



Teaching Guide

SEGMENT 2, WEBISODE 5

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



Segment Overview

The English who settled the North American colonies did not invent slavery. Slavery was already as old as time. However, during the seventeenth century, the English colonists redefined slavery in ways that had a brutal impact on the unwilling and enslaved immigrants from Africa, with lasting consequences for the nation the colonies would become.

Every colony had an interest in slavery. The New England colonists came to North America in search of political and religious freedom, yet they denied freedom to the Africans. The New Englanders' shrewd Yankee economics allowed them to amass wealth through commerce in enslaved peoples. The triangular trade, by which colonial products went to England in exchange for guns, cloth, and trinkets, which were traded for human cargoes to work the Caribbean and southern plantations, began and ended in New England. Africans, both free and not free, played important roles in the building of the middle colonies. The southern colonies' large plantation economy depended on a huge, low cost labor force, which led to the importation of Africans.

As the African population grew in some areas to outnumber the white population, both groups lost some degree of freedom. Southern whites became prisoners of their fear and distrust of the enslaved. African Americans lived under increasingly brutal laws intended to keep them under control.

Teacher Directions

1. Write the following North Carolina law on the chalkboard, chart paper, or a transparency. Explain that indictment means to be publicly condemned or reprimanded.

The teaching of slaves has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction in their minds. Therefore, any free person who shall teach any slave to read and write shall be liable to indictment. If any slave shall teach, or attempt to teach any other slave, he or she shall receive thirty-nine lashes on his or her bare back.

2. Students, working in their small teams, discuss the following questions.
 - What does the phrase "dissatisfaction in their minds" mean?
 - Do you think that a person who has education would remain enslaved as willingly as a person who has no education? Explain your answer.
 - Why were the punishments for teaching an enslaved person so harsh?
 - Why were punishments different and unequal for free and unfree people?



Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.



3. Teams share their responses in a whole class discussion. Make sure students understand the following points in discussing the questions.

“Dissatisfaction in their minds” means that enslaved people who can read and find information on their own cannot remain enslaved. They begin to know better and to think about how they can change their condition. A slaveholder who can keep his enslaved people in ignorance can more easily control them. Fear that African Americans would learn too much and rise up against their bondage caused whites to make the slave laws very harsh.

Teacher Directions

1. Distribute the Student Sheets: *Two Sides of a Story*. Explain to the students that the first person accounts give two different views of how people were captured in Africa and placed on ships to be sold into slavery in America. John Barbot, a European slave trader, made voyages to the West Coast of Africa for the French Royal African Company. Olaudah Equiano, the youngest son of a wealthy African family, was kidnapped at the age of eleven, sold into slavery, and eventually became educated and free.
2. Read the two first person accounts aloud to students as they follow along, or students read them with a partner. Provide the students with a Venn diagram or other graphic organizer on which they can compare and contrast the two views of the slave trade according to a slave trader and a kidnapped African.
3. When students have completed their organizers, lead a class discussion using the following questions.
 - About what things did John Barbot and Olaudah Equiano agree?
 - About what things did they agree but explain differently?
 - About what things did they disagree?
 - Why would they see the same events differently?
 - Which account do you think is nearest the truth?
 - Would either author purposely not tell the truth?
 - Why did each author write his account?
 - What conclusions can you draw about how people viewed slavery when these accounts were written?



What do you
Think?



Moving Toward
Freedom

Teacher Directions

1. Students reflect on the effect of the slave trade on Africa and on the American colonies.
 - What did each group lose?
 - What did each group gain?
 - Who was responsible for the slave trade?
2. Students share their responses with the class.

Teacher Directions

1. Share the following information with students

Despite laws against educating enslaved Africans in every colony, some courageous people taught African Americans to read. A group called the Associates of Dr. Thomas Bray raised funds and established schools for African Americans. Dr. Bray was an English minister who promoted libraries and schools in the colonies. Benjamin Franklin belonged to the Associates of Dr. Thomas Bray. Quakers also worked to educate African Americans, including Anthony Benezet in Philadelphia. And African Americans secretly educated themselves by listening to the lessons of white children and by seizing any bit of written material that they could lay their hands on to learn to read.

