

# Slavery

## *Backwards Planning Curriculum Units*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b> .....   | <b>IV</b> |
| <b>Lecture Notes</b> .....  | <b>S1</b> |
| <b>Student Handouts</b> .....   | <b>H1</b> |
| <b>Backwards Planning Curriculum:</b>                                   |           |
| Slavery: Backwards Planning Activities.....                             | <b>1</b>  |
| Project #1: Amistad Mock Trial .....                                    | <b>3</b>  |
| Project #2: Describing the Life of a Slave (An Eyewitness Account)..... | <b>10</b> |
| Project #3: Abolitionist Newspaper Front Pages .....                    | <b>16</b> |
| Slavery: Multiple-Choice Quiz .....                                     | <b>22</b> |
| Slavery: Multiple-Choice Quiz Answer Key .....                          | <b>29</b> |

# How To Use This Unit

Backwards planning offers an innovative yet simple approach to meeting curriculum goals; it also provides a way to keep students engaged and focused throughout the learning process. Many teachers approach history instruction in the following manner: they identify a topic required by state and/or national standards, they find materials on that topic, they use those materials with their students, and then they administer some sort of standard test at the end of the unit. Backwards planning, rather than just starting with a required instructional topic, goes a step further by identifying exactly what students need to know by the end of the unit—the so-called “enduring understandings.” The next step involves assessment: devising ways to determine whether students have learned what they need to know. The final step involves planning the teaching/learning process so that students can acquire the knowledge needed.

This product uses backwards planning to combine a PowerPoint presentation, activities that involve authentic assessment, and traditional tests (multiple-choice and essay) into a complete curriculum unit. Although the materials have enough built-in flexibility that you can use them in a number of ways, we suggest the following procedure:

- 1.** Start with the “essential questions” listed on slide 2 of the PowerPoint presentation (these also appear in the teacher support materials). Briefly go over them with students before getting into the topic material. These questions will help students focus their learning and note taking during the course of the unit. You can also choose to use the essential questions as essay questions at the end of the unit; one way to do this is to let students know at the outset that one of the essential questions will be on the test—they just won’t know which one.
- 2.** Next, discuss the activities students will complete during the unit. This will also help focus their learning and note taking, and it will lead them to view the PowerPoint presentation in a different light, considering it a source of ideas for authentic-assessment projects.
- 3.** Present the PowerPoint to the class. Most slides have an image and bullet points summarizing the slide’s topic. The Notes page for each slide contains a paragraph or two of information that you can use as a presentation script, or just as background information for your own reference. You don’t need to present the entire PowerPoint at once: it’s broken up into several sections, each of which concludes with some discussion questions that echo parts of the essential questions and also help students to get closer to the “enduring understandings.” Spend some time with the class going over and debating these questions—this will not only help students think critically about the material, but it will also allow you to incorporate different modes of instruction during a single class period, offering a better chance to engage students.
- 4.** Have students complete one or more of the authentic-assessment activities. These activities are flexible: most can be completed either individually or in groups, and either as homework or as in-class assignments. Each activity includes a rubric; many also have graphic organizers. You can choose to have students complete the activities after you have shown them the entire PowerPoint presentation, or you can show them one section of the PowerPoint, go over the discussion questions, and then have students complete an activity.

