

<b>Lesson Title</b>	Exploring the Antebellum Economy of Coastal Georgia
<b>Grade Level(s)</b>	8-12
<b>Timeline</b>	2-3 45-minute class periods

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

In what ways are plantations, the institution of slavery, transportation networks, and Savannah connected?

**OBJECTIVES**

- Observe the expanse of the Owens family finances and plantation holdings
- Examine the labor and economy of coastal plantation operations
- Understand the role played by the introduction of the cotton gin
- Connect the institution of slavery, elite society, plantation agriculture, and regional trade to Savannah

**STANDARDS**

**Social Studies**  
**SS8H4c.** Explain how technological developments, including the cotton gin and railroads, had an impact on Georgia’s growth.  
**SSUSH7d.** Investigate political, economic, and social developments during the Age of Jackson.  
**SSUSH2b.** Describe the Middle Passage, the growth of the African population and their contributions, including but not limited to architecture, agriculture, and foodways.  
**SSSocSC3.** Describe adaptation, cooperation, accommodation, and competition in the context of social control.  
**SSSocSC4.** Analyze the function of social institutions as agents of social control across differing societies and times.  
**SSSocIC1.** Analyze forms of social inequality.  
**SSPSP1.** Analyze the impact of the social environment on behaviors, and attitudes.

**Geography**  
**SSWG1** Explain why physical characteristics of place such as landforms, bodies of water, climate, and natural resources act as contributing factors to world settlement patterns.  
**SSWG2.** Evaluate how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.  
**SSWG4a.** Assess demographic patterns of population using graphs, maps, and other models.  
**SSWG5a.** Describe how and why agricultural techniques and technology have changed over time.

**Economics**  
**SSEF6b.** Explain how investment in equipment and technology can lead to economic growth.

## INTRODUCTION

Georgia's coast was a productive area of interconnected towns and agricultural land. George W. Owens owned property, including plantations, throughout the region. The agricultural goods produced by the enslaved workers on his land were transported to nearby cities for processing and export. Savannah, like Charleston, South Carolina, was a major commercial hub at the time.

Goods like cotton, rice, and indigo produced on local plantations were sent to Savannah for export while finished products were imported to sell in the city and surrounding towns. Savannah was also a major market for the sale of enslaved individuals to plantations further west or perhaps by boat to other cities in the United States.

## SUMMARY

There are several different types of locations to explore: land owned by the Owens family, and other cities, towns, and plantations connected to the slave economy. This regional map shows the area just north of Savannah and south to the Florida border. An in-depth look into how plantations operated is also available.

## ELEMENTS

There are two major experiences in this section: descriptions of the locations and a deep dive into plantations. Each location on the map includes a summary of activities, economic contributions, or products produced. The chart offers economic data. The plantation page details four different economic activities, each with a summary and gallery for an in-depth look at how plantations operated. The Mulberry Grove location is an additional gallery related to the cotton gin.

The Regional Economy section is available at any time from the Discover wheel at the bottom left or from the Table of Contents.

While exploring the Economics of the Antebellum Coast (or Regional Economy) section, you can:

- Read a summary on the economics of the region at the bottom right
- Access a chart displaying the coastal population at the bottom right
- Examine plantation operations at the bottom right
- Click on any of the locations for more information

**PLANTATION PROCEDURE**

Inform students that antebellum plantations were large agricultural businesses. Like farms today, crops were planted and harvested. They had at least one large exception: most of the workers were enslaved and were forced to work without pay.

1. Launch the Economics of the Antebellum Coast section (section five) of the virtual learning journey. Tell students that they will examine the economics of how plantations operated:
  - **Agriculture** (knowledge of growing seasons, climates)
  - **Fieldwork** (sowing, tending, harvesting)
  - **Refining** (curing, separating)
  - **Shipping** (bundling, transporting)
2. Ask students to predict how these processes worked. For instance,
  - What steps would you have to take before you planted any cotton?
  - What does it take to grow cotton or other crops?
  - What is the order of these processes for crops grown in this region (cotton, rice, etc.)?
  - Why can't you just pull rice from the ground and sell it to someone?
  - What must be done to crops after they are harvested but before they are sold to the public? (This is a great opportunity for students with more agricultural knowledge to teach their peers.)
3. Divide students into groups and assign them one of the four areas:
  - Agriculture, In the field, Refining, and Shipping. Have each student look through their gallery and write down five things they didn't know.
4. Have the groups come together, compile their lists, and as a class, create a **25 Things You Didn't Know** wall about how antebellum plantations worked.

