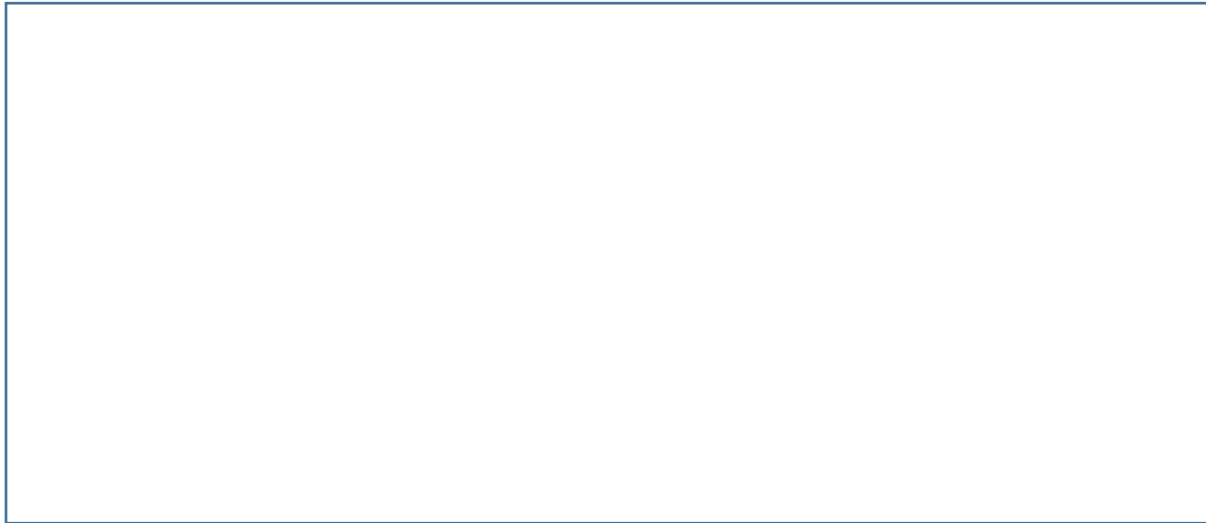


Station 1: Thinking about Objects in Your Life

Some of the artifacts we will look at today are about 200 years old, or older. Museums and archives have been collecting objects and documents from the past for a long time. During this lesson, we will think about why museums collect some things but not others.

Primary sources can be very helpful to historians when learning about the past, but they can also miss out on some very important moments and perspectives. Today, we are going to be historians. We will look at artifacts from about 200 years ago to learn more about the lives of the people who lived during the time of American slavery.

Choose a personal item that has meaning to you. Draw a picture of it here:



- What is it? Where is it from? Was it a gift?

- What could students in 200 years learn about your life from the object that you have chosen?

- What would they NOT learn about you by examining this object?

Station 2: Defining Slavery and Freedom

In your group, discuss how to complete the following statements. Write your ideas on sticky notes and place on the large piece of paper under the heading "slavery" or "freedom."

- What freedom means...
- What I know about slavery...

Conclusion questions: Why are some people enslaved? Why do some people have freedom?

Station 3: Looking at Primary Sources (Documents)

Take a look at your primary source. Answer the questions below based on what you see. It's ok if you don't know the answer to some of the questions. Sometimes historians don't know the answers, but they try their best to observe and use what they know about history to figure things out.

1. What is your source?
2. Is there a date on your object? If so, what is it?
3. Where did it come from?
4. Who do you think created this item?
5. Why did they create this item?
6. How does this object make you feel? (for example, curious to learn more)
7. Do you have any questions about this object?

Station 5: Timeline of Slavery and Abolition

Draw a line across the center of a large piece of paper. This will be the base of your timeline.

Working together as a group, place these events related to slavery and abolition in the U.S. on a timeline. As you place each date on the timeline, read the date and the text aloud.

Station 6: Telling Stories about Objects

Historians and museum curators use objects to tell stories about history and help us know more about our past. Different people may have different interpretations of what an object was used for, where it came from, or its importance.

Each member of your group should choose one object off the table. Taking turns with your groupmates, tell a story about the object you've chosen. Include things you know about the object (like its size, color, weight, material), and create a backstory about the object. For example, was this tape dispenser a gift to your teacher from a famous celebrity?

Make sure each person in the group gets the chance to tell their story.

Timeline Dates for Station 5

1619—first ship of kidnapped Africans arrives in Virginia. They were taken from Angola in West Africa by the Portuguese—20 of these captives were sold into bondage to wealthy British settlers

1634—The first African captives are brought to Massachusetts in bondage

1652—Rhode Island passes its first anti-slavery statute, but there is no evidence that the law is ever enforced.

1675—During King Philip's War, a conflict between some Indigenous inhabitants of New England and the New England colonists, hundreds of members of the Wampanoag tribe were enslaved and sent to plantations in the West Indies. Between 1492 and 1880, between 2 and 5.5 million Native Americans are enslaved.

1777—Slavery is abolished in Vermont

1783—Slavery is abolished in Massachusetts

1784—Rhode Island passes a law for the gradual emancipation of slavery. Under this law, children of enslaved people became free when they reached adulthood.

1785—Connecticut passes the Gradual Abolition Act, "but this act did not emancipate any enslaved persons, only those who would be born into slavery and only after they reached the age of 25"

1787—The first cotton mill in the U.S. is established in Beverly, Mass.

1788—Massachusetts declares the trade of enslaved persons illegal.

Timeline Dates for Station 5

1794—the U.S. Congress passes the Slave Trade Act of 1794. “It prohibited transporting slaves from the United States to any foreign place or country. It also made it illegal for American citizens to outfit a ship for purposes of importing slaves.”

1800—Congress passes the Slave Trade Act of 1800. “The Slave Trade Act of 1800 subsequently strengthened it by increasing the fines for importation of slaves, and making it illegal for American citizens to engage in the slave trade between any nations, regardless of whether the ship originated in the United States or was owned by a U.S. citizen.”

1807—Congress passes a full ban of the international slave trade, but it is still legal to sell enslaved peoples between states.

1827—New York abolishes slavery

1843—Rhode Island abolishes slavery

1857—Accepted date for the end of slavery in New Hampshire. The state never really passed an abolition measure before the Emancipation Proclamation.

1861—The American Civil War begins

1860--The last census before the Civil War shows 4 million enslaved people living in Southern states.

1863—The Emancipation Proclamation goes into effect in Southern States still in rebellion on January 1.

1865--Slavery abolished in the United States with the adoption of the 13th Amendment.