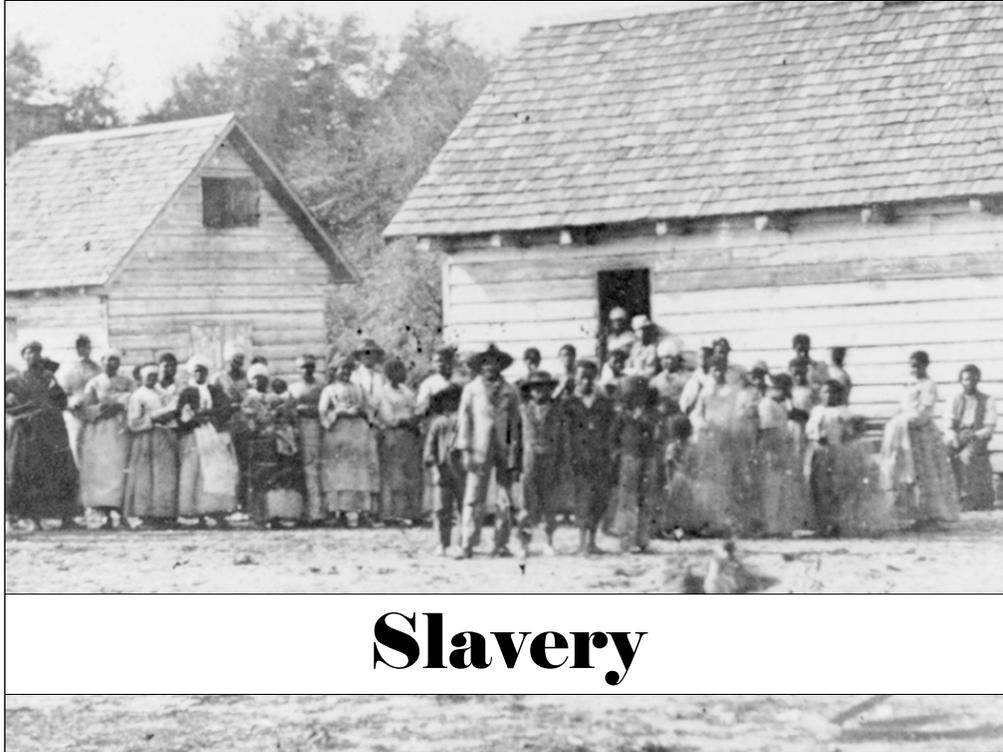
5. End the unit with traditional assessment. The support materials include a 20-question multiple-choice quiz; you can combine this with an essay question (you can use one of the essential questions or come up with one of your own) to create a full-period test.

6. If desired, debrief with students by going over the essential questions with them again and remind them what the enduring understandings are.

We are dedicated to continually improving our products and working with teachers to develop exciting and effective tools for the classroom. We can offer advice on how to maximize the use of the product and share others' experiences. We would also be happy to work with you on ideas for customizing the presentation.

We value your feedback, so please let us know more about the ways in which you use this product to supplement your lessons; we're also eager to hear any recommendations you might have for ways in which we can expand the functionality of this product in future editions. You can e-mail us at [access@socialstudies.com](mailto:access@socialstudies.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

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Perhaps no single issue divided America as did slavery. Its roots went back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when slaves were common throughout the colonies. However, slavery was more common in the South, where large farms and small population made it necessary to import cheap labor. The so-called “peculiar institution” of slavery came to define the South more and more during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As the colonies grew, slavery became more entrenched. Politicians crafted various compromises in an attempt to maintain a union that was “half slave and half free,” but continual struggles between pro- and anti-slavery forces made this impossible. By 1861, it had become obvious that the only way the slavery question could be solved was by civil war. Finally in 1865, the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery. The end of the Civil War a few months later fully destroyed the idea of slavery in the United States.

## **Essential Questions**

- Why were African Americans more desirable as slaves than indentured servants or Native Americans?
- What sort of conditions did Africans endure on their voyage to the New World?
- What impact did slavery have on both sides in the American Revolution?
- What impact did slavery have on the writing of the Constitution and the Northwest Ordinance?
- How were slaves' family and personal lives different than those of other Americans?
- What sorts of conditions affected the development and growth of slavery in the North? In the South?
- What tactics and strategies did the leaders of the abolitionist movement use to promote their cause?
- How did blacks and whites seek to assist those who wanted to escape slavery?
- How did slavery lead to the rise of sectionalism and the beginning of the Civil War?

## Slavery in Africa

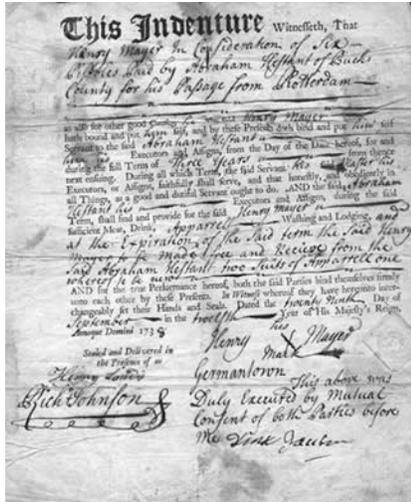
- Slaves represented the bottom stratum of African society
- Different from slavery as it developed in the Americas
- Most African slaves were captives of war
- Slavery in Africa not permanent or hereditary
- Assimilation



Africans enslaved by other Africans

Many people presume that black Africans were enslaved only by white Europeans. However, slavery had existed in Africa since ancient times, with black Africans serving as slaves to other black Africans. Slaves in Africa performed a variety of functions, from household servants to agricultural laborers to gold and salt miners. In general, slaves represented the bottom stratum of African society. However, slavery in Africa was very different from slavery as it developed in the Americas. Slaves in Africa weren't considered property, and were usually not enslaved for their entire lives. Furthermore, most Africans enslaved by other Africans weren't born as slaves; instead, people usually became slaves after their tribe lost a war with another, and members of the victorious side would enslave members of the defeated side. In addition, it was not uncommon for these slaves to eventually become free, sometimes by marriage or adoption. In many cases, slaves eventually became part of the owner's family, either through marriage or adoption. In this way, slavery served as a way to assimilate conquered peoples into a tribe.