**EXTENSION/INQUIRY**

Additionally, groups can create a timeline-like graphic organizer together and summarize the process while including a short list of their facts like the one below. (A printout is available on page seven.)

Agriculture	Fieldwork	Refining	Shipping
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

### MULBERRY GROVE PROCEDURE

Inform students that they are going to be examining the role of the cotton gin, an innovative piece of technology during the antebellum period.

1. Ask students to discuss with a partner what they THINK a cotton gin does. Then ask them to discuss how cotton agriculture may have differed before and after the invention of the cotton gin. Have them write down two or three ideas they discussed.
2. At the bottom right corner of this page, point students toward the Plantation button, then Shipping, and finally the Chart button. Ask groups to calculate the percent change in cotton exports from the two charts for:
  - Pounds of cotton to foreign countries from 1804 - 1848
  - Pounds of cotton to other coastal U.S. cities 1804 - 1848
  - Total pounds of cotton exported 1804 - 1848
  - Total upland cotton exported 1850 - 1860
  - Total Sea Island cotton exported 1850 - 1860
3. Now have students explore the Mulberry Grove gallery and regional economy charts. They should make note of anything they think is evidence of "how the cotton gin impacted agriculture in Georgia."

### INQUIRY/EXTENSION

Complete a **Paper Chat** by setting up stations in different areas of the classroom with a question to answer (perhaps taped to the wall or on flip charts). Questions could be:

- Why do you think Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin?
- What was the purpose of the cotton gin?
- What effect did the cotton gin have on Savannah's economy?
- What effect did the cotton gin have on slavery in coastal Georgia?

Allow students to walk around in groups and post sticky notes as answers, write on flip charts, and/or highlight and comment on others' posts.

### COASTAL MAP PROCEDURE

Inform students that they will be trying to make connections between several different concepts while exploring the map of coastal Georgia. Offer a little background information on the purpose of the map by saying that it displays many of George W. Owens' major properties as well as three other important locations during this time (the city of Savannah, Mulberry Grove, and Jekyll Island).

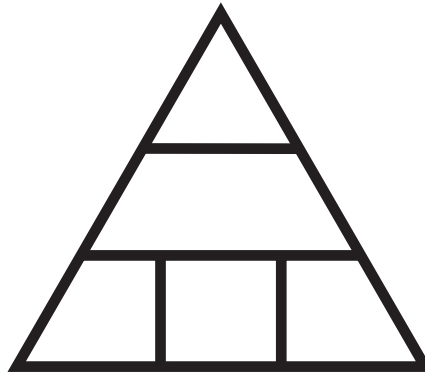
1. Have students draw a **321 Pyramid** graphic organizer like the one on page five. Tell students that they will be using study skills to analyze information.
2. Have students click on the City of Savannah location and read the passage. Ask them to refer to their pyramid organizer and complete it while consulting a partner.
  - On the bottom section, they should list the three pieces of information that they believe are the most important facts.
  - In the middle section, they should explain two reasons why they think these facts are significant.
  - At the top of the pyramid, they can summarize what they have learned or how their thinking about antebellum Savannah has changed in one sentence. Allow these pairs to discuss their conclusions with their partner. Partner groups can then share with the class.



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3. Assign these groups one of six locations on the map (Monteith, Spring Hill, St. Catherines Island, Jekyll Island, Satilla, and Ivanhoe) and have them read the brief summary. Students should then brainstorm an answer to the challenge question at the bottom of each summary.
4. Ask groups to tell the class their location, share a one-sentence summary about it, and report their challenge question and answer. (They can phrase their answer as "We think that \_\_\_\_\_.")
  - NOTE: some locations offer great background information but have no challenge question (Guinas, Ossabaw, and Mulberry Grove) The Mulberry Grove exploration should be completed before this lesson.

