

Study Guide



Chapter 14, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 418–424

THE ABOLITIONISTS

KEY TERMS

abolitionist	Reformer who worked to abolish, or end, slavery (page 418)
Underground Railroad	Network of escape routes out of the South (page 422)

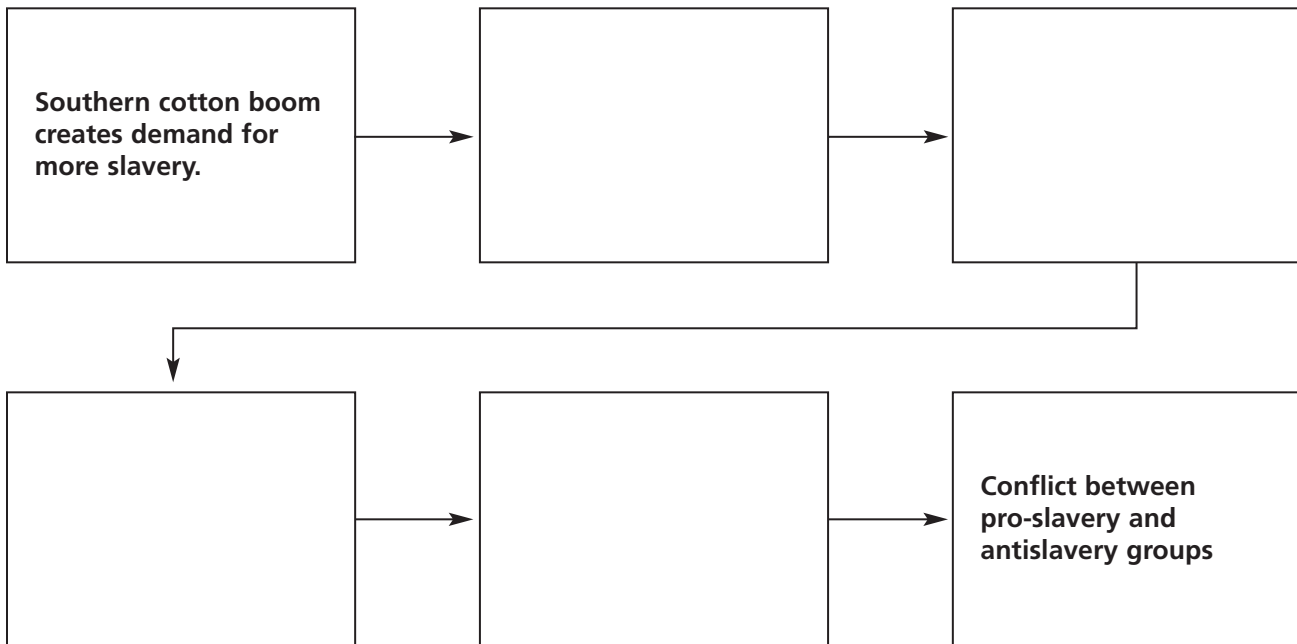
DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Do you feel strongly about a controversial issue? What is that issue? What do you believe about the issue? Are you willing to stand up for your beliefs?

In the last section, you read about how religious and social reformers worked to improve American life and education, and to help people with disabilities. This section focuses on how leaders, such as Harriet Tubman and William Lloyd Garrison, strengthened the abolitionist movement.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the chart below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the movement to end slavery in the United States.



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READ TO LEARN

- **Early Efforts to End Slavery** (pages 418–419)

In the early 1800s, many reformers called *abolitionists* turned their attention to ending, or abolishing, slavery in the United States. Previous attempts to end slavery were made before the American Revolution. A compromise allowing each state to decide the issue of slavery was made in 1787 at the Constitutional Convention. In the early 1800s, Northern states ended slavery, while Southern states continued to rely on slave labor. The antislavery movement began again as a result of the spirit of reform in the early to mid-1800s. The movement was led by men and women of the Quaker faith.