# Indentured Servitude



A certificate of indenture

- A means for people to get to the New World
- Master paid for passage to America
- Indentured servant then owed 5–7 years of work
- Once indenture was paid, servant became free
- Indentured servants initially more desirable than slaves

Many of the first blacks in America weren't slaves, but indentured servants. Indentured servitude was a much different system than slavery. People in Europe who wanted to come to the New World but could not afford passage would "indenture" themselves to another person (usually for a period of five to seven years) who would then pay for their passage to America.

While under indenture, servants were required to work for their benefactor, and could be prosecuted if they attempted to escape. (Generally, if they were caught their indenture would be extended.) However, white indentured servants could look forward to certain freedom.

Early on in colonial times, slaves were less desirable than indentured servants. One of the main reasons was cost. A slave frequently cost five to six times more than an indentured servant. In addition, Africans brought to the New World did not understand the language or culture of their new home, while indentured servants usually did.

## The Origins of American Slavery

- First African slaves in America brought to Jamestown in 1619
- Slavery institutionalized in many states by 1640
- Slaves became “chattel property”



African slaves landing at Jamestown, 1619

Most records point to the first African slaves arriving in Jamestown in 1619. A Dutch ship had taken about 20 captured Africans from a Spanish ship bound for Mexico; when the Dutch landed in Virginia, they traded the Africans for supplies and repairs to their ship. The first blacks brought to the New World were not slaves in the strict sense of the word; instead, they came here as servants. However, by 1640—within a generation of the first blacks arriving in the colonies—many states had made slavery a legal institution. Slaves had become “chattel property,” and could be treated, bought, or sold at the whim of their masters.

# Slavery

## Backward Planning Activities

### Enduring understandings:

Slavery was an American cultural, political, and economic issue  
Slavery divided America both regionally (North and South) as well as philosophically from the colonial period until the Civil War  
Several political and religious groups sought to restrict or abolish slavery  
African Americans themselves worked to assist runaway slaves and spoke out against slavery  
Slave life was harsh, and African Americans would often take extreme measures to escape from slavery  
Slaves provided a significant amount of the labor needed to operate and maintain southern farms and plantations  
In some instances, the slave trade and industries related to slavery represented a significant part of a colony or state's economy

### Essential Questions:

Why were African Americans more desirable as slaves than indentured servants or Native Americans?  
What sort of conditions did Africans endure on their voyage to the New World?  
What impact did slavery have on both sides in the American Revolution?  
What impact did slavery have on the writing of the Constitution and the Northwest Ordinance?  
How were slaves' family and personal lives different than those of other Americans?  
What sorts of conditions affected the development and growth of slavery in the North? In the South?  
What tactics and strategies did the leaders of the abolitionist movement use to promote their cause?  
How did blacks and whites seek to assist those who wanted to escape slavery?  
How did slavery lead to the rise of sectionalism and the beginning of the Civil War?

# Learning Experiences and Instruction

| Students will need to know...   | Students will need to be able to...  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reasons for the enslavement of black Africans</li> <li>2. Conditions affecting slaves' personal and family lives</li> <li>3. How abolitionist groups developed</li> <li>4. Strategies that abolitionist groups used to further their cause</li> <li>5. Various theories of abolition (gradual, immediate, compensated, etc.)</li> <li>6. Why slavery became more entrenched in the South than in the North</li> <li>7. Why slave revolts occurred, and what steps Southern whites took to punish those involved</li> <li>8. How slavery affected American government and politics in 18th and 19th centuries, including the writing of the Constitution, other laws, and the issue of sectionalism</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read and interpret primary source documents that deal with the issue of slavery</li> <li>2. Make conclusions and inferences about various beliefs and views of both the proslavery and anti-slavery sides</li> <li>3. Identify key persons involved in the abolitionist movement</li> <li>4. Recognize the economic aspects of the slavery issue</li> <li>5. Determine why religious groups became involved in the abolitionist movement</li> <li>6. Determine how the slavery issue affected American social and political growth from the colonial period through the Civil War</li> </ol> |

