

The Spirit of Reform

Lesson 2 The Abolitionists

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What motivates people to act?

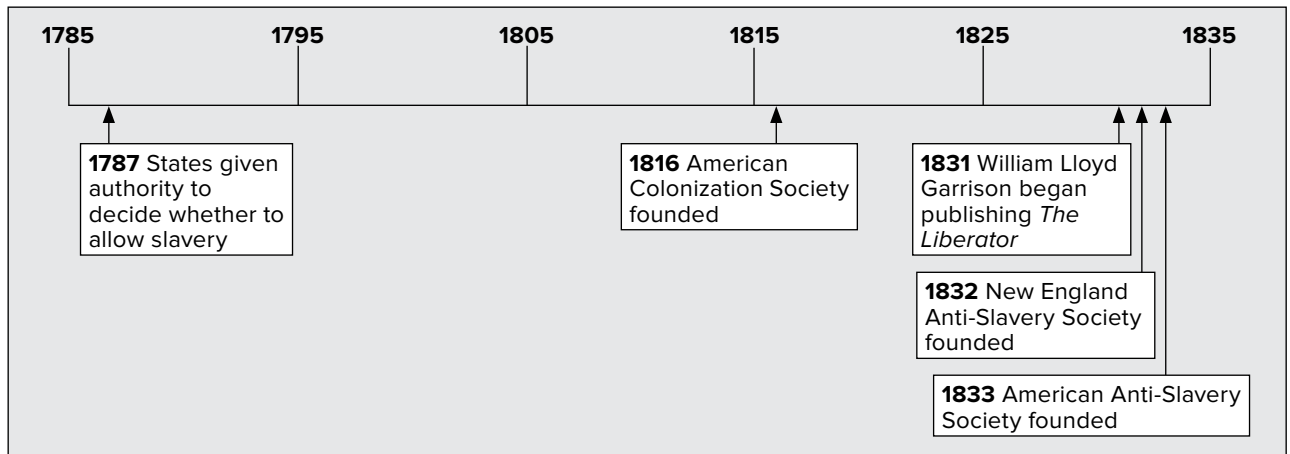
GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *How did Americans' attitudes toward slavery change?*
2. *Why did the reform movement gain momentum?*
3. *Who opposed the abolition of slavery?*

Term to Know

abolitionists reformers who worked to abolish, or end, slavery in the early 1800s in the United States

When did it happen?



What do you know?

In the first column, write what you know about each person before you study. After the lesson, fill in the last column.

| Now... | Who was... | Later... |
|--------|------------------------|----------|
| | William Lloyd Garrison | |
| | Frederick Douglass | |
| | Harriet Tubman | |

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The Start of the Abolition Movement

The early 1800s was a time of reform. One type of reform was the work of abolitionists. **Abolitionists** were people who worked to abolish, or end, slavery. By the early 1800s, Northern states had ended slavery. Slavery was still an important part of the South's economy, however. By the mid-1800s, more and more Americans came to believe that slavery was wrong. The conflict over slavery grew.

Different Attitudes

North

Slavery ends throughout the North.

Slavery is wrong.

South

Our economy depends on slavery.

The first antislavery work was to resettle African Americans outside of the United States. A group of white people from Virginia started the American Colonization Society. They freed enslaved people and sent them to other places to start new lives. The Society had gotten land to start a colony in West Africa. The colony was called Liberia. In 1847 Liberia became independent.

The American Colonization Society did not stop the growth of slavery. The number of enslaved people kept growing. The society could send only a small number of people to Africa. Besides, most African Americans did not want to go to Africa. Their families had lived in America for many years. They just wanted to be free.

The Movement Builds Strength

Around 1830, slavery became the most important issue for reformers. William Lloyd Garrison had a great effect on the antislavery movement. He started a newspaper called *The Liberator*. He also started the American Anti-Slavery Society. He was one of the first to call for an immediate end to slavery.

