

**AMERICAN HISTORY: DEVELOPING SKILLS,  
UNDERSTANDING CONTENT, AND  
APPLYING KNOWLEDGE  
CURRICULUM**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
The Master of Education Degree in the  
College of Education and Human Services Professions**

**By**

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**Committee Signatures:**

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## Curriculum Overview

This is an American History curriculum which in six units covers six distinct topics in American history from the time of Columbus arriving in the Bahamas through the Civil War. For most units, I have provided some suggested lessons and assessment pieces, as well as tips for navigating the lessons through some challenging issues. The curriculum doesn't have complete lesson plans, or assessments, and it is not intended to be used as a textbook or teacher workbook. It's intended to be a guide on how to teach American History in a way that focuses on students' skills and on history's usable lessons. I developed this curriculum while working with high schools students who were at-risk, and the lessons and activities reflect this as much of the work is done as a class, or while actively assisting students. However, the curriculum and lessons can easily be adapted to various ages and abilities. This curriculum is designed to make the study of American history an activity which builds the fundamental skills students need to be successful in school, in work, and as citizens.

## Purpose

American History is a fundamental class in virtually every high school in the country. Like schools themselves, the classes are used to teach us of our past, to build productive citizens and to create a sense of patriotism in each new generation. Although on some level, most educators can still find value in these ideals, schools are being pushed by standardized test scores, and students are looking to the future for answers, and increasingly see the past as irrelevant. If pressed for an answer as to why *they* (students in general) need to study history, a teacher often replies, "If we don't learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it." Although, there is truth to this comment, I don't think it's the best we can do.

When teaching history with traditional methods, I think a disproportionate amount of time and energy is spent learning about dates, names, places, and other trivia-oriented facts which have less inherent value than other more fundamental pursuits. I wanted to change this approach and the need for this changed was made more apparent to me when I was teaching students who were at-risk. The at-risk population isn't a homogenous group, but many

characteristics permeate a majority of the students who fall into this category. Students with special needs, a history of low achievement and ability ratings, who are minorities, or who have been disenfranchised by a lack of belonging throughout their educational journeys, and students whose interest and passions lay outside the scope of traditional education make up a significant percentage of the at-risk population. For many of them, the lofty ideals of education and an appreciation of the past are not viable selling points for History. However, when the course genuinely focuses on the skills they lack and when lessons are made immediately applicable to their daily lives and to current events, there is a tangible element that engages student interest.

The purpose of this curriculum is to design American History courses so that they focus on two important outcomes: the development of academic skills and the learning of fundamental historical lessons that can be readily applied today.

My reasoning for this is simple; it's a matter of priority. When I ask students to read about Columbus, it matters *more* to me that they improve their reading ability, than that they know any certain information about Columbus himself. Likewise, when we write about Lewis and Clark, I am more interested in the writing process, than students getting a detailed account of the journey. To be clear, I am not discounting the learning of facts, nor would I downplay errant perceptions of the topics we study, but rather I am being intentional about keeping the higher-order skills a priority over lower-order knowledge. By maintaining this priority, there is also a natural correlation to focusing on depth over breadth, which I believe to be important for the retention and application of knowledge.

Here is a specific example of the advantages this curriculum offers over a traditional approach when covering a topic such as Jamestown. With a traditional approach, students may read a textbook, view a video, and discuss or research Jamestown as the first permanent European settlement in North America. The reading level may be comfortable, but not challenging, there would likely be a series of factual bits of information which could be learned or memorized and in the end, this topic would (hopefully) be placed in students' mental timeline of American history. Although I personally find studying Jamestown interesting, I would be hard pressed to say it's important that all students who graduate high school need to know the details about those early years. Consider this question; do we think the average citizen who contributes to our community knows much about Jamestown? I doubt it.

With this curriculum, students are challenged by reading high-level material (similar in style to standardized test excerpts) and with the help of the teacher and class, they gain confidence in their ability because they are successful in their efforts to make sense of this challenging article. Additionally, the content of the article is focused on topics such as the rise of slavery, private landownership and a representative government, each of these topics has foundational impacts on our country and lend to discussions that are still relevant today. I encourage students to take on the challenge of reading and making sense of difficult material as a life skill they need to develop, and I think the conversations about private ownership and representative government are more effectively taught when they are brought up at various points in social studies curriculum.

By focusing on skills, the platform is readily available to you (the teacher) to work with students at the place they are. There is no better way to help challenged readers and writers than to work with them daily to build their skills. Rather than students feeling buried by the minutia of historical facts, they are free to focus on improving themselves one step at a time.

Traditionally, the study of history is considered to be valuable because of the insights it can provide into the future. There are seemingly countless variations of quotes relating to, “If we don’t know where we’ve been, we can’t know where we’re going.” So logically, we should study history for its lessons. I believe it’s important here to make these lessons immediately relevant, or too often it gets lost. For example, in the 24 hour news cycle of politics today, students main exposure to government has to do with sound bites and political gaffs. History class should be a place where students learn the fundamentals of government and political theory. Likewise, our culture tents to produce heroes and villains, with little room for middle ground or critical thinking. History shows us countless examples of great people with great flaws, and “villainous” people who may be are more similar to the “heroes” than we care to think; this is rich ground for planting the seeds of critical thought. We should look to history for it is lessons; learning from the complexities of the past can shed light on the complexities we face today if we take the time to *understand* the fundamental nature of these lessons.

The impact of this curriculum on students can be profound. When studying a topic in an honest, historically accurate way, students can often relate much better to the people they study. Although I believe this true for nearly all students, students who are at-risk may be even more profoundly affected. By high school, many students my feel disenfranchised by the established

lessons, curriculum and desired outcome of many history courses. I believe there is a subtle but significant barrier for students who may feel they've never "measured up" to learn about heroes who seem unreal to them. However, when these heroes are revealed, they are often more interesting and relatable to students.

### A Note to Users: How to Use this Curriculum

This curriculum is designed to be a guide on how to teach American History in a way that puts the focus on building fundamental academic skills, and teaching lessons that have application in today's world. It is not intended to be a teacher workbook, it is not intended to fill every day on the school calendar, and it is not intended to limit your (the user's) creativity (or save you from lesson planning).

You should use this guide by reading through an entire unit a few days or even weeks before beginning the unit with the students. Look over the goals, objectives, skills, suggested activities and assessments, and decide what you want to do with it. My hope is that you'll find a lot of what's provided very useful, but that you'll change and augment the units with your own ideas. Find new sources, create new lessons, and teach in way that you are passionate about. My main hope, is that you take this principle (teaching skills and important lesson), and apply it the lessons and units you create.

I believe history can be as interesting as it is valuable. Work hard and have fun teaching young people to develop their abilities while giving them a foundation in social studies which will be an asset to them as they explore their world.

