

Winter 2009 Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter
Learning Activity – Secondary Level

Slavery In the Antebellum South: Varying the Learning Process with Primary Sources



Relics of slavery days

Library of Congress Bibliographic record:
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c03293>



Old Jackson Plantation home, owned by a sugarcane planter

Library of Congress Bibliographic record:
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8c13108>

OVERVIEW

Overview

This learning activity engages students in an analysis of multiple primary sources relating to slavery in the antebellum South from the Library of Congress. It is tiered to accommodate different levels of student comprehension and ability, and to guide students of all learning levels to higher-order thinking.

Objectives

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- articulate the differences in social, economic, and legal status of slaves in the antebellum South
- speculate why the institution of slavery existed
- identify some of the arguments offered by 19th century abolitionist and pro-slavery groups

Time Required

Two class periods

Recommended Grade Range

6-8

Topic

Slavery of African-Americans

Subject/Sub-Subject

Social Studies/History

Winter 2009 Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter
Learning Activity – Secondary Level

OVERVIEW (CONT'D)

Standards

McREL 4th Edition Standards & Benchmarks

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

United States History

Standard 12. Understands the sources and character of cultural, religious, and social reform movements in the antebellum period.

Benchmark 1. Understands perspectives that influenced slavery in the antebellum period (e.g., changing ideas about race, the reception of proslavery and antislavery ideologies in the North and South, arguments used to defend slavery in the 18th and 19th centuries)

Credits

Activity adapted from a lesson plan created by Courtney Kisat, Teaching with Primary Sources Program at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois

Materials Used

Have these materials ready before the activity:

Projection device with one Internet-ready computer (or prepare and distribute copies) to share the following images simultaneously:

Relics of slavery days (image of slave quarters)

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c03293>

Old Jackson Plantation home

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8c13108>

Copies of worksheets (see attached) to distribute one copy per student group determined by academic ability level:

Group One worksheet: Below-level/ELL students

Group Two worksheet: On-level students

Group Three worksheet: Above-level students

Copies of Primary Source Sets (see attached) to distribute one primary source set per student group determined by assigned worksheet/academic ability level:

Group One Primary Source Set: Below-level/ELL students

Group Two Primary Source Set: On-level students

Group Three Primary Source Set: Above-level students

Blank sheets of paper to distribute one sheet per student at the end of the activity for use in completing a culminating individual writing assignment.

Winter 2009 Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter
Learning Activity – Secondary Level

OVERVIEW (CONT'D)

Resources

Background for the activity:

The preceding curriculum for this learning experience should incorporate information about the North Atlantic Slave Trade. The first African slaves were forced into bondage in the 1640s and traveled to North America in slave ships to labor in agriculture. Over the next two centuries, the slave trade grew in the American South, countered by the abolitionist movement developing in the North. Some historians speculate that black slaves made up to 77% of the Southern population by 1750, yet the free white minority maintained the status quo. The passage of national legislation, such as the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, made it even more difficult for slaves in the antebellum South to escape to freedom. It also forced free blacks, primarily living in the North, to carry papers proving their status or risk capture and transport to the South where they could be sold into slavery.

Additional Resources:

African-American Odyssey

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/aohome.html>

From Slavery to Civil Rights: A Timeline of African-American History

<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/civilrights/flash.html>

Slavery Resource Guide

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/slavery/>

Winter 2009 Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter
Learning Activity – Secondary Level

PROCEDURE

Activity:

1. Introduce the activity by prompting prior knowledge; ask students what they know or remember about slavery in the American South.
2. Project the images of a slave cabin and a plantation manor simultaneously on a screen OR pass around handouts of the images.
3. Model primary source analysis with a whole-class discussion prompted by questions such as:
 - What do you see? (How are the two dwellings different?)
 - What do you think you know? (What connection do these pictures have with the institution of slavery? Who would have lived in these houses? What information do these primary sources offer about slavery?)
 - What would you like to learn?
4. Write students' responses on the board. Explain that they will be analyzing additional primary sources in groups to check their initial responses and to deepen their understanding of the social, economic, legal, and political realities of slavery in the antebellum South.
5. Divide students into three groups or tiers; these groups should be selected based on ability to comprehend and critically analyze a set of primary sources. Give each group the appropriate-level worksheet (see attached) and primary source set (also attached).
6. Ask students to assign a scribe and, together in their groups, spend 30 minutes analyzing and discussing their primary sources. Tell them to be prepared to share their findings as part of a follow-up class discussion, using the primary sources as evidence for their conclusions.
7. After 30 minutes, ask groups to take turns presenting their responses to the essential question and evidence to the class. [Note: as each group presents, project their primary sources onto a screen if possible.] Each group should post their primary sources on a bulletin board after presenting.
8. Invite everyone to examine all of the primary sources on the bulletin board following the group presentations. Ask students if seeing additional primary sources causes them to reconsider their group's responses to the essential question.
9. Give each student a sheet of paper. Ask students to fold the paper twice so there are four equal spaces on which to write. On the board, write a list of writing prompts that students may choose from; these can range from basic comprehension to high level critical thinking. Some examples are:

I feel that...

