

MORE THAN SLAVES: AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL EXPRESSION IN
18TH AND 19TH CENTURY AMERICA

It is my goal to weave African-American cultural expression so seamlessly into the curriculum that my students are unaware of its presence. I want the students to believe that these additions are part of the collective that is United States history and not just an attempt to supplement the African-American experience into a text that is perfectly fine without it. I think it is important to include the cultural expressions of African-Americans from the 18th and 19th century because they represent the primary sources of slavery. The students need to know and understand that most of what they have seen about slavery was not created by those who were there and is therefore slanted in a way – positive or negative – as to not reflect the whole truth. I believe it is my job as a teacher to integrate the writings of the African-American into the fabric of United States history if for nothing else, as a more truthful tapestry of the history of this country.

In introducing this topic to a college prep United States history class in Elk Grove Unified School District, the most difficult problem I will face is the fact that slavery is not a content standard. Furthermore, slavery is not even a state content standard for the 11th grade US History classroom. The topic of slavery is covered in our textbook (briefly) and there are mentions of Douglass and Walker in the book; however, this does not distract from the fact that there is simply no content standard to place the topic of slavery in general. The content standard I would be forced to fashion the lesson into (because we must list content standards in our lesson plans) is California History/Social Science Content Standard 11.1:

The students will analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

I will also list other general California History/Social Science Standards 9-12:

Chronological and Spatial Thinking: Students use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including major patterns of domestic and international migration, changing environmental preferences and settlement patterns, the frictions that develop between population groups, and the diffusion of ideas, technological innovations, and goods. (1) Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned. (3)

Historical Research, Evidence and Point of view: Students construct and test hypotheses; collect, evaluate, and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources; and apply it in oral and written presentations (4)

Historical Interpretation

Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments. (1)

Students recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect. (2)

Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values. (3)

Once I have been able to convert the standards into objectives, there should not be a problem bringing materials in the classroom, the only other problem I think I might face is hesitation or resistance from my students to embrace the additions to the curriculum. To alleviate this problem I have designed a set of activities to work with the materials that allow the

students to be creative and critical at the same time. All of the activities related to the topic are different and will require the student to perform a variety of tasks so as not to wear them out on the subject matter. As previously stated my hope is to seamlessly add the information to the existing content in such a way as not to arouse resistance and negative attitudes.

The issue that will play the most critically role in my ability to introduce this topic into my classroom is time. US history teachers often find themselves in a time crunch and my school is designed on a term system that takes no prisoners. Each term is nine-weeks long and United States history is taught for two terms. In the first 9-weeks I am responsible for covering Pre-Colombian America – the 1920's, to spend a week on slavery (especially since it is not a content standard) would be dangerous because it would mean cutting back on areas of study that the students will most definitely be tested on (because the state tests are based on the state standards). In the worst case scenario two of the lessons could be moved to the civil rights movement and I could pull back to this time in history to show the evolution of Black radicalism overtime. The unit plan I have designed is full of lofty goals and it would be fantastic if I were able to get through them all, I just don't know how realistic that thought may be.

UNIT PLAN
MORE THAN SLAVES: AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL EXPRESSION IN
18TH AND 19TH CENTURY AMERICA

NEH PARTICIPANT

Dawniell K. Black

COURSE

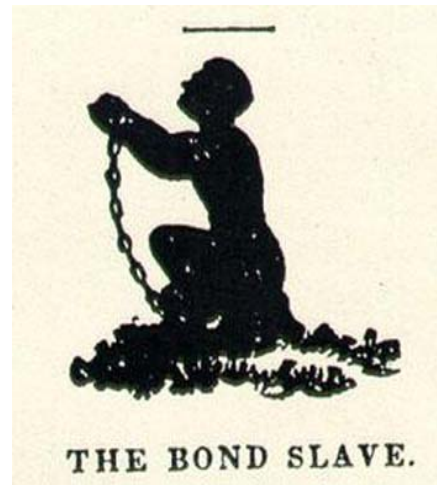
United States History College Prep

GRADE LEVEL

11TH

TIME FRAME

One class period/lesson (94-minute period)



GOALS OF UNIT

Students will understand and recognize through readings, lecture, discussions individual and group work the following:

