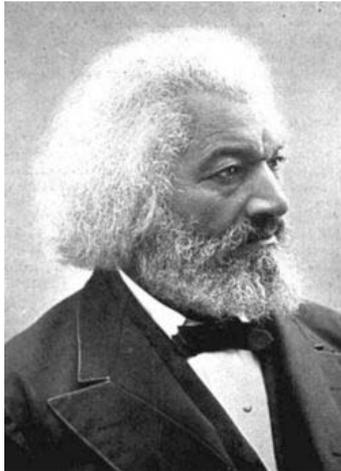


The Debate Over Slavery in Antebellum America: The Abolitionist Movement and Pro-Slavery Arguments



Overview :

This unit would typically follow the *Growth and Division* unit from 1816 -1835. Students should have an understanding of how and why the sections of the United States developed differently. The lesson plans included in this unit are designed to push students to consider all viewpoints in the debate over American slavery. By analyzing an image of slavery, students are prompted to question what they see and formulate a background based on their prior knowledge. These visual exercises will provide students with skills that can be used in everyday situations. Through the use of primary sources students are interpreting meaning, making inferences and drawing conclusions. The lessons included in this unit emphasize critical thinking and comparing and contrasting the arguments of slave opponents and defenders of slavery in both the South and the North. By developing these skills, students are able to articulate their own position on the debate over slavery and become an active participant in one of the most intense crises that engulfed the nation.

State Frameworks:

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

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. (H)

Objectives:

- Analyze and understand various types of historical and literary primary source documents
- Understand the points of view of the key opponents and defenders of American slavery
- Explain the reasons given for and against the morality and legitimacy of American slavery
- Construct and evaluate an economic argument in favor of slavery and an opposing argument on behalf of free labor
- To gain experience in working with oral tradition, biography, and song as types of historical evidence

Timeframe: 5 class periods

Background: Growth of Sectionalism / Seeds of Division

- Compromise of 1850
- Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Fugitive Slave Act
- Transcontinental RR
- Kansas/Nebraska Act - Bleeding KS
- Dred Scott
- Caning of Sumner
- John Brown's Raid

Procedures:

Lesson 1: Slavery in the South

- Warm-up-students will look at a picture of a slave on the board (attached). They will write a response to the picture.
- Students will receive an outline titled The Land of Cotton (attached). They will fill in the blanks during a lecture. The students will then answer the questions at the end.

Homework: Read the Covey story from Frederick Douglass Autobiography, answer the questions (attached)

Lesson 2: Abolitionist Movement

- Introduction—introduce the concept of the abolitionist movement, William Lloyd Garrison the Underground Rail Road, and Harriet Tubman. Lecture notes attached.
- Students will read a speech from Garrison (attached) and discuss his message and method.

-Students will look at artwork praising Harriet Tubman and discuss her methods compared to Garrisons.

Homework: Students will read one pro-slavery primary source and fill in a section of a T chart.

Sources: George Fitzhugh "The Universal Law of Slavery"
James Henry Hammond "The 'Mudsill' Theory"

Lesson 3: The Pro-Slavery Argument—The South

-The class will discuss the chart and fill in the other sides. The class will discuss the merits of each argument. They will compare the arguments in favor of slavery to Garrison's work.

Lesson 4: The Pro-Slavery Argument—The North

-Pass out the anti-abolition broadside (document 8) for students to read. On the back, there will be a name, and occupation, and a group number.

-Once students are done reading, they will get into their groups. Everyone in their group, they will soon discover, has a similar occupation.

-As a group, they will answer-

-Given your occupation, why would you be anti-abolition?

-What do you stand to lose if the abolitionist succeed?

-Is your group pro slavery, or worried about the consequences of freeing the slaves?

-If you believe slavery is wrong, how can you justify your opposition to those trying to end slavery?

-Each group will choose a spokes person to articulate their argument. All members of the group will be encouraged to ask and answer questions of the other groups.

-Students, with the help of the teacher, will understand:

-Northern economy also depended on slavery.

-Jobs of mill workers would not be possible without cotton from the South.

-Opinions on slavery were complicated by matters other than right and wrong.

Lesson 5: Preparing a speech either defending or opposing the institution of slavery.

During class have students review the main arguments of the Defenders of Slavery and the Abolitionists.