## Unit 1: The Significance of Columbus

**Description:** The first unit I will cover in my American History curriculum is about Christopher Columbus's "discovery of the New World." The purposes of this unit are to learn about an American legend, explore some common misconceptions, learn about how his actions impacted native people of the area, and lastly, to critique and question the rationale behind the common textbook coverage of Columbus.

**Duration:** 5-6 hours

**Academic Skills:** Reading challenging text, persuasive writing, and critical thinking.

**Goals:** My goal for this unit is for students to be able to explain why they believe the textbook accounts of Columbus are so starkly contrasted to the accounts offered by authors such as Howard Zinn and James Lowoen. I want them to be able to discuss various perspectives that could explain this contrast, as well as make an argument for the reason(s) they believe to be most likely.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to...

1. Read and comprehend sources that may be initially challenging.
2. Consider the reasons for finding contrasting accounts of an historic figure.
3. Write an opinion essay about why various accounts about Christopher Columbus contrast with each other in such drastic ways.

**Sources:**

- "Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything your American History Textbook Got Wrong," by James Lowoen. Pages 37-74.
- "A People's History of the United States: 1492-Present," by Howard Zinn. Pages 1-22.
- "The American Journey," a textbook published by McGraw-Hill. \* Any textbook may be used.

**Materials:** None

**Suggested Activities:**

Opening: Ask students to look over a calendar, or simply brainstorm holidays, famous names and significant dates on typical calendar. They will likely list common holidays and maybe mention President's day or perhaps say that a few famous peoples' birthdays are listed. Soon, you can point out that the only day 'dedicated by name' to someone is Columbus Day.

Use this, to have a short discussion on why this is, and then ask students to share what they know about Columbus (writing a list of facts on the board may help some students to focus and/ or having the information saved maybe helpful for later class periods).

Steps through unit:

Next, go ahead and let the students know what they're going to be doing for the next few days.

Tell students that they are going to be learning about Christopher Columbus by reading three different accounts of his accomplishments. Describe how students may be surprised by how these accounts seem to paint very different pictures of who Columbus was, and ask them to keep in mind the things they'd discussed of "what they already know about him." I caution against saying too much here, in terms of what to expect. I think it is best to let students process the new information as they read it.

First, the students should read the textbook account of Columbus. Whether students read aloud, alone, do follow-up questions or not, is all up to you. But being familiar with the text is really important.

Second, read the Loewen excerpt. This source is different from the other two in that it's less of a descriptive account, or more a comparison of common textbooks (much like we are doing in this Unit). I have used pages 38-40 or 41 in this source in order to keep the amount of reading in check.

Third, read the Zinn excerpt. This is a much more detailed account of Columbus. The students generally find it interesting and it gives them a new perspective on Columbus. You could basically describe the assignment to come as comparing the textbook's account to Zinn's account, using some of Loewen's ideas (or refuting them). Here I have mainly used pages 1-6.

\*Here are a couple critical ideas to keep in mind. In this article, the author may talk about things that were done to natives, but doesn't attribute all those acts directly to Columbus. He also looks at the long term effect of the Arawak people, well after Columbus had come and gone. This is a great reading to practice being a "critical reader/ thinker" because despite the horrible things Columbus was a part of, it's important we don't overstate his involvement in all of it.

Lastly, assign the essay by handing out the attached sheet. Be sure to look over the expectations with students and stress the focus of the essay, which is to discuss coverage of Columbus, not to write a report about him.

## Additional Information

### Criticisms and caution

One criticism I could give this unit myself, is that it is heavily reading based, and some of the reading can be at a fairly challenging level. Be ready to cope with this issue by reading some aloud, some independently, by breaking up the day with other activities, and by explaining the importance of skills such as critical reading and reading comprehension.

### Buyer beware

One of the goals of this unit is to show that history can be looked at from many different angles. However, it can be easy to unintentionally influence your students to all view this the way *you* might. The first time I taught this, I talked a lot about the textbook making Columbus “look like an American hero” in order to make a point and raise some questions. Later, I looked at the work of my students and found they had become really hung up on the textbook “making Columbus look like he was “perfect” or “really nice guy.” Unfortunately, this really wasn’t true. Most likely the textbook you use will gloss over or not mention some nasty things about Columbus, but they probably fall short of calling him perfect.



## Viewing Columbus with a New Lens

Over the last few days, we've discussed the *significance* of Christopher Columbus travelling to and from Islands in the Caribbean Sea. We began by discussing what we already knew about Columbus, and then added to that by reading three sources which discussed Columbus, the first was your textbook, the second was an excerpt from Loewen's book, and the third was an excerpt from Zinn's book.

With all this in mind, I want you to write an essay discussing your views on how your textbook covers Columbus. Note, this is not a report about Columbus, or a biography, but rather a fact-based opinion on the merits of the textbook's coverage of him.

What specifically you choose to discuss is up to you. Below is a list of ideas you may choose from to, or you may use your own. You may also choose to discuss more than one, or a combination of a few. (These can be used or adapted to be used as topic sentences!!!)

1. Our textbook does a poor job of covering Columbus; it leaves out almost all the negative information so that he is seen as an American hero.
2. Our textbook does a good job of covering Columbus. Textbooks are limited in the amount of coverage they can give to a certain topic, so focusing on the key points of his influence is all that can be expected.
3. Whether he was good, bad or both, he simply gets too much coverage. Europeans would inevitably have settled North America, and likely in a similar manner.
4. Our textbooks can't cover everything, so to choose a few stories to highlight is reasonable. The fact is, Columbus travelling to the "New World" did have a major impact on the world, and good or bad, he was influential.
5. History classes would be more interesting if we learned more about the details, good and bad about famous historic figures.
6. Slavery, abuse and other crimes are covered a lot in textbooks. For the books to list out bad stuff about Columbus would simply take away from the exciting parts of his historic journey.
7. Outright criticism of Columbus wouldn't be accurate either. Without proper context and details, we can't fairly demonize him.
8. (Think of a different idea, modify one of the above, or combine some of these ideas.)

A final note, I am not concerned with *what* your position is, but rather with how you back it up. Use ideas, examples and quotes from each source to support your opinion.

### **Format:**

Title: Centered and Underlined

Font: 12 pt Times New Roman

Line Spacing: Double

Length: About 1 page

Grading Grid

Criteria	Needs Improvement	Good	Very Good
Formatting	1	2	3
Clear Topic Sentence	1 2	3 4	5 6
Strong, Clear Argument to Explain the Discrepancy between various accounts of Columbus	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Used Information to Back Up Argument	1 2	3 4	5 6

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 20 (21 actually possible).

**Comments:**

## Unit 2: Jamestown

**Description:** The second unit I cover in my American History class is on Jamestown. Jamestown was the first permanent European settlement on the North American continent. The focus I use to teach this unit comes largely from the May 7, 2007 issue of Time magazine which contains an article by Richard Brookhiser about Jamestown's influence on America's development.

