Lesson Title: “In Someone Else’s Shoes”

Grade Levels: 4-8

Class Time needed: One class session

Content Standard: See page 36

Objectives:

Students will develop and demonstrate empathy for the conditions and feelings of those who were held in the slave pen, and describe these experiences in writing.

Rationale:

To enhance the experience of visiting the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, and deepen the students’ understanding of the injustices of slavery, they should put themselves in the mindset of people held in the slave pen as property of another person.

Description of lesson/activity:

1. Students are to write a journal entry as if they were “in the shoes” of an enslaved person.

Materials:

“In Someone Else’s Shoes” worksheet

Assessment:

Formal: Journal entry
The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center houses a slave pen once owned by John W. Anderson. It is believed that inside this “house” slaves were held before Anderson would take them to the Deep South for sale.

“In Someone Else’s Shoes”

Create a journal entry as though you were walking in the shoes of an individual who may have been held in the slave pen for a few months before being sold into the Deep South. In this portion of the journal:

Tell what your day would be like.
Tell what your emotions would be. Would you get along with the other enslaved people?
Talk about what the other people in the slave pen are feeling and doing.
How long have you been in the slave pen?
Where is your family?