



AP[®] U.S. History 2001 Sample Student Responses

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The "peculiar institution" could not have found a better location to take roots in than southern colonies during 1619-1775. The growth of slavery in this area was stimulated by economic, geographic, and social factors.

The economy of the southern colonies was completely dependant on slave labor by 1775. From the very beginning cash crops were the staple of southern income. However, they created a huge demand for labor. Tobacco production in the Chesapeake area increased thirty fold by the end of the 17th century. At first labor needs were met through indentured servants. This arrangement lasted only for a while. The benefit was the headright system, which allotted fifty acres of land to the person that paid the passage of one person. However, indenturism only lasted for several years per servant, who after the term of labor was up would receive his freedom and then go on to be a competitor with his former master by farming the same cash crops. Therefore the need for a new labor system arose. As consumption of cash crops like tobacco and cotton increased, so did the amount of acreage being farmed. The perfect answer to this labor shortage was the slave trade. A slave, ~~could never~~ unlike an indentured servant,

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was a permanent labor source who was never freed. Also, slaves were easy to control, and could not go on to lead insurrection like Bacon's rebellion in Virginia. The first slaves were brought to Jamestown in 1619. By 1775 there were over 4 million slaves in America. After the Royal African Company lost its crown-granted monopoly on the slave trade in the America, ~~even~~ eager Rhode Islanders cashed in on the slave trade in the form of Triangle Trade. The slave trade benefitted the New England colonies as well, which provided an internal market for southern goods, which bolstered the South's economy. Without the slave trade, this economic system would come crashing down, but for the time the economy of the southern colonies only fueled slavery.

Geography of the southern colonies also fueled slavery. The climate was friendly to the cash crops, where deep freezes were rare and the rainfall ideal for plantation. With this type of climate the condition was ideal for vast plantations that spanned hundreds of acres. ~~With~~ With more land available for harvest, more demand for cheap labor was created, and was supplied by slavery. Another geographical condition that made the southern colonies so conducive to slavery was the lack of mountainous regions or rocky soil. Unlike their northern neighbors, who had to painstakingly

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pick rocks out of the soil, the South could simply seed the land and watch the crops grow. The geography made such a lucrative business out of ~~the~~ farming vast areas of land that slavery went hand in hand with the southern colonies. With no other nature on the planters' side, slavery turned into a booming business.

Southern society was one of the most contributing factors to the booming business of slavery. Although the majority of white families in the South did not even own slaves, the growth of slavery continued. That is because all the white people in the South aspired to become a slave holder. The society of the southern colonies was based on ownership of slaves. The more slaves a person owned, the wealthier ^{and more respected} they are. This class system provided the poor white families in the South a surprisingly flexible caste system, where they could move up in status through slave ownership. Also evident of the slavery being important to the economy of the southern colonies was the oligarchy structure. The aristocrats of the southern colonies ruled, so if one had money, ~~was~~ ^{one} had power. Of course, the easiest way to get money was by owning slaves. The FFV's held seventy ~~per~~ percent of the offices in the government of Virginia, and not coincidentally they

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each owned fifty to one hundred slaves. People looked upon the FFI's that as an example that slaveholding is power, and thus created a huge desire for slaves. The social structure of the southern colonies certainly ~~and~~ encouraged the growth of slavery and therefore the economy of the

Even though slavery was deemed evil by most, it provided huge amounts of financial security to the colonies. If slavery had not occurred, much of the cause for the American Revolution would have been squelched by both lack of money and purpose. The economy, geography, and society of the southern colonies all stimulated the growth of slavery and economy.

In the year 1619, America was changed forever. In that year, two very important boats reached America and the House of Burgesses was formed. The boats contained: the first women which led to the creation of families across the colonies - not just in New England as there were already women there - and the second Slaves, which led to the "unspeakable evil" of Slavery. Slavery did not grow in the Northern or Middle colonies as it did in the South. Northern and Middle colonies could not or would not use Slaves due to their economy and religious beliefs. Slavery grew as an important part of the Southern colonies between 1607 and 1775 through the economy, geography, and social conditions.

While the North relied on merchants and business and the Middle colonies on small farms, the South was dependant on large plantations featuring one or two staple (cash) crops. As the Americas were initially formed, indentured servants were used as laborers. Indentured servants were those who agreed to work for a certain period of time for a person (usually 7 years) as payment for passage to America. The number of indentured servants began to decline and the use of Slaves grew. Slaves were economically part of the triangular trade system: America would sell rum to Africa, Africa would sell Slaves to the Caribbean and America, and America would buy molasses from the Caribbean. Slavery was a vital link in this economy. This pattern ended as the slave trade was made illegal in the 1670's. Slaves were still a presence in the South, however. The large Southern plantations of the South needed many workers. There

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workers needed to work at very low rates into for the plantation owners to make any profits. Slaves were the cheapest form of manual labor which could be found. Soon the entire economy of the South was dependent upon slaves.

The South was geographically the area most suited to farming. The soil was not as rocky as the north and the climate was more temperate than the middle colonies. ^{As} Plantations grew, it was quickly determined that slaves were excellent farm hands, not only due to the free labor. Slaves were used to the hot temperatures and the climate of the South as it was similar to that of Africa and the Caribbean. Slaves also did not fall ill to such diseases as malaria which existed due to the swampy land of the South. Indians initially were used as slaves; however, they fell ill in mass numbers and were not effective. Due to African slaves' strength in the geography of the South, they grew to be the vital workforce.

Socially, the South was very different from the rest of the colonies. Most of the Southern colonies were formed as economic ventures and for that reason were able to maintain close relations to England. These close ties led to acceptance of the English mercantilist theories. The South was to produce its own crops - sugar, rice, indigo, tobacco, etc. - and sell them to England. Slaves were needed to ensure that this system was to work properly. Southern society was also much like Europe's. There was social mobility among the classes; however, there needed to be a class of people which

others could look down on. The slaves, with their different culture and peasant-like jobs fit the bill perfectly. The slavery movement grew.

Slavery in the South became a vital way of life through the economy, geography, and social conditions. Slavery became important to the ~~inter~~ isolated South and grew in power and strength until Civil War was needed to crush it.

The mercantile demands of Mother England upon her colonies placed pressure upon American colonial settlers and their fledgling farms. The southern colonies of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries relied mainly upon plantation farming as their means of income. As the north was concerned with lumber and textiles, the pressure remained on the south to provide tobacco, cotton, indigo, and other useful products to trade with England. Because of the difficulties of this responsibility, and the easy obtainment of slaves, slavery was encouraged and considered an important foundation for the welfare of southern economy.

Of course, colonial America was dependent upon England right up until the Revolutionary war for independence, and could not be thrust into a shaky world market while barely able to rely on herself. The plantations of the south were large and numerous, and usually owned by single families. The use of slavery was considered geographically important because of the inability of farmers and plantation owners to control and manage their allotted land. Before slavery, indentured servants were brought to America from

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Europe and had made agreements to assist Southern landowners for a pre-determined number of years. The problem associated with indentured servants was that, ~~and~~ after a few years of harsh work for meager pay, started leaving their plantations and running west toward the Appalachian mountains and Native American territory.

As the triangular slave trade originating in the northeast made for free slave ~~and~~ trade in the South, it became easier and more tempting to resort to slave-ownership in order to maintain the stability of the South's economy. Paired with the strict regulations and demands of England and the failure of ~~the~~ the indentured servant system, Southern plantation owners eventually became engrossed in slavery, the practice which tore the United States ~~in~~ apart.