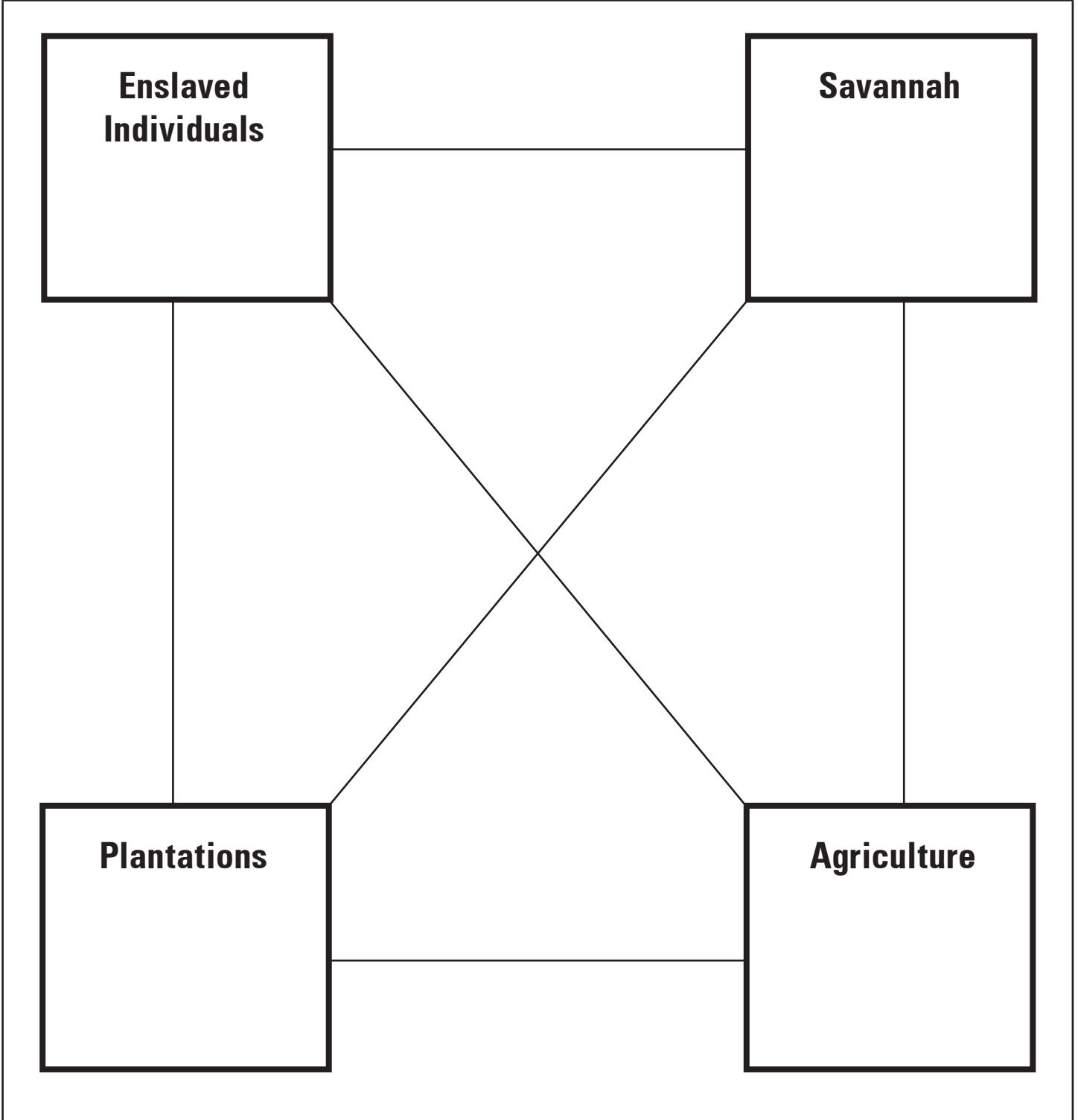
## INQUIRY/EXTENSION

Tell students that they are now going to explore the connections between the major themes of this section from the plantations and processes they examined, to the locations they have analyzed.