I have learned...

I wonder if...

I know that...

If I were a slave owner...

If I were a slave...

Abolitionists believed...

Pro-slavery groups believed...

Compared to today...

Winter 2009 Teaching with Primary Sources Newsletter
Learning Activity – Secondary Level

EVALUATION

Evaluation:

- Observe students' participation in whole class and small group discussions
- Assess students' ability to answer their worksheets' essential questions using evidence from the primary sources
- Assess students' ability to write responses to their chosen writing prompts demonstrating comprehension of key concepts.

Group One Worksheet

Instructions:

- 1) Read all of the questions.
- 2) Examine all of your group's primary sources.
- 3) Discuss answers to the guiding questions before writing your group's answer to the Essential Question. The guiding questions will help your group respond to the Essential Question.
- 4) Present evidence from the primary sources to support your answer to the Essential Question!

Essential Question:

What social, legal and economic status did slaves have in the antebellum South?

Guiding Questions:

- How did the living conditions of plantation owners and slaves differ?
- What do Sarah Graves's memories tell you about the legal rights of slaves? Would the treatment she describes be legal today?
- How do you think slaves and plantation owners regarded one another?

Group Two Worksheet

Instructions:

- 1) Read all of the questions.
- 2) Examine all of your group's primary sources.
- 3) Discuss answers to the guiding questions before writing your group's answer to the Essential Question. The guiding questions will help your group respond to the Essential Question.
- 4) Present evidence from the primary sources to support your answer to the Essential Question!

Essential Question:

What social, legal and economic status did slaves have in the antebellum South?

Guiding Questions:

- Why did many white Southerners consider slavery to be essential to their well-being?
- How did the perception of slaves as property affect their status as human beings?

Group Three Worksheet

Instructions:

- 1) Read all of the questions.
- 2) Examine all of your group's primary sources.
- 3) Discuss answers to the guiding questions before writing your group's answer to the Essential Question. The guiding questions will help your group respond to the Essential Question.
- 4) Present evidence from the primary sources to support your answer to the Essential Question!

Essential Question:

What social, legal and economic status did slaves have in the antebellum South?

Guiding Questions:

- How was slavery described by those on opposite sides of the issue?
- What broad themes or values were used to support the abolitionist and pro-slavery arguments?



Group One Primary Source Set
Primary Source #1 of 3



Group One Primary Source Set
Primary Source #2 of 3

so sick he couldn't work, so me and mama had to work hard. We lived in a kitchen, a room in a log house joined on to the master's house. My mama worked in the field, even when I was a little baby. She would lay me down on a pallet near the fence while she plowed the corn or worked in the field.

Start

"Stepfather and mama often tended their own tobacco and grain in the moonlight. This they could sell and have the money. We could go to church which was held in the school house. Sometimes they let us play with the other children after the noon dishes were washed and there wasn't anything else to do.

"There was most always something to do. Master never allowed nobody to be idle. Mama worked in the house and the fields too. At night after she come home from the field, she had to grate corn for the family next day. We didn't have many grist mills them days, an' we would punch holes in a piece of tin, and rub the ear of corn across it and make meal for our use.

"Nowadays, when you all want a nice wool dress, all you got to do is go to the store and get it", Aunt Sally commented, when asked to tell about their clothing.

"When I was growin' up an' wanted a nice wool dress, we would shear the sheep, wash the wool, card it, spin it and weave

MISSOURI
NODAWAY COUNTY
SKIDMORE
EX-SLAVE STORIES
SARAH GRAVES

Page 6.

131

it. If we wanted it striped, we used two threads. We would color one by using herbs or barks. Sometimes we had it carded at a mill, an' sometimes we carded it ourselves. But when we did it, the threads were short, which caused us to have to tie the thread often, makin' too many knots in the dress. I have gathered the wool off the fences where it had been caught off the sheep, an' washed it, an' used it to make mittens.

"Yes'm. I worked in the fields, and I worked hard too. Plantin' and harvestin' in those days was really work. They used oxen to break up the ground for corn, an' for plowin' it too. They hoed the corn with a hoe, and cut the stalks with a hoe and shocked 'em. They cut the grain with the cradle and and bound it with their hands, and shocked it. They threshed the grain with a hickory stick. Beating it out.

"I carried water for the field hands. I've carried three big buckets of water from one field to another, from one place to another; one in each hand and one balanced on my head.

"Yes'm. Some masters was good an' some was bad. My mama's master whipped his slaves for pastime. My master was not so bad as some was to their slaves. I've had many a whippin',] some I

End

APPENDIX C.

