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| PROJECT TITLE: <b>The Long Arm of Slavery</b> |                                                                                |
| AUTHOR:<br><b>Christine Esposito</b>          | SUBJECT & GRADE LEVEL<br><b>US History through 1865 (6<sup>th</sup> grade)</b> |

## CLASSROOM PRACTICE

### 1. **HI Overview & Teaching Thesis:**

In the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), no mention is made of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. There is a minor reference to the slave trade when students learn that Portugal traded manufactured goods for gold and slaves in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Slaves and slavery are again mentioned, briefly during colonial America. Slavery becomes more of a central issue as students begin to learn about the causes of the Civil War. Students, even in Virginia, tend to learn a simple narrative about the causes of that war. The North was chock full of abolitionists who were appalled by the idea of slavery. The South was bent on fighting to maintain the institution of slavery. Britain is mentioned only in passing regarding tariffs designed to protect Northern industry. To truly understand how the United States ended up at war with itself, students should be introduced to the role slavery played throughout the history of the United States and in Britain, especially after the abolition of the slave trade in 1808.

Though these lessons may seem, at their surface, to merely skirt the ever-important SOL essential knowledge, they are designed to help students understand the bigger picture – domestically and internationally – that slavery and cotton were beginning to play. This knowledge will help students have a deeper understanding of the often complex and hard to comprehend nuances of the causes of the Civil War.

Asking students to look at the whole picture, rather than the distinct compartments of North and South, free states and slave states, good and bad gives students a firm hold on this information. By asking students to investigate the data, by searching an online database, reading primary sources and using historical data they begin to see just how complex history is. Using the complex story behind slavery allows them to see that history is more than just dates and long-dead people.

### 2. **Suggested Grade Level and Length of Activities:** Middle/High school, 3 1-hour classes

### **3. Significance & Relevance:**

In the state of Virginia, students are often taught that slavery is a fairly cut and dry story. Slavery was a major economic force in the South, while it played little role in the North. The impression is often given that those in the North held the moral high ground in regards to slavery, and that the majority of people in the South were slave owners. The truth is far murkier and as a result, far more interesting. By the time students are in middle and/or high school they should be encouraged to ask hard questions of their teachers. More importantly, students should be taught the skills to find the answers to their hard questions by interrogating the historical record.

This activity will leave students with more questions than answers, but it will also give them the skills they need to find the answers to those questions.

- Selected State & National Standards –

- **Virginia Standards of Learning:**

- USI.8c The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in American from 1801 to 1861 by describing the impact of inventions, including the cotton gin, on life in America
    - USI.8d The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in America from 1801 to 1861 by identifying the main ideas of the abolitionist movement.
    - USI.9a The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes, major events and effects of the Civil War by describing the cultural, economic and constitutional issues that divided the nation

- **National History Standards:**

- Era 4: Expansion and Reform –Standard 2D: The student understands the rapid growth of "the peculiar institution" after 1800 and the varied experiences of African Americans under slavery.
      - Explain how the cotton gin and the opening of new lands in the South and West led to increased demand for slaves
    - Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction – Standard 1: The student understands how the North and South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the Civil War.
      - Identify and explain the economic, social and cultural differences between the North and South.
      - Explain the causes of the Civil War and evaluate the importance of slavery as a principal cause of the conflict.

- OAH Historical Inquiry Skills –
  - **Historical Comprehension:**
    - Students will use primary sources to create an historical narrative which will explain
      - when the slave trade was abolished
      - who benefited from slavery and the slave trade
      - how the story of slavery is often far more complicated than it is portrayed in classroom textbooks
      - how England, New England and the South were interdependent during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century
  - **Historical Analysis and Interpretation**
    - Students will consider different historical perspectives (Britain, New England and the South)
    - Analyze cause and effect
    - Challenge historical arguments, including the Virginia Standards of Learning, specifically in relation to the antebellum period of US history.
    - Students will compare and contrast different sets of ideas, and identify the author of the sources to decide if the source is believable
  - **Historical Research**
    - Students will use primary sources to
      - ask questions based on historical documents
      - obtain historical information from a variety of sources, including an online database, maps, data and paintings

### **Lesson Objectives –**

Students will be able to use the Slave Voyages Database to

- make predictions regarding the ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade
- determine the number of slave voyages originating from Great Britain and mainland North America
- determine the number of slave voyages landing in mainland North America
- gather information to make predictions regarding where and what groups of people benefited from slavery and the slave trade

Students will be able to analyze primary sources

- to explain the difference between the abolition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery

Students will synthesize geographic and economic information to

- describe the likely economic effects on Britain, New England and the Southern region of the United States in the early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century

Students will be able to use primary and secondary sources to:

- make predictions about the economy of different regions based on geography, climate, and visual evidence
- dispel common misperceptions about what regions of the United States and England benefited from slavery

