The Ultimate AP® African American Studies Unit 2 Cheat Sheet

2.1–2.3 Explorers & the Slave Trade

African Explorers in the Americas

Juan Garrido: free African conquistador w/ the Spanish in Puerto Rico, Cuba & Mexico; his 1538 petition asked the crown to reward his service in the conquest.
Estevanico (Esteban): enslaved Moroccan on the Narváez expedition (1527–36); explored the Southwest as a guide.
Black Spanish: free & enslaved Africans joined early Spanish & Portuguese voyages as soldiers & sailors.
Takeaway: Africans arrived in the Americas as explorers & free people, not only as enslaved laborers.

Departure Zones & Scale

Region	Note
West Central Africa	Largest overall source
Senegambia	Rice-growing skills
Bight of Biafra	Major source to Virginia
Gold Coast	Forts like Elmina

Scale: ~12.5 million Africans embarked, ~10.7 million survived; ~400,000 went directly to what became the US.
Why the US grew: natural population increase, not imports, built the enslaved population after 1808.
Rice & skills: Carolina planters sought captives from rice-growing regions for their farming knowledge.

Capture & Impact on Africa

Capture: warfare, raids & kidnapping; captives marched to the coast & held in forts or barracoons.
Impact: depopulation, gender imbalance, rise of slave-trading states (Dahomey) & lasting political instability.
Demand side: European & American demand for plantation labor (sugar, tobacco, rice, cotton) drove the trade.

⚠ Don't treat Africa as one place. Name regions & societies; captives came w/ distinct languages & skills.

✓ SAQ: link a source's region to a skill or cultural practice it brought (Senegambian rice knowledge → Carolina).

2.4–2.6 Middle Passage, Sale & Labor

Resistance at Sea

Middle Passage: crowded, deadly Atlantic crossing; ~15% died at sea from disease, abuse & starvation.
Shipboard resistance: revolts (~1 in 10 voyages), hunger strikes, jumping overboard, refusing to work.
Amistad (1839): captives led by Sengbe Pieh (Cinqué) seized the ship; Supreme Court freed them (1841).
Olaudah Equiano: *Interesting Narrative* (1789) described the Middle Passage & fueled British abolition.
British abolition: Parliament ended its slave trade in 1807 & slavery in most of its colonies in 1833.

Auctions & the Domestic Trade

1808: Congress banned importing enslaved Africans, but the internal trade grew to meet cotton demand.
Second Middle Passage: ~1 million people sold or moved from Upper South to Deep South, splitting families.
Auctions: people were inspected, priced & sold like property; separation of families was routine & legal.
Commodification: enslaved people were mortgaged, insured & used as loan collateral, making them central to capital.

Labor & the Economy

System	How it worked
Gang system	Rows of workers, driven pace
Task system	Set daily task (rice areas)
Skilled labor	Smiths, carpenters, cooks
Hiring out	Owner rented out labor

Cotton: after the cotton gin (1793), cotton became the top US export, tying Northern banks & mills to slavery.
Value: by 1860, ~4 million enslaved people were worth more than US railroads & factories combined.

⚠ Slavery wasn't only Southern: Northern shippers, banks, insurers & textile mills profited from it.

✓ Sourcing a narrative? Note purpose & audience: Equiano wrote to persuade British readers to end the trade.

2.7–2.8 Slavery, Law & Race

Slave Codes

Virginia, 1662: *partus sequitur ventrem*, a child's status follows the mother → enslavement became hereditary.
Slave codes: banned literacy, gatherings, weapons & travel w/o passes; defined enslaved people as property.
Status: enslaved people couldn't legally marry, own property, testify against whites or sign contracts.
Purpose: lock in a racial hierarchy & prevent alliances between Black & poor white laborers (a fear after Bacon's Rebellion, 1676, which united them against elites).

Landmark Laws & Cases

Law / case	Year	Effect
3/5 Compromise	1787	↑ Southern power
Fugitive Slave Act	1793	Allowed capture
Fugitive Slave Act	1850	Forced N. help
Dred Scott	1857	No Black citizens

Dred Scott v. Sandford: Chief Justice Taney ruled Black Americans weren't citizens & Congress couldn't ban slavery in the territories; it deepened the sectional crisis.
Fugitive Slave Act of 1850: denied jury trials & forced Northerners to assist → spurred Northern resistance.
Personal liberty laws: some Northern states passed laws to block or slow the capture of freedom seekers.