1. Teacher will project a matrix on the board containing the main components of the argument for each side:
 - Morality
 - Legality under the Constitution
 - Economics of Slavery
2. Students will copy and fill in the matrix.
3. Teacher will assign half the class to be "Defenders of Slavery" and half to be "Abolitionists"

4. Students are assigned to write a persuasive speech based on their assigned position.

Homework: Students will prepare a written speech to last 3-5 minutes. They should be encouraged to use library and internet sources to gain more detail for their position. Students will deliver their speech during next class period.

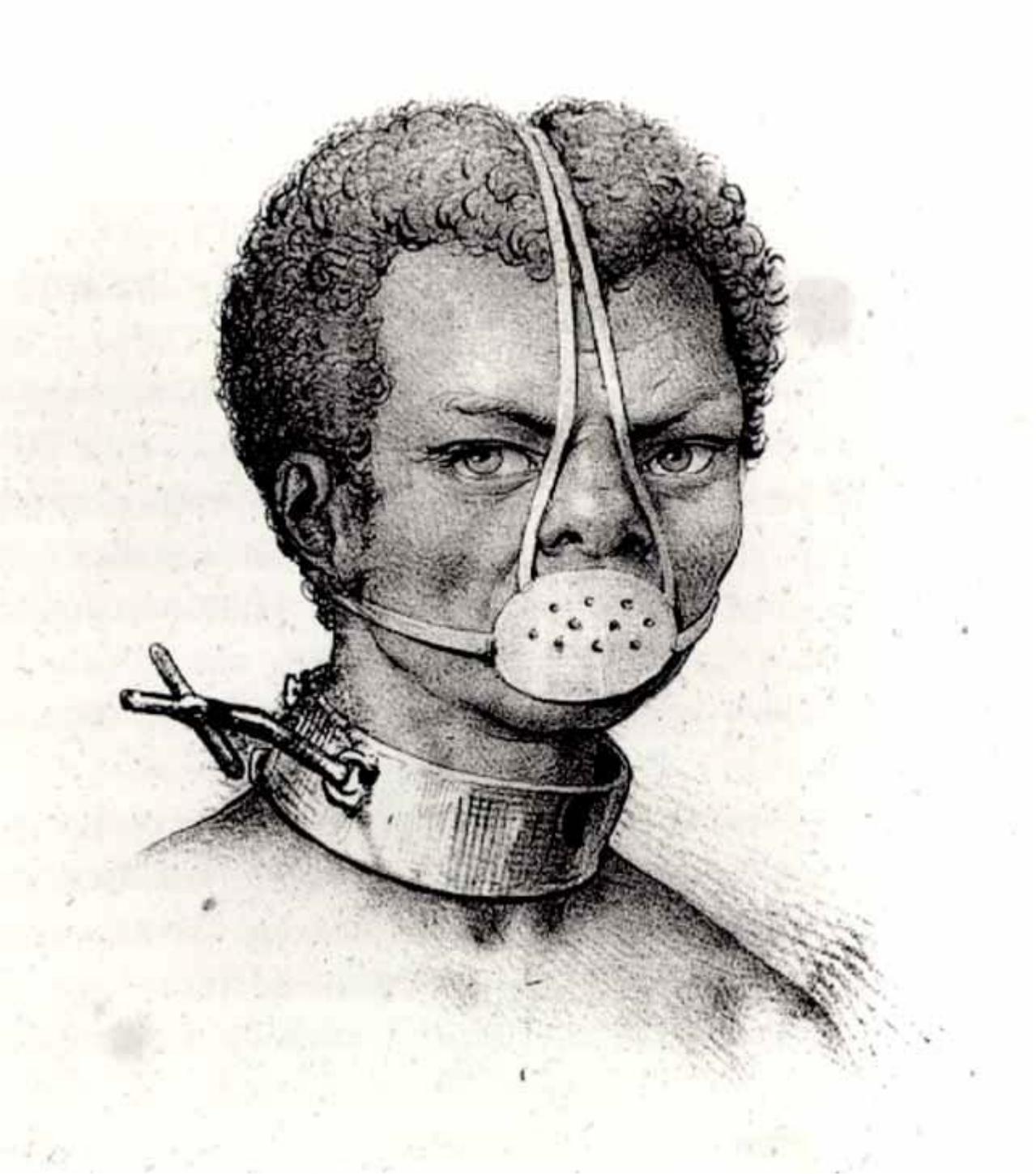
Sources:

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Appleby, Brinkley, Boussard, McPherson, Ritchie. *The American Vision*. New York: Glencoe McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Fishel, Leslie, Jr. and Benjamin Quarles. *A Documentary History*, Third Edition. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1976.

