

# Slavery in the North

In 1806, 9-year-old Isabella Baumfree and her family lived on the property of Charles Ardinburgh of Ulster County in New York. When Ardinburgh died, Isabella found her mother in tears.

"Mau-mau, what makes you cry?" Isabella asked.

"Oh, my child, I am thinking of your brothers and sisters that have been sold away from me," her mother replied.

Soon after, Isabella too was separated from her mother. She was **auctioned**<sup>1</sup>—along with other slaves, horses, and cattle—and purchased for \$100. She was sold again and again, from master to master, until she was **emancipated**<sup>2</sup> in 1828.

Students of history know Isabella better by the name she chose as an adult—Sojourner Truth. Truth was an **abolitionist**. She spoke out against slavery. But what some people may not know is that Truth was one of thousands of slaves who were bought, sold, and forced to do labor in the North.

"Many people are surprised when you talk about slavery in the North," Alan Singer, a professor of education at Hofstra University, told *Senior Edition*. "We associate slavery with the South, even though the biggest importer of slaves—after South Carolina—was New York City."

Historians are beginning to bring slavery in the North into the spotlight. The New York Historical Society recently presented an exhibition on slavery in that state. Singer, who travels the country to talk to students about slavery in the North, wants people to remember that slavery was a national institution.

The slave trade helped finance the **Industrial Revolution** in many major Northern cities, such as Boston and New York City. The

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**1 auctioned:** sold to the person willing to pay the highest price

**2 emancipate:** to free from slavery

Industrial Revolution was a period of rapid growth in the use of machinery in the early 1800s. Many U.S. businesses got their start with profits from slave-produced goods and the slave trade.

It's important to understand how slavery affected the entire country, because its effects linger through discrimination, Singer says. "Kids see slavery as something that happened in the deep past," he told *Senior Edition*. "I want children to know that we still live with the effects of that slavery society."

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. According to the passage, what might some people not know about Sojourner Truth?

- A She was sold for 100 dollars.
- B She was emancipated in 1828.
- C She was a slave in the North.
- D She was an abolitionist.

2. According to the passage, what was one effect of slavery in many major Northern cities?

- A Slavery helped finance the Industrial Revolution in the Northern cities.
- B Slavery stopped the growth of machinery in the Northern cities in the 1800s.
- C Slavery slowed the growth of many U.S. businesses in the Northern cities.
- D Slavery put an end to the Industrial Revolution in the Northern cities.

3. Historians are trying to draw attention to slavery in the North. What evidence from the passage best supports this statement?

- A Thousands of slaves were bought, sold, and forced to do labor in the North.
- B The New York Historical Society presented an exhibition on slavery in that state.
- C Kids see slavery as something that happened a long time ago, according to Singer.
- D Industrial Revolution was a period of rapid growth in the use of machinery in the early 1800s.

4. What can you conclude about Sojourner Truth after reading the passage?

- A She was shy and quiet.
- B She knows Alan Singer.
- C She lives in New York.
- D She was outspoken.

5. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A The Industrial Revolution began in the early 1800s.
- B Alan Singer is a professor of education at Hofstra University.
- C Sojourner Truth was emancipated from slavery in 1828.
- D Historians are teaching people about slavery in the North.

6. Read this sentence from the passage: “We **associate** slavery with the South, even though the biggest importer of slaves—after South Carolina—was New York City.”

As used in this sentence, what does the word “**associate**” mean?

- A explain
- B judge
- C mourn
- D connect

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Many people associate slavery with the South, \_\_\_\_\_ slavery was in the North too, says Alan Singer.

- A because
- B until
- C but
- D for

8. According to Alan Singer, why are many people surprised when we talk about slavery in the North?

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9. How did slavery in the North impact the Industrial Revolution?

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10. Explain whether it is important for organizations like The New York Historical Society to teach people about slavery in the North. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

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## Teacher Guide &amp; Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 1000

1. According to the passage, what might some people not know about Sojourner Truth?
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  - C **She was a slave in the North.**
  - D She was an abolitionist.
  
2. According to the passage, what was one effect of slavery in many major Northern cities?
  - A **Slavery helped finance the Industrial Revolution in the Northern cities.**
  - B Slavery stopped the growth of machinery in the Northern cities in the 1800s.
  - C Slavery slowed the growth of many U.S. businesses in the Northern cities.
  - D Slavery put an end to the Industrial Revolution in the Northern cities.
  
3. Historians are trying to draw attention to slavery in the North. What evidence from the passage best supports this statement?
  - A Thousands of slaves were bought, sold, and forced to do labor in the North.
  - B **The New York Historical Society presented an exhibition on slavery in that state.**
  - C Kids see slavery as something that happened a long time ago, according to Singer.
  - D Industrial Revolution was a period of rapid growth in the use of machinery in the early 1800s.
  
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6. Read this sentence from the passage: "We **associate** slavery with the South, even though the biggest importer of slaves—after South Carolina—was New York City."

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Many people associate slavery with the South, \_\_\_\_\_ slavery was in the North too, says Alan Singer.

- A because
- B until
- C **but**
- D for

8. According to Alan Singer, why are many people surprised when we talk about slavery in the North?

**Suggested answer:** According to Alan Singer, many people are surprised when we talk about slavery in the North because we associate slavery with the South.

9. How did slavery in the North impact the Industrial Revolution?

**Suggested answer:** Slavery in the North helped to finance the Industrial Revolution. Many U.S. businesses got their start with profits from slave-produced goods and the slave trade.

10. Explain whether it is important for organizations like The New York Historical Society to teach people about slavery in the North. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage. For example, students may explain that it is important for people to develop a more accurate understanding of American history, as many people have the preconceived notion that slavery was an institution mainly found in the South, not the North. Students may also explain that by learning more about slavery (both in the North and South), we can better understand its lingering effects and address them.