

Unit III Alabama in the 19th Century

Chapter 5

Settlement of a Territory
Pages 132-161

Chapter 6

Alabama, Finally a State
Pages 162-191

Chapter 7

The American Civil War
Pages 192-219

Chapter 8

After the War
Pages 220-235

Chapter 9

A Changing Alabama
Pages 236-269

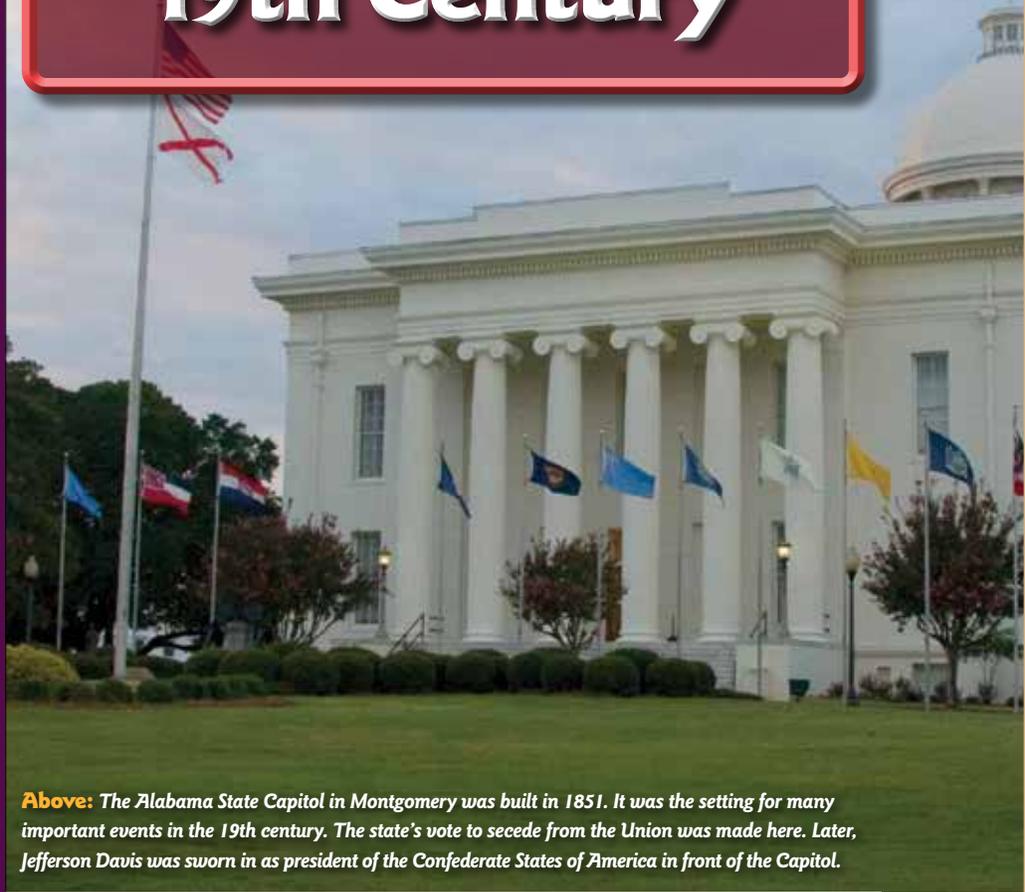
Field Trips

There are numerous historic sites and other places of interest across Alabama that students can visit. The list on page T131 is not exhaustive, but is meant as a starting point for planning trips relevant to Unit III.

Unit

III

Alabama in the 19th Century



Above: The Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery was built in 1851. It was the setting for many important events in the 19th century. The state's vote to secede from the Union was made here. Later, Jefferson Davis was sworn in as president of the Confederate States of America in front of the Capitol.

130 Alabama: Our Beautiful Home

Notes:

Chapter 5 Settlement of a Territory

Pages 132-161

Section 1

Pioneers

Pages 135-137

Section 2

Frontiers Open to Settlement

Pages 138-145

Section 3

Different Cultures Move to
the Alabama Frontier

Pages 146-151

Section 4

Slavery in Alabama

Pages 152-159

Chapter Review

Pages 160-161

Introduce the chapter using the steps outlined on page viii.

Preview Terms

The vocabulary words (terms) for each chapter are listed at the beginning of that chapter. The terms for each section are listed in the “As You Read” box at the beginning of that section. To introduce the vocabulary, start each section by reading each word to the students. Have them repeat the word after you. You will find the suggested vocabulary exercises on page viii in To the Teacher.

NOTE: Websites appear, disappear, and change addresses constantly. The Internet addresses included throughout this program were operative when the text was published.

Chapter 5

Settlement of a Territory

Chapter Preview

TERMS

economic, cede,
navigable,
frontier, squatter,
speculator, yeoman,
freedman, plantation,
planter, cotton gin,
economy, mill

Above: Settlers often built their cabins near a river. This gave them water for drinking, bathing, and their livestock. It also made transportation easier.

132 **Alabama: Our Beautiful Home**

Course of Study for Chapter 5

Standard 4 Relate the relationship of the five geographic regions of Alabama to the movement of Alabama settlers during the early nineteenth century.

- Describing human environments of Alabama as they relate to settlement during the early nineteenth century, including housing, roads, and place names

Standard 6 Describe cultural, economic, and political aspects of the lifestyles of early nineteenth-century farmers, plantation owners, slaves, and townspeople.

Examples:

cultural—housing, education, religion, recreation

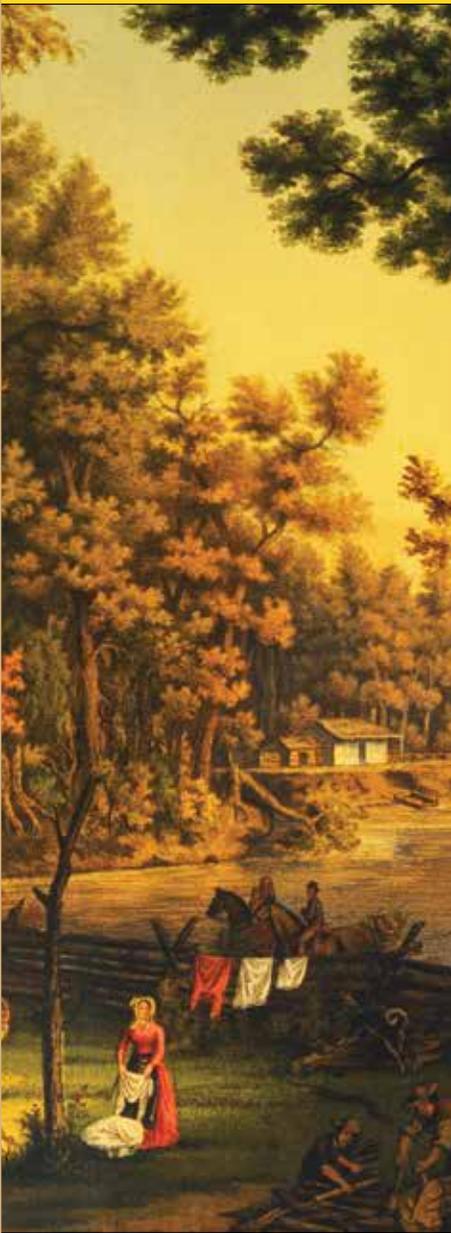
economic—transportation, means of support

political—inequity of legal codes

- Describing major areas of agricultural production in Alabama, including the Black Belt and fertile river valleys

You can find the full text of the standards at this website:

alex.state.al.us/standardALL.php.



A

Alabama fever” struck the southern states after the Treaty of Fort Jackson. Andrew Jackson made treaties with the Choctaw, Cherokee, and Chickasaw Indians. The Creek Indians had **ceded** (given up) much of their land in Alabama to the United States government. The U.S. government then sold the land to settlers. By 1820, three-fourths of Alabama was open for settlement. In 1810, there were 9,000 white and black settlers in the territory. By 1820, nearly 150,000 people lived in the state of Alabama.

This migration of settlers into Alabama changed the population from mainly Indian to largely white. It changed the way land was used. Huge fields for farming were created when forests were cleared. It changed the culture of the area from American Indian to American settler.

People like Judge Harry Toulmin wrote about the southern part of the state. The climate in the region provided for a long growing season. Toulmin said land near the rivers was good for growing crops like corn and cotton. He also pointed out the large pine forests in the area. People in other states with worn-out land read this article. Others who were looking for a place to settle read it too. Many people wanted to come to this rich state to live. It had good land for crops and plenty of lumber for building.

The pine forests Toulmin wrote about were of special interest. Many people used pine trees, especially the longleaf pines, for naval stores. Naval stores are products made from the resin taken from pines. These products included turpentine, which had many uses. Settlers used it in folk medicine. They also applied it to cloth and leather to help these items shed water. Camphene, or palmetto oil, was turpentine mixed with alcohol. It was used as a fuel for lamps until kerosene became available. The settlers needed naval stores to use and to sell.

Chapter 5: Settlement of a Territory 133

Chapter Preview

Migration of settlers into Alabama rapidly increased after the Creek War. Settlers moved into Alabama on the Federal Road, Natchez Trace, and Huntsville Road. Students will learn how this migration changed the population, land, and culture of the state.

Many people were important in the settlement of the Alabama Territory. Early settlers were small farmers and planters, as well as squatters and speculators. Life on the early frontier is described, including the differences in the lives of yeoman farmers and planters and a look at the lives of slaves. The last French settlement in Alabama, founded by the Vine and Olive Company, and the first settlement of freed blacks, Africa-Town, are discussed.

The chapter concludes with a look at the importance of Eli Whitney’s invention, the cotton gin, in making Alabama the “cotton kingdom.” A special segment discusses Alabama agriculture.

Chapter Objectives

- Compare the lifestyles of pioneer small farmers, planters, slaves, and free blacks.
- Identify the characteristics of squatters and speculators.
- Describe travel on the major roads into Alabama during the 19th century.
- Describe major areas of agricultural production in Alabama.
- Assess the importance of the invention of the cotton gin to agriculture in Alabama.