What do you think happened just before this picture was created?



The Land of Cotton

Start on page 251 of *American Vision*

What happened to Solomon Northup?

Rewrite the quotation in your own words.

The Southern Economy

- The South's economy depended on cash crops, which means crops grown for _____
- they included _____, _____, _____ and most importantly _____

Cotton Becomes King

- Cotton was a pain to grow because it took a long time to _____
- _____ invented a machine called the _____ to do it much faster
- this happened around the same times _____ were expanding in the North
- production of cotton _____
- Cotton made some Southerners very rich, it also _____ the institution of slavery
- demand for slave labor increased
- Congress had outlawed the overseas slave trade in _____ but the number of slaves in the USA grew because of a _____
- by 1850 there were about _____ slaves in the United States

Industry Lags

- the South did not _____ as fast as the North
- only _____ percent of America's manufacturing total

Society in the South

- the South had a very strict class structure
- at the top were _____-owned the big plantations
 - owned more than _____ slaves
 - very small percentage, but everyone else wanted that life style
- ordinary farmers called _____ made up most of the white population
 - had four or fewer slaves
 - worked the land themselves
- near the bottom were the _____
 - less than _____ percent of the white population
- at the bottom were _____
 - _____ percent were slaves
- there was also a very small group of city people (there were not many cities)

Slavery

- Slaves worked mostly on _____
- some were _____ or house servants
- for farm workers, there were two systems, depending on how large the farm was
 - task system—
 - gang system---

-a work gang was directed by a _____, most were slaves themselves

- _____ worked to end slavery

African American's Legal Status

-they had few (if any) legal rights

-state laws called _____

-

-

-

Free African Americans

-free African Americans lived in the South and the North

-they all had to deal with racism

-many worked in the Abolitionist movement

Coping with Enslavement

African American Culture

-Slaves coped with their enslavement with _____

- _____ for freedom in their churches, often the only place they could gather

Resistance and Rebellion

-Slaves resisted in many ways:

-

-

-rebellling against slavery _____ and _____

Read about Nat Turner on page 256

What did he do?

What were the results?

Is he, in your opinion, a murder or a hero? Why?

People:

Nat Turner Denmark Vesey Frederick Douglas Eli Whitney

Terms:

Slave Code Cotton Gin Planter

Questions:

1. Why did industry not develop in the South?
2. How did the cotton gin change the South?
3. If you were a slave, how would you resist? What risks would you be taking?
4. Why did slave owners want female slaves to have children?
5. How did northerners benefit from slavery?

Covey, the Negro-Breaker

Directions: Read the article, and answer the questions using complete sentences. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Who is the author? Write 2 facts about him.
3. Using the context, what does "breaking young Negroes" mean?
3. What happened with the oxen? What was Frederick Douglas accused of?
4. Why did Covey send Frederick Douglas to the woods with the oxen?
5. What happened to Frederick Douglas when he returned from the woods? Why?
6. What is an overseer? What skills did Covey learn as an overseer?
7. Why did Covey make the slaves think he was not watching them some of the time?
8. Why did Covey buy Caroline?
9. Why did slave owners lend their slaves to Covey for cheap? (HINT: what did the original owners get?)
10. What, according to Frederick Douglas, were the effects of Covey's treatment of him? Why do you think slave owners would want this result?
11. What did Douglas mean when he wrote, "He {Covey} was just beginning to lay the foundations of his fortune and in a slave state that meant owning human property"?
12. Why, after he was free, did Frederick Douglas write this?
13. What is your reaction to this reading? Write a paragraph to describe your thoughts.
14. Is this a primary source? How do you know?

THE ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT

Due to a revival of religion and a renewed belief in the power of individuals, many Americans engaged in reform movements in the mid 1800's. Some citizens embarked on a crusade to end slavery in the United States. Their movement is known as the Abolitionist Movement. This movement was one of the most divisive; pitting the North against the South. It polarized the nation and helped bring about the Civil War.

