

Jennifer Johnson-Corwin

Grade Level(s): upper elementary (6-9)

Historical Era(s): Colonial to Civil War

Content Area(s): World History, US History

Where I am From: Experiencing Slavery with Primary Sources

WHI.20 Describe the development and effects of the trans-African slave trade to the Middle East from the 8th century on, and the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the Western Hemisphere from the 16th century on. (H, E, G)

Summary and Objective:

Massachusetts and Rhode Island were the two main slave trading states in the Triangular Trade, a topic rarely explored in the teaching of slavery, leaving an incomplete picture.

Slavery was entrenched in colonial New England and societies with slaves were established. They lived in the homes of owners, worked for members of the community, were sometimes educated, got married, and became members of the owner's church. The southern colonies created slave societies, where the number of slaves outnumbered the white population and there was a clear separation of the races, with little documentation about the lives of the individual slave.

At the end of a unit on the trans-Atlantic slave trade, students examine the African slave trade and the impact of slavery on those sold in colonial New England and later in the southern United States. Students will examine various primary and secondary sources assuming the role of a slave, and write a poem using the "Where I AM From" template provided. They will look at a sample poem, then using the sites listed below incorporate historical information into the poem, creating a historical sketch enabling students to give a voice to those enslaved.

Show students "Numbers and Percentages of Slaves in Three New England States" so that they can see where slaves lived and see the original numbers.

1. Students will look at the "Where I Am From" template and sample.
2. They will then discuss primary and secondary sources, providing examples of each.
3. Students will look at the hyperlinks provided on Student Share or on a Google docs provided by the teacher.
4. Students will read the primary and secondary sources provided and make notes based on level of interest for the historical figures provided.
5. Students use the information written/notes to create a poem using the template provided.
6. They will take turn sharing the poems created.

MA Historical Society:

<https://www.masshist.org/endofslavery/index.php?id=60>

American Centuries links:

Johnathan Ashley's Account Book with reference to Titus:

<http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=6303&level=advanced&transcription=1&img=5>

<http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=6303&level=advanced&transcription=1&img=0>

<http://americancenturies.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=6304&img=0&level=advanced&transcription=1>

Punishment of Titus:

<http://americancenturies.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=19774&img=0&level=advanced&transcription=1>

["Negro Slavery in Old Deerfield"](#)

1893

L98.018

Published by Boston's *New England Magazine*, this article by George Sheldon chronicles the ownership of slaves by residents of the town of Deerfield, Massachusetts

Lucy Terry Prince painting by Louise Minks:

<http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=17464>

"Bars Fight"

<http://www.memorialhall.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=7779>

Complaint against slave Cesar for stealing:

<http://americancenturies.mass.edu/collection/itempage.jsp?itemid=7798&img=0&level=advanced&transcription=1>

Where I'm From

I am from a large wooden spinning wheel in the corner of the room
from a thrasher and a wooden handled hoe.

I am from Liars are Sinners

And a large crackling fireplace made of brick

I am from an old sycamore with lichen growing on the trunk
whose branches reach for the sky while its leaves dance from the breeze blowing down Main
Street.

I am from a slave ship and from a 1741 probate inventory
from Abijah and Ebenezer

I am from wanting to be saved and lending me out to work
and from remember your history as a warning for the present
from fearing the Indians because they may return.

I am from being baptized and allowed to attend service

I am from a mother and father I remember faintly
from salted pork in summer and molasses in my water
from being purchased while a young girl
and from freedom is soon to be mine

from buttons and pockets tied around my waist

I am from those moments that are slavery in southern New England before the Revolutionary
war.

<http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu/activities/afam/index.html> link shows a map with
the location of enslaved individuals in Deerfield.