**Duration:** 6-8 hours

**Academic Skills:** Reading challenging text, note taking (HUGing), writing, timeline conception

**Goals:** By the time students complete this unit they should have gained confidence in their ability to read a challenging article using a study skill (HUGing) designed to increase their comprehension of complex text. In addition, students should be able to explain the significance of Jamestown by discussing how representative government, private ownership of land, and slavery all had roots in this first permanent settlement. Finally, students should be able to compare and contrast the subtle evolution of how indentured servants and slaves were perceived by the "ruling" class during the early 1600's (according to the article "The Root of the Problem," by Orlando Patterson).

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to identify 3 significant themes that originated in Jamestown and continued through a significant portion of America's history.
2. Students will be able to accurately describe the significance of private ownership of land and of representative government.
3. Students will discuss the similarities and differences between indentured servants and slaves.
4. (If time allows)\* Students will be able to compare and contrast different historical accounts of the story of John Smith and Pocahontas.

### **Sources:**

- "Time" (magazine). The issue from May 7, 2007. This issue contains the articles used in this unit. (However, they are also provided in copied form with this curriculum).

Also suggested:

- "National Geographic" from May, 2007.

### **Materials:**

- I scanned then project an image on the board for discussion. Not necessary, but helpful.

**Suggested Activities: Openings:** This may not be the world's strongest opening, but here's how I go about it. I ask students to consider the challenges of life in the "new world," specifically; they should discuss the challenges of staying *alive*. Whether from this class or another, this does serve as a bit of a review and preview of the past and present units. Students should consider things such as extreme weather, disease, intense labor, food shortages and battles with native people. I usually have students write their answers first and follow with a class discussion.

Steps through unit:

The first hand out I give students is from pages 56 and 57 in the Time magazine (which I also scanned to project onto the board). The pages show a depiction of the Jamestown fort, a timeline and populations maps. I find each of these helpful in giving student an overview of various aspects of Jamestown. The picture of the fort is perhaps the most important for the beginning of the lesson as this will likely help students visualize something that would likely be difficult to picture without background knowledge. Also, this has the advantage of perhaps building some interest before handing out the longer, more tedious part of the assignment.

At this point, I try to put all else aside, stop momentum and achieve as much focus from the class as possible. I tell the students what we are going to focus on the next few days. (Up until now, we have focused on general Jamestown *settlement* issues; from here on out, we are focusing on 3 themes of our country's history that originated in Jamestown.) First, I ask if anyone knows what the word "Microcosm" means. Going from there, I give a few examples of what microcosms are/ and how the word is often used. Be sure there is a solid level of understanding. Then, I write on the board/ share that we will be focusing on Jamestown as a microcosm of the United States that develops in the subsequent years in three key ways; the first is the development of representative government, the second is the idea of private business/ land ownership and the third is the development of slavery. When beginning this unit, you cannot over stress these three ideas to students, as these are the themes we hope to develop throughout this unit.

Now to the more tedious part of the assignment, it's time to HUG an article. HUGing an article is study technique which can be used to really dissect and understand an article. In the acronym "HUG," the H stands for highlighting, the U stands for underlining and the G stands for Glossing. The way I teach this, is for students to **highlight** (using a highlighter!) any key facts or ideas they think are important. As usual, it can be helpful to suggest to students approximately how much they should underline [(I usually say no more than 20% of all words, but suggest 10% or less. Often, I suggest trying to highlight the topic sentence(s)]. The **underlining** should be done with a pen or pencil, and what I suggest here is that students are identifying information that supports the bigger ideas they identified. For example, they may highlight a sentence that says life was hard, while they underline sentences mentioning sickness or extreme weather. Sometimes, students struggle with differentiating between big ideas (highlighting) and little ideas (underlining), but this is a good skill to practice, and they are learning the content in the meantime. Finally, I teach them about **glossing** the article. When I teach glossing, I tell students this means writing notes in the margins. I encourage students to write both notes and questions they have while reading. By writing questions as well as notes they will be much more likely to remember to search out the answer later.

To begin, I always start this process as a group. I believe HUGging an article is a great way to learn it, but it's a challenging thing for many students. Working through multiple paragraphs together will probably save a lot of confusion and frustration. After this process, debrief in way which bring the class to a common understanding of the three themes mentioned in this article, and of how Jamestown can now be viewed as a microcosm of the US's development.

**Assessment:** The assessment I use here comes in two parts. The first part is a very informal assessment that comes in both a formative (during) way, and a summative way (at the end). While working through the first few paragraphs with the class, and as the students begin to work on their own, actively monitor and engage the students. Look for puzzled and frustrated looks, or for student making good progress. By the time most students are finished, the class should discuss the three major themes of the article (Land ownership, representative government, and slavery) and how they can be seen as a microcosm of how the US develops as a country. The class discussion should give you a feel for how successful the class has been.

The second way to assess the students' learning is to look over the articles they HUGged. When I have done this, I don't give a letter grade for specific criteria, but instead try to comment on what they did well, and what they could work on doing better. (That's not to say I don't give points or a grade, but simply that I score them on my judgment of the effort they put it into the work, rather than the finished product).

#### Next Step:

The next activity, involves reading a shorter, but very valuable article about slavery titled, "The Root of the Problem". When reading this article, students should be focusing on two main points. The first point students should look for is the differences between how slaves and indentured servants were viewed. The article does an excellent job of this and I believe this is a great example for students of how history is more interesting when you take the time to find the details. It also shows how simplistic some views can be (the term "slavery" can refer to many different kinds of slavery). Also, you can use this as a chance to ask students to really think critically by asking; would a different author disagree with the statements this author made (was the racial separation truly deliberate, etc.)? The second point to look for is how it supports our (previous) theme of Jamestown as a microcosm on the country that follows.

**Assessment:** For this article, I think a class discussion would be the best way to assess understanding, and would also allow for guidance, as this is a subtle and challenging concept. A short written summary of the article could also work to challenge students' ability to explain complex themes in a clear manner. (Note: It is a complex article and could be a sensitive topic for some people, so be ready for challenges.)

Jamestown: The Seeds of Representative Government and Private Land

As we know from the readings and discussions of this unit, Jamestown, which was the first permanent European settlement in North America, happen to also foreshadow much of what American would struggle with and much of what it would come to stand for.

During this quiz, we are going to set aside the issue of slavery, and focus on two important foundations settlers developed in Jamestown, that continue today as cornerstones for our country: Representative Government and Private Ownership of Land.

To the best of your ability, fill in the chart below. For each answer, one clearly worded sentence is enough. Don't over explain them, but keep them clear and simple.

Representative Government	Private Ownership of Land
What are the benefits of have a Representative Government?	What are the benefits of having <i>Private Land Ownership</i> ?
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
What are some of the challenges that come with implementing this new system?	What are some of the challenges that come with implementing this new system?
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3. X Just do two challenges here, skip this #3

**Assessment:** One of the objectives of this unit is for student to be able to describe the significance of private ownership of land and of representative government. To assess student understanding this topic, I have students fill in the worksheet (above) (often in the form of a quiz). It provides structure for short answers that should still show knowledge and understanding. I grade this quiz by giving a possible 2 points for each answer, but score the quiz out of 20 points (with 22 points possible).

