

# Life aboard a slave ship essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



The slaves were packed aboard a slave ship then taken across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. This journey took about six to eight weeks. In the West Indies, slaves were either sold through auction or prearranged sales.

Overcrowded conditions were the norm aboard a slave ship, as the captains attempted to maximize the profits. The slaves were kept in cramped condition with little more than a sitting room. Only shelves being about 18" deep were built to accommodate the slaves. Overcrowded conditions were the main cause of the spread of diseases.

Extreme depressions were common among slaves on the ship. Slaves were taken on decks once a day to exercise to enable the circulation of the blood. During this time, many slaves attempted to commit suicide by jumping overboard and having their spirits return to Africa. They were given meals, twice a day, which was not properly cooked and prepared and those who refused to eat, their teeth was knocked out and the food was then forced down their throats. One bucket of water was thrown on them (where they were everyday) to keep down the stench: because they excreted, urinated and died right there. Almost all the slaves who arrived on the sugar plantation, in the West Indies, were in need of medical care. Sometimes, slaves needed to be quarantined in order to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Slaves often became ill with fever and influenza before they became accustomed to the climate.

Newly arrived Africans underwent serious personality trauma. Symptoms of withdrawals and apathy were common. Extreme depression was often the cause of suicidal behavior. The general's uncaring attitude towards their

personal property was a reflection of the mental condition of the African Slaves would provide some form of welcoming entertainment for the newly arrived slaves. Generally, slaves were placed under the care of the seasoned African slaves from the same tribe who would teach them the language. They would also train them on how to adjust to their new way of life. They would be assisted by the Creole slaves in putting up a small hut and in teaching them how to cultivate their small plot to supplement the food stuff supplied to them by their masters.