

Title—The Africans Arrive: A History Mystery!

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Key Words—Negro, victual, indentured servant, slave

Grade Level—Grade 4 or 5, Virginia Studies

Time Allotted—60 minutes

Lesson Overview A Mystery History (Day 1)	In fourth grade Virginia students are given their first “in depth” look at United States history by looking at Virginia history. While not their first introduction to Jamestown, it is their initial introduction to slavery in the United States. In this introduction, students become historians and use primary and secondary resource documents, to explore how Africans came over on a ship, traded for food, and decide whether the Africans arrived as indentured servants or slaves. Students will learn that historians do not know the answer to this at this time, and use evidence from documents in the same manner they are looking at documents.
Guiding Question	When the Africans first arrived in the Jamestown settlement in 1619, were they indentured servants or slaves?

Learning Objectives

- Students will trace the Africans voyage from Angola, in western Africa to Jamestown, in Virginia.
- The student will examine 2 primary documents relating to the arrival of Africans at Jamestown
- The student will summarize the content of both of their documents in a graphic organizer.
- The student will determine whether the Africans arrived as indentured servants or slaves using evidence from their document.

Virginia Standards of Learning & Essential Historical Skills Taught

Selected Virginia & National Standards:

- **VS.1 a, d, f, g** The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to

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- a) The student will identify and interpret artifacts and primary and secondary source documents to understand events in history;
- d) The student will draw conclusions and make generalizations;
- g) The student will interpret ideas and events from different historical perspectives;
- **US1.4c** The student will demonstrate knowledge of European explorations in North America and West Africa by identifying the location of West Africa and their interactions with traders.
- **ENG4.1 b, c, d** The student will use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings.
 - b) The student will contribute to group discussions.
 - c) The student will seek ideas and opinions of others.
 - d) Use evidence to support opinions.

OAH Historical Inquiry Skills

- Historical Issues-Analyze and Decision Making
 - Students will examine 2 primary documents to determine whether Africans arrived in Jamestown as indentured servants or slaves and state their opinion in their *Mystery History* worksheet using evidence presented in the documents.
- Historical Research Capabilities
 - Students will use research given with their primary or secondary document and relate it to the African experience in Virginia.

Assessment Tool(s)

- Slavery Pre-TEST (Post-TEST to be given on Day 3)
- *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer

Materials/Resources

- The Story of Slavery in Virginia Lesson Plan PowerPoint-title slide and slides two to five
- Slavery Pre-TEST
- *Primary Documents*
 - *Jamestown Landing* Document, one per student OR one per group
 - John Rolfe letter and translation (photocopied back to back) one per student OR one per group
 - Optional: Map, one per student OR one per group
- *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer, one per student
- *History Mystery* Worksheet Samples (3 samples of student completed *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer for teacher to view)
- Media Permission *form*—if movie is going to be audiotaped, check with your school system to make sure proper permissions are in place. A sample permission form is included in the Day ONE folder and the Day TWO Movie folder.

All documents are found in the Lesson One Folder.

Primary and Secondary Documents

- *Jamestown Landing* Document, one per student OR one per group
- John Rolfe letter and translation (photocopied back to back) one per student OR one per group
- Optional: 1819 Map, one per student OR one per group

Modifications

- Group a high achiever with a low achiever if reading skills are a major issue.
- Perhaps you would want a gifted learner to work with a gifted learner so they could compare their decisions and achieve answers that are at a higher level.
- Project documents onto a wall or SmartBoard to alleviate making copies of the documents.
- Discuss documents in small groups of 4 or 5 with teacher rotating between fewer groups.

Instructional Procedures/Process

IMPORTANT: Begin with the Slavery Pre-TEST to see what the students know, and to show them how much they'll learn in the next few days. Take up tests immediately so answers won't be changed as the lesson progresses.

Teacher's Guide to Setting Up the Mystery:

Introduce the lesson as a *History Mystery Day*! This will usually be a fourth graders' first introduction to Africans arriving in Jamestown, and there actually is a cloud of mystery.

Describe to the students the excitement around the year 1619. It was the fall/winter that the *brideship* left England, headed for Jamestown, to find men to marry! It was the year that the House of Burgesses began and Jamestown formed their own government and began passing their own laws. It was also the year that the *MYSTERY* began. The *History Mystery* lesson centers on the arrival of the first Africans in the Jamestown settlement.

Standards of learning twenty years ago said the Africans arrived as slaves. (If you have an old history book you may share it. The Dingledine text, used as the textbook in the 1960's and whose information is listed in the Annotated Instructional Bibliography, is one example. There is a copy in our school library and annotated in the bibliography of this lesson.) As recently as last year, we were teaching Africans arrived as indentured servants. This year, historians just don't know, so we're going to help them out. (This also shows how historical perspectives change!)

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The Africans began in their home of Angola (Show map. If you do not have one there is one in the primary documents in Day TWO.). The Africans were sold to Portuguese traders and eventually were on their way to the Caribbean when they were captured by an English ship traveling with Dutch papers, because the English would have hanged them as pirates!. Thus, the Africans found their way onto an English ship, even though they probably didn't want to be there! (Continue showing the route on the map.) They were probably originally headed to be slaves on sugar plantations, or large farms. The ship didn't have very much food, or **victuals**, the English term for food (new vocabulary word), so they made the first landing they could find, which was in Jamestown. It was there that they traded the Africans to Governor Yeardley of Jamestown, for food. How do you think the Africans felt as they left the ship and entered Jamestown? (Wait for answers!)