Social Construction of Race

Race as a construct: laws, not biology, created racial categories to justify enslavement & control status.
Hypodescent ("one-drop rule"): any African ancestry classified a person as Black; kept status hereditary.
Sexual violence: enslavers' assault of enslaved women produced children who were legally enslaved.

⚠ The law didn't just reflect slavery; it built it. Cite specific codes & cases, not general "laws were unfair."

✓ DBQ evidence: pair a law (1662 Virginia) w/ its effect on families or status to show causation.

2.9–2.10 Culture, Identity & Naming

Creating African American Culture

Syncretism: African traditions blended w/ European & Indigenous ones to create new African American culture.
Religion: "invisible church" (secret worship), spirituals w/ coded freedom themes, the ring shout.
Gullah Geechee: Sea Islands of SC & GA; kept West & Central African language, crafts, foodways & faith.
Foodways & crafts: okra, rice dishes, sweetgrass baskets, quilting & banjo trace to African roots.
Kinship: extended & fictive kin networks helped people survive separation by sale & raise children.
Oral tradition: folktales (Br'er Rabbit), proverbs & songs passed history, values & trickster resistance.

Institutions

Group	Year	Founders
Free African Society	1787	Allen, Jones
AME Church	1816	Richard Allen
Prince Hall Masons	1780s	Prince Hall

The Question of Naming

Names as identity: "African" (1700s churches & societies) → "Colored" → "Negro" → "Black" → "African American."
Debate: claiming African heritage vs. asserting a right to belong as Americans; names signaled political goals.
Self-naming: freedpeople often chose new surnames, rejecting enslavers' names as a mark of autonomy.
Colored Conventions (from 1830): national meetings where free Black people debated rights, education & naming.
Black press: *Freedom's Journal* (1827), 1st Black-owned US newspaper: "We wish to plead our own cause."

⚠ Culture was a form of resistance, not just survival. Explain HOW a practice preserved identity or community.

✓ Spirituals like "Steal Away" carried double meanings: faith on the surface, escape or freedom underneath.

2.11–2.13 Revolts & the Haitian Revolution

Stono & Fort Mose

Stono Rebellion (1739, SC): ~60–100 people, many Kongolese & Catholic, marched toward Spanish Florida.
Result: SC passed the Negro Act of 1740, banning assembly, literacy & growing food; harsher control.
Fort Mose (1738): Spanish Florida's free Black town near St. Augustine; freedom for escapees who converted.
Spanish policy: Spain freed escapees to weaken English Carolina; Fort Mose men formed a free Black militia.

Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)

Saint-Domingue: France's richest sugar colony; enslaved people revolted, led by Toussaint Louverture.
Outcome: Haiti became the 1st Black republic & the only nation born from a successful slave revolt (1804).
Legacy: inspired enslaved people & abolitionists; terrified US enslavers → tighter laws & fear of revolt.

Revolts in the United States

Revolt	Year	Place
Gabriel's	1800	Richmond, VA
German Coast	1811	Louisiana
Denmark Vesey	1822	Charleston, SC
Nat Turner	1831	Southampton, VA

Nat Turner: ~55–60 white people killed; whites then killed many Black people; VA & others tightened codes.
Everyday resistance: work slowdowns, breaking tools, feigning illness, running away, preserving culture.
After revolts: harsher codes, bans on Black preachers & literacy, and more patrols across the South.

⚠ Most revolts failed or were betrayed, but each reshaped law & politics. Explain effects, not just events.

✓ Compare: Haiti succeeded (majority enslaved, colonial war) while US revolts faced a white majority & militias.

2.14–2.18 Communities & Debates

Black Organizing in the North

Free Black communities: churches, schools, mutual aid & newspapers (*Freedom's Journal*, 1827).
Maria Stewart: early Black woman public speaker (1830s), linked abolition, women's rights & education.
Limits: Northern free Black people still faced segregation, voting bans & kidnapping into slavery.
Education: schools like the African Free School (NYC, 1787) & Oberlin College (1833) opened doors.