Early Opposition to Slavery:

<i>Reform</i>	<i>Goals/Methods</i>
Gradualism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First stop new slaves into country• Phase out slavery in North and Upper South• End slavery in Lower south• Compensation given to slave holders
Colonization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send African Americans back to ancestral homelands in Africa
Abolition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Argument that enslaved Americans should be freed immediately without gradual measures or compensation

Key Figures of the Abolitionist Movement:

Frederick Douglass

- Runaway slave from Maryland
- Joined the Abolitionist movement with William Lloyd Garrison
- Published his own autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* 1845
- This story became a bestseller and he became very popular
- Traveled to England to elude slave catchers
- Actively involved in the Underground Railroad

William Lloyd Garrison

- Writer and editor from Massachusetts
- Initially believed in Colonization but later rejected their beliefs and created his own anti-slavery newspaper, the *Liberator* in 1831
- Words from his first issue include: "I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. . . . I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- AND I WILL BE HEARD."
- Found the New England Antislavery Society in 1832 and the American Antislavery Society in 1833

Harriet Tubman

- Runaway slave from Maryland
- Known as the "Moses of her people."

- Over the course of 10 years, and at great personal risk, she led hundreds of slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad, a secret network of safe houses where runaway slaves could stay on their journey north to freedom.
- It is estimated that Tubman made 19 trips to Maryland and helped 300 people to freedom
- Later became a leader in the abolitionist movement, and during the Civil War she was a spy for the federal forces in South Carolina as well as a nurse.

Response to Abolitionism

Reaction in the North

- Some opposed to extreme abolitionism
- Viewed as a threat to existing social system
- Feared war between North and South
- Feared loss of jobs and housing to freed African Americans
- Investors feared loss of money from Southern planters who owed them money

Reaction in the South

- Widely opposed in the South
- Believed it was a "national benefit"
- Believed slaves didn't want freedom due to the close relationship with their masters
- Banned abolitionist papers as condition for remaining in the Union

William Lloyd Garrison, speech at Charleston, South Carolina (14th April, 1865)

In 1829 I first hoisted in the city of Baltimore the flag of immediate, unconditional, uncompensated emancipation; and they threw me into their prison for preaching such gospel truth. My reward is, that in 1865 Maryland has adopted Garrisonian Abolitionism, and accepted a constitution endorsing every principle and idea that I have advocated in behalf of the oppressed slave.

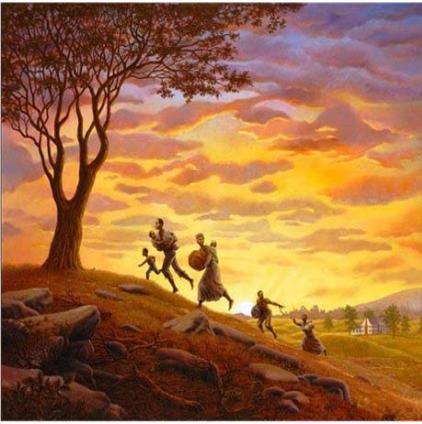
The first time I saw that noble man, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, at Washington, - and of one thing I feel sure, either he has become a Garrisonian Abolitionist, or I a Lincoln Emancipationist, for I know that we blend together, like kindred drops, into one, and his brave heart beats freedom everywhere, - I then said to him: "Mr. President, it is thirty-four years since I visited Baltimore; and when I went there recently to see if I could find the old Prison, and, get into my old cell again, I found that all was gone." The President answered promptly and wittily, as he is wont to make his responses: "Well, Mr. Garrison, the difference between 1830 and 1864 appears to be this, that in 1830 you could not get out, and in 1864 you could not get in." This symbolizes the revolution which has been brought about in Maryland. For if I had spoken till I was as hoarse as I am tonight against slaveholders in Baltimore, there would have been no indictment brought against me, and no prison opened to receive me.

But a broader, sublimer basis than that, the United States has at last rendered its verdict. The people, on the eighth of November last, recorded their purpose that slavery in our country should be forever abolished; and the Congress of the United States at its last session adopted, and nearly the requisite states have already voted in favor of, an amendment to the Constitution of the country, making it forever unlawful for any man to hold property in man. I thank God in view of these great changes.