1. As a culminating activity for this large regional study, break students into "inquiry" groups and provide them with the following documents:
  - Coastal map
  - Georgia map of cotton production and enslavement
  - Data charts
2. Have students create a graphic organizer like the one provided or print it for them from page six.
3. Assign students one connection within their group. Tell them to use the given documents along with any of the information inside the Economics of the Antebellum Coast section to examine what connection the two concepts have.
  - As students explore these connections, tell them that they can write a more general summary on the lines between the two concepts like "Savannah was a market where agricultural products were sent for export."
4. Encourage students to report these connections to their group by saying " \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are connected because..."
  - To extend this activity, ask students to provide evidence for their conclusions.
5. Other group members can note these connections on their own organizers.
6. After all students have reported connections and their organizers are complete, ask them to return to their coastal maps. (Students can color-code the legend and the locations to help them understand the map better.)
7. Tell students to draw lines connecting several different locations:
  - Two different plantations and Savannah
  - Jekyll Island and Savannah
  - Mulberry Grove and another close by plantation



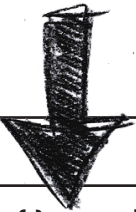
## COASTAL MAP CONNECTIONS GUIDE



## PLANTATION ECONOMICS ANALYSIS GUIDE

### Agriculture

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



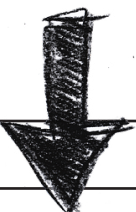
### Fieldwork

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



### Refining

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



### Shipping

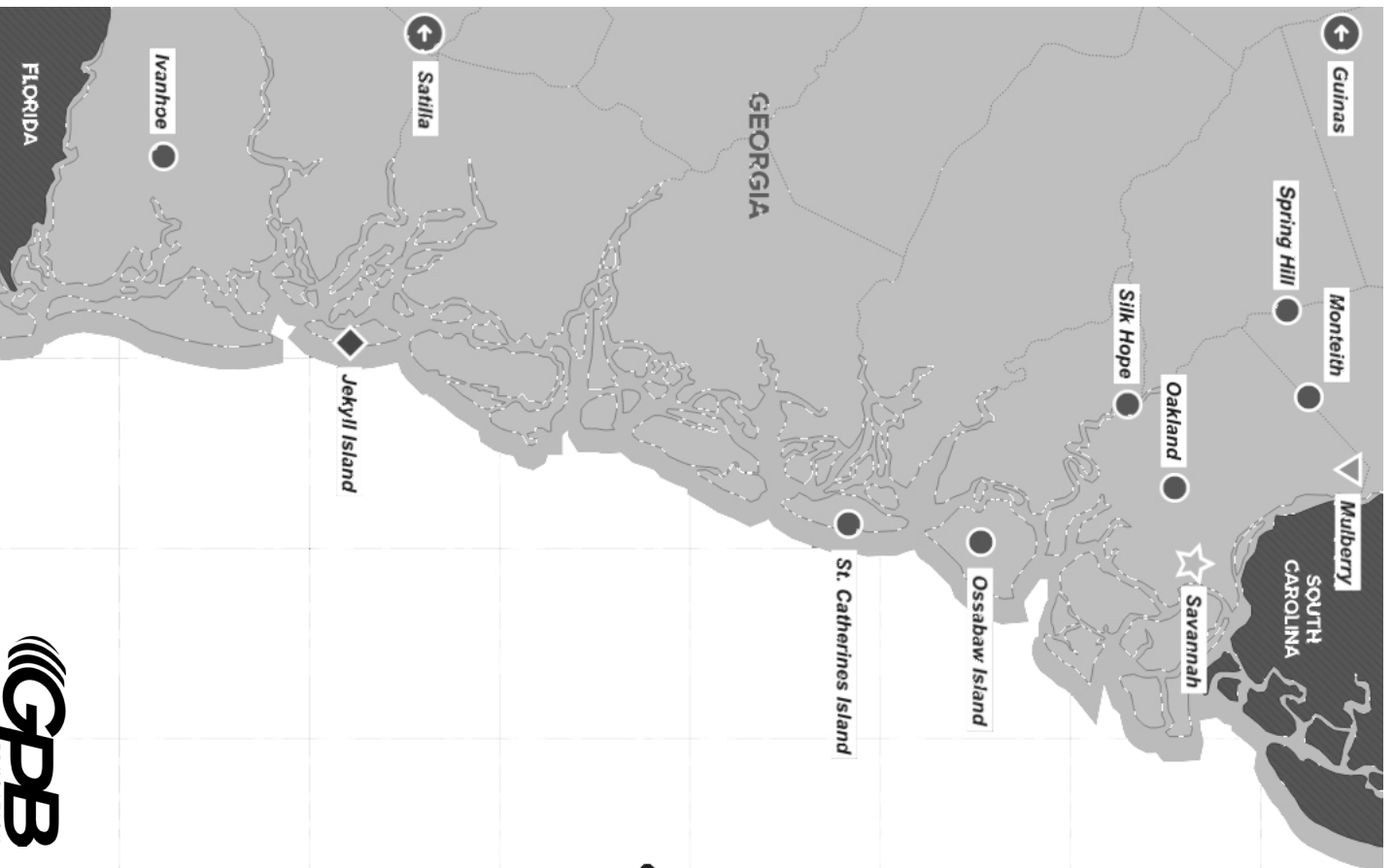
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