Maroons, Brazil & Indigenous Ties

Place	Example
US maroons	Great Dismal Swamp
Brazil quilombo	Palmares (1600s)
Florida	Black Seminoles

Maroon societies: communities of people who escaped slavery & lived autonomously in swamps & mountains.
Brazil: received ~5 million Africans (most of any nation); last in the Americas to abolish slavery (1888).
Brazil vs. US: Brazil had more manumission & a larger free Black population, but harsher death rates on plantations.
Indigenous territory: some nations (Cherokee, Choctaw) enslaved Black people & took them west on the Trail of Tears; others like the Seminoles sheltered them.

Emigration vs. Belonging

American Colonization Society (1816): mostly white group sent free Black people to Liberia (founded 1822).
Black responses: most opposed colonization as removal; some (Paul Cuffe, Martin Delany) backed emigration.
Belonging: Douglass & others argued Black Americans had built the nation & had every right to stay as citizens.

⚠ The ACS ≠ Black-led emigration. Many white supporters wanted free Black people gone, not free.

✓ Diaspora lens: compare US maroons w/ Brazil's quilombos to show resistance across the Americas.

2.19–2.22 Abolition, Art & Narratives

Radical Black Political Thought

David Walker: *Appeal* (1829) called on enslaved people to resist, by force if needed; banned in the South.
Henry Highland Garnet: "Address to the Slaves" (1843) urged resistance: "Let your motto be resistance!"
Garrison vs. Douglass: Garrison saw the Constitution as proslavery; Douglass later argued it could be antislavery.

Abolition & the Underground Railroad

Underground Railroad: secret network of routes & safe houses; Black conductors & vigilance committees led it.
Harriet Tubman: escaped 1849, made ~13 trips back & guided ~70 people north; later a Union scout.
William Still: Philadelphia vigilance committee leader who recorded freedom seekers' stories (1872 book).
Freedom seekers: thousands escaped each year, many to Canada after 1850 when the North was no longer safe.

Narrative	Year	Focus
Douglass, *Narrative*	1845	Literacy → freedom
Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?"	1851	Race + gender
Jacobs, *Incidents*	1861	Women's abuse

Art, Photography & Gender

Frederick Douglass: most-photographed American man of the 1800s; used portraits to show Black dignity.
Henry "Box" Brown (1849): mailed himself to freedom in a crate; his story spread in prints & panoramas.
Edmonia Lewis: sculptor of Black & Native American heritage; *Forever Free* (1867) celebrates emancipation.
Gender & narratives: women's narratives exposed sexual exploitation & the pain of separation from children.
Sojourner Truth: born enslaved in NY, freed herself in 1826; spoke for both abolition & women's rights.

✓ Douglass vs. Jacobs is a strong comparison: male escape & literacy vs. female vulnerability & motherhood.

2.23–2.24 Civil War & Freedom Days

The Civil War & Black Communities

Self-emancipation: enslaved people fled to Union lines; "contrabands" at Fort Monroe (1861) forced the issue.
Emancipation Proclamation (Jan. 1, 1863): freed people only in Confederate-held areas; allowed Black enlistment.
US Colored Troops: ~180,000 Black soldiers; 54th Massachusetts at Fort Wagner (1863) proved valor.
Inequality in service: lower pay until 1864, white officers, risk of enslavement or execution if captured.
Black women: served as nurses, cooks, spies & scouts; Tubman led the Combahee River Raid (1863), freeing 700+.

Legal End of Slavery

Milestone	Date	Limit
Emancipation Procl.	1863	Rebel areas only
13th Amendment	1865	Crime exception
Juneteenth	June 19, 1865	News arrived late

13th Amendment: abolished slavery "except as a punishment for crime" → later used for convict leasing.
Juneteenth: Union troops announced freedom in Galveston, Texas, 2½ years after the Proclamation.
Contradiction: freedom didn't bring land, rights or safety; Reconstruction battles over citizenship follow in Unit 3.

Freedom Days

Commemorations: Juneteenth, Emancipation Day (Jan. 1) & others kept memory of freedom alive; federal holiday 2021.
Why commemorate: Freedom Days preserve memory, build community & frame freedom as an ongoing struggle.

⚠ The Emancipation Proclamation didn't free everyone. Border states & Union-held areas were excluded.

✓ Theme: freedom was claimed by Black action (flight, enlistment), not only granted by laws.