

Study Guide

Chapter 13, Section 4



For use with textbook pages 401–407

THE SOUTH'S PEOPLE

KEY TERMS

yeomen	Farmers who did not have slaves (page 402)
tenant farmers	Farmers who rented land and worked on a landlord's estate (page 402)
fixed cost	Regular expenses that remain about the same each year (page 403)
credit	A form of loan (page 403)
overseer	A plantation manager (page 403)
spiritual	An African American religious folk song (page 405)
slave code	Law in the Southern states that controlled enslaved people (page 405)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Do you have an extended family—grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins? Are they important in your life? How often do you see them? What kinds of things do you do together?

In the last section, you read about how the economy of the South depended on cotton. This section focuses on the Southern way of life.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about how Southerners relied on agriculture during the first half of the 1800s.

Southern Class System	
Highest	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

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READ TO LEARN

- **Small Farms** (pages 401–402)

There were four groups or classes of white Southerners.

- A.** Plantation owners usually owned a handful of slaves and a comfortable house. Only 12 percent of plantation owners could afford the mansions and many enslaved Africans shown in movies about the South.
- B.** Most Southerners called *yeomen* were farmers who owned land but not enslaved laborers.
- C.** *Tenant farmers* rented land and worked on landlords' estates.
- D.** Poor rural farmers lived in small cabins in wooded areas. They took care of themselves, growing what they could, fishing, and hunting.

1. What was the Southern class structure?

- **Plantations** (pages 402–403)

The goal of all plantation owners was to earn a profit. Prices paid for cotton varied, but farmers' *fixed costs*, or regular expenses, remained about the same each year. In order to get the best price, plantation owners sold their cotton crops to agents in big cities who held the crops until prices rose. The agents gave plantation owners loans in the form of *credit*, which they paid back when the crops were actually sold.

Wives of plantation owners were in charge of the enslaved Africans who worked in the house. They also took care of enslaved laborers when they were sick. Additionally, wives supervised the fruit and vegetable gardens and buildings. Many kept the plantation's financial records. Some husbands moved their families westward and traveled a great deal. Wives spent a lot of time at home alone.

Running a plantation involved a lot of work. Most enslaved Africans worked in the fields. An *overseer* was hired to manage the plantation and supervise the enslaved Africans who worked in the fields. Domestic enslaved Africans took care of household chores. Some enslaved Africans were taught needed skills such as those required of blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, and weavers. Others took care of the farm animals.

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2. What was life like for the wives of plantation owners?

- **Life Under Slavery** (pages 403–406)

Enslaved Africans endured terrible hardships and much unhappiness. They were often separated from their families and sold to new owners. They had little hope of freedom, no money, and inhumane living and working conditions. Despite the hardships, they developed their own culture and family life. Friends and family became extended families. They lived in crowded log cabins with dirt floors. Families could be separated by sale at any time. Many enslaved Africans were married even though the marriages were not legally recognized. They resisted slavery in different ways.

After the slave trade was banned by Congress in 1808, all new enslaved people were born in the United States. Many accepted Christianity, but practiced the religious beliefs of their ancestors as well. Enslaved Africans used African American religious folk songs called *spirituals* to secretly communicate with one another.

The laws in Southern states, called *slave codes*, became harsher because white plantation owners feared an uprising or rebellion. Enslaved Africans could not assemble in groups. They could not learn to read or write. They could not leave their master's property without written permission. Nat Turner was hanged for leading a group of enslaved Africans in a rebellion where they killed about 55 whites.

Two successful runaway enslaved African Americans, Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass, helped other runaways make it to the North. Free blacks and whites who were against slavery secretly helped the runaway enslaved Africans. The Underground Railroad was a series of stops, or safe hiding places, along the route to the North where enslaved Africans could receive help. Most runaways were caught and returned to their owners who punished them severely. Many enslaved Africans resisted slavery in other ways. They worked slowly or pretended to be sick.

3. What were the slave codes?

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- **City Life and Education** (*pages 406–407*)

The main cities in the South during the mid-1800s were Baltimore and New Orleans. Charleston, Richmond, and Memphis were growing, too. White people, some enslaved laborers, and free African Americans lived in these cities. African Americans formed their own communities and provided services there. They became barbers, carpenters, and small tradespeople. They established churches and other institutions. They were not permitted to move to other states. Arkansas made all free African Americans move out of state in 1859, however. The rights of free African Americans were limited by laws passed by Southern states between 1830 and 1860.

4. What was life like for free African Americans in Southern cities?
