

From Slavery to Freedom: Understanding Sequence in the African American Experience

GRADE: 5th or 8th

LESSON DURATION: 1 session

LESSON INTRODUCTION:

The war was a time of great change for the African American. When the Union armies marched into the state, Tennessee slaves were some of the first in the country to shake off the yoke of slavery and seek their freedom. Many ran away from the farms and plantations they worked on and ran towards the Union lines. These steps were the first in a long journey of seeking their freedom. Many young African American men sought shelter and security in contraband camps. As the war progressed they were mustered into the ranks of the Union army, and eventually some of them saw heavy combat and fought bravely for their freedom and their families' freedom.



In this lesson, your students will consider the perspective of African Americans during the War. By analyzing works of art and primary sources, they will learn the steps that African Americans took to secure their freedom from slavery to the end of the war.

GOAL: To understand the sequence of events that led many African Americans from slavery to freedom during the Civil War.

OBJECTIVES:

The students will [TSW] analyze primary sources in art.

TSW use <http://www.civilwarshades.org> to read about and comprehend the journey many African Americans took to secure their freedom.

TSW use the deduction method to understand which image comes first.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS:

5.5.01 Understand the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War.

c. Identify similar and different northern and southern social and cultural customs.

5.1.04 Understand the contributions of individuals and people of various ethnic, racial, religious, and socioeconomic groups to Tennessee.

5.1.tpi.2. Group and label American history artifacts to find common characteristics and to make generalizations about American cultural similarities and subcultures.

5.4.04 Recognize how Americans incorporate the principles of the Constitution into their lives.

b. Use knowledge of facts and concepts drawn from history, along with elements of historical inquiry to inform decision making about and action taking on public issues.

- 8.5.19 Identify the contributions of African Americans from slavery to Reconstruction.
b. Analyze the social and cultural impact of African Americans on American society.
- 8.5.spi.11. Identify conclusions about historical events using primary and secondary sources.
- 8.5.spi.12. Differentiate between primary and secondary source documents.
- 8.6.02 Understand how groups can impact change at the local, state national and world levels.
- 6.01 Understand the impact of individual and group decisions on citizens and communities.

VOCABULARY WORDS:

runaway
Contraband
Provost Marshall

PROCEDURES:

1.) Hold a quick review with students about slavery. Ask them who were slaves and what were their lives like?

Distribute or show this painting.



http://content.mtsu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shades&CISOPTR=51&DMSCALE=12.5&DMWIDTH=600&DMHEIGHT=600&DMX=0&DMY=0&DMMODE=viewer&DMTEXT=&REC=5&DMTHUMB=1&DMROTATE=0

Ponder this painting: Where are they working? What do you think they are growing? Does it look like hard work? What makes you think so? Are these people working on their own farm or for someone else? Do you think they got paid money for their hard work?

2.) Give the students a scenario. If you (the teacher) told them to get to work on a task (something they really wouldn't like to do), and then left the room for the rest of the day, perhaps the rest of the week, or maybe even never to return, would they complete the task? What would you do without a teacher day in and day out?

3.) Have students read the story of the Wessyngton slaves.

<http://www.civilwarshades.org/building-a-future/wessyngton/>

Explain that when the Civil War broke out, many plantation owners and overseers joined up to fight. In many cases, authority figures were no longer there. When the Union army moved near the farm and

the Confederate army retreated, some slaves ran away. They didn't feel like they had to stay on the plantation because the authority was gone and the new authority was the Union army.

4.) What do you think happened to the slaves at that point? Allow students to predict what happened to the African Americans that ran away.

Analyzing Primary Sources and Understanding Sequences of Events:

5.) Distribute or show the following pieces of artwork. Explain that each painting depicts the different period of life for many southern African Americans during the War. They will need to divide into groups of three or four and determine in which order these illustrations should go. (The correct order is listed below)

http://content.mtsu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shades&CISOPTR=8&CISOBX=1&REC=2



http://content.mtsu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shades&CISOPTR=198&CISOBX=1&REC=3



http://content.mtsu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/shades&CISOPTR=194&CISOBX=1&REC=4



6.) To help them determine the correct order, have the students complete the attached primary source analysis sheet.

http://www.gilderlehrman.org/historynow/04_2008/pdf/Photo%20Analysis%20Worksheet.pdf

Class Discussion:

7.) As a class but still in groups discuss each image. Ask the groups to determine which image they think came first. Make sure they support their claim with evidence and analysis from the image.

Examples:

The Contraband: He has tobacco leaves in his pocket indicating that he is fresh off the farm. The bag and stick may mean that he has recently run away from the plantation.

The Soldier: The uniform, his gun. Do you think he was proud to now be a soldier? Does he look proud?

The Veteran: He is on crutches and has probably lost his leg in battle. His blue uniform has now faded. What is the demeanor of the soldier? Is he disheartened from losing his leg? Why do you think he is saluting?

8.) Display the images in the correct order. Discuss with your class why they think this young man would have run away to the army when fighting in the war was very dangerous. He could have been killed. He even lost his leg, but he remained proud.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

Creative writing exercise:

Have your students take time to consider what they have just learned about African American experiences during the War. What perils did they have to overcome when running away? What did many men do when they ran to the Union army? Why do you think they fought?

Now have your students think about this one man. Based on what they have learned, have the students create a story about him. What is his story? Give him a name. Where was he from? Did he have a family? Where were they? What happened when he ran away? Why did he join the army? How did he lose his leg? Did he lose any friends during the War? What happened to him after the War?

Consider reminding the class of the slaves at Wessington Plantation. Have them reread the story about them.

<http://www.civilwarshades.org/building-a-future/wessington/>