## Teaching and Learning Activities that will equip students to demonstrate targeted understandings:

- Overview of essential questions and basic understandings
- Class discussion of subject matter and questions from the PowerPoint presentation
- Teacher introduction of terms and ideas in the essential questions and related projects
- Providing students with primary source materials with which they complete the related projects
- Students conduct research in groups to be used later in individual and group projects
- Informal observation and coaching of students as they work in groups
- Evaluation and delivered feedback on projects and research reports
- Students create and present unit projects
- Posttest made up of multiple-choice questions covering the presentation, with one or more essential questions as essay questions

# Project #1: *Amistad* Mock Trial

## Overview:

In this lesson, student groups role-play various individuals and groups involved in the *Amistad* slave revolt case, and retry the case. In order to complete the project, students will need to research both the case and the slavery issue. Groups then use their research to portray attorneys representing both sides, restate the prevalent philosophies regarding slavery in the 1840s, and reenact the trial.

## Objectives:

As a result of completing this lesson, students will:

- Understand the impact of the *Amistad* case on the slavery issue
- Develop research skills targeted to finding information on the slavery issue
- Synthesize this information and make conclusions about the *Amistad* case

## Time Required:

Five to seven class periods, depending on the amount of time needed for research

## Materials Required:

Computer(s) with Internet access, printer, microphones and video recording equipment (optional if you want to record the trial reenactment)

## Methodology:

Before beginning the lesson, students should have a basic understanding of the proslavery and anti-slavery positions of the early and mid-1800s. You may wish to review related slides from the PowerPoint with the class prior to beginning the lesson.

After reviewing the *Amistad* case, discuss it with the class in more detail. The related Web resources for the lesson offer further background information on the case and the subsequent Supreme Court decision. Next, assign roles for the court trial, either as principals, witnesses, or attorneys. While you may wish to divide the class according to the number of students, the following roles should be assigned:

- Sengbe Pieh (also known as Cinque), who led the slave revolt on the *Amistad*
- José Ruiz (owner of the slaves on board the *Amistad* and one of the captives on the ship)
- Pedro Montez (the other owner of the slaves onboard the ship and also a captive)

Lieutenant Thomas R. Gedney (commander of the Naval Frigate USS Washington, who discovered the *Amistad* off the coast of Long Island; he filed a claim for the ship and cargo as rightfully his because it was seized on the high seas)

Representatives of the Spanish government, who believed that since the owners of the *Amistad* were Spanish the ship and cargo were property of Spain

President Martin Van Buren (in office at the time of the *Amistad* revolt, who was concerned that the case would affect his popularity in Southern states and supported the claims of the Spanish government)

Roger Sherman Baldwin (the attorney who had represented the slaves in lower court)

Seth Staple and Theodore Sedgwick (who had assisted Baldwin in representing the slaves in lower court)

Henry D. Gilpen (Attorney General, who represented the federal government in the trial)

John Quincy Adams (member of the House of Representatives and former president who delivered many of the arguments during the hearings before the Supreme Court)

Roger B. Taney (Chief Justice of the Supreme Court at the time of the case)

If needed, you may also wish to assign students roles as the Associate Justices on the Supreme Court at that time: Joseph Story, Smith Thompson, John McLean, Henry Baldwin, James Moore Wayne, Philip Pendleton Barbour, John Catron, and John McKinley

Remaining students may assume the roles of research assistants helping the attorneys develop arguments, bailiff, or members of a jury that decides the verdict in the case.

Once roles have been assigned, have the students begin their research, using the “Trial Information Sheet” and suggested Web resources included with this lesson.

### **Suggested Web Resources:**

(Note: Several Web sites provide information on the *Amistad* case; in addition, you may wish to have students conduct further Web searches for other sources to use in completing the project.)

National Archives *Teaching With Documents: The Amistad Case*

(<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/amistad/>)

Smithsonian Institution National Portrait Gallery *Amistad* case page

(<http://www.npg.si.edu/col/amistad/>)

University of Missouri (Kansas City) Law School *Amistad Case* site

(<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/amistad/AMISTD.HTM>)

U.S. State Department *Amistad Revolt* page (<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/amistad/>)

HistoryCentral.com site including Adams’s arguments before the Supreme Court

(<http://www.multied.com/Amistad/amistad.html>)