- The role of African-American cultural expression in the social and political fight for liberty and freedom during slavery in the United States.
- The importance of literacy in slavery as both a means of oppression and liberation.
- The elements of African-American cultural expression from slavery, that are present in later works of African-Americans.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The lessons within this unit may or may not be taught together but they would come after the Revolutionary War. The unit works as a unit on Slavery itself and within each lesson is an opportunity to interject lectures on the topic. The only background the students would need would be an introduction to slavery and information on the Declaration of Independence.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Explain the significant events in the founding of the nation (slavery) and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.
- Use primary source documents to identify and describe tensions and frictions that arose between and within groups in 18th and 19th century America.
- Compare the present with the past by evaluating the decisions and determine the lessons that have been learned from past events.
- Use primary and secondary resource documents to produce written work and persuasive oral presentations.
- Identify the connections, causal and otherwise, between slavery events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
- Interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

MATERIALS

CD Player; Lyrics and Music “We raise de wheat” (F. Douglass), “Go Down Moses”, “Soon I will be done,” “Changes”(T. Shakur), “My Petition” (J. Scott), “Self Destruction” ; “A poem on the Fugitive Slave Law” (E. Rogers); “We Wear the Masks” (Dunbar); “On being brought from Africa to America” (P. Wheatley); “To the University of Cambridge, in New England” (P. Wheatley); “To His Excellency George Washington” (P. Wheatley); “The Kind Master and Dutiful Servant” (Hammon); “On Liberty and Slavery” (G. Horton); “What is to the Slave is the 4th of July,” (F. Douglass); “An Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World.”; Excerpts from The Narrative of Fredrick Douglass, An American Slave; Excerpts from Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (H. Jacobs); “Arn’t I A Woman” (S. Truth); “Address to the Slaves of the United States” (Garnett); Lined Paper; Markers; Colored Pencils; 8X11 Blank paper; Found Poem Handout; Pamphlet Handout; TPMAS Handout; Persuasive Speech Rubric; Portfolio Coversheet.

ACTIVITIES

Students will turn in all of their work at the end of the unit in a portfolio with a cover page. Each lesson in the unit will build upon the other, although the lessons may be taught individually.

Lesson #1: The Songs of the Slaves

- Bell Ringer (students will answer the following questions in their notebooks)
What is your favorite song? (by favorite song I mean what song can you listen to repeatedly and when you hear it – you want to sing at the top of your lungs)
Explain in at least one paragraph why this is your favorite song.
- Discussion Questions Why do we sing?
When do we sing?
How does music make us feel?
How is music used for other than entertainment?
How is music historically important?
How can music be used for social and/or political purposes?
- Lecture/
Discussion The Sorrow/Slave Songs
- Class Activity Students will listen to slave songs and orally interpret their various meanings.
Students will also listen to songs by Jill Scott, Tupac Shakur, Jadakiss and the Stop the Violence Movement.
- Individual Activity Create a coded song that reflects or criticizes a particular social or political view or bring in a coded song with your interpretation of its political or social significance.
- Ticket Out The Door How was music used by slaves for social and political purposes? How is music used today for social and political purposes?

LESSON #2: 18th and 19th Century African-American Poetry

- Bell Ringer Create a mind map with poetry at the center
- Lecture/
Discussion African-American poets of the 18th and 19th Century
- Class
Activity Using the TPMAST format the class will dissect Phylliss Wheatley's "On Being Brought from Africa to America" and Paul Lawrence Dunbars "We wear the Masks"
- Group
Activity Students will be organized into groups of 3-4 and each group will receive a different poem and a TPMAST worksheet. Students will present their information to the class and take notes on each others information.
- Individual
Activity Students will select a line from any of the poems presented in class and design an illustration that represents this line from the poem.
- Quick write Students will answer the following question in at least three paragraphs: What can we learn about slavery in the United States from the poetry of African-Americans in the 18th and 19th century? List specific examples from the text to defend your position.

LESSON #3: Declaration of Independence 1776

- Bell Ringer (students will answer the following questions in their notebooks)
What is patriotism?
How do you define a patriot?
How do you celebrate the 4th of July?
Why do you celebrate the 4th of July?
- Lecture/
Discussion The Declaration of Independence
- Class
Activity Read, "What to the slave is the 4th of July?"
- Individual
Activity Write a 15-25 line Found Poem using the text of Fredrick Douglass's speech.
- Ticket Out
The Door Answer the following question: Is Fredrick Douglass a patriot? Why or why not? Defend your answer using specific examples from the text.

