

Black History Month Lessons: Resistance and Liberation



Resources Overview

Our mission is to provide rigorous, engaging and joyful lessons for learners to explore the richness of Black history and the continued creation of history. We will provide a variety of readings, resources, and activities for different topics in Black history each week, to push learners to investigate the trials and triumphs of Black Americans throughout U.S. History.

Please note that resources, which may include Newsela articles, videos from various content providers, or external activities will be hyperlinked in the activities.

Table of Contents

- [Lesson 1: Africans Enslaved on Plantations to Free Blacks in Sanctuary Cities](#)
 - [Worksheet for Lesson 1](#)
- [Lesson 2: Pushing Civil Rights and Progress](#)
- [Lesson 3: Toiling the Land to Owning the Dream](#)
 - [Worksheet for Lesson 3](#)
- [SEL Connection](#)
 - [Worksheet for SEL Connection](#)

This Week's Focus

“Where there is power, there is resistance.” Resistance means the refusal to accept or comply with something. In the case of Black Americans, resistance was necessary in order to achieve liberty. In these text sets, you will see evidence of Black individuals and groups consistently fighting for their own liberty. In doing so, Black Americans transitioned their identity from being owned by others to owning their dreams. Asè!

Lesson 1: Africans Enslaved on Plantations to Free Blacks in Sanctuary Cities

1. **Introduce:** Use the [Image Analysis](#) graphic organizer (included on next slide) to record your thoughts about [this photo](#) from one of the included articles. Post a few of your responses on your Learning Management System.
2. **Read and Learn:** As you closely read, [Before sanctuary cities, how black Americans protected fugitive slaves](#) highlight efforts to *gain* freedom for African Americans. Annotate questions and connections that arise. Then as you read, [The "kidnapping club" featured cops selling free Black New Yorkers into slavery](#) highlight efforts to *stop* freedom for African Americans.
3. **Discuss:** Share your annotations on your Learning Management Platform, and discuss answers to the following questions. Note the differences or similarities of your ideas with your peers':
 - What do these stories show about the resilience of African Americans who were once enslaved?
 - What were a fugitive enslaved Africans and free Black Americans truly seeking?
 - What connections do you see between kidnapping clubs and issues around police brutality today?
4. **Create:** Research and design a Virtual Museum exhibit that displays a timeline representing the journey from enslavement to freedom.

Image Analysis

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Choose 3 details in the image and describe them using words and images on the LEFT. On the RIGHT, add notes about the details based on your background knowledge, text you read about this topic, and class conversation.

Describe detail #1:	Analysis of detail:
Describe detail #2:	Analysis of detail:
Describe detail #3:	Analysis of detail:
Notes about details:	Analysis notes:

Lesson 2: Pushing Civil Rights and Progress

- Introduce:** Read the quote and take some time to respond to the questions on a piece of paper: *“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”* Nelson Mandela
 - On a scale of 1-5, 1 being somewhat true and 5 being very true, what number represents your thoughts on this quote? What forms of resistance have been used in the past to fight against racism? Why does racism persist?
- Read and Learn:** Closely read two articles: [Ebenezer Baptist](#) and [Black students who integrated a high school recall their role in history](#). As you read, use one color to highlight examples of how African Americans fought for justice. Use a second color to highlight challenges they encountered. Use the annotation tool to add your text-to-world connections.
- Discuss:** Find a peer to discuss the readings with, over chat or video, using the following guiding questions:
 - What did James Wilson Kilby do to resist injustice? How was his approach different than the approach of Martin Luther King, Sr.?
 - How did their identities motivate their desire to achieve Civil Rights and justice for African Americans?
 - Why was Ebenezer Baptist Church significant then and today?
 - Principal Amy Gluber said, "They need to know more about why they might need to take a stand like we did." How can raise your voice for liberation for African American students in schools?
- Create:** You may choose one assignment:

Option 1. Write a Blog post responding to the questions: *What are forms of resistance to combat discrimination? What makes certain forms of resistance more effective than others?* Cite evidence from the articles to support your response.

Option 2. Create a Civil Rights Digital Story that shows the connection between the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Lives Matter Movement. Use photos, recordings, film, songs and/or interviews.

Lesson 3: Toiling the Land to Owning the Dream

1. **Introduce:** *Note: President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act on May 20, 1862. On January 1, 1863, Daniel Freeman made the first claim under the Act, which gave citizens and freed Blacks up to 160 acres of public land provided they live on it, improve it, and pay a small registration fee.*

If you had a large amount of land, what would you do with it? Would you build on it? Would you have crops? Watch the video [Black Homesteading in America](#) (3:13), and as you watch record your thoughts on [Connect-Extend-Challenge](#) graphic organizer (included on next slide).

2. **Read and Learn:** First, read [All-black towns across America: Life was hard but full of promise](#). As you read, add additional notes to your Connect-Extend-Challenge graphic organizer. Next, read [The new sisterhood of Black female homesteaders](#), and select one color to highlight examples of trauma experienced by women in the article. Use a second color to highlight examples of the triumphs each Black woman experienced. Add connections and questions you have.
3. **Discuss:** Using your Learning Management Platform, share your responses with a small breakout group or as a written post:
 - What types of traumas and triumphs did Chantel Johnson, Aja Yasire and Jacqueline Smith experience similar to early homesteaders?
 - How did stereotypes minimize the contribution of Black women homesteaders?
 - How does homesteading represent liberation for African Americans then and now?
4. **Create:** Write 1-2 paragraphs in response to the prompt: Life, *liberty* and the pursuit of happiness are guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence. How does Homestead Act and homesteading represent liberty for African Americans?

Connect-Extend-Challenge

Name: _____

Date: _____ Class: _____

Directions: Fill in the chart below based on your reading(s).

Connect	Extend	Challenge
What connections can you make between what you read and what you already know?	How did your reading extend your thinking or give you new ideas?	What ideas from your reading are still challenging you? What questions do you still have?

Social-Emotional Learning Connection

Emotion Tracker: Reading about Black Americans fighting for their rights and refusing to comply with injustices may evoke a wide range of physical and emotional responses. Engaging with this content may also prompt you to think about current activism such as the Black Lives Matter Movement and global responses to the murder of George Floyd.

To better navigate and understand these emotions, fill out the [Newsela Emotion Tracker](#) worksheet before and after the lessons. Doing so can help you stay grounded and mindful while engaging with sensitive topics.

CASEL Competency Alignment: Self Awareness, Self Management

SEE Learning Alignment: Personal Awareness (Attention and Self Awareness), Personal Compassion (Self Compassion), Personal Engagement (Self Regulation)

Emotion Tracker

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Part 1: Before the Lesson

1. Circle the emoji that best represents how you're feeling right now.



2. Explain why you circled the emoji above.

Part 2: After the Lesson

1. Circle the emoji that best represents how you're feeling right now.



2. Explain why you circled the emoji above.

Reflection: What do you notice about your feelings before and after the lesson? Did your feelings change? Why or why not?
