Geography of Slavery Lesson Plan

Description

In this lesson, a fifth grade class will use the Geography of Slavery web site to create a biographical profile and a historical fiction piece of writing about an actual runaway slave. The class will also create a bulletin board sized chart which will demonstrate the uniqueness and personalities of the slaves.

5th Grade Standards of Learning

History Standards       US1.1a, US 1.5c
English Standards       5.1, 5.8, 5.9

National History Standards

2A, 2C, 2G, 4B

Objectives

Students will be able to read, list, and infer facts about a slave from a historic document.

Students will be able to write an accurate and reasonable historical fiction account of a slave based on a historic document.

Students will be able to appreciate the uniqueness of each individual slave through the creation of a class chart.

Pace

This took my class about ten 45 minute class periods to complete. However, that time could vary from 5-15 days easily, depending on the amount of extra background knowledge the teacher supplies and connection activities.

Materials

- Internet access and LCD projector
- Copies of indexed slave ads
- Picture books, videos, textbooks, etc. concerning slavery, runaway slaves, and maps to support learning
- The website http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/
- Writing materials, large chart paper or blank bulletin board, markers, highlighters, etc.
- Direction sheet

Differentiation
This lesson is really easy to differentiate based on your learners because the teacher controls which student receives which slave. Some slaves have multiple advertisements, these I reserved for the accelerated writers. For other students who do better with minimal information, I assigned slaves with only one or two ads. This lesson can also be used with older or younger students by varying the number of slave ads you assign for each student.

**Prior Knowledge**

For this lesson, the students will need background knowledge on slave ads, the Underground Railroad, conditions of slavery, etc. I also provide in my room many picture books and atlases to help the students when they need ideas for their writing. Also, any supplemental videos on slavery or the Underground Railroad would also fit in nicely, depending on your pace and how much time you have. My class completed this lesson after we studied colonial America, American Revolution, Underground Railroad and the Fugitive Slave Laws in history class.

The students also need to understand the characteristics of biographies and historical fiction writing. This is covered in reading class.

**Anticipatory Set**

1. Through the LCD projector, go to the Geography of Slavery in Virginia Web Site.
2. Have pulled up the slave ad for Sandy (9-14-1769). Distribute copies of the ad if necessary.
3. Ask one of the kids to come up and read the ad to the class. Repeat this with each ad you choose to do for the hook.
   a. Ask the kids what they are looking at. From previous Social Studies lessons, the kids will identify this as a fugitive slave ad.
   b. Ask the kids what they notice about the ad. There are quite a few interesting things about this ad- Sandy was an alcoholic, the ad was placed by Thomas Jefferson, Sandy was a shoemaker and horse jockey, etc.
4. Explain to the kids that this is a slave ad. Point out the “parts” of the ad: the newspaper it was printed in, the date, the subscriber, the reward, etc.
5. Pull up the ad for Scipio (9-25-1795). This slave ran away from Madison County (our county). It also talks about the slave being a valet to a French officer in “the last war” which was the Revolutionary War.
6. Pull up Anthony (11-22-1786). This slave ran away from Orange and the ad was placed by James Madison.
7. Ask kids if they think that anyone ever got away. Pull up Dollar and Greenock (5-24-1751) and the court record linked at the bottom. These slaves were captured and brought in for trial.
8. Emanuel (11-19-1772) did get away. Pull up the ad and also the Yates letter off of the homepage in which Mr. Yates complains that Emanuel was seen in London, England.
9. Next, go to the home page of the web site and show the kids how these ads were found. Show them how you can search by different criteria. Ask for a volunteer and you can search their name.

10. Search for the slave London. Four hits will come up. Distribute copies of the four ads, one per every few students. Ask the students to decide which ads talk about the same person. Have kids justify their responses.

**Procedure**

1. Using the indexed slave ads (attached), assign a slave to each student. Have copies of their slave ads stapled together. Distribute.
2. Transition into the project details. First, explain to the students that you have pulled and assigned them each a slave and have copied the slave ads for them.
3. Distribute direction sheet so they can follow along. Assign due dates for each part, to keep students on track and to check in with them.
4. After this, the students are in charge of creating. However, many will need support! Depending on your students you may need to do focus groups at the beginning of each step, to re-explain the directions, expectations, and to share ideas.
5. On the web page’s homepage there is a link for personal profiles. It is helpful to review the profile of Billy to illustrate how you can gather information from the ads.
6. Also, throughout our time, I read picture books to them about escaped slaves, did picture walks through books, and showed some videos that featured fugitive slaves.
7. The writing process varies from project to project and from classroom to classroom. Complete this step as you see fit.
8. After the students are finished with their writing, they will draw a picture of an exciting part from their paper.