John Rolfe didn't know what to do with the Africans because Jamestown had NO definition of SLAVERY! Jamestown didn't have any slaves. They had tried again and again to enslave Indians, but found that the Indians could easily escape and blend into their environment. In Indian society women did most of the agricultural work, and the male Indians just would not work on the plantations! In England they used indentured servants and not slaves for their workforce, or source of labor so there were laws regarding indentured servants. These were the same rules the colonists were following, but no rules or laws regarding slaves, except that they considered it fair to use Indians as slaves because they weren't English. Indentured servants were often traded for items such as tobacco or food because the colonists had very little silver or gold.

What a trip these Africans had! First, they left Africa, headed to slavery in the Caribbean, then ended up in Jamestown where there was no slavery! The Mystery Begins!!!

Our guiding questions today is: (**Show the first slide, or title slide, from the PowerPoint included in Day ONE.**) When the Africans first arrived in the Jamestown settlement in 1619, were they indentured servants or slaves?

Mystery History Begins

1. **Defining Slavery:** Students need to have a clear definition of indentured servant and slave and be able to distinguish between the two. Ask students if they know a definition of slave and indentured servant and write them on the blackboard or on chart paper. Share your definitions.
2. **Show the second PowerPoint slide 2 with the definition of slave and indentured servant taken from a fourth grade textbook.** You may want to give an example of a laborer having to work for 4 – 7 years and then becoming a free man and owning his own land (indentured servant) and then an example of a man who never became free to live on his own (slave).
3. The Mystery begins! Today's standards state Africans could either have been slaves OR indentured servants!! (**Show PowerPoint slide 3**) The Africans who

arrived in Jamestown were captured on the west coast of Africa in a place called Angola. Have a student find Angola on the map. (**It is necessary to explain that Negro is the word that we have replaced with African American. I tell my students that Negro is a word that often hurts feelings and it is NOT a playground word. It is also the Spanish word for black.*)

4. The Africans were originally on a Portuguese ship and captured by an English ship traveling in disguise as a Dutch ship. So, now today's mystery begins. (**Power Point Slide 4--*Illustration of Jamestown Landing***)

Let's think about our guiding question: When the Africans first arrived in the Jamestown settlement in 1619, were they indentured servants or slaves?

5. Students, it is your job as a historian in this classroom to decide! (**PowerPoint Slide 5**) Were the Africans just lucky that Jamestown did not have slavery? Because Jamestown had no slavery, were the first Africans slaves or indentured servants?

Mystery History Assignment:

1. Explain to them that they will be given an illustration of *Jamestown Landing* by Howard Pyle, who drew it in 1917 to visualize the Jamestown landing of the Africans. They also will be given a letter that John Rolfe wrote to Sir Edwin Sandys, president of the Virginia Company of London.
2. Explain to the students that the letter with John Rolfe's words has an easier copy with today's words on the back. John Rolfe wrote this letter to Sir Edwin Sandys, who was treasurer of the Virginia Company of London, to explain how the Africans arrived at Jamestown. They will also be given a Mystery History Graphic organizer to help them decide whether they thought the Africans arrived as indentured servants or slaves.

Optional: you may also give the students a copy of the map so they are able to accurately see where the Africans began.

3. Choose groups and give students the John Rolfe letter and the *Jamestown Landing* illustration to analyze in their cooperative groups. (This works well with groups of 2 – 4)
4. Give each student a *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer. Examples of actual student completed *History Mystery* Graphic Organizers are included in the Day ONE folder marked *History Mystery* Student samples.
 - Read the directions on how to complete the *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer to the students.
 - Each student in the group must fill out his or her graphic organizer and decide for themselves if they believe the Africans arrived as indentured servants or slaves and answer any relevant questions.

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- They may discuss the issue in groups and fill out the top and middle text box together, but each student must complete the bottom text box of his or her own graphic organizer.
- Explain they must have evidence from one of their documents to justify their choice. *Evidence may be something that is written in the document and/or something that is seen in the image.*
- This should not take over 10 or 15 minutes.

5. When students have finished the *History Mystery* Graphic Organizer learning activity, discuss as a group whether they believe the Africans arrived as indentured servants or slaves, reminding the students they must have evidence from one of their documents to justify their choice. Model this: **I believe the Africans arrived as slaves (indentured servants) because use evidence from their document to complete**. See student samples.

Closure—History is Still a Mystery!

1. Have students close their eyes and take a vote to take a count of what each believes. (Closing eyes prevents students voting as their friends vote!) Announce the votes. This gives the students a general idea of what the classroom decided.
2. Know that historians think much the same way the students think: some are still undecided and historians today continue to look for clues in documents in history for answers—JUST LIKE THE STUDENTS DID TODAY!!!! Tell them they may be the one to grow up and find that special document in history that gives the exact answer!!!
3. Take up *History Mystery* Graphic Organizers as the class ends or the students exit the classroom. Answers to the *History Mystery* will vary, so there is no answer key: any answer is correct, provided there is something from the documents that justify their answers. A student sample is enclosed.
4. As teacher rotates around the room, encourage all students to participate in the discussion.