# Economics

## Antebellum Coast

### Legend

- ◆ Jekyll
- ▾ Mulberry Grove
- ★ Savannah
- All Owens Properties



*Atlantic  
Ocean*





# Populations of Chatham County

1790 - 1860



	Free People of Color	Enslaved Persons	Whites	% of Total Population
<b>1790</b>	122	—		
<b>1800</b>	224	9,049	3,673	71.6
<b>1810</b>	578	9,784	3,214	76.3
<b>1820</b>	626	9,542	4,641	68.6
<b>1830</b>	393	9,468	4,226	68.7
<b>1840</b>	669	11,331	6,801	63.8
<b>1850</b>	731	14,018	9,152	61.7
<b>1860</b>	725	14,807	15,511	50

\* Based on figures from Stewart, Mart A. (1996). "What Nature Suffers to Groe." *Life, Labor, and Landscape on the Georgia Coast*. UGA Press, Athens.



# Export of Cotton from the Port of Savannah

1804 - 1848

	Foreign Countries		US Coast		Total	
	Bags/bales	Pounds	Bags/bales	Pounds	Bags/bales	Pounds
<b>1804</b>	20,977	5,733,426	22,865	6,223,578	43,842	11,957,004
<b>1825</b>	64,906	23,366,160	72,789	26,204,040	137,695	49,570,200
<b>1826</b>	108,486	39,054,960	82,092	29,553,120	190,578	68,608,080
<b>1839</b>	—	—	—	—	199,176	71,703,360
<b>1840</b>	—	—	—	—	284,249	102,329,640
<b>1841</b>	—	—	—	—	147,280	53,020,800
<b>1842</b>	142,386	52,258,960	79,868	28,752,480	222,254	81,011,440
<b>1843</b>	193,099	69,515,640	87,727	31,581,720	280,826	101,097,360
<b>1844</b>	130,964	48,456,680	113,611	42,036,070	244,575	90,492,750
<b>1845</b>	182,073	69,187,740	122,471	46,538,980	304,544	115,726,720
<b>1846</b>	77,852	31,140,800	108,454	43,381,600	186,306	74,522,400
<b>1847</b>	119,321	50,114,820	114,830	48,228,600	234,151	98,343,420
<b>1848</b>	127,760	54,936,800	115,473	49,653,390	243,233	104,590,190

\* Luciana M. Spracher, Bricks & Bones Historical Research (2014) in Leslie M. Harris and Daina Ramey Berry (Eds.), *Slavery and Freedom in Savannah*. University of Georgia Press: Athens.



# Export of Cotton from the Port of Savannah

1850 - 1860

	Upland Cotton			Sea Island Cotton		
	Foreign Countries	US Coast	Totals	Foreign Countries	US Coast	Totals
<b>1850</b>	142,700	187,099	329,799	8,904	1,641	10,545
<b>1851</b>	145,150	160,642	305,792	8,497	3,145	11,642
<b>1852</b>	116,849	224,958	341,807	7,605	3,656	11,261
<b>1853</b>	135,691	193,352	328,953	6,767	6,577	13,344
<b>1854</b>	98,580	203,363	301,943	3,861	11,667	15,528
<b>1855</b>	178,194	197,714	373,908	6,993	7,474	14,467
<b>1856</b>	177,182	200,426	377,608	8,138	7,346	15,484
<b>1857</b>	152,228	158,791	311,019	6,611	10,028	16,639
<b>1858</b>	159,141	117,680	276,821	8,561	7,447	16,008
<b>1859</b>	253,743	198,523	452,266	8,298	8,489	16,787
<b>1860</b>	331,159	190,137	522,096	6,596	18,245	24,941

\* Luciana M. Spracher, Bricks & Bones Historical Research (2014) in Leslie M. Harris and Daina Ramey Berry (Eds.) *Slavery and Freedom in Savannah*. University of Georgia Press: Athens.