### **Additional Activities:**

If there is time, there is an article about Captain John Smith (who was mention in the first article, and is likely mention in the textbook available in a class). He is most likely known to some students from the Disney movie “Pocahontas”. Using these different sources is great way to learn (or unlearn) a famous American story, and does even more to promote a discussion on how history is written. \*Assessment below

\*The final objective for students was for them to be able to compare and contrast different historical accounts of the story of John Smith and Pocahontas. This portion of the lesson doesn’t necessarily tie into the rest of the themes of Jamestown. However, if there is time, reading various accounts of the John Smith and Pocahontas is interesting for student. Especially since Disney has popularized this story, students are often familiar with it, and comparing accounts (much like we did with Columbus) reminds students of the previous lessons, and reminds them to be carefully with historical research.

### Unit 3: Revolution

**Description:** When teaching about the American Revolution, I focus on two main parts. The first is a problem solving and creative thinking exercise which involves students theorizing about what would happen in a hypothetical settlement situation and the civilization process of the settlers. The second is the brief and semi-traditional look at the “founding fathers,” key ideas in the American Revolution, and key events that occurred during that period.

**Duration:** 10-12 Hours

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, cause and effect, timeline of events, vocabulary expansion, fundamental reading.

**Goals:** The goal of this unit is for students to provide perspectives relating to the challenges of designing a government when the constituents it governs have diverse needs and desires. Students should consider the various roles a government should/ should not fill in community and how to build consensus among diverse people. In addition, students should be able to identify fundamental advantages and disadvantages of living in a society (verse basically living independently).

(Goals for Part 2 of Unit 3) For this portion of the unit, students should be able to explain the basic argument the founders used for why America should become independent from Britain. They should also be able to explain the perspectives of both the “patriots and loyalists” during the time of the Revolution. Finally, students should be able to provide their personal perspective on the significance of the ideas of John Locke and the ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence.

**Objectives:** The students will be able to.

1. Imagine and describe some of the challenges that come about from living in new settlement.
2. Consider the likely consequences of rules or decisions made within a group of people.
3. Briefly discuss the key events and people who were significant to the Revolutionary period of American.
4. Explain a few of the primary issues that were dealt with as our country’s government was being designed.
5. Debate and translate various perspectives on the role of government.

**Sources:** none.

Also Suggested:

- A textbook with a good overview of Revolutionary Period
- Excerpts from “Common Sense,” by Thomas Paine
- The Constitution
- Any good source to discuss the Revolutionary period



**Materials:**

- Poster board and colored pencils

**Suggested Activities:** I like to begin this unit with what I call the “Mountain Top Scenario.” In this exercise, students will read a short story which details a hypothetical settlement situation. From there, students will design a landscape scene, and begin answering a series of questions about what they believe would happen in a situation such as this. The assignment attached explains the rest of the necessary details. However, the goal here is to get students thinking about the challenges of starting a new country (or in this case even a small village). In some cases, they will discover ways of doing things that are contrary to the way we live today, such as having a simpler economy and smaller government. In other cases, they will likely see why we do some of the things we do, such as create laws and enforce those laws in a variety of ways.

## **The Mountain Top Scenario**

Imagine this...

Once, at no particular time in history, there was a group of people living a city who had had enough of living by the rules and laws of the city. They believed the taxes were too high, the police were corrupt, the laws restricted their freedom to live as they chose, they felt stifled in their attempts to produce, buy, sell and trade goods; and they were willing to leave to have a fresh start. In fact, while hundreds of people had similar complaints, a group of about 200 people decide to pack up, leave and start a small, new community without the control of the government. About 100 miles, they knew of a large plateau on the top of a small mountain. The area was approximately 6 square miles in size; it contained one river, which flowed into, and out of, the one lake in the area. There were some wild animals that could be hunted, and fish to be caught. There was land suitable for farming, trees for building, and enough sun and rain to make the climate conducive to settlement. Despite these resources, the isolated area was susceptible to the impacts of a large settlement of people. At high rates, trees cleared, deer killed, fish caught, and land used, wouldn't be sustainable for many years.

The 200 hundred people moving to this plateau had a number of things in common. They wanted to live in land that was largely free of government intervention. They wanted to be able to farm their own land, and own their own property. However, this is largely where the similarities stopped. Many of these people didn't have the same views on all things, they didn't all know each other, some were young, other old, some had families, and others were alone.

On some level, they one more thing in common, although they desired independence, they also saw some value in "community." They knew settling with

a small group would be easier than going alone. They also knew there was some safety and efficiency in having some cooperation and teamwork.

Finally, on an early spring day, the group left for the plateau. Upon arriving people set up temporary camps, most in small clusters with other settlers. People began working together to build more permanent homes. Some would hunt and fish, while others started tilling soil to grow crops. Tensions mounted a few times when peoples' choices of the location of their homes and those of their neighbor conflicted. However, compromises were made and settlement continued. During the first year, everyone was able to build rudimentary houses, create small gardens, and found access for food. However, by the next spring, more issues were arising, with few compromises being made.

In the first spring there, a group of people became upset when waste (including human waste and dead animal remains) began to be spotted in the river flowing past their home. Clearly, people from upstream had been using the river as a way to remove waste. Two other men fought when one killed a deer just 20 yards from the home of another man who claim he had shot the deer on "his property." Some people were concerned that a group of people who were netting fish in the river were taking more than their share, and that the fish population could be drastically altered. And among a host of other issues, there had been a series of small thefts that was mostly likely being committed by a group of 5 young men who were known to be lazy and unproductive.

As tensions continued to rise, a group of about 10 people decided they would hold a "town hall" style meeting to discuss the recent issues that have challenged this group of settlers. About 90 people of the 200 attended.

## Meeting Notes

Now, imagine you were at this meeting. What would your thoughts be about all that's been happening? What ideas would you share or what concerns would you have. Answer each of other following questions as if you were at the meeting and could suggest ideas to other people in the room.

1. What are the 3 most important issues you think should be raised at this meeting?
2. For each issue, list two possible solutions that may have been offered.

Issue 1:

Issue 2:

Issue 3:

3. Some people wish to establish a "security force" or a jail/ court system. How you would suggest going about establishing a security force?
4. If the people at the meeting decided to write a few laws, establish a security force and pick a few people to act as judges or head law men; how would you suggest this process occur?
5. Would you suggest making decisions that day, or would suggest waiting and having another similar meeting were these idea could be discussed and decided upon, why?

Now, look at these last few questions which look at the big ideas of this entire issue.

6. How would you balance the starting of this quasi-government with the peoples' basic desire to be removed from government?
7. Naturally some people will be in support of, others opposed to, the creation of a government. How many people (what percent) do you think need to be in support in order to go ahead with this new government, why? (Be ready to defend your answer with rational. Consider whether or not a simple majority would be enough.)
8. Do you agree with the idea that on some level every civilization needs some kind of government? Can people live in harmony without laws and enforcement, or is there a natural need for some structure and authority?

