

Philadelphia: The Journey to Freedom

Subjects: Social Studies

Suggested Grade Levels: 7–9

Time Frame: 4–5 classes

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Overview

Students will evaluate the strategies and efforts that were used by the American Anti-Slavery Society to end the institution of enslavement throughout the United States.

Background:

In 1833, the American Anti-Slavery society, held its first convention in Philadelphia, PA. Sixty abolitionist leaders from ten states met in Philadelphia, to bring an immediate emancipation to the institution of enslavement in the United States. At the convention, the society elected officers. William Lloyd Garrison wrote the organization’s constitution and a declaration was adopted which stated, “Its members pledge to work for emancipation through non-violent actions of “moral suasions,” or the overthrow of prejudice by the “power of love.”

The American Anti-Slavery Society was founded by William Lloyd Garrison and Arthur Tappan. Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave, was a key leader of this society.

- www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohhtml/exhibit/apart3.html

Connection to Philadelphia World Heritage Tool Kit’s Goal

Since the establishment of our country, Philadelphia has always been a pivotal city for African-American culture and heritage. This was especially true in the 17th and 18th century, with the passing of the act for the gradual abolition of slavery in Pennsylvania on March 1, 1780. Philadelphia had the largest free black population in the United States, and it was the center of the abolitionist movement in the country.

The Free African Society of Philadelphia was founded in April 1787 with the goal to create a non-denominational religious organization that would serve the spiritual, economic, and social needs of Philadelphia’s African American community. The Free African Society of Philadelphia was founded by Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Benjamin Banneker, and Prince Hall. It was the first mutual aid society in the city.

- www.pbs.org/wgbh/ala/part3/3h465.html

Core Curriculum Standards

- Draw evidence from informational texts to support reflection and research.
- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source different from prior knowledge or opinions.
- To identify issues and problems of the past, recognize factors contributing to such problems by identifying and analyzing alternative courses of action, formulate a position, and evaluate the implementation of that decision.

Objectives

- The students will examine the institution of slavery in the United States and its economic impact on the Southern states.
- The students will analyze, and cite the efforts of the abolitionist movement with the Underground Road, and its direct connection to Philadelphia.
- The students will identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the American Anti-Slavery Society.
- The students will analyze philosophies of the Anti-Slavery Society and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.
- The students will examine the Preamble of the Free African Society, and present a justification for the need of such an organization.
- The students will compare and contrast the Free African society and the NAACP.

Essential Question

Would you stay or would you go?

Materials Needed

Computers, Laptops or iPad with internet access; notebooks will be needed to complete the historical research and inquiry that will be required to complete assignments.

Procedure

Teacher Background:

Introduce students to the core curriculum standards and the lesson objectives. Explain the time commitment needed to complete this assignment effectively. (Estimated time needed for completion: 4-5 class periods of 45 minutes each.)

This is a collaborative learning research assignment that will conclude with a powerpoint or prezi presentation.

Period 1:

Hook/Introduction: You are an enslaved African in Maryland and you heard the Underground Railroad could help you get your freedom. To do this, you must leave your family behind and the thought of being captured and returned is frightening. What do you do? Would you stay or would you go?

(The students must decide in 5 minutes.)

Activity: Show the YouTube video on the Underground Railroad.

- <https://youtu.be/F54jtNaBK2E>

Homework: Write a review on the Underground Railroad video and include whether seeing the video has change your perspective as to you staying or running away.

Period 2:

Hook/Introduction: In small groups, the students will discuss and explain their response to the essential question. (10 min.)

Activity 1: The students will present their reviews of the Underground Railroad video to the class. (15min.)

This activity can be used as an oral presentation assessment.

Activity 2: Crash Course US History Slavery Video

- <https://youtu.be/Ajn9g5Gsv98> (May need to use closed captions as the speaker talks very fast).

In small groups, the students will examine the economic impact that slavery had on the southern states. (Hand out questions prior to showing video. Also, post the questions on a board or on chart paper.)

Response Questions

1. What was the importance of southern cotton?
 - The students will examine why cotton was the most important trade commodity by the 19th century.
2. Did northern states prosper from the southern cotton industry? (Please explain)
3. What was the profitability of slave based agriculture
4. How did the lack of technological innovation, such as railroads, hurt the south in the Civil War?
5. Why do you think slavery was viewed as a necessary evil?
6. Have you changed your mind? Would you stay or would you go?

Homework: If students have not completed the assignment by the end of the class period, they may complete the assignment for homework and the groups may present during the beginning of the next class period.

Period 3:

Hook/Introduction: Introduce the students to the Faces of Freedom.

- PowerPoint presentation: www.nationalgeographic/facesoffreedom

The students will research and give a presentation on one of the abolitionist listed in the Faces of Freedom PowerPoint presentation.

Activity: In small groups and using a Venn diagram, the students will identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the American Anti-Slavery Society. (What evidence can you find that caused the society to prosper or fail?)

Students can use the link below to conduct research to complete their assignment. Encourage the students to research other historical sites that will support their response to the assignment

- www.teachushistory.org

Students should come prepared next class to present their group findings.

Homework: have the students analyze philosophies of the Anti-Slavery Society and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's.

Period 4:

Hook/Introduction: The Quilts of the Underground Railroad

- <http://page.reallygoodstuff.com/pdfs/154227.pdf>

Activity 1: The students will be introduced to the quilt system that was used as a strategy for abolitionist to communicate their participation in the underground railroad.

The student assignment is to work with a partner and identify the meaning of each quilt.

Activity 2: Students will examine the Preamble of the Free African Society and present a justification for the need of such an organization during that period of time in United States history.

Students can use the link below to answer the question: What is a preamble? They may use that website to research an answer, but are encouraged to develop additional sources.

- www.pbs.org/wgbh/ala/part3/3h465.html

Homework: The students will compare and contrast the Free African Society and the NAACP.

- www.socialwelfarehistory.com
- www.naacp.org

Outcome/Assessment

The students will compile all of the data that they have researched, class lectures, and small group work, and in their assigned collaborative learning groups the students will give presentation of the “Importance of Philadelphia on the Journey to Freedom”

Special Education and English Language Learners Accommodations

All assignment must be modified specifically to accommodate the needs of the individual learner who may have some barriers to his or her academic success. Please CHECK with the Special Services department at your school for necessary adjustments and support.

Additional Resources

Film:

Traces of the Trade: <http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/>

Film that covers the importance of the slave trade in Rhode Island.