Note:

Making Predictions: Alabama Fever

Write the phrase, “Alabama Fever,” on the board. Give students three minutes to jot down all the ideas that come to mind about what the phrase might mean. Let students share their ideas. Discuss the desire for new land that brought settlers into Alabama after the Creek War.

Engaging Your Students

Have any students ever heard the phrase “grins like a possum”? Do they know what it means? Give them a few minutes to speculate. Tell them to ask their grandparents or older family members about this phrase. You might show students a picture of a possum (opossum), or have them look for one.

Focus on Reading Skills: Main Idea and Supporting Details

“Why the Possum Grins”

1. Answers will vary.
2. The possum and the wolf
3. The setting was near a pond and a persimmon tree.
4. The wolf was hungry.
5. The possum took advantage of the wolf’s hunger and got him to kill himself by butting his head into the tree.
6. A persimmon tree plays an important part.
7. Answers will vary.

Practicing the Reading Skill: Writing a Folktale

Discuss with students the Indians’ use of stories, myths, or tales to explain events in the world, or to teach lessons. Have students write their own one-page folktale about an animal hero. Students will choose an animal, give it a character or personality, and decide what lesson it will learn about life or the world. You might want to use a rubric to assess students’ written work. Allow students to read their finished folktales to the class.

Focus on Reading Skills

Main Idea and Supporting Detail

Read this story and answer the questions at the end. You will be looking for the main idea of the story and the details that support the idea.

Why the Possum Grins

An Indian Myth

Did you ever hear why the possum grins? No?

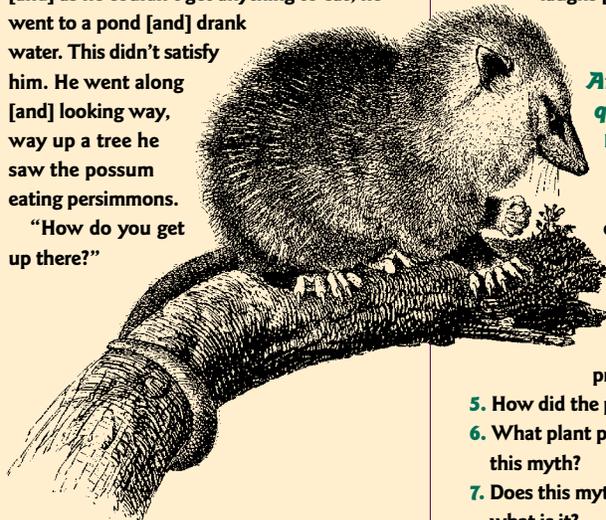
Well, the wolf was nearly starved to death [and] as he couldn’t get anything to eat, he went to a pond [and] drank water. This didn’t satisfy him. He went along [and] looking way, way up a tree he saw the possum eating persimmons.

“How do you get up there?”

“I climb up but sometimes the ’simmons fall down on the ground and I pick them up.”

“I wish I had some.”

“Well, you go way off yonder [and] run with all your might [and] butt your head against the tree [and] shake some down.” The wolf did as directed, came with all his might, hit the tree [and] killed himself. The possum was so delighted at his death he has never stopped laughing. He laughs [and] grins yet.



Answer the following questions:

1. What is this passage about?
2. Who are the main characters?
3. What was the setting of the myth? Or where were the characters?
4. What was the wolf’s problem?
5. How did the possum fool the wolf?
6. What plant plays an important part in this myth?
7. Does this myth teach a lesson? If so, what is it?

Notes:

Section 1

Pioneers

As you read, look for

- how the United States got land for settlement;
- travel in early Alabama;
- terms: **navigable**, **frontier**.

Settlers heard reports of rich land, good climate, and navigable (passable by ship) rivers in Alabama. They were willing to leave their homes for a new frontier. (A **frontier** is land beyond settled areas.) They had dreams of wealth and a new start in life.

Some were already rich. These well-educated people brought their slaves and belongings to make a new home in richer Alabama. They bought large areas of land. But most of the

**Figure 11
Timeline:
1730 to 1840**



Section 1 Pioneers

INTRODUCE

Outline

- A. Pioneer Roads
- B. Traveling the Roads

Materials

Textbook, pages 135-137

Activity Sheets

Words! Words! Words!, 43-44

Teacher Tech Website

Lesson Plan

Visual Aids

Guided Reading, 5-1

Map of Alabama or the Southeast

Using the Timeline

Ask students if they can identify an item on the timeline that could be a reason for the rapid increase in the number of settlers coming to Alabama between 1800 and 1820. (*Congress provided money for the Federal Road and the Natchez Trace. Students might find additional contributing factors.*)

Research Using Technology

Let students choose one event from the timeline that interests them. Assist them in using the Internet or other media center resources to research their chosen topic. Allow students to share what they learn with the class. Students can work individually, or in groups. For example, all students who choose the University of Alabama could work together, all who choose the *Amistad* mutiny could work together, etc.

Notes:

TEACH

Building Background

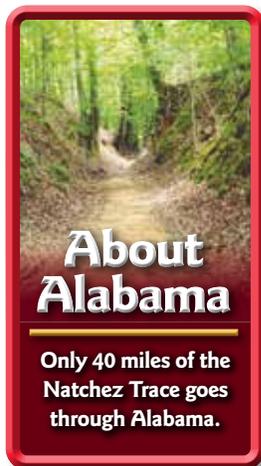
Ask students how they think settlers traveled on the early roads into Alabama. Discuss how settlers walked pulling carts or rode in wagons over dirt trails and rough, dangerous roads. Ask students if they would have been willing to make the journey. Why or why not? Can they think of reasons the settlers might have had for leaving their homes and enduring such hardship and danger?

Research Using Technology

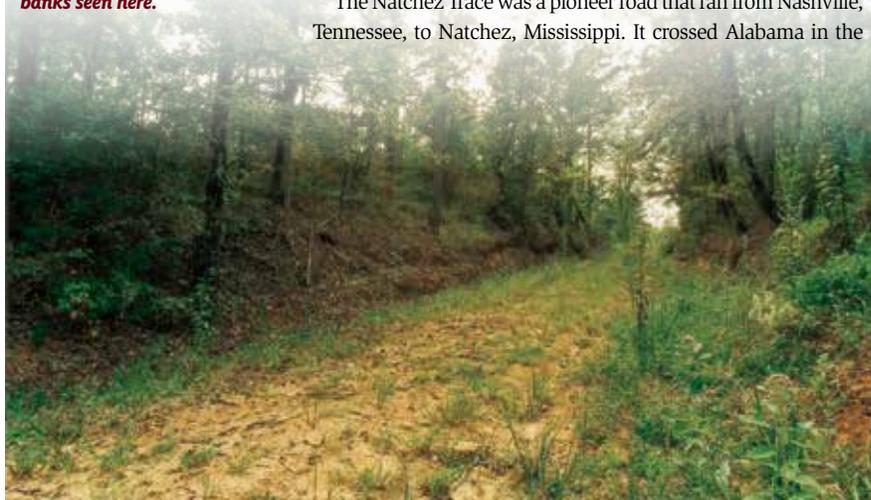
Have students use the Internet to research the routes of the Old Federal Road and the Natchez Trace. Let students trace the routes of these roads on a map of Alabama or the southeastern United States. Students should also look for information about the conditions of the roads in the early 19th century. Two useful websites for students are nps.gov/natr/ and alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/alabama/before1825.html. You can also refer the students back to Map 15, Pioneer Roads, on page 115 in the textbook.

FYI

Jeffrey C. Benton's *The Very Worst Road* is a compilation of authentic accounts from 16 contemporary travelers on the Old Federal Road. Obtain a copy and read some of these first-person accounts to the students.



Below: Sections of the Old Federal Road can still be found in Alabama. This one is in Lee County. Thousands of pioneers used the road over the years. This packed down the dirt surface and made the high banks seen here.



136 Chapter 5: Settlement of a Territory

newcomers were poor and could only afford small farms. They barely had enough food to get them through a winter. Like the Indians, they hunted for food.

Most of the people who came to Alabama during this time were from Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Many families brought everything they owned and came to stay. In just one day, an English geographer counted 1,200 people moving into the area. These pioneers walked or rode over trails and roads made by soldiers and American Indians.

Pioneer Roads

Pioneers moving into Alabama usually traveled on one of three major roads. Congress provided money for the Federal Road (later called the Old Federal Road) and the Natchez Trace in 1806. These were the first two roads into present-day Alabama. Together, these roads connected Washington, D.C., and New Orleans, Louisiana. The Huntsville Road was also important to the pioneers.

These roads were dangerous to use because robbers attacked travelers. Settlers liked to make the journey in groups for protection.

The Old Federal Road mainly brought pioneers from Georgia and South Carolina. It entered Alabama just below the center of the state and generally followed the Alabama River. It started as a horse path and was improved to a wagon trail. But the road was very rough and had no bridges.

The Natchez Trace was a pioneer road that ran from Nashville, Tennessee, to Natchez, Mississippi. It crossed Alabama in the

Notes:

northwestern corner of the state. Today, the Natchez Trace Parkway is a national park. You can travel the entire length of the road and stop at historic spots.

The Huntsville Road was part of a road that started in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In Alabama, it ran from Huntsville through Tuscaloosa to St. Stephens. St. Stephens was the capital of Alabama when it was just a territory.

Traveling the Roads

Settlers traveled into Alabama in different ways. The poorest settlers pulled their own carts. Others had horses or oxen to pull the carts. Some used packhorses to carry their belongings. Those who could afford covered wagons used them. Pioneers who had slaves used them to drive the farm animals to the new land.

Some roads were paths barely wide enough for a family to walk single file. One woman wrote of her family's journey, "Got along very badly today. Roads rough and muddy, my oxen gave out and little wagon broke down."

Sometimes the pioneers marked the path for people who would follow. One of these roads was marked along the way by three notches cut into tree trunks. It became known as Three Notch Road.