The abolitionists in Connecticut petitioned the Legislature of that state at its late session on several subjects deemed by them proper for legislative action. In answer to these petitions—

1. The law known as the "Black Act" or the "Canterbury law"—under which Miss Crandall was indicted and tried—was repealed, except a single provision, which is not considered objectionable.
2. The right to *trial by jury* was secured to persons who are claimed as slaves.
3. Resolutions were passed asserting the power of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and recommending that it be done as soon as it can be, "consistently with the *best good* of the *whole* country." (?)
4. Resolutions were passed protesting against the annexation of Texas to the Union.
5. Resolutions were passed asserting the right of petition as inalienable—condemning Mr. Patton's resolution of Dec. 21, 1837 as an invasion of the rights of the people, and calling on the Connecticut delegation in Congress to use their efforts to have the same rescinded.

Read

APPENDIX D.

In the year 1793 there were but 5,000,000 pounds of cotton produced in the United States, and but 500,000 exported. Cotton never could have become an article of much commercial importance under the old method of preparing it for market. By hand-picking, or by a process strictly *manual*, a cultivator could not prepare for market, during the year, more than from 200 to 300 pounds; being only about one-tenth of what he could cultivate to maturity in the field. In '93 Mr. Whitney invented the Cotton-gin now in use, by which the labor of at least *one thousand* hands under the old system, is performed by *one*, in preparing the crop for market. Seven years after the invention (1800) 35,000,000 pounds were raised, and 17,800,000 exported. In 1834, 460,000,000 were raised—384,750,000 exported. Such was the effect of Mr. Whitney's invention. It gave, at once, extraordinary value to the *land* in that part of the country where alone cotton could be raised; and to *slaves*, because it was the general, the almost universal, impression that the cultivation of the South could be carried on only by slaves. There being no *free* state in the South, competition between free and slave labor never could exist on a scale sufficiently extensive to prove the superiority of the former in the production of cotton, and in the preparation of it for market.

Thus, it has happened that Mr. Whitney has been the innocent occasion of giving to slavery in this country its present importance—of magnifying it into the great interest to which all others must yield. How he was rewarded by the South—especially by the planters of Georgia—the reader may see by consulting Silliman's Journal for January, 1832, and the Encyclopædia Americana, article, WHITNEY.

APPENDIX E.

It is impossible, of course, to pronounce with precision, how great would have been the effect in favor of emancipation, if the effort to resist the admission of Missouri as a slaveholding state had been successful. We can only conjecture what it would have been, by the effect its admission has had in fostering slavery up to its present huge

x.12

GANG OF 25 SEA ISLAND COTTON AND RICE NEGROES,

By LOUIS D. DE SAUSSURE.

On *THURSDAY* the 25th Sept., 1852, at 11 o'clock, A.M., will be sold at RYAN'S MART, in Chalmers Street, in the City of Charleston,

A prime gang of 25 Negroes, accustomed to the culture of Sea Island Cotton and Rice.

CONDITIONS.—One-half Cash, balance by Bond, bearing interest from day of sale, payable in one and two years, to be secured by a mortgage of the negroes and approved personal security. Purchasers to pay for papers.

No.	Age.	Capacity.	No.	Age.	Capacity.
1 Aleck,	33	Carpenter.	16 Hannah,	60	Cook.
2 Mary Ann,	31	Field hand, prime.	17 Cudjoe,	22	Prime field hand.
3—3 Louisa,	10		3—18 Nancy,	20	Prime field hand, sister of Cudjoe.
4 Abram,	25	Prime field hand.	19 Hannah,	34	Prime field hand.
5 Judy,	24	Prime field hand.	20 James,	13	Slight defect in knee from a broken leg.
6 Carolina,	5		21 Richard,	9	
7 Simon,	1½		22 Thomas,	6	
5—8 Daphne, infant.			5—23 John,	3	
9 Daniel,	45	Field hand, not prime.	1—24 Squash,	40	Prime field hand.
10 Phillis,	32	Field hand.	1—25 Thomas,	28	Prime field hand.
11 Will,	9				
12 Daniel,	6				
13 Margaret,	4				
14 Delia,	2				
7—15 Hannah,	2 months.				



Group Two Primary Source Set
Primary Source #3 of 3

SLAVERY AND TRUTH.

The institution of Slavery presents itself to sane minds in these two aspects. *Religious* and *Political*. The former more particularly concerns the Church—the latter the State.

Religiously viewed, it is not to be regarded as a Divine institution like the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or the Marriage Covenant, but as a providential condition of society, recognized and regulated by the Holy Scriptures, and as such to be tolerated by Christian people where it exists by law—always acting in strict conformity to the inspired precepts concerning it. This is according to the course pursued by Christ and his Apostles, and this is the view given by every standard commentator of the Bible.

