

Lesson Title: Create Your Own “Harper’s Weekly” Antebellum Newspaper

Grade Levels: 4-8

Class Time needed: Two or Three class periods (Varies depending on the age of students)

Content Standard: See page 36

Objectives:

Students will learn about key events / people in Antebellum America, i.e. Compromise of 1850, Missouri Compromise, Frederick Douglass, and Harriett Beecher Stowe.

Rationale:

By researching, in detail, a key person or event of the antebellum time period, students will enhance their understanding of lessons taught at the Freedom Center. Students will also improve their research and presentation skills through this project.

Description of lesson / activity:

1. Discuss with students where they can find information on historical events. Possible questions could be:

Where would you get information on current events?

Where would you find information on the war in Iraq or genocides taking place around the world? (Teacher can come up with detailed list.) Keep a list of student responses on the board. Teacher could also have possible historic newspapers, magazines, and news clips to show to students. Next, discuss with students which one of these were used in Antebellum America. (10 minutes)

2. Teacher will need to present project prior to attending the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Students may work together to create a selection of newspapers or work independently.

Each student / group should have a different event and person to report on. Teacher also may include key summaries on each event / person to help student project. Length of each piece is at the discretion of the teacher. (5 to 10 minutes)

3. Students will first need to research their event or person. Each student will need to pick 4 to 5 key points on each. Students will then write their newspaper article.

Students should also have an illustration that represents something that they learned about at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Students will have to pick a title for their newspaper article. Students will then put the illustration, articles, and title onto a large poster board / paper. (Two or Three class periods)

4. Students will present projects to the class. Each student / group will have 3 to 5 minutes to present. (Depending on class size)



Materials:

Crayons or color pencils
Pencils and pens
Large poster board
Paper
Glue
Tape
Student scissors

Optional Resources:

History/Social Studies Textbook, Internet, Encyclopedia

Assessment:

Formal: Final project, including: participation, creativity, accuracy, length, the illustration, and/or other factors that the teacher may want to include.