On the well-traveled roads, there were taverns, forts, and stands selling food and supplies. The prices for goods at these roadside places were very high.



Map 18 Early Settlements of Alabama

Map Skill: Which area of the state had the most settlements (SE, SW, NE, NW)? Why do you think that area had more settlements?

Think It Through!

1. Why were people excited about the news of Alabama's resources?
2. What states did most Alabama settlers come from?
3. What government provided money for two roads through Alabama?
4. Name the routes the settlers used to travel into Alabama.

Answers to Map 18 Skill

Southwest (SW). Answers will vary, but should refer to access due to the roads and navigable rivers.

Maps and Math

Using Map 18 or a map in the Atlas of Alabama, have students estimate the distance from Huntsville to St. Stephens (or another town). Assume that it would take about one hour for pioneers to walk one mile with their wagons, carts, animals, etc. Have students determine how long it would take pioneers to walk the length of the Huntsville Road. What additional things do they need to consider (rest stops, meals, camping before nightfall, etc.).

Compare and Contrast

Have students draw a T chart with PIONEER TRAVEL on one side and TRAVEL TODAY on the other. They should list ways pioneers traveled (walking, wagons, stagecoaches, horseback, boats, etc.) on one side and list ways we travel today (cars, planes, trains, buses, ships, etc.) on the other.

ASSESS

Answers to "Think It Through!"

1. Students' answers will vary, but should state that people had heard of fertile land, pine forests, navigable rivers, and a good climate. They wanted to have better lives.
2. Georgia, Virginia, and the Carolinas
3. Federal (national) government
4. The Federal Road, the Natchez Trace, and the Huntsville Road

Note:

Pioneer Brainstorm

Have students write the word PIONEER vertically down the left side of their paper. Ask them to think of words or short phrases that begin with each letter to describe the pioneers who traveled to Alabama. Students should write those words or phrases to the right of the corresponding letter. (Example: P = prepared)

Section 2 Frontiers Open to Settlement

INTRODUCE

Outline

A. The Life of Yeoman Farmers

1. Building Log Cabins
2. Living in the Cabin
3. Farming
4. Fun on the Frontier

B. Education on the Frontier

Materials

Textbook, pages 138-145

Activity Sheets

*School – The Difference
200 Years Makes, 45*

Teacher Tech Website

Lesson Plan

Visual Aids

Guided Reading, 5-2

TEACH

Building Background

Place students in collaborative groups and give them five to ten minutes to brainstorm all the things they have in their homes that they enjoy and list them on a large piece of chart paper. When the lists are completed, tell each group to come to a consensus on which things they could or could not give up. Have students put a check mark beside each item they feel they could not do without. Give students five to ten minutes to complete this part of the activity. Post the charts around the room and briefly discuss the students' choices. You might choose to assist students in thinking of additional things to add to their lists.

Section 2

Frontiers Open to Settlement

As you read, look for

- the kinds of settlers who came to Alabama;
- how the pioneers lived;
- early schools in the state;
- terms: **squatter**, **speculator**, **yeoman**.

Below: *Squatters moved onto land and built cabins without buying the land. They had to move when the land was sold.*

Some of the earliest settlers came to present-day Alabama before the government had land to sell. They did not wait to buy land. They just chose a place to live, cleared the land, built log cabins, and planted crops. These people were known as **squatters**.



138 Chapter 5: Settlement of a Territory

Now and Then

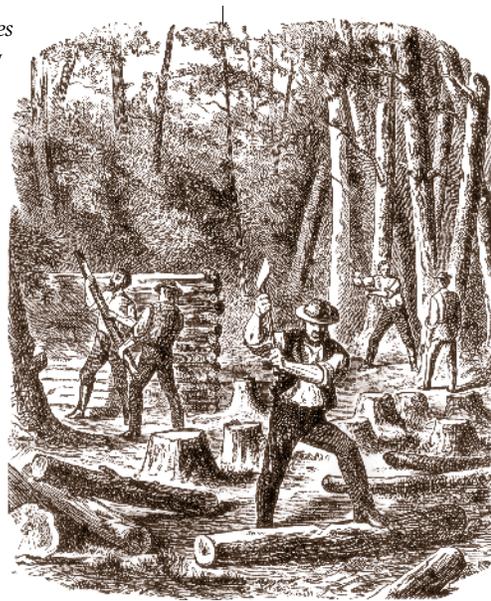
End the “Building Background” activity by walking to each chart and using a marker to strike through every item on each list that would not have existed or not been a part of the pioneer farmer’s life. Give students a moment to consider life without the things that were eliminated from their lists.

Note:

After the land was surveyed, it was sold to the people who were willing to pay the most money. Most buyers bought 40 to 80 acres of farmland. Many squatters did not have enough money to buy the land they had settled. People with money bought the land, and the squatters were forced to move. Some of the squatters did buy the poorest land, which sold for a few dollars an acre.

Some people formed *land companies* and bought large amounts of land at very low prices. They were called speculators or land investors. (A **speculator** buys something planning to sell it later for a profit.) The speculators then divided the large areas of land into smaller parts. They sold each part for a higher price than they paid.

One of the most important people in early Alabama history was John W. Walker. He was a member of the Broad River Group of land investors. In 1809, the group bought former Creek land from the federal government. They paid about two dollars an acre for the land in Madison County, Mississippi Territory. In 1810, Walker and his wife, Matilda Pope, moved to this area. It was later known as Huntsville.



Above: Settlers often helped each other build their log cabins.

The Life of Yeoman Farmers

Most of the pioneers were neither squatters nor speculators. They were yeoman farmers. (A **yeoman** is a person who owns and works a small farm.) These farmers worked hard to provide for their families. They grew vegetables and hunted animals for food. Their cattle roamed the woods in search of food.

Building Log Cabins

When the settlers arrived and claimed their land, they needed shelter. Most settlers lived in log cabins. Often, the men in the village or settlement worked together to build the cabins. They chopped down trees and cut off the limbs. Then they cut the trees into logs of the same length. The men cut deep notches

How Big Is an Acre?

Do students know the size of an acre? It is the unit for measuring parcels of land. Before standard measurements, an acre was said to be the amount of land a pair of oxen could plow in a day. Today, an acre equals 43,560 square feet. Help students visualize this using these examples. A soccer field is close to the size of an acre (45,000 square feet). A football field is also close (48,000 square feet, without its end zones). Take students outside and walk the perimeter of a nearby football or soccer field.

Research Using Technology

Point out that in 1809 the land bought by the Broad River Group cost \$2.00 an acre. Have students research the selling prices of land acreage in Alabama today. They might use the newspaper or online classified section to identify land for sale. Tell students to make a chart or graph (or give them a template) that compares land prices then and now.

Family Involvement

Tell students to imagine that their families are all frontier farm people. Everyone in the family must help to make their farms run smoothly. Students should create a “chore chart” that gives every member of the family 19th-century farm chores to do. You might also have students do a comparison chart of the chores each family member does around their house today. Ask students to talk with their families about what daily life was like on frontier farms compared with what it is like today. What conclusions did they draw?

Notes:

Art Activity

Place students in small groups or pairs to create replicas (models or pictures) of a frontier log cabin. For models, students should use sticks (or log building blocks), small pebbles, and mud or clay (or modeling clay). For pictures, they should include detailed drawings of the inside floor plan with measurements, etc.

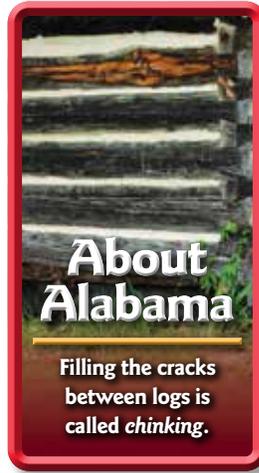
Creative Writing

Have students imagine they lived as a child their own age on the early Alabama frontier. Students should write several descriptive journal entries describing their frontier lives. They might describe their cabins, daily tasks, schools, or any aspect of frontier life seen through the eyes of a child.

Waste Not, Want Not

Discuss with students how the settlers on the frontier learned to use the materials they found at hand to meet their needs. For example, they could not go to a toy store and purchase a doll. Instead, they made dolls from corn husks, or carved them from scraps of wood.

Have students search for other examples of using the available raw materials to make things that were needed. Examples are straw, pine needles, or grasses to stuff a mattress; hollow logs for a cradle or bed; animal skins as blankets; scraps of old clothes to make quilts; mud for mortar; etc.



Below: *This is an artist's idea of life on the frontier. It shows a peaceful scene with plenty of food. But for most settlers, real life on the frontier was hard.*



140 Chapter 5: Settlement of a Territory

near the ends of the logs. The logs were then stacked to make the cabin walls.

The roof was made with thick boards. Wooden pegs held some boards in place. On other cabins, big rocks helped hold roofs in place.

When the logs were stacked, there were big cracks between them. Rain and cold wind came in through the cracks. So the settlers filled the cracks with sticks, small rocks, and mud. Even young children in the family helped fill cracks to make the cabin snug and dry.

Living in the Cabin

At one end of the cabin was a large fireplace. It was used for heating the cabin and for cooking. Pots were hung from hooks inside the fireplace to cook vegetables and soups. Bread, potatoes, and meat were cooked in heavy pans over hot coals.

The earliest fireplace chimneys were made of sticks. The sticks were laced together and sealed inside and out with clay. Later, chimneys were made of big rocks held together with thick mud.

Log cabins were built close to a spring or a stream so families could have water to drink. Families also used the streams for bathing and washing clothes.

Notes:



Left: The fireplace was the center of life in a log cabin. It gave light, heat, and a place to cook food. **Below:** Clearing land of trees to make fields was one of the hardest tasks on the frontier. These settlers have “girdled” the trees, which is to cut a ring through the bark all the way around the tree. This will kill the trees and make it easier to cut them down.

Most cabins had only one room. Sometimes the walls were high enough so children could sleep in a loft. A few cabins had two rooms with an open hall between them. A large family might add an extra room or a shed to the cabin. Mattresses were stuffed with hay, grass, cornhusks, or Spanish moss. The hides of deer or bear were often used as blankets.

