

# DBQ

## Grade 8

Source NYSED

*Directions: the following question is based on the accompanying documents (1- 5). Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of task. This question is designed to test your ability to work with historic documents. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the sources of the document and the author's point of view.*

Historic Context:

Throughout history, basic civil and human rights have been denied people through the actions of individuals, groups and governments. From the earliest colonial times until 1865, slavery existed in the United States. What was the purpose of slavery from the earliest colonial times until 1865?

Task: Discuss the purpose of slavery from colonial times until the Civil War and how slavery denied people their basic human rights.

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Part A: Short Answer

The documents below relate information about slavery in the United States before the Civil War. Examine each document carefully, and then answer the question that follows it. These answers will help you in part B.

Document1: Description of a Whipping

" My master use to ...whip me. He would put my hands together and tie them. He would strip me naked—He would whip me one side till that was sore and full of blood and then he would whip me on the other side till that was all tore up."

What does this document say about the relationship of slave and master?

When slave were whipped what human right was being denied to the slaves?

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Document 2

" A Tobacco Plantation"



Describe some of the tasks performed by the slaves.

What was the job of the overseer?

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Document 3: Description of the Home of a Slave.

"We lodged in log huts on the bare ground. Wooden floors were an unknown luxury. Our beds were collections of straw and old rags, thrown down in the corners and boxed with boards, a single blanket the only covering---The wind whistled and the rain and snow blew in through the cracks, until the damp earth soaked in the moisture till the floor was a miry as a pigsty. Such were the houses."

Identify two specific examples from the document that illustrate the poor living conditions endured by the slaves.

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## Document 4: Description of Being Sold

### "The Slave Market"



"I was about twelve or fourteen years old when I was sold—I was a boy then big enough to work. I had a brother named John and a cousin by the name of Brutus. Both of them were sold and about three weeks later, it came my turn. On the day I left home, everything was sad among the slaves. My mother and my father sung and prayed over me and told me how to get along in the world."

What power did the boy's parents have over have future?

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## Document 5: A Speech by Frederick Douglass (1850)

"The law gives the master absolute power over the slave. He may work him, flog him, hire him out, sell him... In law a slave has no wife, no children, no country and no home. He can own nothing, acquire nothing, but what must belong to another."

What was Frederick Douglass' point out about the institution of slavery?  
Why?

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**Part B: Essay Task:**

Using the documents above, your answer to the questions in Part A , and your knowledge of social studies, write a well-developed essay that includes an introduction, support paragraphs and a conclusions. In your essay discuss the purpose of slavery from colonial times until the Civil War and how slavery denied people their basic human rights.