**Closure**

1. For the culminating activity, we made a large bulletin board chart. We put titles of Slave’s Name, Age, Occupation, Characteristics across the top with enough room so that each student could add a row to the chart.
2. Invite students to choose something to add to the chart. Let them write it on the chart or post it with a post-it.
3. Discuss as a group some of the interesting, humanizing things we learned about the slaves.
4. Discuss how the slaves were individuals with individual talents and personalities, just like us. Ask the students who they would have liked to meet and why.
5. We also shared our stories with a small group and also hung them in the hallway with our pictures.

**Assessment**
The students are assessed on two general criteria for their writing. They are assessed first as writers and then as historians. For the writing assessment, I use the Madison County writing rubric. For the historical assessment, I use the additional criteria attached to the writing rubric.
## Index of Slave Ads Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>Jan. 15, 1785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar (Dollar &amp; Greenock)</td>
<td>May 24, 1751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>June 20, 1801, Jan 5, 1782, June 15, 1775, June 18, 1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>March 7, 1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>March 27, 1746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scipio</td>
<td>September 25, 1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandy</td>
<td>Sept 15, 1769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romeo and Juliet</td>
<td>March 4, 1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>Nov 22, 1786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syphax</td>
<td>Aug. 6, 1799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillis</td>
<td>Aug 16, 1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>Feb. 24, 1737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumper</td>
<td>April 24, 1738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>April 28, 1738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Dec 15, 1738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natt</td>
<td>June 15, 1739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos Legg</td>
<td>Aug 15, 1766, July 23, 1767, April 26, 1783, May 10, 1783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caesar</td>
<td>Sept 23, 1773; Sept 30, 1773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuffy</td>
<td>May 16, 1771, may 30, 1771, March 12, 1772</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pompey</td>
<td>Jun 20, 1777, Nov 28, 1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>April 28, 1768, Dec 22, 1768, Jan 3, 1771, Jan 10, 1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>May 14, 1772, Oct 22, 1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>Jan 30, 1752, March 20, 1752, Nov 30, 1759</td>
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<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>May 28, 1789; Aug 8, 1793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis</td>
<td>May 23 1796, June 5, 1798, Sept 2, 1802, Jan 6, 1803, Aug 20, 1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>June 5, 1798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Jan 6, 1803, May 23, 1796</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>Oct 17, 1796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortune</td>
<td>April 29, 1773</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nanny</td>
<td>Sept 5, 1766</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agnes</td>
<td>April 25, 1766, Dec 22, 1768</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabb</td>
<td>Nov 17, 1768, Nov 2, 1769, Jan 3, 1771</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edith</td>
<td>March 22, 1770, Oct 22, 1772</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sall Cooper</td>
<td>November 21, 1771, Feb 27, 1772, March 5, 1772,</td>
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The Geography of Slavery in Virginia
A Historical Fiction Writing Experience

Ok, you have been introduced to the Geography of Slavery web site and you have met your runaway slave. You are their biographer. You are in charge of documenting their story, with a little embellishment of course!

Step One: Getting to Know Your Character
Date Due _________
1. Read your ads. Understand the words. Get to know your person.
2. Share your person with a partner. Pretend like you are introducing two people. Really talk about the person!

Step Two: Creating the Biographical Profile
Date Due _________
1. Take your ads one at a time. Find facts about the person. You may have to infer!!
2. Organize your thoughts into categories. Use the Biographical Profile Organizer.

Step Three: Creating Historical Context
Date Due _________
1. Brainstorm some ideas of how you are going to add what we learned in history about slavery, runaway slaves, the underground railroads, etc. into your story. Use the picture books!
2. Also, use a map and outline your escape route- which states did you cross? Which rivers? Which mountains?

Step Four: Creating Fictional Context
Date Due _________
1. Here is the super fun part- make up your person’s story! Start with the day/night they ran away. Why did they go? Where did they go? What happened to them along the way? How does the story end?

Step Five: The Writing Process Begins!
Date Due _________
1. Bring it all together! Write a rough draft incorporating the biographical, historical, and the fictional part. Put an X next to ideas as you use them to help you keep track!
2. Complete the writing process, all the way to publishing.

Step Six: Illustrations
Date Due _________
1. Choose an exciting part to illustrate. Your picture must be on the paper provided. There may be NO WHITE SPACE. You may use colored pencils or crayons only. NO MARKERS.
Name _____________  Historical Assessment Rubric Add-On

Student used information from biographical profile
0  1  2  3

Student used information from historical sources
0  1  2  3

Student used geographical landmarks
0  1  2  3

Name _____________  Historical Assessment Rubric Add-On

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