Two sisters, Sarah and Angelina Grimké, spoke and wrote against slavery. They used their money to free several of the family's enslaved workers. Their book, *American Slavery As It Is*, was one of the strongest works against slavery at that time.



Defining

- Who were the abolitionists?



Reading Check

- What was the purpose of the American Colonization Society?



Drawing Conclusions

- How did William Lloyd Garrison influence the abolition movement?

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Mark the Text

4. Underline the ways that Samuel Cornish, John Russwurm, and David Walker worked for abolition.

Reading Check

5. What were Underground Railroad “stations”?

FOLDABLES®

6. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover the graphic organizer. Label the two tabs *Free African American Abolitionists* and *Underground Railroad*. On both sides of the tabs, record information about key free African American abolitionists and describe the network of escape routes.

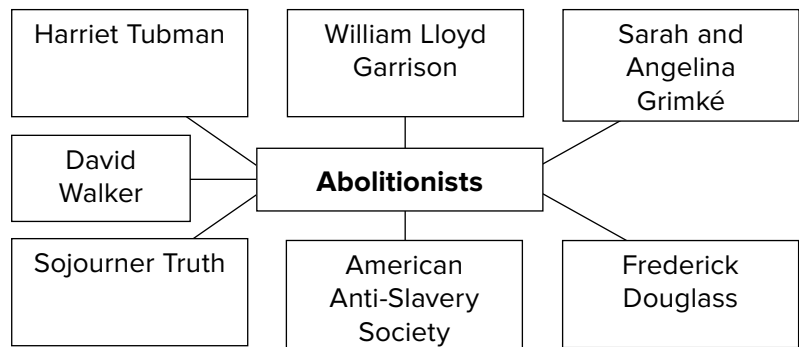
Free African Americans also played an important role in the abolitionist movement. They helped set up and run the American Anti-Slavery Society. Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm began the first African American newspaper. It was called *Freedom's Journal*. David Walker was a writer who urged African Americans to rise up against slavery. In 1830, free African American leaders held an important meeting in Philadelphia.

Frederick Douglass was the best-known African American abolitionist. Douglass escaped from slavery in Maryland in 1838. He settled in Massachusetts. Later he moved to New York. He was a powerful speaker. He spoke at many meetings in the United States and abroad. Douglass was the editor of an antislavery newspaper called *North Star*.

Sojourner Truth escaped from slavery in 1826. She worked with Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison to end slavery. She traveled throughout the North. She spoke about her life as an enslaved person. She also worked in the women's rights movement.

Some abolitionists helped African Americans escape from slavery. There was a network of escape routes from the South to the North. It was called the Underground Railroad. Along the routes, whites and African Americans guided the runaway “passengers” to freedom in Northern states or in Canada. They traveled at night. By day they rested at “stations.” These were barns, basements, and attics in safe houses. Harriet Tubman became the most famous “conductor” on the Underground Railroad.

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Reaction to the Abolitionists

Only a small number of Northerners were abolitionists. Many Northerners believed that freed African Americans could never fully be a part of American society.

Some Northerners were afraid that the abolitionists would start a war between the North and South. Other Northerners feared that freed African Americans would take their jobs.

Opposition toward abolitionists was cruel at times. An angry white mob destroyed Elijah Lovejoy's antislavery newspaper offices three times. The fourth time, the mob set fire to the building and killed Lovejoy.

Many Southerners said abolition threatened their way of life. Southerners defended slavery. They thought it was a necessary part of the Southern economy. Southerners said they treated enslaved people well. They said they gave enslaved people food and medical care. Some of their beliefs were based on racism. Many whites believed African Americans could not take care of themselves and were better off under the care of white people.

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Check for Understanding

List three ways that abolitionists tried to end slavery in America.

What groups opposed the abolitionists?



Listing

7. List two reasons Northerners opposed abolition.



Reading Check

8. How did Southerners defend the idea of slavery?



9. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Label the tabs: *What motivated the abolitionists?* and *What motivated those who were against the abolitionists?* Recall why each group felt strongly about slavery. Write the reasons for their beliefs. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.