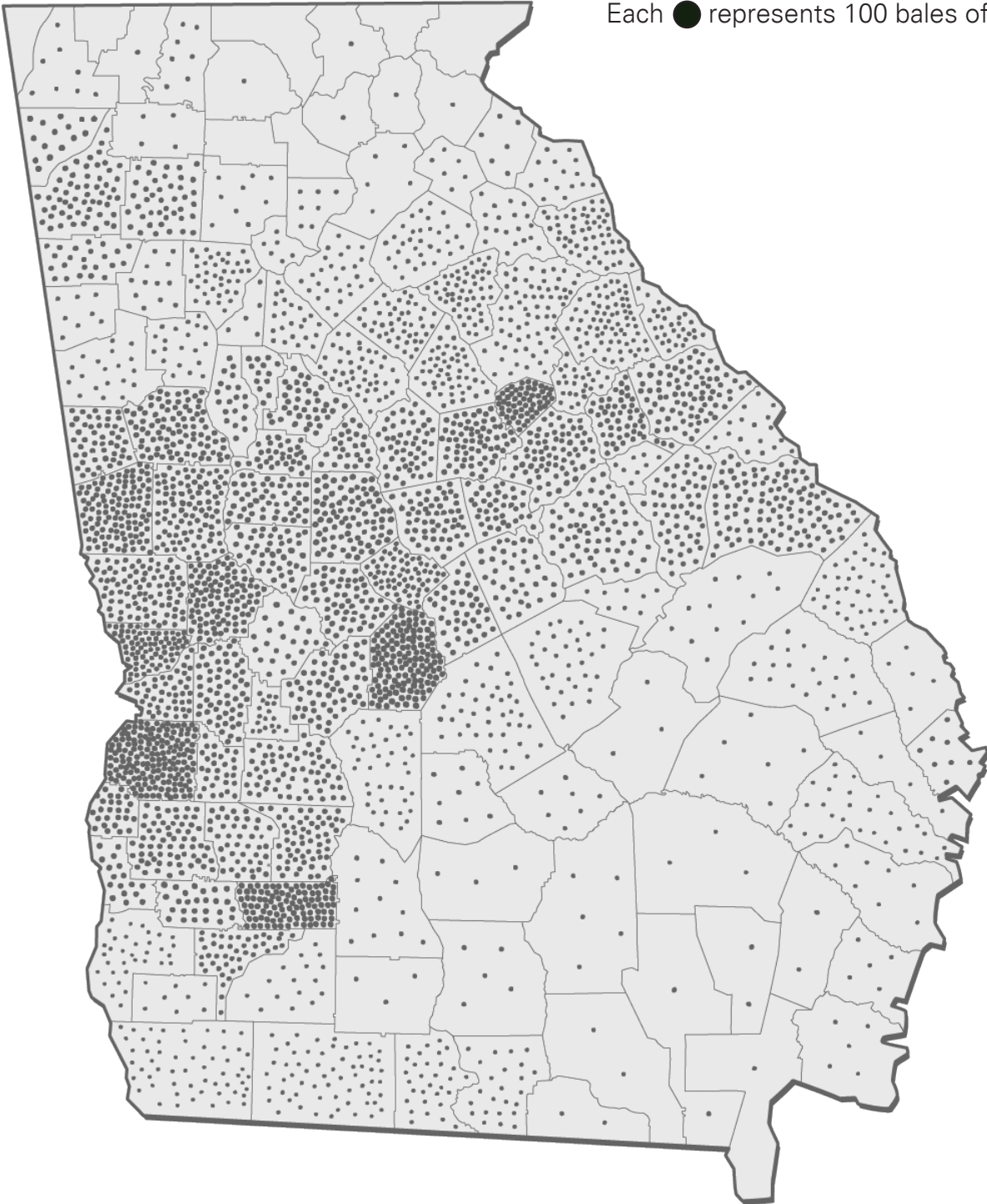




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## COTTON PRODUCTION, 1860



Each ● represents 100 bales of cotton.



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## ENSLAVED POPULATION, 1860