In 1816 a group of white Virginians formed the American Colonization Society. The society worked to buy enslaved African Americans from their slaveholders and send them to colonies in West Africa and the Caribbean. Private donors, Congress, and some state legislatures paid the cost of sending enslaved African Americans to these new colonies. Liberia, a colony in Africa, was settled in 1822. In 1847 Liberia became a separate country. In spite of their efforts, slavery continued to grow. The Society could only resettle so many enslaved African Americans. Most enslaved African Americans wanted to be free, yet remain in America.

1. Who were abolitionists?

- **The Movement Changes** (pages 419–421)

The cotton boom in the Deep South created a demand for more slave labor. The number of enslaved persons increased. Beginning in the 1830s, the renewed antislavery movement was the most important social concern for reformers. William Lloyd Garrison was one of the first white abolitionist to demand the emancipation, or freeing, of enslaved people. He motivated others in the antislavery movement through his Boston newspaper, *The Liberator*. He formed the New England Antislavery Society in 1832 and the American Antislavery Society in 1833. By 1838 more than 1,000 chapters, or local branches, of these organizations were formed by Garrison’s followers.

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Sarah and Angelina Grimké, sisters from a wealthy slaveholding family in South Carolina, were the first women to lecture and write against slavery. For their share of the family inheritance, the sisters asked for and received many of the family's enslaved workers instead of money. They then freed the workers. Angelina and her husband, Theodore Weld, wrote a very convincing abolitionist publication called *American Slavery As It Is*. It was a collection of real-life experiences of enslaved people.

The free African Americans of the North lived in poverty and were banned from most jobs in many Northern cities. They were proud to be free, however. Many joined the American Antislavery Society and subscribed to Garrison's newspaper, *The Liberator*. America's first African American newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was started by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm. Sojourner Truth, born Isabella Baumfree, became free when New York banned slavery in 1827. She worked for women's rights and the abolitionist movement. Free African American leaders met in Philadelphia in 1830 at their first convention. Their discussions included establishing an African American college and persuading free African Americans to move to Canada.

Frederick Douglass, a runaway enslaved African American, became a well-known abolitionist speaker and writer. He lectured around the world and edited an antislavery newspaper called the *North Star*. He was a member of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society. Douglass supported freedom and full equality with whites. In 1847 his friends helped him buy his freedom from the Maryland slaveholder from whom he escaped.

2. What contributions did some of the famous abolitionists make to the effort to end slavery?

- **The Underground Railroad** (pages 422–424)

Abolitionists took many risks as they helped enslaved Africans escape. If caught, they faced prison or death. Escaped Africans traveled at night to avoid capture. They ate, rested, and hid during the day in barns, attics, church basements, or other “stations” along the **Underground Railroad**, which was the name given to a network of safe hiding places along the route to freedom in the North. White and African American “conductors” along the route helped the enslaved escape to freedom in the North. “Passengers” traveled on foot or in wagons with secret compartments, guided through the darkness by the North Star. Harriet Tubman, an escaped African, became the most famous conductor on the Underground Railroad. Most enslaved Africans who were able to escape came from the states located between the northern states and the Deep South. Only a small percentage of enslaved Africans were actually helped by the Underground Railroad. For many others, it offered hope.

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Many Southerners were against the abolitionist movement because they depended on slavery for the success of their plantations and farms. Some Northerners opposed the movement because they considered free blacks a threat to their social order. Some believed that free blacks would take jobs away from whites. Some were afraid of a war between the North and South. Angry whites acted out violently toward abolitionists. Abolitionists were attacked, buildings were burned, and some were killed. Southerners defended the practice of slavery. They believed that they could take care of African Americans better than they could take care of themselves. They argued that slavery was better than working in Northern factories.

Conflict continued between those in favor of and those opposed to slavery. Abolitionists continued to fight for the end of slavery and joined the growing women's rights movement as well.

3. What was the Underground Railroad?