Rich settlers brought fine furniture with them. Most settlers made their own furniture. Some tables and chairs were just logs with legs on them. A hollow log lined with a soft animal skin became a cradle. Clothes and cooking pots hung on wooden pegs driven into the walls.

Farming

Clearing a field for farming was harder than building a log cabin. First, the settlers had to chop down all the trees. Then stumps, roots, bushes, and vines were dug out. That could take more than a year! Remember that the settlers had few tools and no modern things like chainsaws and bulldozers. After that, the land was ready to plow. Then the settlers could plant crops and grow food. The work was hard, but the whole family helped.

Crops were not easy to grow. The farmer had to worry about freezing weather and drought. He had many problems including



Class Quilting Bee

Pioneers found ways to make utilitarian objects beautiful, such as the quilts that kept them warm. Have students search to find pictures of popular old or vintage quilting patterns such as Star, Pinwheel, Wedding Ring, Log Cabin, or Patchwork. Discuss the creativity and artistry of early quilters.

Create a class quilt. Ask each student to bring a four-inch-square piece of cloth to class to use as his or her quilting square. The squares might be from students' old shirts or dresses, blankets, or something else that will uniquely represent each student in the finished quilt.

When all their quilting squares have been assembled, let the students arrange them in a pattern. They may lay them out on tables or on the floor, and pin the pieces together as they want them in the finished quilt.

You will need a large piece of solid fabric to use as the back of the quilt.

To finish the quilt, enlist the help of parents, a Family and Consumer Science teacher, or a local group of quilters.

Invite a Guest

Invite a local historian to speak to your class about life on the early frontier in your area of the state. Solicit frontier artifacts to display or demonstrate for the class from parents, faculty, and community members.

Notes:

Science Investigator

Have students use the Internet or media center resources to find out how early farmers churned butter. Have students simulate the churning of butter using a pint of heavy cream and a clean jar with a lid. Vigorously shaking the jar for a period of time will cause the cream to turn into edible butter. Serve with crackers! You can find instructions for this activity at <https://littlehouseontheprairie.com/making-homemade-butter-with-kids> and other websites.

Food Fun

Write on the board or on chart paper the title, FRONTIER MENU. Vertically list the days of the week underneath. Each day, have students record any food items served in their lunchroom that would have been a common food crop of frontier farmers. At the end of the week, discuss with students the differences and similarities in the foods we commonly eat today and those commonly grown and eaten by frontier farmers. Ask students to think about which eating habits are probably healthier and why.

Fun on the Frontier

Social life on the frontier was often based on work that had to be done. Before students read the section, have them write down these terms: barn-raising, quilting bee, and corn shuckin'. Have them quickly jot their thoughts about each of these. They might write descriptions or predictions as to the meaning of the terms.

animals eating the crops. Common food crops were corn, potatoes, peas, squash, beans, sugarcane, and melons. Some of the harvest was eaten fresh. The rest was dried and stored for use in the winter.

Corn was the main farm crop. From corn, settlers made cornbread and grits. They made molasses and cane syrup from sugarcane. They also made syrup from a grain called sweet sorghum. These syrups were used for sweetening in place of the costly white, or refined, sugar.

A few families grew cotton, and some had a small patch of tobacco. They did not have cigarettes, but some men and women smoked pipes, chewed tobacco, or dipped snuff. Yeoman farmers had few or no slaves to help with the work. It was difficult for them to make much money growing cotton because their farms were so small. There were almost no slaves or free blacks in the regions settled mainly by yeoman farmers.



Above: This very early Alabama quilt was made in the Selma area in the 1820s.
Right: Corn shuckin' was a fun way to celebrate the corn harvest with neighbors.



Fun on the Frontier

Settlers had to be brave and strong to make a new home on the frontier. Most early pioneers did not have close neighbors. They were often lonely. But as more people moved to the area, social life improved.

More Fun on the Frontier

After students have written their predictions about “Fun on the Frontier,” pair them to read and talk about the section. They should then verify or correct their ideas. Would students enjoy these activities? Can students think of any “work” or chores they have today that can also be fun to do?

Note:

Do You Know?

Do students know what the “Three R’s” are? (*reading, ’riting [writing], and ’rithmetic [arithmetic]*) Explain to students that, in most frontier schools, these basic subjects were the only things taught.

Literature/Media Connections

Have students read a selection of classic literature about the frontier, such as *Old Yeller*, *Little House on the Prairie*, *Addie Across the Prairie*, or *Grasshopper Summer*.

Show the movie *Old Yeller* or *Little House on the Prairie* (or a recorded segment of the television show). Have students critique the film or show for accuracy, dramatic interest, etc.

ASSESS

Answers to “Think It Through!”

1. Speculators bought lots of land so they could sell it for profit. Squatters could not afford to buy land.
2. Answers will vary, but should mention the availability of trees for logs.
3. Most settlers did not have any close neighbors.
4. Quilting bees, corn shuckin’ (shucking), and parties with music, singing, and dancing
5. Everyone used the same long-handled dipper to drink water out of a wooden bucket.



Above: *Philip Henry Gosse was an English naturalist. He spent eight months as a schoolteacher near Pleasant Hill, Alabama, in 1838. Back in England, his Letters from Alabama appeared in a magazine. His writings were critical of slavery.*

In 1799, William and John Pierce opened the first school in Alabama. It was at the Boat Yard on Lake Tensaw. Here the kin (relatives) of the Scottish trader Lachlan McGillivray—the Taitts, Weatherfords, and Durants—and other children learned to read.

Other schools were opened as more families arrived. Early schools were one-room log cabins. Children sat on benches made of logs cut in half. Wide, rough boards hung on the walls like shelves and were used for desks. A table or shelf held a wooden water bucket. Everyone used the same long-handled dipper to drink from the bucket.

Most schools did not have many books. Pupils had no pencils or paper on which to write. Instead, they memorized and recited their lessons. Some wrote with chalk on a slate (a thin piece of rock that can be wiped clean).

One teacher taught all the grades. While one group recited the lesson to the teacher, another group studied. Pupils who did not know their lessons had to stand in a corner. Sometimes the teacher used long switches to help naughty pupils learn to behave!

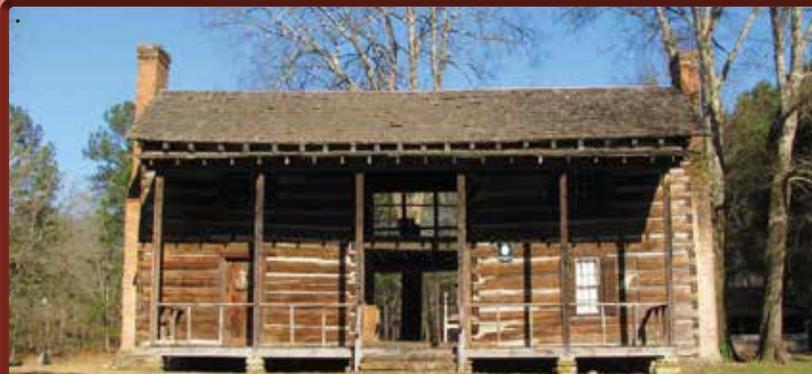
Philip Henry Gosse taught at Pleasant Hill in Dallas County. He wrote:

My schoolroom is a funny place, built wholly of round, unhewn logs.... The desks are merely boards.... The pupils are, mostly, real young hunters, who handle the long rifle with more ease than the goose-quill, and who are more at home in “twisting a rabbit,” or “treeing a possum,” than in conjugating a verb.

Think It Through!

1. What was the difference between speculators and squatters?
2. Why did the pioneers build their cabins of logs?
3. Why were settlers sometimes lonesome?
4. What did settlers do for fun?
5. How did students at school get a drink of water?

Notes:



John Looney House, a rare pioneer two-story log house in Ashville, Alabama, 1820.

Figure 12 Selected Early Towns and Villages

There were few towns and villages in early Alabama and they were far apart. They were usually built near a place where people gathered. These places included mills, ferries, roads or crossroads, Indian villages, forts, or natural resources. These little towns may have had a church, a store, and a school.

County	Town or Village	Date
Autauga	Prattville	1816
Baldwin	Fort Mims	1813
Barbour	Yufala	Creek Indian village
Bibb	Centreville	1819
Blount	Brooksville	1816
Bullock	Chananagi	Lower Creek Indian village
Butler	Fort Dale	1818
Calhoun	Tallaseehatchee	Indian village destroyed by General Jackson's forces
Franklin	Cedar Creek	1815
Jefferson	Ashville	1822
Madison	Hunt's Spring	1802
Marengo	Demopolis	1818

Source: *Historical Atlas of Alabama Volume I*

Using Photographs and Illustrations

Direct students' attention to this photograph of a historic log house in Ashville. Ask students why they think pioneer houses were built with dogtrot (breezeways connecting two parts of the cabin) and separate kitchens. Can students guess the origin or reason for the name "dogtrot"?

Mathematics Connection

In 1810, there were 9,000 settlers in the Alabama Territory. By 1820, nearly 150,000 people lived in Alabama. Ask students to choose the correct statement.

- Between 1810 and 1820, Alabama's population increased by more than 10 times its size.
- By 1820, Alabama's population had just doubled in size.
- Alabama's population decreased in the 10 years following 1810.

(Alabama's population increased by more than 10 times its size.)

Alabama Fever

Have students look for factors or circumstances that caused so many settlers to come to Alabama's frontier in such a short period of time. (*better land, resources, adventure, business opportunities, etc.*)

Then ask them to consider the effects of so many people settling on the land. (*clearing land, cutting trees, destroying natural habitats, encroaching on American Indian communities, etc.*)

Discuss the positive and negative aspects of "Alabama Fever."

Notes:

farmers, slaves, freedmen, and plantation owners. (A **freedman** was a black person who was not a slave.) These different ways of living often went on side by side. One culture would often mix with another. People used foods, words, and clothing styles from other cultures.

