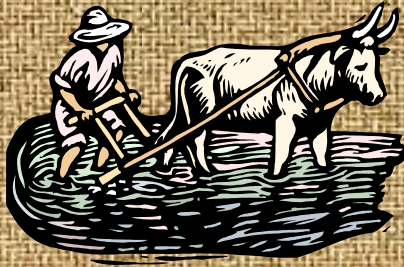


Slavery in America

Lessons developed for 1st Grade Students



The following lessons supplement a unit on early American settlers.

Students will recognize that, although many people came to America in search of freedom and a better way of life, other people were forced to come to America and did not enjoy the freedoms others had.

Day One: “Unwilling Settlers: Atrocities of Slavery” (20 mins.)

Core Content: *SS-E-5.1.2:* History can be understood by using a variety of primary and secondary sources and tools. *SS-E-5.2.2:* People explored and settled America and Kentucky for multiple reasons.

Objectives: Students will compare and contrast the experiences of American settlers. Students will be able to describe how African-American slaves were treated.

Materials: *...If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine; chart paper; marker

Procedure: Have students explain what the early American settlers had in common. (All were searching for freedom and/or a better way of life.) Explain that some settlers did not choose to come to

America but were forced to come as slaves. Read “What did it mean to be a slave?” in the book *...If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad*. List the atrocities of slavery on chart paper. Have students compare their own lives to the lives of enslaved people.

Assessment: Observation/Participation

Day Two: “The Underground Railroad”

(20 mins.)

Core Content: *SS-E-2.4.1:* As cultures emerge and develop, conflict and competition (e.g., disagreements, arguments, stereotypes, prejudice) may occur. *SS-E-5.1.2:* History can be understood by using a variety of primary and secondary sources and tools.

Objectives: Students will identify Harriet Tubman and others who fought against slavery. Students will be able to explain how the Underground Railroad worked.

Materials: *Harriet Tubman and the Freedom Train* by Sharon Gayle; list from yesterday; chart paper; marker

Procedure: Review the atrocities of slavery list from yesterday’s lesson. Explain that not everyone agreed with slavery. Introduce the term “Underground Railroad” and explain how the term was coined and how the system worked. Read *Harriet Tubman and*

the Freedom Train. Have students suggest reasons why slaves wanted to run away and why others wanted to help them. List some characteristics of a slave, a slave owner, and an abolitionist/conductor. Ask the question, “Who would you have been?” and have students explain their decisions.

Assessment: Observation/Participation

Day Three: “Passage to Freedom” (30 mins.)

Core Content: *SS-E-5.1.2:* History can be understood by using a variety of primary and secondary sources and tools. *AH-E-3.1.41:* Create and perform using creative dramatics.

Objective: Students will be able to use facts learned in class to reenact a plausible scene from the Underground Railroad.

Materials: *Freedom River* by Doreen Rappaport; lists from two prior days; group rubric

Procedure: Review the two lists created on Days One and Two. Read *Freedom River* to familiarize students with an actual Underground Railroad scene. Divide students into groups of four and assign them the roles of slave, slave owner, and Underground Railroad conductors. Have each group create and perform a short reenactment of an Underground Railroad scene.

Assessment: Group rubric (participation and facts)

Day Four: “History Storybook” (30 mins.)

Core Content: *SS-E-5.1.2:* History can be understood by using a variety of primary and secondary sources and tools. *WR-E-1.3:* Literary writing

Objective: Students will be able to write three facts about slavery and/or the Underground Railroad.

Materials: *Almost to Freedom* by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson; paper; pencils; rubric

Procedure: Read *Almost to Freedom* to remind students of the emotions involved with slavery and the Underground Railroad. Have each student pretend to be a slave. Give the following instructions: Write a diary entry about what it is like to be a slave. Include at least three facts learned in class, and tell whether or not you attempted to escape. If you did and were caught, what happened to you? If you escaped, how did you succeed?

Assessment: Rubric