

Unintended Consequences: The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade	
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CLASSROOM PRACTICE

1. HI Overview & Teaching Thesis

These lessons are intended to focus on the motivations to end the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the unintended consequences brought about by its abolition. It illustrates a truism of history put forward by V.I. Lenin: *“We make our history ourselves ... [but] what each individual wills is obstructed by everyone else, and what emerges is something that no one willed.”* For the abolitionists, their noble goal of ending the Transatlantic Slave Trade resulted in a burgeoning domestic slave trade in the United States. For Virginians who schemed about getting rich from the domestic slave trade, their political power diminished with their declining population as slaves and farmers moved south. Students will learn that the Abolition Acts of 1807 and 1808 were significant, but perhaps not for the reasons for which they were intended.

2. Suggested Grade Level and Length of Activities:

11th Grade United States History 2 Blocks of 90 minutes

3. Significance & Relevance:

SOLs

- US 11. 6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the major events from the last decade of the eighteenth century through the first half of the nineteenth century by
- b) identifying the economic, political, and geographic factors that led to territorial expansion
 - e) describing the cultural, economic, and political issues that divided the nation, including tariffs, slavery, the abolitionist and women’s suffrage movements, and the role of the states in the Union.
- US 11. 7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and their importance as major turning points in American history by
- a) evaluating the multiple causes of the Civil War, including the role of the institution of slavery as a principal cause of the conflict;

National History Standards

- Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions by identifying likenesses and differences.
- Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes, and fears.

- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships bearing in mind multiple causation including (a) the importance of the individual in history; (b) the influence of ideas, human interests, and beliefs; and (c) the role of chance, the accidental, and the irrational.
- Challenge arguments of historical inevitability by formulating examples of historical contingency, of how different choices could have led to different consequences.

4. Lesson Objectives

- Students will be able to define the law of unintended consequences and apply it to historical examples.
- Students will be able to describe the Transatlantic Slave Trade, its origins, how it worked, who was involved, and how it ended.
- Students will be able to analyze and explain the motivations of those who wanted to abolish the slave trade.
- Student will compose RAFT papers to explain how different groups were affected by the abolition of the slave trade.
- Students will apply the concept of unintended consequences to the slave trade.

5. Lesson Plans or Instructional Activities –

- Overview of Transatlantic Slave Trade- Students will get the background information on the transatlantic slave trade and analyze the motivations of those who wanted to abolish the slave trade.
- RAFT- Students will choose a RAFT assignment in which they will focus on how one particular group was impacted by the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

6. Technology (if applicable)

Lesson 1: One computer will need to be made available for students to view Thomas Clarkson's virtual box of artifacts of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Lesson 2: Students will use a computer to access a web page that will give them their RAFT assignment as well as resources to help them complete it. Additionally, it is suggested that students use glogster (glogster.com) to make a virtual poster. The program is pretty intuitive and does not require much training.

7. Modifications, Differentiation, and Extensions

Students will get to choose their RAFT assignment (some are potentially harder than others). Students that work ahead may choose to do more than 1 RAFT or to create their own.

8. Annotated Instructional Bibliography

- Voyages Database (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces>) – this database has records on over 35,000 different slave voyages as background information, maps, pictures, and timelines that provide a comprehensive resource on the trade.
- The Abolition Project (<http://abolition.e2bn.org/index.php>) - This site looks at the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Thomas Clarkson and his fellow abolitionists. It provides a timeline, images, background information, and primary source documents that provide a comprehensive resource regarding abolition in the UK.

- The Domestic Slave Trade
(<http://www.inmotionaame.org/migrations/landing.cfm;jsessionid=f830980801291541937109?migration=3&bhcp=1>) – This site from the New York Public Library is incredible resource for the American domestic slave trade. It includes images, maps, primary resources, academic essays, background information and links on the domestic slave trade.
- [Glogster](#)-- site where you can virtually collect and show your artifacts. Students must register to use the program (registration is free). Also, this seems to work better with Safari or Internet Explorer rather than Mozilla Firefox.
- Africans in America: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/home.html> -- The Africans in America Web site is a companion to Africans in America (the PBS series). The web site provides documents that focus on the history of racial slavery in the United States -- from the start of the Atlantic slave trade in the 16th century to the end of the American Civil War. There are lots of excellent primary and secondary sources to be used.
- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History Slavery and Abolition Page
http://www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/era_slaveryabolition.php The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History website provides history resources for educators. The site provides a wealth of resources for teachers including video podcasts of lectures, excellent secondary sources, and a wealth of primary resources.