

- ✓ **BIOGRAPHY**
Harriet Tubman
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER**
Working on a Plantation
- ✓ **PRIMARY SOURCE**
American Slavery As It Is



Lesson 4

People of the South

ESSENTIAL QUESTION *How do people adapt to their environment?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Enslaved Africans faced many hardships but were able to establish family lives, religious beliefs, and a distinct culture.

Southern Agriculture

GUIDING QUESTION *How were Southern farms different from Southern plantations?*

Slavery was at the heart of the Southern economy, but that did not mean that every white person owned large numbers of enslaved people. White society in the South was complex and had many levels. Most white Southerners fit into one of four categories: yeomen, tenant farmer, rural poor, or plantation owner.

Small Farmers and the Rural Poor

Most white people in the South were **yeomen** (YOH•muhn), farmers who generally owned small farms of 50 to 200 acres (20–81 ha). These yeomen lived mostly in the Upper South and in the hilly areas of the Deep South. They did not practice plantation-style agriculture. They grew crops to use themselves and to trade with local merchants. Yeomen generally owned few or no enslaved African Americans.

Another group of Southern whites worked as tenant farmers. They rented land from property owners.

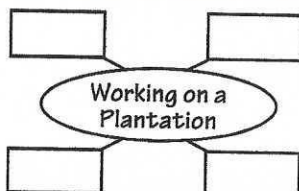
These classes of white Southerners made up the majority of the white population of the South. They lived in simple homes—cottages or log cabins. The poorest of these groups lived in crude cabins.



New York Academic Standards
7.7b, 7.8a

Reading **HELP**DESKTaking Notes: *Describing*

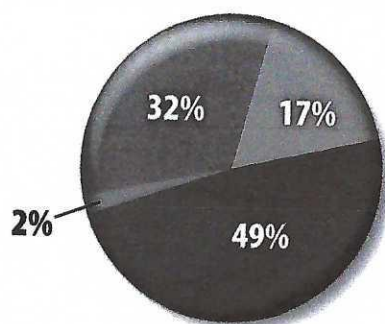
As you read, use a diagram like the one here to describe the work that was done on Southern plantations.



Content Vocabulary

- yeoman
- overseer
- spiritual
- slave codes
- Underground Railroad
- literacy

SOUTHERN POPULATION 1860



African Americans	Whites
Enslaved	Slaveholders
Free	Not Slaveholders

*Total population = 12 million

Source: Geospatial and Statistical Data Center

This picture shows the Legree Plantation, Capers Island, South Carolina.



GRAPH SKILL

In 1860 about 400,000 households in the South held enslaved workers. Nearly 4 million African Americans remained in slavery.

1 IDENTIFYING What percentage of the total Southern population was African American?

2 CRITICAL THINKING
Making Inferences Given the size of the African American population, how do you think white Southerners were able to control African Americans?

These rural poor were often stubborn and independent. Though they were looked down upon by many, they were proud of their ability to provide for their families.

A few free African Americans also held enslaved workers. Some free African Americans bought members of their own families to free them, although others worked their enslaved workers in the same manner as white Southern planters.

Plantation Owners

The larger plantations covered several thousand acres. In addition to the land they owned, plantation owners measured their wealth by the number of enslaved people they had. In 1860 only about 4 percent of slaveholders held 20 or more enslaved workers.

Earning profits was the main goal for owners of large plantations. To make a profit, they needed to bring in more money than they spent to run their plantations.

Large plantations had fixed costs. These are operating costs that remain much the same year after year. For example, the cost of housing and feeding workers is a fixed cost. There is no easy way to reduce a fixed cost.

On the other hand, the price of cotton changed from season to season. A change in price often meant the difference between a successful year for a plantation and a bad one.

Reading HELPDESK



yeoman farmer who owns a small farm

Reading in the Content Area: Circle Graphs

Circle graphs show how a whole is divided into parts. In the graph above, what is the whole being shown, and what is the largest share of that whole?