Students will use historical data to

- compare the impact of slavery and slave-related raw materials on the economy of different regions, including New England, England and the South

## **Lesson Plans or Instructional Activities -**

- *The Long Arm of Slavery:* Students will use an online database to challenge their misconceptions about slavery and its reach during the early-to-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- *Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade:* Students will use primary sources to analyze and compare the abolition of the slave trade in Britain and the United States.
- *After Abolition:* Students will use historical data and other sources to challenge their misconceptions about slavery and its reach during the early-to-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

## **6. Technology:**

- Students will learn to use the Slave Voyages Database to
  - locate information
  - make predictions based on queries
  - make inferences regarding the economies of different regions

## **7. Modifications, Differentiation, and Extensions**

- a. *The Long Arm of Slavery*
  - i. Students who complete the activity early should be encouraged to create a list of questions they'd like to ask the data and see if they can create queries to answer those questions.
  - ii. Groups of students could be assigned a different query, based on levels of readiness (query one would be an easy one for struggling students).
  - iii. For a class that struggles with independent work, this activity could be done as a teacher-led activity.
- b. *Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*
  - i. Students could use the voyages database (directions can be found in the *Long Arm* lesson) to learn the dates of the last slave voyages. Students can use those to predict the end of the slave trade in Britain and the United States. Slave voyages continued after the abolition, so this could lead students to do further research.
  - ii. For the wrap-up, students could do outside research to learn why each act was passed and what groups or people pressed for its passage.
- c. *After Abolition*
  - i. Rather than doing this lesson as stations/centers, this could also be done as a teacher-led activity using the *Dependence* PowerPoint.
  - ii. This can also be done as a jigsaw activity, where students research a single region and then share their information with the class.

## **8. Related Materials and Resources:**

### *a. The Long Arm of Slavery*

- i. Lesson plan that challenges students to confront their misconceptions about slavery and its reach during the early-to-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- ii. Predicting the extent of the slave trade worksheet
- iii. Agricultural vs. Industrial PowerPoint & Question Frame
- iv. Directions on using the Slave Voyages Database
- v. Worksheet & Answer Key for Slave Voyages Database activity
- vi. Formative assessment: Students independently generate a list of people and groups of people who might have benefited from the slave trade. Students then come together to create a class list.

### *b. Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*

- i. Lesson plan asking students to analyze primary source documents involving the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in Britain and the United States
- ii. Worksheets and answer keys to help students analyze primary source documents.
- iii. Talking points for leading a classroom discussion
- iv. Formative Assessment: Students will create an historical marker to commemorate the abolition of the slave trade

### *c. After Abolition*

- i. Lesson plan asking students to analyze various historical sources to investigate the reach of slavery after the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave trade.
- ii. Center and/or station packets for Liverpool, New England and the South. Contains copies of pictures and links for those pictures.
- iii. PowerPoint for teacher to use if a whole group lesson would be more beneficial.
- iv. Link to online timer to help students transition
- v. Worksheets and answer keys for each center/station.
- vi. Summative assessment: Students will pick out and caption sources from this lesson. Captions will explain how that region benefited from slavery.

## 9. Annotated Instructional Bibliography

- Slave voyages database (<http://www.slavevoyages.org>). The Slave Voyages Database contains information on more than 30,000 slave voyages from 1514-1866. The database could be used for a wide variety of lessons. Once introduced to this database, it might be beneficial to let students do their own queries and let them come with and answer their own questions.
- [British National Archives on Slavery](#) This website is from the British National Archives. It gives a good overview of the British perspective. There are additional lesson plans and primary sources found here. The online resources link is particularly helpful.
- <http://maap.columbia.edu/place/22.html> This resource also includes additional lesson plans and background information on a slave market found in New York City. This will also show students what the location of the slave market looks like today.
- [http://people.hofstra.edu/alan\\_j\\_singer/docket.html](http://people.hofstra.edu/alan_j_singer/docket.html) This is a publication from the New York and New Jersey State Councils for the Social Studies specifically geared towards teaching slavery in the North. It contains additional lesson plans as well as background information a teacher might find helpful.
- [http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/tour\\_galleries.htm](http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/tour_galleries.htm) This is a great web resource. This specifically looks at slavery in New York, but it can be used for background information on slavery in the North. Students who complete assignments early could also be sent to this site and asked to compile information that they found interesting to share with their class.
- [British Things](#): A video from a television show on the BBC entitled *Horrible Histories*. This is a music video that explains how “British things” often come from elsewhere, including cotton.
- *Amazing Grace* (DVD, 2006) This movie traces the abolition of the slave trade in Britain. It follows William Wilberforce’s struggle to convince Parliament to abolish the slave trade, despite the economic benefits.