The Vine and Olive Colony

A different kind of settler came to Alabama in 1817 from France. These people had been friends of Emperor Napoleon. They came to the United States where they planned to grow grapes and olives. The government gave them some land along the Tombigbee River. They called their town Demopolis, which means “city of the people.”

The French settlers were shocked by life on the frontier. They had never cleared land, built cabins, or farmed. They tried hard, but found that the climate was not good for growing olive trees. Then they learned the land they had worked so hard to clear was outside their land claim.

The French settlers soon moved to cities along the Gulf Coast. Life there was more like what they had known in France. These settlers left behind French names such as Marengo, Bon Secour, and Bayou La Batre.



Above:
This lady's
fan with carved
ivory sticks belonged to
a resident of the colony.



Section 3: Different Cultures Move to the Alabama Frontier 147

Cause and Effect Shout Out

Read aloud with students the passage about the Vine and Olive Colony. Tell students to call out “cause” each time they hear a reason for the failure of the colony. (*lack of preparation for the hard life on the frontier, wrong climate, located outside their land claim*) Have them call out “effect” each time they hear a result, or effect, of the failed colony. (*the move to cities on the Gulf Coast; French names of places such as Marengo, Bon Secour, and Bayou la Batre; customs such as celebrating Mardi Gras*)

Growing Olives in Alabama?

The French settlers of Demopolis tried unsuccessfully to grow olive trees. List on the board the conditions necessary for olive trees to thrive: warm, dry, subtropical climate; mild winters with temperatures above 22°F; long, warm, dry summers with low humidity; and dry conditions during bloom season in April and May. Ask students whether Alabama’s climate is well suited for growing olive trees. (*no – too humid and wet in spring and summer, temperatures can drop below 22°F in winter*)

Using Maps

Students should locate Demopolis, the site of the Vine and Olive Colony, on a map of Alabama. What two rivers join here? (*the Black Warrior and the Tombigbee*)

Notes:

Plantation Life 3-2-1

Divide the class into thirds. Assign each of the passages on pages 148-150—Plantation Homes, Social Life of Planters, and Plantation Children—to one-third of the class. Have the students in each group read their assigned passage and fill out 3-2-1 charts (3 important details, 2 connections, and 1 question I still have).

Write the three topics on the board. Have students from each section of the class come up and write one important detail under the heading for their topic. Give every student an opportunity to participate by having students come to the board one or two at a time. Each student should write a new/different detail on the board without repeating any already written.

Round-Robin Q and A

Each group (from the 3-2-1 activity) should have formulated at least one question for each of the three topics—Plantation Homes, Social Life of Planters, and Plantation Children. Allow a student from the first group to ask one of their questions, and a student from one of the other groups to answer it. Continue in round-robin order until all three groups have asked all their questions.



Above: Gaineswood, in Demopolis, is one of the most beautiful antebellum houses in Alabama. It was designed and built by its owner, Nathan Bryan Whitfield. He was a planter who moved to Alabama from North Carolina. The house took 18 years to complete. Opposite page, below: The ballroom at Gaineswood is considered to be the finest room in the house. This is where Whitfield would have entertained his friends and neighbors. Opposite page, above: Kirkwood, in Eutaw, is another example of a fine antebellum mansion.

Planters

Most people in Alabama who grew crops were yeoman farmers. But some of the wealthier settlers owned large areas of land. These big farms were called **plantations**, and the people who owned them were called **planters**. Planters owned slaves who farmed the large plantations.

Plantations used slave labor to grow most of the food that they needed. Slaves on the plantation even made the family's clothes. Neither planters nor yeoman farmers bought much from a store. But planters could afford to buy things from Europe and the North. Goods like tools, cloth, and food came by ship through the ports of Mobile and New Orleans.

Plantation Homes

Planters often lived in beautiful houses. Some were two stories tall with columns. There was usually a wide porch on the front where the family could sit, rock, and talk in the late afternoon.

Rooms in the houses were usually large with very high ceilings. Since heat rises, this helped keep the rooms cool in summer. But the high ceilings made the rooms hard to heat in winter. For that reason, most rooms had a fireplace.

Notes:

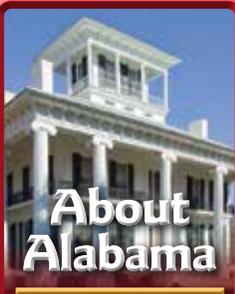
Some plantation families had furniture that came from Europe. Many houses also had fine furniture made in the plantation's carpentry shop. Oil paintings of family members (portraits) often hung on the walls. Artists traveled from one plantation to another painting these portraits. The artist stayed with the family while he painted.

The plantation kitchen was most often in a one-room building separate from the main house. In case of fire, this plan stopped damage to the main house. This also meant that the main house escaped the heat from the cooking fires. Servants carried hot food from the kitchen to the dining room.

Social Life of Planters

Families on plantations got lonesome too. When planters' families visited each other, they often stayed more than a day or two. The men usually traveled on horseback. The other family members rode in a horse-drawn carriage. Women brought their long dresses in small trunks. Men packed their clothes in leather cases.

The men hunted, fished, or rode their horses around the fields. Sometimes they went to horse races. If the guests stayed long



About Alabama

Old plantation houses are called *antebellum*. That is a Latin word meaning "before the war." In the United States, the term is used to describe houses built before the Civil War.



Section 3: Different Cultures Move to the Alabama Frontier 149

Art Activity

Let students draw their vision of a plantation home with surrounding land and outbuildings. Students might research historic plantation homes on the Internet or using media center resources. Have them search Plantation Architecture at encyclopediaofalabama.org for pictures of historic plantation homes, buildings, and quarters for slaves. You might want students to refer to these as they read about the lives of slaves on the plantations.

Rich Man, Poor Man

Ask students to examine the pictures in this chapter that show frontier and plantation homes. How do the log cabins of poor settlers and yeoman farmers compare with the large homes of plantation owners? Let students point out the differences in the exteriors and interiors of these homes. Discuss possible reasons for the differences in type and style between homes of yeoman farmers or poor settlers, and those of plantation owners.

Climate Connection

Many pictures and illustrations of antebellum houses in Alabama and other parts of the South show that the houses were painted or whitewashed in bright white, and built with wide porches and many tall windows. Do students know why? Ask students to list as many reasons related to climate and weather as they can. You may want students to research to find the scientific basis for this.

Notes:

Critical Thinking: A Different Life

Ask students to compare the lives of planters' children with the lives of yeoman farmers' children. Have them list all the differences they can. Were there any similarities? What were the major underlying reasons for the differences? (*wealth, etc.*) Were there greater differences between the lives of boys and girls on the small farms or on the large plantations? What reasons would there be for these differences?

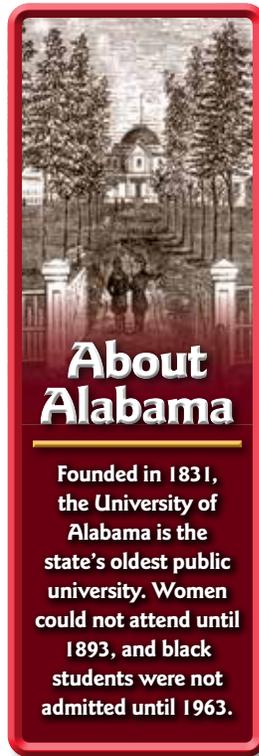
Journal Writing

Have students write a "diary" entry describing a day in the life of a planter's son or daughter in antebellum Alabama. The students should assume the role of the son or daughter, and write the entry in first-person narrative style. Allow students to share their diary entries. What would they most enjoy about the life of a planter's son or daughter? What would they dislike?

ASSESS

Answers to "Think It Through!"

1. "City of the people"
2. To help keep the rooms cool in summer
3. Plantation kitchens were in a separate room behind the main house to protect the house from fire. This placement also kept the heat from cooking away from the main house.
4. Planters' sons studied Latin, English, history, literature, and mathematics with hired teachers. Many went away to college in the East, and some attended the University of Alabama.



enough, the men might go to the nearest town. They could get supplies and learn the latest news there.

The women might sew or embroider (a form of fancy needlework) while they talked. Some painted designs on china or drew pictures. Someone might play the piano or other musical instrument for the group.

Plantation families and their friends had a full social life. It included outdoor parties, weddings, foxhunts, and church services.

Plantation Children

The children of wealthy planters did not have to go to one-room schools. They did not lack books or paper. Planters hired teachers for their sons. The boys studied Latin, English, history, literature, and mathematics. Many of them went to colleges in the East. Some attended the University of Alabama. Planters expected their sons to help run the family plantation. That was the goal of their education.

Boys were allowed the freedom to roam the fields and woods for the fun of it. When a boy was old enough, he learned how to handle a gun. With it, a young hunter went after deer, turkey, duck, fox, and squirrel. When the weather turned hot, boys enjoyed a swim in the creek.

Some daughters of plantation owners went to special schools in town. One of these schools was Locust Dell Academy. It was located on what is now the University of North Alabama campus at Florence. Girls studied music, French, geography, and literature. At home, girls learned to sew and entertain. Mothers taught their daughters how to manage the household. They learned how to plan everything from small dinners to very large parties. The girls were also taught to direct the people who worked in the plantation house and yard.

Think It Through!

1. What does the word *Demopolis* mean?
2. Why did plantation houses have high ceilings?
3. Where was the kitchen in the planter's home? Why?
4. How was a planter's son educated?

FYI

The University of Alabama was founded in 1831 as "The University of the State of Alabama." It was located in Tuscaloosa, which was the state's capital at that time. In 2021, *U.S. News & World Report* magazine listed the University of Alabama as tied for 65th place in the top 100 public universities in the United States.

Note:

Focus on Agriculture

Alabama Crops

Certain crops were native to North and South America. That is, they grew here before the Europeans came. Important native crops included corn, potatoes, squash, beans, tomatoes, tobacco, and sugarcane. European settlers learned about these crops from the Indians. But the Europeans and Africans also brought crops with them that were new to this part of the world. Cotton, peas, melons, okra, and peanuts were introduced crops.