Abolitionism, what is it? Liberty. What is liberty? Abolitionism. What are they both? Politically, one is the Declaration of Independence; religiously, the other is the Golden Rule of our Savior. I am here in Charleston, South Carolina. She is smitten to the dust. She has been brought down from her pride of place. The chalice was put to her lips, and she has drunk it to the dregs. I have never been her enemy, nor the enemy of the South, and in the desire to save her from this great retribution demanded in the name of the living God that every fetter should be broken, and the oppressed set free.

I have not come here with reference to any flag but that of freedom. If your Union does not symbolize universal emancipation, it brings no Union for me. If your Constitution does not guarantee freedom for all, it is not a Constitution I can ascribe to. If your flag is stained by the blood of a brother held in bondage, I repudiate it in the name of God. I came here to witness the unfurling of a flag under which every human being is to be recognized as entitled to his freedom. Therefore, with a clear conscience, without any compromise of principles, I accepted the invitation of the Government of the United States to be present and witness the ceremonies that have taken place today.

And now let me give the sentiment which has been, and ever will be, the governing passion of my soul: "Liberty for each, for all, and forever!"



Escape at Sunset



Jacob Lawrence

The Life of Harriet Tubman, No. 7: Harriet Tubman worked as a water girl to field hands. She also worked at plowing, carting and hauling logs.

1940

casein tempera on hardboard, ca. 18 x 12 in.

Hampton University Museum

at the Whitney Museum



Questions for Discussion:

1. How is Harriet Tubman portrayed in each?
2. Do you think the painter of each picture is for or against abolition?

Names and Occupations for Lowell Activity

Group One- High Ranking Mill Officials

- Kirk Bott-Agent of the Merrimack Manufacturing Co, Agent of the Proprietors of Locks and Canals, Representative of Lowell in the Massachusetts Legislature
- Alexander Wright-Superintendent of the Carpet Works
- Alanson Crane-Paymaster at the Carpet Works counting room
- S.B. Goddard-Superintendent of the Lawrence Manufacturing Co.
- John B. Goodwin-Assistant Agent of the Lawrence Manufacturing Co.
- John Aiken-Agent of the Tremont Manufacturing Co.

Group Two-Mill Managers

- Harrington Hatch-Accountant at the Lawrence Manufacturing Co.
- Benjamin R. Knox-Clerk at the Proprietors of Locks and Canals
- Joshua Swan-Machinist
- Edwin Stearns-Overseer at the Lawrence Manufacturing Co.
- Samuel A. Appleton-Clerk at the Hamilton Manufacturing Co. counting room
- Charles L. Tilden-Clerk at the Tremont Manufacturing Co.
- John B. McAlvin-Clerk at the Suffolk Manufacturing Co. counting room

Group Three-Shopkeepers

- Henry A. Hall-Owner of H.A. Hall & Co. Hardware Store
- Harvey Hartshorn-Owner of Harvey Hartshorn Hat & Cap Store
- Samuel M. Emery-Owner of Samuel M. Emery & Co. Clothing Store
- Henry DeLand-Tailor at Samuel M. Emery & Co. Clothing Store
- J. L. Wentworth-Watchmaker and jeweler
- Francis Hobbs-Woolen draper
- P.H. Willard-Owner of West India goods store
- Alliston Allen-Clerk at Thomas Ordway's Dry Goods, Glass, & China Ware Store

Group Four-Professionals, Innkeepers, Builders

- Walter Willey-Innkeeper at the American House
- C.P. Coffin-Physician
- William A. Farwell-Stageman
- J.W. Mansur-Attorney at Law
- Ira Frye-Agent—Boston to Lowell Stage
- John A. Savels-Innkeeper at the American House
- Jonathon Tyler-Real Estate Developer

Group Five-Government Officials

- Joshua Swan-Selectmand and contractor
- William W. Wyman-Lowell Representative in Massachusetts Legislature
- Samuel A. Coburn-Town Clerk
- Jefferson Bancroft-Deputy Sheriff of Middlesex County
- Benjamin F. Vernal-Sheriff of Middlesex County

Group Six-Mill Workers

- Bridget O'Neill-Mill Girl
- Nora Connolly-Mill Girl
- Mary Smith-Mill Girl
- Ivan Trotsky-Mill Worker
- Robert Kupoloski-Mill Worker