Slavery, politically considered, is an institution of our country which each State has a perfect right to tolerate or repudiate at pleasure. Any interference in the matter on the part of one State or section of the country towards another, is a breach of covenant between the parties, which every Christian patriot and every citizen should deplore and rebuke.

If the principles contained in these two propositions had been duly regarded, who believes this nation would now be involved in such a terrible conflict?

We are assembled here, this evening, for the purpose of discussing the question of American Slavery: — — The startling fact that there are in these United States, under the sanction of this professedly Christian, Republican Government, nearly Four millions of human beings now clanking the chains of Slavery. — Four millions of Men and Women and children, who are owned like horses and cattle, — and bought and sold in the Market. — Four millions of thinking, acting, conscious beings, like ourselves, driven to unpaid toil, from the rising to the setting of the sun, through the weary

G. W. Kaler, Printer, 213 King St. near Market
Charleston, S. C., U. S. A.

The device of our Fathers in their first struggle for liberty,—1776.

UNITE OR



DIE



“SLAVE STATES, once more let me repeat, that the only way of preserving our slave property, or what we prize more than life, our LIBERTY, is by a UNION WITH EACH OTHER.”

Jefferson Davis.

Illustrations of the American Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1840.



"Our Peculiar Domestic Institutions."



Northern Hospitality—New-York nine months ago. [The Slave steps out of the Slave State, and his chains fall. A Free State, with another chain, stands ready to re-enslave him.]



Burning of McIntosh at St. Louis, in April, 1836.



Showing how slavery improves the condition of the female sex.



The Negro Pew, or "Free" Seats for black Christians. Mayor of New-York refusing a Carman's license to a colored Man.



Savagery of the Northern States in arresting and returning fugitive Slaves.



Selling a Mother from her Child.



Hunting Slaves with dogs and guns. A Slave drowned by the dogs.



"Poor things, they can't take care of themselves."



Mothers with young Children at work in the field.



A Woman chained to a Girl, and a Man in irons at work in the field.



Branding Slaves.



Cutting up a Slave in Kentucky.



Paid. Unpaid.

Citations: Slavery In the Antebellum South Primary Source Sets

Group One Primary Source Set
#1 of 3 O'Sullivan, Timothy H. <i>Five generations on Smith's Plantation, Beaufort, South Carolina</i> . Photograph. 1862. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsc.00057
#2 of 3 O'Sullivan, Timothy H. <i>Culpeper, Virginia (vicinity). John Minor Botts and family</i> . Photograph. 1863. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog. http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cwpb.03718
#3 of 3 <i>Still carries scars from lashes, Graves, Sarah</i> . Skidmore Nodaway County, Missouri: WPA Slave Narrative Project, Missouri Narratives, Volume 10. Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mesnbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(mesn/100/131126))
Group Two Primary Source Set
#1 of 3 <i>Correspondence, between the Hon. F. H. Elmore, one of the South Carolina delegation in Congress, and James G. Birney, one of the secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society</i> . The Anti-Slavery Examiner, Vol. 8, 1838, p. 58, Appendix D. From the Library of Congress, <i>From Slavery to Freedom: The African-American Pamphlet Collection, 1824-1909</i> . http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbaapc&fileName=02900/rbaapc02900.db&recNum=57
#2 of 3 De Saussure, Louis D. <i>Gang of 25 Sea Island Cotton and Rice Negroes</i> . Print advertisement, 1852. Advertising Ephemera Collection – Database #A0160, John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History, Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library. http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.award/ncdeaa.B0317
#3 of 3 <i>Life of George Washington—The farme / painted by Stearns ; lith. By Régnier</i> . Lithograph. Paris : Lemercier, ca. 1853. From the Library of Congress, <i>By Popular Demand: Portraits of the Presidents and First Ladies, 1789-present</i> . http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/presp:@field(NUMBER+@band(cph+3b52233))
Group Three Primary Source Set
#1 of 4 <i>Slavery and truth</i> . [1861?]. From the Library of Congress, <i>An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broad­sides and Other Printed Ephemera</i> . http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=rbpe&fileName=rbpe23/rbpe234/23400800/rbpe23400800.db&recNum=0
#2 of 4 Anthony, Susan B. <i>“Make the slave’s case our own.”</i> ca. 1859. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs online catalog, http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.02934
#3 of 4 <i>Unite or die</i> . Pictorial envelope. Falen, G.W., printer. From the Library of Congress, Civil War Treasures from the New-York Historical Society. http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/cwnyhs:@field(DOCID+@lit(aj92036))
#4 of 4 <i>Illustrations of the American anti-slavery almanac for 1840</i> . New York: 1840. From the Library of Congress, <i>An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broad­sides and Other Printed Ephemera</i> . http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/rbpe.24800100