Many crops were grown just so people could feed themselves. Other crops were grown so they could be sold to make money. Crops grown to be sold are called *cash crops*. Cotton (pictured right), sugarcane, and tobacco became important cash crops in the southeastern states. Even today, cotton is an important cash crop in Alabama.

Climate influenced the kinds of crops grown in different regions of the country. Each crop needs a certain length of growing season. Some crops, like cotton, require a longer growing season than others.

In the northern states, farmers could not grow cotton or sugarcane. The growing season was not

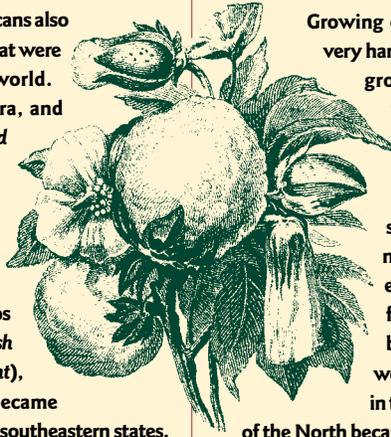
long enough there. So those farmers grew wheat and corn to eat and as cash crops. They fed corn to hogs and cattle, which they then sold. Farmers in the South grew all kinds of food crops. Because of the long growing season, cotton and cane were the main cash crops in the South.

Growing cotton or sugarcane was very hard work—a lot harder than growing corn or wheat. A wheat farm might require only 3 or 4 workers.

A single family could run a wheat farm. The same size cotton plantation needed 20 or more workers. That was more than a family could do, so planters bought slaves to do the work. There were few slaves in the wheat and corn regions

of the North because they were not needed. There were many slaves in the South where cotton was grown.

Not all parts of Alabama had the same number of slaves. Plantations were concentrated in the Black Belt and in the broad Tennessee River Valley. The planters needed large areas of flat land. If you look at the map on page 155, you will see that there were large numbers of slaves in those regions of Alabama.



Using Photographs and Illustrations

Have students look at the illustration of cotton bolls on this page. Point out that seeds in the center of a boll are very sticky. Ask students to imagine how long it would take to pick all the seeds out of each boll by hand. Would it make their fingers sore?

Have students guess how many bolls it takes to make a pound of cotton. Bring bags of cotton balls and a scale to class and allow students to measure out enough cotton balls to make a pound.

Organizing Information

Have students create a chart or other graphic that shows the following information about the listed crops: Native Crop or Introduced Crop, Food Crop or Cash Crop, Grown in the North or Grown in the South. List these crops: corn, potatoes, beans, tomatoes, sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, wheat, melons, and peanuts.

X Marks the Spot

Students should work in pairs or trios to search Focus on Agriculture for the paragraph that explains why there were more slaves in the South than in the North. (*paragraph 4*) When each team has identified the paragraph, record their responses on the board. Students should justify their choices and explain how the information in the paragraph answers the question. Guide students to verify the correct answer.

Note:

Agricultural Scientist

Do students understand the term “growing season”? Explain that each plant or crop takes a certain length of time at a certain temperature to grow and bloom or produce fruit. What are students’ favorite vegetables or fruits? Have students research to learn what the growing season is for their favorites.

Section 4 Slavery in Alabama

INTRODUCE

Outline

A. Slavery

1. The Last Slave Ship
2. The Life of Slaves
3. Beliefs and Customs of Slaves
4. Slave Codes

B. Free Blacks

C. Cotton Gin Increases Amount of Cotton Grown

1. Eli Whitney's Invention
2. Cotton Kingdom

Materials

Textbook, pages 152-159

Activity Sheets

Working from Dawn to Dusk, 48

A Different Life, 49

Cause and Effect: Mapping for Understanding, 50

Teacher Tech Website

Lesson Plan

Visual Aids

Guided Reading, 5-4

TEACH

Building Background

Ask students to define slavery in their own words. Have each student share one feeling they might experience if they were a slave. (*sad, tired, homesick, confused, angry...*) Discuss with students that slavery has been practiced at different times in most parts of the world, and that people of all races have been slaves.

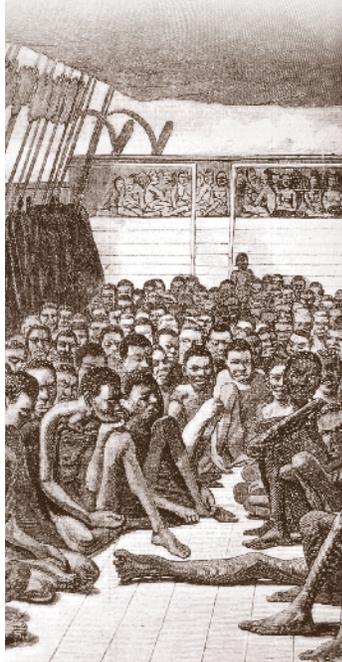
Section 4

Slavery in Alabama

As you read, look for

- how black people came to Alabama;
- how slaves lived;
- the invention that changed Alabama's economy;
- terms: **cotton gin, economy, mill.**

Below: Slaves were first brought to America from Africa in 1619. Many thousands of African men and women died during the long voyages.



The first black people to settle in Alabama arrived

with the Spanish. When de Soto came to this land, he brought African men with him. Later, a few black people settled with the French in Mobile. By the early 1800s, there were thousands of Africans in the South. Almost all of these black people were slaves.

Slavery

The first slave ship to come to America was a Dutch ship. It brought African slaves to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. Slaves were brought into Mobile in 1721 on the ship *Africane*. The slaves were forced to work. They could not quit their jobs or leave the area.

The Last Slave Ship

The *Clotilda* was the last known slave ship to come to America. Bringing slaves into the United States was against the law after 1808. But in 1860, the *Clotilda* sailed on a bet by the ship's owner. He bet that the ship could bring slaves into Mobile. The plan was to do this right under the noses of federal agents. The slaves were moved to a steamboat and kept hidden. A ship's pilot guided the boat at night up Mobile Bay to Clarke County.

Notes:

They stopped where the Alabama and Tombigbee Rivers meet.

These enslaved people were members of several tribes in West Africa. After the Civil War, some settled in an area near Mobile called AfricaTown, USA. The last survivor of the illegal voyage was Cudjoe Lewis, whose African name was Kazoola.

In 1860, about one-third of Alabama families owned slaves. Half of those owned fewer than 5, and many others owned fewer than 10. However, a planter in Greene County owned 647 slaves. Most slaves worked on plantations. Planters in Marengo, Dallas, Greene, Montgomery, and Madison Counties owned the greatest number of slaves in the state. These counties are in the Black Belt and Tennessee River Valley. Cotton grows well in the rich soil of these areas.

The Life of Slaves

Slaves worked at different jobs. Some worked as field hands in the cotton fields. They planted, plowed, chopped, and picked cotton. They also had to remove the seeds from the cotton. The field hands worked from sunrise to sunset. Other slaves worked in and around the planter's home. Most of these were cooks, carriage drivers, kitchen helpers, garden workers, maids, or

About Alabama

AfricaTown, USA, was the first town in the United States that was founded, occupied, and governed by African Americans.

Below: These slaves are bringing in the cotton harvest at the end of a long day. Field slaves on cotton plantations worked from "can see" (sunrise) to "can't see" (sunset).



Section 4: Slavery in Alabama 153

Slave Ships

Students read about the slave ships *Africane* and *Clotilda* in this chapter. There were many other ships involved in bringing African slaves to North America.

To help students visualize the conditions on slave ships, go to virtualjamestown.org/map4b.html to view the stowage of the *Brooks* (misabeled *Brookes* in the picture), a British slave ship. The lower deck was 100 feet long, 25 feet 4 inches wide, and 5 feet 8 inches high. At least 450 slaves were crowded into the lower deck for travel across the Atlantic Ocean. At times, the ship carried up to 700 slaves.

Research: The Underground Railroad

Once they emerged from slave ships and were transported to plantations, slaves were subjected to a lifetime of harsh conditions. Many slaves tried to escape. Explain to students that they had to travel secretly to other states in the North or to Canada where slave owners could not capture them.

Divide the class into teams and have each team research one aspect of the Underground Railroad: (1) guides/conductors, (2) drivers, (3) station masters, (4) origin of the Underground Railroad, and (5) well-known conductors (Harriet Tubman, Levi Coffin, etc.). Good starting places for research would be the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (<https://freedomcenter.org>) and <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Underground-Railroad/353882>.

Notes:

Spotlight on Culture

AfricaTown, USA

Last Survivor of *Clotilda*

Cudjoe Lewis died in 1935, years after the last of the other slave passengers from the 1860 voyage of *Clotilda*. Students can find pictures of Cudjoe (Cudjo) Lewis at encyclopediaofalabama.org under the Civil War and Reconstruction section of History.

An Amazing Discovery

In March 2018, a team of marine scientists began surveying the 12 Mile Island section of the Mobile River, where their research indicated the wreckage of the *Clotilda* might be found. On April 13, 2018, they brought a piece of *Clotilda* to the surface, 160 years after the ship had been burned and sunk in the river. They kept the discovery secret for a year until the find was completely verified. The Alabama Historical Commission announced the discovery on May 22, 2019.

What Would You Do?

Ask students to imagine being taken against your will to another continent and not being able to return home. Would they decide to hold on to their culture and live as they did in their homeland, or would they give up their culture and learn to live as the people around them?

Languages

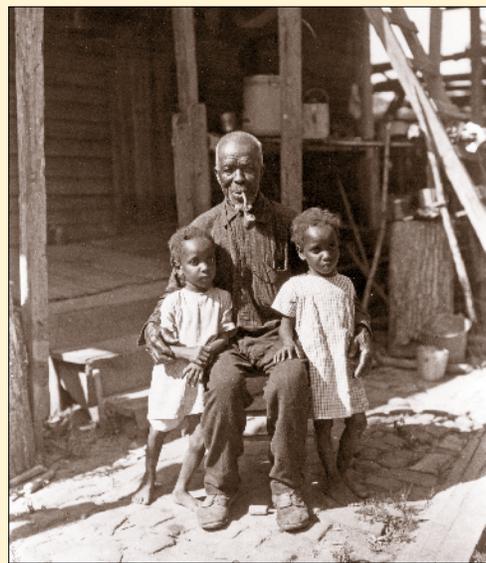
The people of AfricaTown spoke their African language and taught it to their children for generations. Do any students speak a native language other than English? Or do they have relatives at home who do? Ask students to think about why it might be important to keep the language of your homeland, as well as learn the language used in your new home.