Class discussion:

Using these worksheets, lead a class discussion about these ideas. The main goal is for students to think about the most basic role of the government. Press students to consider what a society would be like if there wasn't any government (even leadership of elders and societal rules are a form of government). To avoid making this a "pro-government" lesson, also lead students to discuss why so many people don't like or trust the government if we think it's basically necessary in some form.

**Assessment:** The class's discussion and looking over students' worksheet should give you a good picture of student understanding. However, be sure to focus on questions 6, 7 and 8 as these are the most fundamental questions.

### **Unit 3 (part 2): The Founding**

Part 2 of Unit 3 combines the some of the previous concepts, such as the need for government and the challenges of developing a working civilization with the events, people and ideas that helped for country.

Rather than detailing lessons plans for this unit, I will focus on the curriculum itself. Much of this curriculum aligns with the state standards, however, I spend little time talking about the military history portion of the Revolutionary War, but spend most of my time focusing on key events and ideas that became central to this period. The outline covers the basic items I suggest covering, and the information in the brackets [ ] is simply notes about the topic or how I might suggest covering the topics.

- I. Background
  - A. People came from Europe for a variety of reason (political, economic, religious, etc.) [Do this quickly, simply make the point people came for various reasons. I think there are people who perceive that everyone came with the idea of starting a new country with freedom of religion, clearly this is inaccurate].
  - B. Many settlers became frustrated with the Monarchy's control (taxes, laws, etc.) [Be brief, this is background]
  - C. Ideas of independence spreads [Be brief, this is background]  
[I. Background: This could all be done in one or two days with a few short readings and lectures. The whole point is put the situation in a rough, but proper, context.]
  
- II. Events leading up to War
  - A. Stamp Act and other "Acts" [I am not a big fan of textbook, but I used them here for a quick overview of various acts.]
  - B. Arguments for and against independence (Patriots vs. Loyalist) [This is important stuff. Be clear that being a "Patriot" meant being a traitor to your country. Reference the South in the Civil War and make illustrations to what this would look like today (homegrown terrorism?).]
  - C. Boston Tea Party [It's kind of a fun story, so make it fun. Students should know this story as it is one of the most famous in our country's history]
  - D. Boston Massacre [Cover the 5 W's, and talk about how this could partially be propaganda. For instance, the word "Massacre" was used when just 5 people were killed.]
  
- III. Ideas of independence
  - A. John Locke (Natural Rights) [Good stuff here: There is a clear connection to his belief the government's role is to protect the peoples' Life, Liberty and Property

and the words written in our Declaration. In civics, I spend a lot of time discussing Locke and his thoughts on the role on the government. Remind students of the Mountain Top activity. I'd spend as much time here as you can because it's both historical, and yet very current.]

- B. Tom Paine (Common Sense) [Find some excerpts to read. A great chance to use a primary source.]
- C. Declaration of Independence [Discuss its meaning. I have provided a worksheet to use to put the words of the Declaration into your own. Also, if you take the time to study, you will learn the war had already begun when this was written, and the writing of this Declaration was "assigned" to Jefferson as a rather unimportant task. It later grew into popularity.]

#### IV. Results

- A. Include any desired Military history here [The Patriots were underdogs and Washington lost many early battles. The French rescued us. Winning was not a sure thing. Cover prominent battles or turning points if you wish (Lexington and Concord, the Battle of Trenton.)]
- B. The prominent role of George Washington [The real history of Washington is very interesting. He had many heroic characteristics and was vital in many roles to the beginning of our country. However, he too was imperfect, held slaves, and was always wishing to retire and thought he'd die young. The more of the story you share, the more interesting he becomes.]
- C. The arguments for the Federalist and the Anti-Federalist [This debate ties in nicely to any conversation about what the role of government should be and can be a teaching tool for the political parties and ideas of today.]
- D. The Constitution [If this were civics, I could spend weeks on the constitution. For the sake of time, we have to pick and choose. However, students should know what it is, what it says and why it's important. It's not just history, its current!]

#### **Assessment:**

- In addition to class discussions and another other assessments you may choose to implement, I suggest organizing an activity, or assigning an essay where students discuss John Locke's ideas about the role of government (primarily to protect people's life, liberty, and property) and then argue for (or against) the government filling additional roles. For example, the government provides scholarships to some college students, so does this over step the governments intended role? If so, does this mean the government shouldn't do it? (Many government initiatives will also work). Look for 2 things; do the students understand Locke's perspective on government, and can the students consider

for themselves the advantages and disadvantages of government operating outside of those realms.

- Design a worksheet or activity where students list or identify the reasons why “Patriots” chose to separate from England and why “Loyalist” chose to stay loyal. (You might want to preview the Civil War here by asking, “How could we compare the Northerners and Southern to Patriots and Loyalist.”)



The Declaration of Independence:

*in Your Own Words*

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another,

and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them,

a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,

that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights,

that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men,

deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends,

it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government,

laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes;

and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism,

it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

--Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states.

To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

## Unit 4: Lewis and Clark

**Description:** This unit will focus on the story of Lewis and Clark and their exploration of the West. The students will be asked to write a paper about this topic, they will write 2 or more pages, use 5 or more sources, create an outline and even create a works cited page (while using internal citation). For many non-traditional students, this may seem nearly impossible, but during this unit, we take each step one at a time, and as a class gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful. Despite the initial protest and concern over ‘another’ paper, this unit has proved to be one of my most successful.

**Duration:** 12-15 hours

**Academic Skills:** Research techniques and formal essay writing.

**Goals:** The goal of this unit is simple; I want students to experience writing a high school, or even college-level research paper about a topic in history. Students will identify credible sources, create an outline, improve their essay writing by properly using various sources, be able to use MLA style citation and create an accurate formatted works cited page. Students will learn about creating an original work by choosing a unique and specific topic (sentence) and using a variety of sources to create a new essay. They will also be able to explain, and utilize important concepts that help avoid plagiarism.

### **Objectives:**

The students will be able to.

1. Use multiple sources to find information on a given topic
2. Use a variety of styles of note taking
3. Create an outline to be used for writing a paper
4. Create works cited page and use internal documentation when writing.
5. Write an original 2-3 page essay on a given topic.

### **Sources:**

- “Time” (magazine). The issues from July 8, 2002.
- “National Geographic.” The issue from October 1998.
- “Lewis and Clark, Great Journey West” a video by National Geographic.
- “Undaunted Courage,” by Stephen Ambrose.  
\*\*\* All the material (excluding the video) I used is copied and provided with this curriculum.

Additional sources:

- A textbook could provide a short overview. And it may be interesting to compare what the students learn from the textbook, versus what they can learn with research and study.

