

Atlantic Trade

KEY QUESTION How did New Englanders profit from the triangular trade?

New England settlers engaged in three types of trade. First was the trade with other colonies. Second was the exchange of goods with Europe. But the third type, known as the **triangular trade**, had a sinister, or evil, aspect—because it involved trade in human beings.

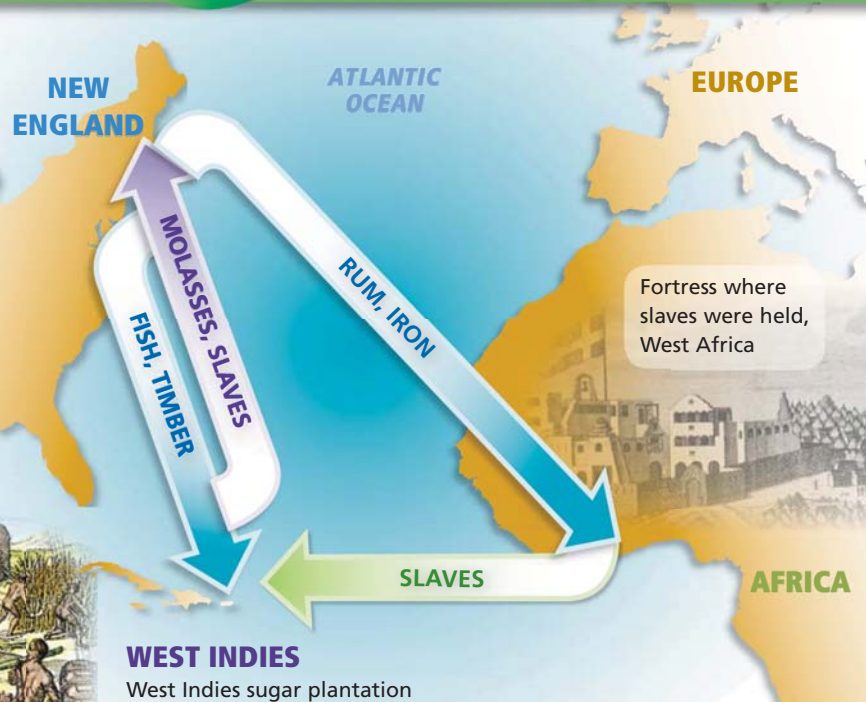
Human Cargo Triangular trade describes a complex system of trans-Atlantic trade used to exchange slaves, rum, sugar, and molasses. For example, a ship might leave New England with a cargo of rum and iron. In Africa, the captain would trade his cargo for slaves. Slaves then endured the cruel voyage to the West Indies, where they were exchanged for sugar and molasses. Traders then took the sugar and molasses back to New England. There, colonists used the molasses to make rum, and the sequence began again.

New Englanders not only brought slaves to the West Indies but also sent fish to feed the huge slave population there. In this way, the economies of New England and the West Indies were closely tied. This trading system brought prosperity to both New England and the West Indies.

CONNECTING *Economics and History*

TRIANGULAR TRADE

America's natural resources brought great wealth to the colonists, who shipped these resources around the world. New England merchants developed a complicated system of trade routes between the Americas, Europe, and Africa. The triangular trade was only one part of this international trade system.



CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Make Inferences** How did New England merchants help spread slavery?
- 2. Connect to Today** What countries produce the clothes you wear and the food you eat?