

**Jennifer Goguen
Lynnfield High School**

***A More Perfect Union: The Origins and Development of the U.S.
Constitution***

Year Two

Slave Life

Massachusetts History and Social Science Learning Standards

USI.29 Describe the rapid growth of slavery in the South after 1800 and analyze slave life and resistance on plantations and farms across the South, as well as the impact of the cotton gin on the economics of slavery and Southern agriculture.

USI.31 Describe the formation of the abolitionist movement, the roles of various abolitionists, and the response of southerners and northerners to abolitionism.

Time Frame

This lesson plan is designed for three-five fifty-minute class periods. Teachers can either modify or extend the lesson to fit their needs. Since I currently teach students with learning challenges, I would expect that this mini-unit would take me about five classes. However, I anticipate that an honors or AP class would take about three classes.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to interpret primary sources regarding slavery.
2. Students will be able to develop critical thinking skills including analysis and synthesis through reading and analyzing both primary and secondary sources.
3. Students will be able to argue a point of view of a slave.
4. Students will be able to describe some of the reasons why Nat Turner and Toussaint L'Ouverture revolted.

Essential Question

What can we learn about the life, culture, emotions of slaves through their own experiences?

Materials

- *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
- *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester
- Images of slaves <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/documented-rights/exhibit> and <http://www.sonofthesouth.net/slavery/slavery-photographs.htm>
- *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (pp. 44-57)
- Copy of PBS Series: *Africans in America* Part 3

Procedures

Day 1

- A. Students will have the background knowledge about the Atlantic Slave Trade and the institution of slavery.
- B. The word “slavery” will be written on the whiteboard or smartboard when the students enter the class.
- C. The Students will be divided into groups of four or five. Each group member will receive a poster size post-it.
- D. The Students will spend ten minutes discussing slavery and then write as much as they can about slavery that can be shared with the rest of the class on the post-it poster.
- E. The students will go back to their groups with a new post-it and write the word “slave” at the top. The groups will then discuss and write descriptions of a slave. There tend to be fewer responses to slave. We will discuss the reasons why we can easily describe slavery and it is more difficult to describe a slave
- F. The students will view photos and illustrations on a slide show. For each picture that is shown, the students will write down what it tells us about the

life of a slave. The illustrations and photos will depict both slaves as happy and sad. The class will discuss the different points of view of the primary source illustrations.

- G. For homework, the students will describe a slave on blogster. The students use our class account to blog about different issues in United States History. After signing into to the blog, the students will type a paragraph describing a slave. They will be descriptive.

Day 2

- A. Today will begin with a review yesterday's lesson. The teacher will share some of the work from last night's homework on blogster.
- B. The lesson today will begin with and an online exercise. As a class we will visit the interactive website:
<http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/walkthru/melrose.htm>. This website describes the daily life of slaves at a plantation in Natchez, Mississippi.
- C. The students will review several primary sources in class: Excerpts from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and Excerpts from *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester.
- D. The students will work in small groups and walk to five different stations. Each group will spend about 5-7 minutes at a station, which will have a primary source document at it. During their analysis, the groups will answer questions about each document.
- E. For homework, the students will read *Confessions of Nat Turner* and be prepared to discuss why slaves revolted. The students will respond to questions to help guide them through the reading.

Day 3

- A. At the beginning of class, the students will discuss the questions that went along with *Confessions of Nat Turner*.
- B. The students will view an excerpt from *Africans in America—Part 3 Conspiracy and Rebellions*.
- C. The teacher will lead a discussion on Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian revolt.

- D. The students will discuss the similarities and differences of the Haitian revolt and Nat Turner's rebellion.
- E. For homework, students will create a glogster. Glogster is a website that allows students to create an online poster. Go to www.glogster.com to begin. Students will make a poster which describes either Nat Turner's rebellion or Toussaint L'Ouverture's revolt.