

Massachusetts Frameworks:

U.S.I. 29 Describe the rapid growth of slavery in the South after 1800 and analyze slave life and resistance on plantations and farms across the South, as well as the impact of the cotton gin on the economics of slavery and Southern agriculture.

Topic: Female Slaves in the South

Purpose: To study the lives of female slaves and how their experiences differed from that of male slaves and the traditional roles of women in American society.

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about the life of Harriet Jacobs and read excerpts from her autobiography.
- Study how racism and sexism affected slave women
- Discuss traditional female roles in society.
- Understand the mythology surrounding Jezebels and Mammy.
- Understand what freedom meant to the slaves.
- Study the Abolition movement.

Class Schedule: 82 minute block

Opening Activity: Show a 20 minute video clip from "Gone with the Wind", the scene with Scarlett O'Hara and her Mammy.

Discuss what southern society must have been like and Mammy's role in the family.

Lecture notes on the myth of Jezebels and Mammy.

Activity: Students will be handed excerpts from "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl" by Harriet Jacobs. Students will be divided into groups and handed one of the following:

Group 1. "What Slaves are Taught to Think of the North" (pp.39-40, Jacobs)

Group 2. "The Flight" (pp. 80-82, Jacobs)

Group 3 "Incidents in Philadelphia" (pp.132-135, Jacobs)

Group 4 "Prejudice Against Color" (pp143-145, Jacobs)

Students will read and discuss their articles and then complete a jig saw exercise to put together the life of Harriet Jacobs by answering questions.

Closure: Students will write an essay or a diary/journal on what it must have been like to be a female slave and deal with issues such as marriage, children, abuse, and freedom.

Assessment: The essay or diary will be graded on a rubric for historical accuracy.

References:

Jacobs, Harriet, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl , Mineola, New York, Dover Publications, Inc. 2001.

White, Deborah Gray, Ar'n't I a Woman? New York, W.W. Norton and Company. 1999.