LESSON #4: David Walker

- Bell Ringer: Students will be given a series of quotes from David Walker and one from Patrick Henry. Students will have to match the quotes to the correct author.

Lecture/ Discussion	The Biography of David Walker
Group Activity	Students will be organized into groups of 3 or 4. Each group will be given an excerpted portion of David Walker's <i>Appeal</i> . Groups will be responsible for summarizing at least 5 main points from their section onto a transparency to be presented to the class. During group presentations each individual student will fill-out a graphic organizer.
Individual Activity	Each student will be responsible for creating a pamphlet supporting or criticizing David Walker's <i>Appeal</i> from one of the following perspectives, Southern plantation slaveholder, Northern Abolitionist, Free African-American, or Literate Slave.
Whip Around	David Walker – Radical or American Patriot?
Bell Ringer	<u>LESSON #5: Understanding Slavery Through the Slave Narrative</u> KWL Chart – What were the physical and emotional effects of slavery?
Lecture/ Discussion	The Slave Narrative
Class Activity	Working in pairs students will complete a Venn Diagram on the effects of slavery as seen by Fredrick Douglass and the effects of slavery as witnessed by Harriet Jacobs. Students will focus on their attention on the following four topics – the effect of slavery on Southern Whites; the physical, emotional, verbal and mental abuse of the slaves; the importance of literacy for obtaining freedom and familial relationships among enslaved African-Americans.
Discussion Questions	What do the narratives of Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs reveal about slavery in the United States? What effect could these narratives have had on slavery?
Individual	Write a letter based on your readings to the editor of a newspaper defending slavery or calling for its abolition.
Class Poll	War was the only way to end slavery in the United States.
Bell Ringer	<u>LESSON #6: The Oral Tradition</u> (students will answer the following questions in their notebook) What is the best speech you have ever heard? What about the speech makes it your top pick? What qualities did the speech possess that made it memorable?

Class Activity Read the speeches of Sojourner Truth (Ar'nt I a Woman) and Henry Highland Garnet (Address to the Slaves of the United States)

Lecture The Importance of the Oral Tradition in the African-American community

Individual Activity Each student will give a 2-3 persuasive speech about a topic that is important to them and attempt to persuade their classmates to agree with their position. During speeches, each student will be graded (based on a rubric) by three classmates. The rubrics will appear in the students portfolio.

Discussion How is the spoken word more or less accessible than the written word?

EVAULATION

Students will write a 2-3 page essay answering the following:

How did oppressed and enslaved African Americans use cultural expressions (songs, writing, speeches) to describe slavery and demand freedom? Provide specific examples from your readings on the slavery unit.

Students will also turn in a unit portfolio of the work that has been completed.

UNDERSTANDING POETRY

TITLE	What do you think the title of the poem means?
PARAPHRASE	Put the poem in your own words.
ATTITUDE	What is the attitude (tone) of the poem?
HISTORICAL	What is the historical context of the poem or what historical event is the poem reflecting.
SHIFT	When does the poem shift (climax)?
TITLE	After reading the poem how would you interpret the title.

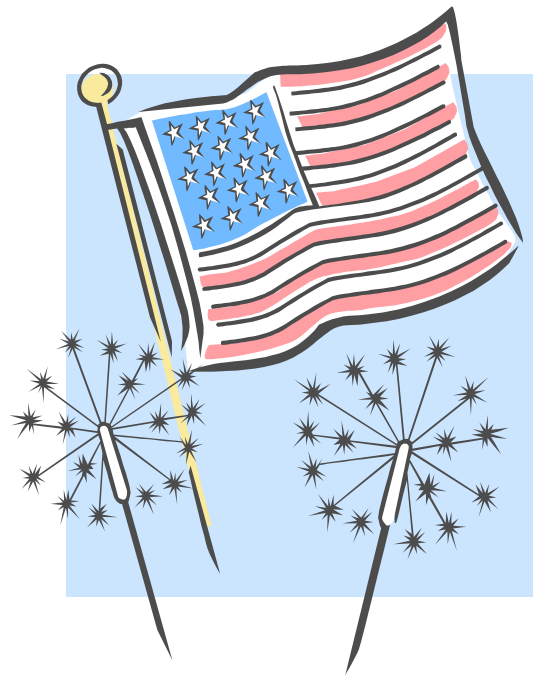
FOUND POEM WORKSHEET

Re-read Fredrick Douglass' "What is the 4th of July to the Slave"

Highlight at least 25 words or phrases that are powerful to you. (Your goal is to capture the essential message and tone of the piece writing)

Once you have gathered your words or phrases organize them into a poem that represents your interpretation of the reading. (You can only use words or phrases that you have 'found' in the text) Although you can arrange the words however you'd like.