**Suggested Activities:** If you are reading this, you are probably not an English teacher, so you may need to brush up on some writing techniques. Feel free to check with an English teacher for tips before you get started if you think that'd help.

One of the keys to success with this project is to be prepared to go slow. When I first did this with my class, I couldn't believe how long it took, but I also learn the (many, many) reasons why the papers I'd assigned in the past were nearly 100% not done, or heavily plagiarized. Remember, this assignment is designed so that everyone can keep up. Don't rush to save one day of class time if it means the students don't understand something.

\*Steps below correspond to Steps on student hand out

Step 1: After introducing the unit and topic all that jazz, I begin the unit by showing the National Geographic video. Being that many students are likely unfamiliar with this topic, this video provides a nice overview of the story. It also provides some visuals for the unit to follow. Further readings are easier when you can refer to the images from the video.

After viewing the video, the next few days are used to read the various articles. Rather than suggest the nitty-gritty for this process, I simply recommend you use your judgment. Clearly, teaching various note taking techniques, reading some articles, to the class, with the class and individually would all be good ways to vary the instruction. Just be sure that each article is understood by all students, and in the end, be sure that each student has any specific notes highlighted or written than you want them to have later. I strongly suggest helping a lot with note taking in some form as this is a skill that many students lack, and because the following work will be more meaningful to students if their notes are corresponding the work being done.

Step 2: The next step is choosing a topic. Here is good chance to review what you've learned and to teach students how to write a strong topic sentence that focuses a broad topic (Lewis and Clark) to a much narrower one (such as; The story of Lewis and Clark is one that can entertain people with a wide range of interests). Be sure to talk with students about what possible topics they could focus on, and talk about how each article they read had a specific focus. Although each was about Lewis and Clark, the each were about something in particular.

You may choose any topic you or your class likes, but the rest of this curriculum will follow the one I've used in the past (as it uses many of the sources' foci). So, the topic sentence I create (with the classes' help) is; the story of Lewis and Clark is a story than can appeal to many different people with a variety of interests.

Step 3:

As always, feel free to adapt this outline phase of this assignment (use a bubble/ web format: or just approach it differently all together if you'd like. But here is what I did.

First, we determine what ideas we would use to support our topic sentence. So, we outlined our first paragraph to contain our topic sentence (above), and followed by saying whether someone is interested in "outdoor adventure stories," or "Science and Nature," or "Leadership skills and relationship dynamics," this story has got something for you.

As we develop our outline, I focus intently on teaching students to use the sources they've read. I also want to prepare them for writing their paper with MLA formatted internal citation. Therefore, our outlines looks like this: here is an example of how we outlined the second paragraph in our paper.

## II. Interest in Outdoor Adventure Stories

- A. Struggles w/ river travel, danger and hardship (Ambrose 121, 140: Bridges)
- B. Climbing Bitterroots and Rocky Mountains (Ambrose 289: Jones 52: Bridges)
- C. Winter Camps, Fort Mandan and Clatsop (Ambrose 191, 318: Bridges)

Here are few notes of explanation that may help more sense of this process. First, as you can see, I am directing students back to specific pieces of information and recording page number so that the writing and citation process can be much smoother. Second, taking notes with the citations in place will help students find the information as needed, and will help with citations while typing their paper. Third, each paragraph should be supported by a variety of sources, but each paragraph will have certain authors that are most useful. (Ambrose can be used for any depending on the excerpts you select. The Nat Geo Video can be used for in most places as well. Fisher focuses on science and Nature and Jones on Leadership. You'll get the idea, and hopefully so will the students! I will also include of somewhat more complete outline which provides ideas for the entire paper should you choose to use it.

Step 4:

I suggest writing the paper (using projector if possible) to write most or all of the first 2 paragraphs together as a class. This gives students a feel for the writing and the internal citation. After that, they should be ready to write the last three paragraphs on their own (you'll be there to actively assist!).

Step 5:

When creating the Works Cited, explain to students the reason for using a works cited page, and how they differ from bibliographies. Making use of online tools is very helpful, but doing one on your own first will likely help you help students to avoid pit falls (like tricky judgment with what information goes where).

Step 6:

Have students proof read their own paper, than trade with a partner for further editing. At this point, I really encourage a strong finish to the unit. Student may have just completed the best paper they have ever written. They may feel proud, or at least relief. Remind of the how they used detailed information, from multiple sources, and created an *original* paper (all important keys to writing quality, non-plagiarized papers).

## Grading Rubric

	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Well Done	Comments
Outline	1 Sources and information are missing, or out of place. Paragraphs lack distinction	2 3 4 Paragraphs and well defined and organized. Sources and information are mostly intact	5 Outline looks nearly flawless. Organization, source identification clear and easy to use	
Essay: Paragraphs, Organization and Grammatical work	1 2 3 There are not 5 or more clear paragraphs. Essay is hard to follow and lacks clarity	4 5 6 7 Paragraphs are neatly defined. There is general flow and focus. However, grammatical errors and lack of precision take away from the essay	8 9 10 Paragraphs are neatly defined. There is focus and clarity. There are few grammatical errors and the essay flows from beginning to end	
Essay: Internal Citation	1 Internal citation does not follow the proper formatting is often not present	2 3 4 Internal citation is often used, and often in correct format; however, inconsistency remains	5 Internal citation is used after each necessary statement. Formatting is correct in all cases	
Essay: Appropriate use of sources	1 2 Sources are rarely used, misquoted, or out of context	3 4 5 Sources are used well, but could incorporate varieties of sources and usage style better	6 7 Sources are used well, quoted and non-quoted material is used well. Each source is utilized but not over used	
Essay: Formatting	1 Formatting specifications are not followed	2 Most formatting specifications are followed	3 Formatting specifications are closely followed	
Essay: Overall Impression	1 There were errors in organization, clarity and technical aspects	2 3 4 The essay was well written, but errors or lack of precision took away from the overall work	5 The essay was well done in nearly all aspects. The technical and creative portions of work were both impressive	
Works Cited:	1 Incomplete or poorly formatted	2 3 4 Mostly correct, but containing a few errors	5 Perfectly formatted with no errors	

Total Score:            / 40 pts. Comments:



### Works Cited

Ambrose, Stephan E. *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*. First Touchstone Edition 1997. New York, NY: Touchstone, 1997. 121 -289. Print.

Bridges, Jeff, Perf. *Lewis & Clark: Great Journey West*. National Geographic Society: 2002, DVD.

Fisher, Ron. "Lewis and Clark: Naturalist and Explores." *National Geographic*. Oct. 1998: 76-93. Print.

Jones, Landon. "Leading Men." *Time*. 8 Jul. 2002: 54-58. Print.

Kirn, Walter. "Lewis and Clark: The Journey that Changed America Forever." *Time*. 8 Jul. 2002: 36-41. Print.

## Lewis and Clark Essay

Over the course of the next few weeks we will be studying and writing an essay on the Lewis and Clark. The story of Lewis and Clark is often considered one of the greatest adventure stories in American history.