2. Ask the students
 - Why was teaching African Americans to read so important to people who cared about their rights and well-being?
 - Why were African Americans so eager to learn how to read?
 - How does the ability to read move people toward freedom?
 - Why is a nation of educated people likely to remain free?
3. Students, working in their teams, design a collage from magazine and newspaper clippings or of their own illustrations that shows the importance of literacy to freedom. Ask students to think about the opportunities and activities that they enjoy because they can read. What choices and privileges do they have that would not be available to them if they could not read?



Connections

Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with your students.

Math — Students research how many Africans came on slave ships to the colonies in the seventeenth century. How many came in the eighteenth century? By what percentage did the trade increase in each century?

Literature/Writing — Students read *The Kidnapped Prince, The Life of Olaudah Equiano*, adapted by Ann Cameron.

Literature — Students read poet Lucille Clifton's poem "slaveship," as found in *Every Shut Eye Ain't Asleep: An Anthology of Poetry by African Americans Since 1945* @ <http://dept.english.upenn.edu/~hbeavers/281/clifton-slaveship.html>.

Geography — Students research maps of the West Coast of Africa and the North American colonies in the seventeenth century to locate major slave trading ports.

TWO SIDES OF A STORY — Olaudah Equinào



One day, when all our people were gone out to their works as usual and only I and my dear sister were left to mind the house, two men and a woman got over our walls, and in a moment seized us both, and without giving us time to cry out or make resistance they stopped our mouths and ran off with us into the nearest wood... we had advanced but a little way before I discovered some people at a distance, on which I began to cry out for their assistance: but my cries had no other effect than to make them tie me faster and stop my mouth, and then they put me into a large sack.

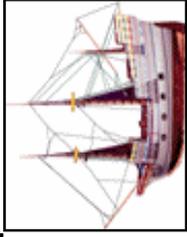
The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast, was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror, when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled, and tossed up to see if I were sound, by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me... I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little, I found some black people about me, who I believed were some of those who had brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and long hair. They told me I was not: Soon after this, the

blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair.

I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so

that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across, I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely...the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water.

I found some of my own nation, which in a small degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of these what was to be done with us? They gave me to understand, we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate; but still I feared I should be put to death.



TWO SIDES OF A STORY — John Barbot

Those sold by the Blacks are for the most part prisoners of war, taken either in fight, or pursuit, or in the incursions they make into their enemies territories; others are stolen away by their own countrymen; and some there are, who will sell their own children, kindred, or neighbours...The kings are so absolute, that upon any slight pretence of offences committed by their subjects, they order them to be sold for slaves, without regard to rank, or possession....In times of dearth and famine, abundance of those people will sell themselves, for a maintenance, and to prevent starving.

These slaves are severely and barbarously treated by their masters, who subsist them poorly, and beat them inhumanly... This barbarous usage of those unfortunate wretches, makes it appear, that the fate of such as are bought and transported from the coast to America, or other parts of the world, by Europeans, is less deplorable, than that of those who end their days in their native country; for aboard ships all possible care is taken to preserve and subsist them for the interest of the owners, and when sold in America, the same motive ought to prevail with their masters to use them well, that they may live the longer, and do them more service. Not to mention the inestimable advantage

they may reap, of becoming Christians, and saving their souls, if they make a true use of their condition....

Many of those slaves we transport from Guinea to America are prepossessed with the opinion, that they are carried like sheep to the slaughter, and that the Europeans are fond of their flesh; which notion so far prevails with some, as to make them fall into a deep melancholy and despair, and to refuse all sustenance... And tho' I must say I am naturally compassionate, yet have I been necessitated sometimes to cause the teeth of those wretches to be broken, because they would not open their mouths, or be prevailed upon by any entreaties to feed themselves; and thus have forced some sustenance into their throats....

One thing is to be taken notice of by sea-faring men, that this Fida and Ardra slaves are of all the others, the most apt to revolt aboard ships [and] easily draw others into their plot: for being used to see mens flesh eaten in their own country, and publick markets held for the purpose, they are very full of the notion, that we buy and transport them to the same purpose; and will therefore watch all opportunities to deliver themselves, by assaulting a ship's crew, and murdering them all, if possible....