Pay attention to the rhythm and flow of your poem. Be creative.



DAVID WALKER *APPEAL TO THE COLOURED CITIZENS OF THE WORLD*
Graphic Organizer

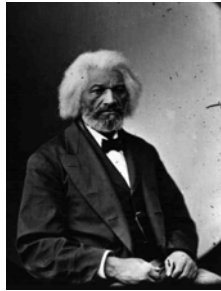
MAIN POINTS	SUMMARY
PREAMBLE	
ARTICLE I	
ARTICLE II	

ARTICLE III

ARTICLE IV

PORTFOLIO COVER SHEET

BELL RINGERS



_____/25 POINTS

CODED SONG

_____/25 POINTS

ILLUSTRATED POETRY

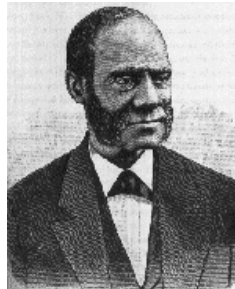


_____/25 POINTS

FOUND POEM

_____/25 POINTS

PAMPHLET



_____/25 POINTS

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

_____/25 POINTS

PERSUASIVE SPEECH



_____/25 POINTS

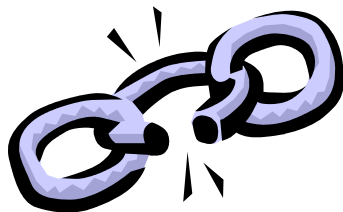
LECTURE NOTES

_____/25 POINTS

ESSAY

_____/100 POINTS

TOTAL POINTS



_____/300 POINTS

Full Name
Period

Letter to the Editor

[Your Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]
[Date of your Letter]

[Recipient Name]
[Title]
[Company Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]

Dear [Recipient Name]:

Introduce who you and why you are writing this letter. What stand are you taking on slavery and why.

Provide at least three statements or examples from the texts of Harriet Jacobs or Fredrick Douglass that supports your position.

Provide at least one counterargument to reinforce the strength of your opinion.

Be creative. Appeal to the emotions of your audience. Imagine that your letter will be running in a newspaper and your goal is not only to have your opinion represented but to sway people to your side.

Conclude by restating your stand on the issue and why this issue is important.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[City, State]

Full Name
Period

TITLE OF YOUR ESSAY
(TWO SPACES)

Essay begins here. Your thesis statement should appear in the first paragraph and should fully address the question – **How did the oppressed and enslaved African-Americans of the 18th and 19th centuries use cultural expression; songs, writings and speeches; to describe slavery and demand freedom?**

The content of your paper should include information from your readings, class discussions, lecture notes and assignments related to the unit on slavery. Outside resources are recommended but they are not required. If you use someone one else's work or direct quotations be sure to cite the reference using MLA format.

The format requirements of your paper are as follows: Typed; Double-Spaced; Length 2-3 pages; 12 point font; Times New Roman, *Arial* or *Courier New* are the accepted fonts; 1-inch margins on all sides. REMEMBER – proofread your paper, you will lose points for spelling and grammar errors.

Your paper will be worth 100 points. Seventy-five (75) points for content (or your ability to fully address the question you have been asked) and twenty-five (25) points for format. Your paper is due on _____. Late papers will be accepted for three days after the assigned due date. You will lose 20 points for everyday your paper is late.

FOUND POEM (EXAMPLE)

FREDRICK DOUGLASS “WHAT TO THE SLAVE IS THE 4TH OF JULY”

CELEBRATION

INSIGNIFICANT

GREAT DELIVERANCE

GROSS INJUSTICE

EMANCIPATED

DISPARITY

PATRIOT’S HEART

CONSTANT VICTIM

THREE MILLION

CHAINS RENDERED

INTOLERABLE SADNESS

JUBILEE

CRUELTY

PEACEFUL SUBMISSION

REMEDY FOR OPPRESSION

FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

HYPOCRISY

THE 4TH OF JULY

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