After the trip from Africa into Mobile, the illegal slaves were secretly sold to different people. Then in 1865, the end of the Civil War brought freedom to all of the slaves. Those who had come on the *Clotilda* wanted to go back home to Africa, but did not have the money. They decided to live together and use their own language and customs.

They were on the land of Timothy Meaher, owner of the *Clotilda*. The area was known as Plateau. This land became AfricaTown. The people earned money and bought the land from Meaher. At first, the people made shelter from whatever they could find. They hunted in the forest for food.

The people of AfricaTown practiced their African religion and spoke their African language. They gave their children African names. By 1869, most citizens had turned to Christianity. They built their first church, Old Landmark Baptist Church. By 1880, many of AfricaTown's residents had been born in America. They had never been to Africa. But their parents taught them about Africa and the language. Many of these children lived into the 1950s still speaking their African language.

Two citizens of AfricaTown, Cudjoe Lewis and Gumpa, sued a major company for injuries



Above: Cudjoe Lewis was the last survivor of the slaves brought to Mobile on the *Clotilda*.

on a railroad. The case went all the way to the Alabama Supreme Court.

Today, there are thousands of great- and great-great-grandchildren of those slaves from the last slave ship. They know the names and homelands of their ancestors. They are very proud to know their history.

Notes:

Folk Remedies

Slaves and many settlers often depended on herbs and other plants to treat illnesses. Have students ask older family members if they recall any folk remedies. Examples of remedies are St. John's wort to treat scrapes and strains, wild horehound plant to reduce cold symptoms, lemon juice and honey to soothe sore throats, garlic for infections, and clay or mud to treat insect bites.

Engaging Your Students

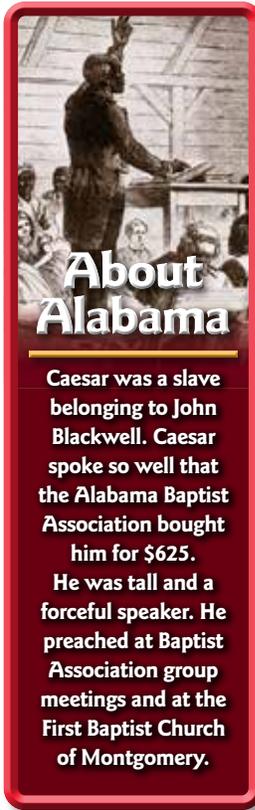
Allow students to create and demonstrate a "patting juba" routine for the class. Show the introductory and/or ending scenes of the movie, *The Color Purple*, which shows sisters clapping or "patting juba."

Meaningful Music

Slaves often sang songs as they worked on plantations. Many of the songs' lyrics contained coded messages about escaping to places where they could live free.

Collaborate with the music teacher in your school, or have students use the Internet, to get the words to a coded slave song such as "Follow the Drinking Gourd" or "Go Down, Moses." Students should identify and explain the coded messages in the songs.

Have the students write their own song lyrics or a poem containing "coded" directions for their classmates to follow (for example, from the classroom to the playground or the lunchroom, or from school to home or to the park, etc.). For further information and song lyrics, look at www.harriet-tubman.org/songs-of-the-underground-railroad/.



"remedies." Some white families had the nearest doctor come out to treat slaves in emergencies.

Beliefs and Customs of Slaves

When two slaves wanted to get married, the man would ask the master, who often married the couple. There might be a party at the wedding. Sometimes a couple married by doing something simple. One common custom was to hold hands and jump over a broom. Slave marriages were not legally recognized, but most owners wanted slaves to marry and have large families. The planters wanted more slaves to work on the plantation.

Religion was important in the life of a slave. To die and go to heaven seemed better than being a slave. Some of the songs we know today began when slaves sang about their hope for a good life in heaven. Songs like "I Got a Robe" tell of the slaves' desire to be in heaven.

Slaves kept many of their African religious practices. These customs included group singing, public ceremonies, and the special use of water. They developed a special style of preaching. These African practices blended well into most Christian churches in the South.

Some slaves had their own church meetings. Others went to the same church as the master's family. The slaves sat together at the back of the church or in the balcony. Some churches in Alabama had more slaves than whites attending services. Preachers for the slaves might be slaves themselves. Sometimes wives of planters or white clergymen led the services.

Slave Codes

There were many laws concerning slaves. The Slave Codes were laws made to control the slaves in every way.

It was against the law to teach slaves to read or write. Slave children did not go to school. However, the wives and daughters of some plantation owners taught their slaves to read from the Bible. Sometimes, an owner taught math to a slave so the slave could help the owner keep records. Planters were fined if caught teaching their slaves.

By law, slaves could not carry weapons, own land, or speak against a white man in court. Slaves could not own a dog, a horse, a mule, or a hog. They could not spend time or food caring for an animal. If slaves broke a law, they would be whipped, or worse.

Notes:

One of the worst things about being a slave was being sold. Buying and selling slaves was a common practice. Some masters sold slave families together. Others sold the father to one planter and the mother and children to another planter. The family might be separated by hundreds of miles. By Alabama law, a mother and her young children had to be sold together. This law was not always obeyed.

Free Blacks

Not all blacks in Alabama were slaves. When the Alabama Territory became a state in 1819, only 1 black person out of 85 was free. During the next 40 years, the number of free blacks grew, but not nearly as fast as the number of slaves. Some free blacks owned slaves.

Blacks gained freedom in several ways. A small number of slaves bought their freedom. Sometimes, slaves with special skills were allowed to work outside the plantation. Some worked at mining and others worked at construction (building). The owners let them keep a small part of the money they earned. Sometimes a master would give a slave his or her freedom. Children born to a free mother remained free.

When they gained their freedom, most blacks did not stay on the farms. They moved to towns to find jobs and places to live. Some free blacks worked as carpenters, cooks, and barbers. Others worked in factories making mattresses and shoes. Many had learned these trades while they were slaves.

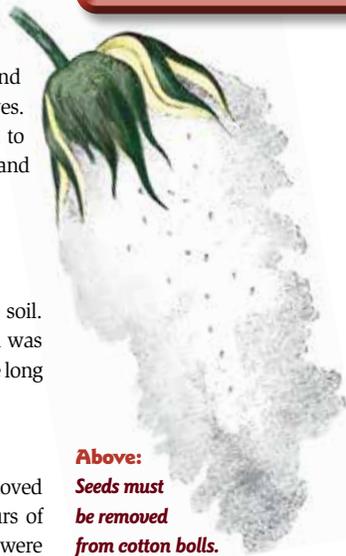
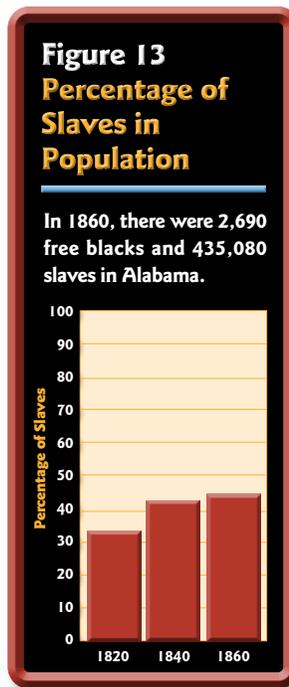
There were also special laws for free blacks. They had to carry passes to prove they were free. They could not vote and had only a small chance to get an education.

Cotton Gin Increases Amount of Cotton Grown

Alabama's Black Belt is known for the dark color of its soil. Early settlers learned that this dark, sometimes sticky soil was good for growing cotton. Alabama's climate gave cotton the long growing season it needed.

Eli Whitney's Invention

After cotton was picked, the small seeds had to be removed from the bolls. This was done by hand, and it took hours of work. Once the seeds were gone, the short, white fibers were



Above:
Seeds must
be removed
from cotton bolls.

Note:

Reading a Bar Graph: Figure 13

Have students look at the graph in Figure 13, which shows the percentage of the population that were slaves. During which period did the percentage of slaves in Alabama increase the most? (*between 1820 and 1840*)

Journal Writing

Point out to students that slaves were forbidden by law to learn to read or write. Ask students why they think that was the case. In spite of those laws, a number of slaves did achieve literacy with the help of some whites, other slaves, or free blacks who risked teaching them.

Have students imagine that they are slaves who have learned to read and write, and that they are keeping a secret journal about their lives on an Alabama plantation or farm. Have them write journal entries describing a daily or weekly routine in their life. Students should include their personal feelings and use the first person perspective when they write.

Critical Thinking

Ask students what they think was the worst thing about being a slave. What would have made them most unhappy? What would they fear? What things would they have done to try to make this life more bearable?

Comparing Lifestyles

Have students think about how the lives of slaves and free blacks differed from those of frontier farmers and planters. Have students work in collaborative groups to complete a chart showing information about these groups of settlers: Yeoman Farmers, Planters, Slaves, and Free Blacks. Use categories such as housing, work, social life, education, legal rights, etc. After the groups have completed their charts, have each student write a paragraph summarizing the most significant differences.

Cotton Gin Discussion Web

In the center of a discussion web graphic organizer, write this question: “Did the invention of the cotton gin lead to an increase in slavery in Alabama?” Have students work in collaborative groups to find support in the text for the pro and con positions about the question.

After a discussion period, have them try to reach a consensus as a group. At the bottom of the web, write the conclusion and students’ reasoning.