In addition to learning about their journey, we will be working closely as a class to write an essay about this story. Writing an essay can be complicated, but I will assist you with the research, learning, organizing and formatting of the paper. We will use MLA format which will prepare you for future high school and college papers that you'll be asked to write.

We are going to use 5 sources and write an essay that is unlike others that we read. Plagiarism is a common problem in writing, but I will show you how to avoid it, by creating a new focus to your essay, and by properly giving credit to the sources you use.

Our steps will include:

- Reading our sources
- Organizing our information in an outline
- Writing our papers with internal citation
- And creating a works cited page.

Your paper should be formatted as follows (note: this is not MLA style):

- Use 12 pt. Times New Roman Font.
- Center and underline your title
- Type your name in the top left corner
- Double Space your essay

The due date will be determined as we get closer to the end of the project. If you work hard, ask questions, and have regular attendance, I am confident this project will guide you to writing the best essay you've ever written and will give you confidence for all future essays.

## Unit 5: Slavery in America: Building a Memorial

**Description:** Teaching about slavery in America is one of the most exciting, and challenging, topics of study for an American History teacher. It's exciting because there is so much information that is both historical and personal in nature, that it lends itself nicely to engaging lessons. It's also a good topic because it forces a lot of critical thinking to occur, and because its significance can't be questioned. However, the topic is also challenging, in that the material is racial sensitive (especially to some students), there is also so much to cover and it does feel right to exclude any of it.

When I teach about slavery, I try to follow a (admittedly simple) storyline or process of a slave's journey. Using some sources from "Eyewitnesstohistory.com" and few other websites, I begin with a reading about the "kidnapping" of slaves from Africa, then study the Middle Passage, followed by a reading about a slave auction, and finally end with a little about the daily life of a slave. When the unit is nearly over, I assign a project for students which consists of designing and describing a slave memorial that they would like to see created (perhaps in Washington D.C.).

As I've said above this topic in history is so incredible in scope, importance, and teachable skills that I'd rather leave this unit open to each teacher. However, below I'll share a few of the ideas I've used in the past that I thought were valuable. In addition, I'll leave you with a creative summative assessment piece that I strongly encourage using in some form as I have found it very useful.

**Goals:** When studying slavery and the slave trade, I want students to be able to empathize with the human elements of slavery, explain the factual and historical elements of the slave trade and provide perspective on the historical significance of slavery in America.

### General Lessons

As I said above, I try to cover a rough storyline from "kidnapping," to the Middle Passage, the slave auction, and daily life on a plantation. For each of these, the website Eyewitnesstohistory.com has great primary source reading to read. Although you may not use this for each portion of the story, they are all worthwhile.

In addition, there is a website called The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database found at <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/index.faces>. This is a really incredible website that I strongly recommend using. Attached with this unit is a worksheet I created to be used with this website.

When talking about the kidnapping and Middle Passage, I used a part of a period to turn off the lights and look at a few images of these events. Then, quietly, I asked students to do some

reflective/ creative writing. I think this activity breaks up routine and sets precedents of remembering the human element of this topic.

For the daily life on a plantation, I suggest looking at the website “Slavery in America” at <http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/>. This site was created for the PBS series, Slavery and the making of America. Both of these sites have some great resources.

In general, there is no shortage of quality tools to teach about the slavery, so find something that you’ve been lacking (using technology, reading, writing, etc.) and plug it into this unit.

**Final project for slavery unit:** Creating a memorial.

Look to the assignment sheet provided for more details about this project, but here’s the run down. This project incorporates creativity and knowledge as students design a memorial similar to some of the memorials in Washington D.C. Prior to the beginning of the project I show picture of some memorials which is usually interesting to students, and I share ideas about how to design or represent large numbers and large scale statistics using symbols.

The assignment is fun, but also provides a good assessment of student knowledge of the topic of slavery.

(Assignment sheet and assessment below)

## Creating a Memorial

Imagine you've been given the task of creating a memorial for the slaves in our country's history. Your memorial will be erected in Washington D.C. and the donations to build are in the millions of dollars. And you've got an acre of land to use as you see fit.

Your job today is to design (a basic blue print) or what you would build. Your job is NOT to create a poster board, but rather to design construction ideas, and plan out how you'd present information.

### Things to consider in your design

- Indoor or outdoor exhibits (or both)
- Design of buildings or structure (symbolic, replica, functional, etc.)
- How will you display stats, facts, information?
- Consider lighting, color, walking path (or no path).
- Will you have a simple memorial, or a museum feel?

### Things to consider for information

- What information will you display?
  - o Personal accounts
  - o Statistics
  - o Summaries
  - o Will you symbolically represent numbers?
  - o Will you focus on all years of slavery?
  - o How will you cover the emancipation of slavery?
  - o Will you have an "experience" portion of the memorial?

### What to do, and turn in.

1. You should have sketched plans of the overall (basic design) of your memorial.
2. You should have written out clearly all the information you plan to display (and show where and how it will be displayed).
  - A. You must include at least 1 personally account (or biographical info.)
  - B. You must have at least 5 "summary type" informational paragraphs
  - C. You must include at least 5 relevant and accurate statistics.
3. Have a one page typed description (basically in a format of a proposal) of your idea and the experience you plan to create.

Sources to use...

Your textbook

The online sites of. "eyewitness to history"

"Slavery in America"

"Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade"

Look for other credible websites, books here in class, or resources we've already used.

**Assessment:** To assess this project, I begin by letting students self-assess their work by using a check list. I used the same sheet to fill in scores relating to those items. See assessment sheet below.

Personal Checklist and Grading Sheet

1. Have you sketched a design of the basic plan of you memorial or monument? Yes \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you written out the following information?
  - A. 1 personal account of a slave. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. 5 “Summary type” informational paragraphs on different topics. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. 5 relevant and accurate statistics regarding slavery. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does your one page typed description of the memorial you designed provide a perspective on the significance of slavery in America and the experience you want visitors to have? Yes \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do your personal account and your 5 summaries show empathy for the tragic struggles slaves faced in their lives? Yes \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do your personal account and 5 summaries explain some of the historical aspects of the slave trade and daily plantation life? Yes \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does everyone in your group have their names on all the work to be turned in? Is all your work neatly organized and paper clipped together? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

Hey everyone, glance below at how you will be scored.

- |                                       |                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Interesting and creative design    | _____ / 10 pts. |
| 2. Personal account is well written   | _____ / 10 pts. |
| 3. 5 Summary Paragraphs               | _____ / 25 pts. |
| 4. 5 relevant and accurate statistics | _____ / 10 pts. |
| Total Score                           | _____ / 55 pts. |

Comments:

## Creating a Memorial

Imagine you've been given the task of creating a memorial for the slaves in our country's history. Your memorial will be erected in Washington D.C. and the donations to build are in the millions of dollars. And you've got an acre of land to use as you see fit.

Your job today is to design (a basic blue print) or what you would build. Your job is NOT to create a poster board, but rather to design construction ideas, and plan out how you'd present information.

### Things to consider in your design

- Indoor or outdoor exhibits (or both)
- Design of buildings or structure (symbolic, replica, functional, etc.)
- How will you display stats, facts, information?
- Consider lighting, color, walking path (or no path).
- Will you have a simple memorial, or a museum feel?

### Things to consider for information

- What information will you display?
  - o Personal accounts
  - o Statistics
  - o Summaries
  - o Will you symbolically represent numbers?
  - o Will you focus on all years of slavery?
  - o How will you cover the emancipation of slavery?
  - o Will you have an "experience" portion of the memorial?

### What to do, and turn in.

4. You should have sketched plans of the overall (basic design) of your memorial.
5. You should have written out clearly all the information you plan to display (and show where and how it will be displayed).
  - D. You must include at least 1 personally account (or biographical info.)
  - E. You must have at least 5 "summary type" informational paragraphs
  - F. You must include at least 5 relevant and accurate statistics.
6. Have a one page typed description (basically in a format of a proposal) of your idea and the experience you plan to create.

Sources to use.

Your textbook

The online sites of. "eyewitness to history"

"Slavery in America"

"Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade"

Look for other credible websites, books here in class, or resources we've already used.

## Atlantic Slave Trade

Today, we are going to explore a website that is full of information about the slave trade in the Atlantic. Follow the instructions below to complete the sheet.

First, go to google and type, “slave voyages.”

1. Go to the “Assessing the Slave Trade” and click on “Estimates.” Now answer the following Questions.

- A. How many slaves were brought to the US in between 1500 and 1866?
- B. When was the first year slaves were brought to the US?
- C. Which country brought the most slaves to its lands?
- D. How many total slaves were transported in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade?
- E. \*In what *ten year* period did the most US bring in the most slaves?
- F. \*How many slaves died on the voyages to the US in these years (use embark/disembark stats)?

Now, click the timeline tab above, and answer the following.

- A. Estimate how many slaves were traded in the year 1776 (America’s Revolutionary).
- B. What happens in the year 1808 and how does that affect slave trade numbers (at least initially)?

Using the Map tap.

- A. Find how many people disembarked in North America.
- B. Find how many people disembarked in Brazil.

Now, using the “Introductory Maps” under “Assessing the Slave Trade,” answer the following.

- A. (MAP 1) In a few sentences, describe what this map shows and what information you are getting from it.
- B. (MAP 7) In a few sentences, describe what this map shows and what information you are getting from it.



Lastly, go the “Essays” tab underneath “Assessing the Slave Trade.”

Read the “introduction” and write a short summary.

Then read about “The Middle Passage” and write a short summary.

Finally, look at the left column and find “Vignettes” and click on “Ayuba Suleiman Diallo...”.  
Read that, and write a reaction.

## Unit 6: Civil War

**Description:** I always say about history topics, “Someone could study the Civil War for an entire semester, year, or even life time.” Therefore we have to pick *what* specifically we are going to cover when we get to the teaching of the Civil War. As usually, I tend to spend little time with dates and battles, as military history can be so overwhelming, not time is left to discuss the ideas, lessons, and outcomes resulting from the War.

If time allows, I do enjoy teaching about the Battle of Gettysburg, as this battle was clearly an important one, and one that has been well captured in Michael Shaara’s, “The Killer Angels,” and the movie (based on his book) “Gettysburg.”

Below I have provided an outline of the topics I would generally focus on while covering the Civil War. In the [ ]’s I have provided ideas for resources, class discussions, or activities that may work well for covering the topics. Being this is the last unit of the curriculum, I leaving out further instruction, in hope that you (the user) will adapt the ideas from previous units and create their own lessons. Likewise, in your assessments (formative and summative) I encourage you to focus on the academic skills used by your students as much as on the content learned.

**Goals:** At the end of this unit, I want students to be able to explain the Southerners’ argument for states’ rights and to explain the economic importance of slavery to south. I also want them to be able to compare these concepts with modern issues [such as state rights concerning certain political issues, and the important role of the labor force in a market economy (*respectively*)]. Likewise, students should discuss the importance of maintaining the Union as Lincoln argued and relate it to military and economic power that comes with a large, unified country.

### Civil War Outline: Topics and Ideas

#### A. Background and Causes

- I. Lasting problems from Constitutions [I have used the first chapter of Bruce Catton’s “The Civil War” to give some background to the war. In addition to the background, I would prepare a short lecture and collect a few resources, i.e. The Constitution, and talk about Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist and the 3/5 Compromise.]
- II. Different economies
- III. State’s Rights
- IV. Slavery

#### B. The North and the Union

- I. What did the north want from its government? [Catton covers this]

- II. What was the North's view on Slavery? [Many were morally opposed, but not everyone]
- III. What was the challenge of having to be on the offensive? [Travelling, supplies, and how do you force someone to agree to be a part of something they don't want to be a part of? This can be a good discussion and allows for complex ideas]

#### C. The South and the Confederacy

- I. They wanted independence (similar to Revolutionary Patriots?) [Compare and contrast with "Patriots". How were they viewed in the South/ North? What if they'd won?]
- II. Importance of slavery to economy [Even if you opposed slavery, there would be economic collapse if they were suddenly freed.]
- III. Smaller army, fighting at home, but having land destroyed [Cost of war, community and farms destroyed.]

#### D. Lincoln

- I. What was his main goal surrounding the Civil War [Preserve the Union right? Not to free slaves.]
- II. Biographical Information [Any biographical info could be worthwhile]
- III. Writing and Speeches [Speech transcripts and letters can be great Primary Sources, be sure to use a few to discuss the content.]

#### E. Battles of the Civil War

- I. First battles [Fort Sumter]
- II. Important and famous (Antietam, Gettysburg) [As I've said, I often don't spend much time on Military history. For those interested, there are countless resources. However, I do believe there is value in learning about a battle or two. Knowing about the style of battle, and the gruesome nature of the war does help both this tragedy in context.]
- III. Weapons and the wounds of war [The wounds of the war were very numerous and gruesome, it again adds context to the war as a whole].

- F. State's rights today [This is one place I want to be sure to spend a little time. If someone were to ask (even rhetorically), "Why do I need to know this today?", this is your answer. Our government is designed to share its power between the federal, state and local levels, and I think it's a good thing for students to discuss these issues.]

- I. It's still a debate [What level should rule on these issues, education, abortion, etc.? What if a state wanted to succeed because it disagreed strongly with a Federal Law?]
- II. Importance of the Union today [A brief discussion to talk about the significance of the Civil War.]

**Assessment:** The goals stated above contain complex issues with a broad range of possible activities. I suggest assessing some of these goals informally, with class discussion and daily activities. I also suggest that for 1 or 2 of the goals, students are asked to present a short PowerPoint, or write a short essay detailing the similarities and differences of the issues faced during the Civil War compared with modern issues.