The American Pageant Chapter 16 Reading Guide

**Vocabulary**

West Africa Squadron

Breakers

Black belt

Responsorial

Nat Turner’s rebellion

Amistad

American Colonization Society

Liberia

The Liberator

American Anti-Slavery Society

Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Mason-Dixon line

Gag Resolution

**Reading Questions**

1. How did the increase in cotton production following Eli Whitney’s invention of the cotton gin impact both the North and the South?

2. Why does the text suggest the South was similar in some ways to an oligarchy rather than a democracy?

3. How was Southern society shaped by the rule of the “planter aristocrats?”

4. How were the lives of Southern women shaped by the plantation system?

5. The section called “Slaves of the Slave System” suggests that much was “worrisome, distasteful, and sordid” under the plantation system. What were the four major ways that the plantation system hurt the South?

6. In the section called “The White Majority”, the text discusses the social hierarchy of the South. In the first paragraph, how is the number of slaves distributed among slave-holding families?

7. How is life different for the whites in the South that don’t own slaves? Why did they defend the slave system so much?

8. What made the mountain whites so different from other whites in the South?

9. Describe life for a free black in the United States in the years leading up to the Civil War.

10. Once the international slave trade was ended in 1808, how did the slave trade change in the United States?

11. By 1860, which states had a majority, or near-majority, slave population?

12. What was the life of a slave like in the antebellum United States?

13. Define the term “black belt.”  
14. How were African roots visible in the religious practices of slaves?

15. How did slaves “rebel” against their masters in the South? (Make sure to include each of the actual rebellions as well as not so obvious ways of rebelling.)

16. Describe the *Amistad* incident.

17. What was the goal of the American Colonization Society?

18. How did people like William Wilberforce, and Theodore Dwight Weld influence the abolitionist movement?

19. What was the name of William Lloyd Garrison’s newspaper, and how did he approach the abolitionist movement?

20. How did black abolitionists like David Walker and Frederick Douglass influence the movement?

21. Why did the 1831-32 debate in the Virginia legislature mark a turning point in Southern views toward slavery and abolition?

22. How did Southerners respond to abolitionist movements in the North?

23. Southern whites are sometimes described as believing in a “paternal” view of slavery that meant they believed they were actually caring for their slaves. What argument did the Southerners use to promote this paternal view of slavery?

24. What is the Gag Resolution?

25. What did the government in Washington order southern postmasters to do in 1835?

26. Why did the North have a heavy economic stake in the South?

27. Describe three specific times when abolitionists were treated badly in the North.