (Live Science)

[African influence in Ancient Greece](#) (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

[Ethiopian Presence in Ancient Greece](#) (Neos Kosmos)

[Greek Attitude Toward the Negro](#) (American Anthropologist)

[African Presence in the Roman World](#) (Atlanta Black Star)

[Does Slavery Exist in Plato’s Republic?](#) (download pdf) (University of Chicago)

[Resisting Slavery in Ancient Rome](#) (BBC)

[The Spartacus Revolt](#) (Ancient History Encyclopedia)

[Slavery in the Roman World](#) (Ancient History Encyclopedia. Includes percent of population)

[Slaves and Freemen in Rome](#) (PBS)

[Twelves Tables of Roman Law](#) (search for ‘slaves’)

[St. Augustine, the African](#) (Georgetown)

[Slavery in History](#) (Free the Slaves) (For Continuity and Change Over Time)

Era 4 Expanding Exchanges and Encounters (500–1450 CE)

Contrast feudal life with slaves, serfs, peasants, and people of color.

Read excerpts from the story of Aladdin and identify passages calling attention to race.

Analyze the importance of the intellectual contributions of Mali, Songhai, Ghana.

Report on the wealth of African empires from salt and gold.

Research African caravan routes and trade centers and compare African empires with European feudal states.

Report on the contributions in literature, art, architecture from Mali, Ghana, and Songhay.

Evaluate the leadership skills of Mansa Musa and compare them with Charlemagne, William the Conqueror or Genghis Khan.

Analyze how the Islam religion influenced acceptance and treatment of people, especially those who were poor or a 'slave'

Design an inquiry lesson on the importance of Portuguese and Chinese trade in East Africa. (Mombasa)

Essential Question

1. If you had a choice of where to live in 1200 C.E., would you choose to live in Africa, Arabia, Europe, India, or China?

Digital Resources

[African Presence in Medieval Europe](#) (Public Medievalist)

[Medieval European Slavery and Mediterranean Slavery](#) (Swarthmore College)

[Timbuktu and Mali](#) (Understanding Slavery Initiative)

[Tombouctou Manuscripts Project](#) (Need to register for access)

[University of Sankore](#) (Black Past)

[University of Sankore](#) (Muslin Heritage)

[Trans-Saharan Gold Trade](#) (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

[The Songhai Empire](#) (South African History Online)

Renaissance and Global Connections

Identify the reasons for the forced displacement of Africans, breakup of families, death on the transatlantic voyage, by the Dutch and Portuguese.

Report on how African dances (Conga, Rhumba, Samba, Lindy, Limbo, Calypso, Fox Trot, Charleston, Cakewalk, Watusi, Tap, Twist, Boogaloo) came to America.

Essential Question

1. Why has African history been ignored for centuries?

Digital Resources

[The Great Zimbabwe](#) (The Guardian)

[Wealth of the Zimbabwe](#) (BBC)

[Kingdom of Benin and Tropical Forested Kingdom](#) (Ancient History Encyclopedia)

[West Africa Before the Europeans](#) (National Archives United Kingdom)

[Slave Voyages: The Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved Africans](#) (UNESCO Digital Library, 272 pages)