Young Inventors

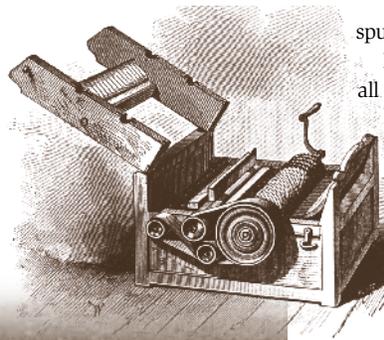
As a young boy, Eli Whitney was fascinated by taking things apart and reassembling them to find out how they worked. As a child, he invented many practical things. Students might research to learn more about Eli Whitney’s life and inventions.

Ask students to think of an idea for an invention that would make their lives easier or better. Ideas can be simple, such as a new lunch box. Each student should describe the item in writing and draw a design of it. Have students present their inventions to the class.

ASSESS

Answers to “Think It Through!”

1. Answers will vary.
2. Slaves sang songs about a better life in heaven. Sometimes slaves sat in the balcony of the master’s church during services.
3. The cotton gin greatly increased Alabama’s cotton harvest and helped its economy, making it the “cotton kingdom.” It increased the need for slaves and workers in cotton fields.



Above: *Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin (top) while visiting a cotton plantation in Georgia. This invention led to a large increase in the production of cotton, and the need for many more slaves to grow it.*

spun into thread. Then the threads were woven into cloth. In 1793, a young inventor named Eli Whitney changed all of that. He made a simple machine that could take the seeds out of the fiber. Whitney named his invention the “cotton engine.” That was later shortened to **cotton gin**.

To use a cotton gin, one man turned a crank handle. This action turned rollers with metal teeth on them. When cotton was fed into the machine, the teeth took the seeds out of the fiber. Later, larger gins were built. The large gins used the power of horses or water.

Cotton Kingdom

In 1820, Alabama grew only a small amount of the United States’ cotton crop. The use of the cotton gin changed that. Alabama’s cotton harvest increased to almost one-fourth of the nation’s total crop. As people wanted more cotton, more workers were needed. This meant more slaves were put to work in the fields.

As use of the cotton gin spread, landowners grew more cotton. Whitney’s invention made a big difference in Alabama’s economy. (The **economy** includes all the things people do to make and sell goods and services.) It helped Alabama become the “cotton kingdom” of the South. The worldwide market for cotton grew rapidly. This was because more cotton was needed for the textile mills of Great Britain and France.

These **mills** were factories built near rivers with swift-flowing water. The water turned a waterwheel that then moved the factory parts. The first mills were gristmills. The waterwheel moved a heavy stone to grind wheat or corn into flour or meal.

Most of Alabama’s cotton was shipped out of Mobile. Cotton grown in the Tennessee Valley was shipped on the Tennessee River. The route was west, then south to the Port of New Orleans in Louisiana.

Think It Through!

1. Describe the life of a slave.
2. How did slaves practice their religion?
3. How did the cotton gin change Alabama?

Notes:

Alabama Portrait

Horace King

Horace King (1807-1885) was born a slave in South Carolina. He went on to be a huge success as an engineer, architect, and builder. King was one of the wealthiest former slaves in Alabama.

John Godwin, a builder, bought Horace King in 1830. King learned to design and build while working for Godwin. In 1846, John Godwin freed his slave, Horace King. After King was free, he and Godwin became business partners. Together they built a 560-foot-long covered bridge. It crossed the Chattahoochee River at Phenix City (Girard, at that time), Alabama.

In 1839, King married Frances Gould Thomas, a free black woman. Because she was free, her children were free. After Frances died, he married Sarah Jane Jones McManus in 1865. His sons continued in the building business and were very successful. His children were Washington, Marshall, John Thomas, Annie Elizabeth, and George.

After the Civil War, Horace King served two terms in the Alabama Legislature. At this time, many buildings lay destroyed by the war. King helped the state recover from the war. He did this by building many new businesses such as warehouses and mills. King also built bridges and the Lee County Courthouse.

King is best known for his wagon and railroad bridges. Some of the towns with King bridges are Eufaula, Phenix City, Tuscaloosa, Tallassee, and Wetumpka. He also built homes and the



Above: This is one of the freestanding spiral staircases of the Alabama State Capitol. It is believed that Horace King built these beautiful stairs.

Alabama state mental hospital. King had a very good reputation. Many people wanted Horace King as their builder.

Horace King did not allow his past status as a slave to take away his kindness. When Godwin died in 1849, King had a marker put on his grave. Some of the words on it are

This stone was placed here by Horace King in lasting remembrance of the love and gratitude for his lost friend and former master.

Horace King died in LaGrange, Georgia. His granite headstone reads "Horace King, Master Covered Bridge Builder."

Bridge Builder

Have students use the Internet to research and find a picture of one of Horace King's covered bridges in Alabama. If a building, home, or bridge built by Horace King is located in your area, encourage students to ask their parents to show it to them. They might take pictures or draw sketches to share with the class.

Critical Thinking

Let students read the inscription on the marker that Horace King put on John Godwin's grave. Why do students think King could say this about his former owner and master?

What things happened in King's life that helped him to overcome his past as a slave?

A Man of Many Talents

Write this statement on the board:

Horace King was an artist, an engineer, a scientist, an inventor, a builder, a mathematician, and an entrepreneur.

Place students in seven small groups, and assign one of the underlined words to each group.

Each group will prepare a statement of proof that their word accurately describes Horace King. They may use both pictures of his work and information from the text as evidence to prove their word.

Allow groups to present their statements of proof to the class.

Notes:

Remember

After the Indians ceded their land to the U.S. government, roads were built. Pioneers were the first settlers to come to the territory. Soon squatters, speculators, and yeoman farmers came to make money or new lives.

Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin made cotton a money-making crop. Planters used slave labor on very large farms called plantations. The slaves led very hard lives because they were owned by another person. They grew cotton for the textile mills in France and Great Britain.

Reviewing the Facts

1. The Federal Road, the Natchez Trace, and the Huntsville Road
2. Yeoman farmers
3. Corn, potatoes, peas, squash, beans, and melons
4. Plantations

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Pioneers moved into Alabama along the Federal Road, the Natchez Trace, and the Huntsville Road. Some people, called squatters, lived on land that did not belong to them. Others, called speculators, bought large tracts of land to sell for a profit.

Most pioneers lived in simple log cabins. They cleared the land and farmed it for a living. They helped each other and got together for fun.

Pioneer schools were usually in log buildings, and they had few books or supplies. The children memorized their lessons.

A group of French settlers came to present-day Demopolis. The settlement was called the Vine and Olive Colony. The people later moved to cities along the Gulf Coast.

Most people who grew crops were called yeoman farmers. Those with larger amounts of land were called planters. Planters owned slaves who worked the land and cared for the planter's family. Life for a slave was very hard. A small number of African slaves were freed and able to work for money.

Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793. It made cotton a very important crop in Alabama.



Remember

Choose the correct words from the list below to tell the story. Write the words in the correct order on a separate piece of paper. Be careful; not all words are used.

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| Ceded | Plantations |
| Cotton gin | Planters |
| Economic | Speculators |
| Freedman | Squatters |
| Mills | Yeoman |

After the Indians _____ their land to the U.S. government, roads were built. Pioneers were the first settlers to come to the territory. Soon _____, _____, and _____ farmers came to make money or new lives.

Eli Whitney's invention of the _____ made cotton a moneymaking crop. _____ used slave labor on very large farms called _____. The slaves led very hard lives because they were owned by another person. They grew cotton for the textile _____ in France and Great Britain.



Reviewing the Facts

1. Name three roads that pioneers used for traveling to Alabama.
2. Most farmers in Alabama grew their own crops without the help of slaves. What were these farmers called?
3. Name some food crops of early settlers.
4. What were the large farms called that used slave labor?

Notes:



Using Critical Thinking Skills

1. Compare your life as a student to that of a pioneer student. To a slave child.
2. Why was it important for a pioneer family to clear the land quickly?
3. List some different or unusual things that you might do for fun if you were a pioneer.
4. What are three things Horace King is known for doing?



Making Decisions

1. Pioneers often risked death and hardship to move to Alabama. Would you have left a home in Georgia to move to Alabama? Why or why not?
2. What questions would you ask before you decided which road to take into early Alabama?
3. Squatters came to Alabama. Why do you think they decided to settle on land that was not theirs? What would you do?



Project

Here are some of the songs of early settlers and/or slaves: “Down in the Valley,” “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,” “Bluetail Fly,” “Steal Away,” and “Little Brown Church.” Choose a song from the list and find the words to it. Find out if any of these songs are still sung today. Then sing a song or two!



Writing

Pretend that you are a pioneer child who has just moved to Alabama. Write a letter to family or friends in the state or country that you left. Include how the land looks; what your home is like; what you

do, eat, and wear; how you feel about your new home in Alabama. Describe any problems that you have or see.



Preparing for Tests

Multiple Choice—These questions are like those you may see on tests. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Which of the following facts is true for a planter?
 - A. Sold land to make profit
 - B. Owned small amount of land
 - C. Farmed the land with family
 - D. Used slave labor for farming
2. Which of the following facts is true for both the yeoman farmer and the speculator?
 - A. Owned large tracts of land
 - B. Farmed the land
 - C. Used no slaves for farm labor
 - D. Sold land for profit



Using Technology

In order to understand more about slavery, you should look at some of the laws called the Slave Codes. Using the Internet, go to <https://archives.alabama.gov/teacher/slavery/lesson1/doc1.html> and find the Slave Code of 1833. Look at Section 31 on page 397 of the code. What could any person not do? What was the fine if a person was convicted of breaking this law?

Using Critical Thinking Skills

1. Answers will vary.
2. They needed to plant food crops to sustain themselves.
3. Answers will vary.
4. He was a great engineer, architect, and builder.

Making Decisions

1. Answers will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary.

Project

You might wish to collaborate with the music teacher in your school to assist students with finding and learning songs of the period.

Writing

Students’ letters will vary, but should contain accurate information students have learned from this chapter.

Preparing for Tests

1. D. Used slave labor for farming
2. C. Used no slaves for farm labor

Using Technology

Students will find at least 42 laws in the slave codes shown in this document.

Notes: