

Debunking the Myth: Slavery in New England

Grade level: 7

Documents:

- Excerpt from *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture Smith*
- Excerpt from *Life of James Mars, A Slave Bought and Sold in Connecticut*
- “Connecticut Slave Owners in 1790”
- Handouts from *From Slavery to Freedom in New England 1638-1848*
- “The State that Slavery Built”
- “Slavery’s True History”
- “Before the Amistad...Slavery in 18th Century New England”
- “Chronicling Black Life in New England”
- “A State of Involvement”

Content Standard 1: Historical thinking

Performance Standard 1.7-8.1: Formulate historical questions based on primary and secondary sources.

Content Standard 2: Local, United States, and World History

Performance Standard 2.7-8.1: Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of major events and trends in US History

Performance Standard 2.7-8.3: Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of major events and trends in local history.

Enduring Understanding:

Slavery played significant social, economic, and political roles in New England.

Essential Question:

To what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery?

Knowledge & Skills:

- Definition of slavery
- Support observations and opinions by the citation of quotes, facts, and statistics about the social, economic and political realities of slavery in New England.
- Write a persuasive essay

Previous Learning Activities

- Focus Writing
- Previous unit on slavery in the South
- Persuasive Essays
- Advantages/disadvantages of primary and secondary sources
- Definitions of political, social and economic

Strategies:

1. Small group and large group discussions
2. Completing learning log entries in response to readings and class discussion
3. Reading primary and secondary source documents and completing note taking graphic organizers
4. Completion of graphic organizer to assist in writing of persuasive essay

Overview of Lesson Activities:

The Unit of “Debunking the Myth: The Realities of Slavery in New England” will take place over six 40-minute periods. On Day 1, students will discuss existing knowledge of slavery and develop a class definition of slavery. On Days 2 & 3, students in small groups will examine different primary source accounts of slavery in New England and report their findings on a graphic organizer to be shared with the class. On Days 3 & 4, small groups will examine different secondary sources, and report and share their findings on a graphic. At the end of each class, students will respond to the question: “To what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery? Cite facts and examples to justify your opinion. If your position changes, explain why you changed your mind.” On Day 5, students will group themselves by position and brainstorm reasons and support they can use in their essay. For homework, they will plan their essay on a graphic organizer. They will write their essay in class on Day 6.

Assessment:

Based on readings, class discussion, and notes, students will write a persuasive essay defending their position on New England’s degree of participation in the institution of slavery.

Curriculum created by Amy K. Schiller

Learning Activities Day 1 Defining Slavery

Question Addressed: What is slavery?

Materials:

- Chart Paper
- Magic Markers
- 8 x 11 paper

Opening Activity:

1. Using a sheet of math paper and ask students to draw a quick sketch of images that come to mind when they hear the word “slavery”. Allow 3 minutes.
2. Have students share images

Procedure:

1. Review rules of focus writing
2. Allow students 3 minutes to focus write on the questions: “What is slavery? What do I know about slavery?”
3. Break students into groups of 3 or 4. Allow 5 minutes to discuss response.
4. Within groups, students must create their own definition of slavery. They will write definitions on chart paper and decorate poster with relevant images.
5. Each group will share their definition.
6. Class will discuss what all definitions have in common.
7. Teacher will list common features on chart paper. Students will also observe differences and discuss which ideas they wish to include. From charted teacher notes, class will determine a consensus definition of slavery.

Homework: Complete Learning Log 1.

Learning Activities Days 2 & 3

Using Primary Sources to Evaluate New England's Participation in the Institution of Slavery

Question Addressed: What do primary sources reveal about New England's participation in the institution of slavery?

Materials needed:

- Note taking graphic organizers
- Slavery quotations and statistics sheets
- Runaway Slave Advertisements
- James Mars excerpt
- Venture Smith excerpt
- State & US Census Data
- "The State of Involvement"
- "The State that Slavery Built"
- "Chronicling Blacks Living in Colonial America"
- "Before the Amistad...Slavery in 18th Century New England"
- "Slavery's True History"
- Overhead projector
- Felt pens
- Transparencies of all handouts and note taking graphic organizers.
- Learning Log 2

Opening Activity:

1. Students line themselves up on basis of rating determined in Learning Log 1.
2. Students note pattern of responses.
3. Volunteers share learning log entries.

(Learning Activities Days 2 & 3 Continued)

Procedure:

1. Class will review definitions of primary sources, social, economic, and political as well as the strengths and weaknesses of primary sources.
2. Students will read and respond to slavery quotation sheets.
3. Teacher will explain note taking graphic organizers and class will take sample notes from slavery quotation sheets using overhead transparencies.
4. Class will break into 5 small groups. Each group will receive a different primary source reading. Groups will read their selection and complete note taking graphic organizers.
5. Group will record their notes on overhead and report results to the class. Classmates will copy these notes into their graphic organizers.
6. Students will complete Learning Log 2 in class.

Homework: Students in each group will receive a different secondary source to read and will record observations in their note taking graphic organizers.

Day 4

Using Secondary Sources to Evaluate New England's Participation in the Institution of Slavery

Question Addressed: What do secondary sources reveal about New England's participation in the institution of slavery?

Materials:

- Overhead projector
- Note taking graphic organizers
- "The State that Slavery Built"
- "A State of Involvement"
- "Chronicling Blacks Living in Colonial America"
- "Before the Amistad...Slavery in 18th Century New England"
- "Slavery's True History"
- Transparencies of documents and graphic organizers
- Felt tip markers
- Learning log 2
- Learning log 3

Opening Activity:

1. Students will line themselves up in the front of the room based on their responses to Learning Log 2.
2. Students will note changes in line position.
3. Volunteers will explain why they changed their opinions and/or share entries in learning logs.

Learning Activities – Day 4 (Continued)

Procedure:

1. Class will review definition of slavery and secondary sources and review the strengths and weaknesses of secondary sources.
2. Groups will meet to compare homework notes and will compose a group report on their reading, completing a transparency of their composite answers.
3. Each group will report their findings as classmates take additional notes for their graphic organizers.

Homework: Students will complete Learning Log 3.

Day 5 – Taking a Stand

Question Addressed: To What degree did New England participate in the slave trade?

Materials:

- Learning Log III
- Observation notes
- Graphic Organizers
- Persuasive essay Guidelines
- Graphic Organizer for Persuasive Essay
- Rubric for Persuasive Essay

Opening Activity: Students will focus write for 5 minutes on what makes a good persuasive essay. Students will share what they know.

Procedure:

1. Using Persuasive Essay Guidelines, class will review what constitutes a good persuasive essay.
2. Class will read through rubric for the next day's in-class essay.
3. Class will align themselves by their positions for a final time based on their leaning logs.
4. Students will divide into groups according to positions and brainstorm reasons, facts, statistics, quotes and examples to support their position.

Homework: Complete graphic organizer for essay.

Day 6 – Assessment Day

Students will bring their observation notes, completed organizer, and rubric to class and complete the in-class essay.



Slavery in New England Learning Log 1

Using the class definition of slavery and pre-existing knowledge, on a scale of 1 (almost nonexistent) to 5 (totally entrenched), to what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery?

1. I rate New England's economic participation a ___ because:

2. I rate New England's social participation a ___ because:

3. I rate New England's political participation a ___ because:

My overall rating is ___ because:

Slavery in New England Learning Log 2

After sampling primary sources, to what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery, Cite at least 2 facts from primary sources, quotes or examples from primary source documents to justify each rating.

1. I rate New England's economic participation a ___ because:
2. I rate New England's social participation a ___ because:
3. I rate New England's political participation a ___ because:
4. My overall rating is ___ because:
5. I changed/did not change my opinion because:

Slavery in New England Learning Log 3

After sampling secondary sources, to what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery, Cite at least 2 facts from secondary sources, quotes or examples from secondary source documents to justify each rating.

1. I rate New England's economic participation a ___ because:

2. I rate New England's social participation a ___ because:

3. I rate New England's political participation a ___ because:

4. My overall rating is ___ because:

5. I changed/did not change my opinion because:

Economic Realities of Slavery in New England		
Observation	Specific Example (Quote/Fact/Statistic)	Source

Political Realities of Slavery in New England		
Observation	Specific Example (Quote/Fact/Statistic)	Source

Social Realities of Slavery in New England		
Observation	Specific Example (Quote/Fact/Statistic)	Source

Persuasive Essay Guidelines

Thesis statement (opinion and what you want done about it) must be clearly stated.

Know your audience (who are you trying to influence)

Show don't tell - Never say "My essay is about...", "My opinion is..." or "This is the conclusion".

Avoid 1st and 2nd person pronouns in formal essay. Examples include: I, me, we, us, myself, you, your, our, etc.

Follow five paragraph format:

Introduction	At least 3 sentences, contains thesis statement
Reason 1	2 nd strongest argument with at least 3 supporting details
Reason 2	Weakest argument with at least 3 supporting details
Reason 3	Strongest argument with at least 3 supporting details
Conclusion	Sums up position, at least 3 sentences, states opinion and what you want done (thesis statement)

Persuasive Essay Graphic Organizer

Thesis Statement _____

Reason 1

Supporting Detail 1 _____
Supporting Detail 2 _____
Supporting Detail 3 _____

Reason 2

Supporting Detail 1 _____
Supporting Detail 2 _____
Supporting Detail 3 _____

Reason 3

Supporting Detail 1 _____
Supporting Detail 2 _____
Supporting Detail 3 _____

Conclusion



New England Slavery – Fact or Fiction

To what degree did New England participate in the institution of slavery? Use your definition of slavery and social, economic and political observations to form reasons for your position. Cite facts, statistics, examples and quotes from at least 5 primary and/or secondary sources to support your position.

Rubric

Grading Criteria	Possible Points	Points Earned
Evidence of work process (Learning Logs, Observation Graphic Organizers, Essay Graphic Organizer)	15	
Creative introduction with clear thesis	10	
At least 3 reasons are based on definition and observations	15	
Use of at least 5 sources documented at end of essay	15	
Each body contains at least 3 supporting examples, quotes, statistics and/or facts	15	
Conclusion restates thesis and reasons	10	
Effective transitions	10	
Proofreading/Editing	10	

Resources

Allis, Sam. *Slavery's True History*, *The Boston Globe*,
http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2004/04/25/slavery_true_history, 7/14/04.

Before the Amistad...Slavery in 18th Century New England.
<http://www.stanleywhitman.org/slaverynewengland.html>, 7/14/04.

Complicity: How Connecticut Chained Itself to Slavery. Northeast Magazine: The Sunday Magazine of *The Hartford Courant*. September 29, 2003.

Lee, Lawrence. *Chronicling Black Lives in Colonial New England*.
<http://csmonitor.com/cgi-bin/durableRedirect.pl?durable/1997/10/29/feat/feat.1.html>, 7/14/04.

Melish, Joanne. *From Slavery to Freedom in New England 1638 – 1848: Handouts, Discussion, Topics, Class Activities, Selected Bibliographies*, Prepared for the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Slavery in New England, 4th Annual Teacher Institute, July 12-16, 2004.

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