

## NEH 2016 Courting Liberty Final Lesson

**Discipline:** U.S. History (9-12)

**Lesson Type:** SHEG Inquiry Model

**Rationale:** The antebellum period was a tumultuous time in U.S. history. While the modern American can hardly fathom living in a nation with institutionalized slavery, there were many staunch advocates in the antebellum era who could not imagine living without it. This lesson seeks to expose students to proslavery thought using the inquiry model in an effort to help them understand why something so horrifying to a modern individual existed for centuries within the nation.

**Instructional Objectives:**

- 1) Students will be able to identify proslavery advocates and their arguments by completing the readings individually and participating in a class discussion.
- 2) Students will practice their analytical writing skills by completing the post-lesson assessment.

**Materials:** Packets of readings from Paul Finkelman's *Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003) (given prior to class)

**Procedure:**

*Initiation* (10 minutes): Prior to class, students should be introduced to the question of "In a democratic republic that valued equality, how could slavery possibly exist?" With that question in mind, students should come to class having read and annotated the following passages from *Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South* by Paul Finkelman:

*Notes on the State of Virginia*, 1787 by Thomas Jefferson (p. 47-54)

*Speech in the U.S. Senate*, 1837 by John C. Calhoun (p. 54-60)

*Slavery and the Bible*, 1850 by De Bow's Review (p. 108-114)

Once students arrive to class, they should find their assigned partner to share their first impression of the sources. Why surprised them? Was anything confusing? Then, pairs should work together to identify the following features with using the A.P.P.A.R.T.S. reading strategy:

A: Author – Who is the author? What is his/her role/title/etc.?

P: Place and Time – When and where was this source published?

P: Prior Knowledge – What do you know about the topic?

A: Audience – For whom is this source intended?

R: Reason – Why was this source made?

T: The main idea – what is the central point of this source?

S: Significance – What is the overall impact of this source on our study?

*Development* (25-30 minutes): Reconvene the entire class and ask for pairs to share their first impressions, writing key words from their descriptions on the board. Then, review the A.P.P.A.R.T.S. answers. Once done, have students arrange their desks in a circle and facilitate an open discussion on the question posed when they first received the source: "In a democratic republic that valued equality, how could slavery possibly exist?" Students should be expected to participate at least once or twice (depending on the size of the class - maybe more if it is a smaller class) in the discussion, but are encouraged to participate without raising their hands. The teacher may need to intervene as needed, but be sure to encourage the class to run the discussion on their own and review expectations for respectful participation beforehand. Students are also required to take notes on the discussion to help them with the reflection that will be assigned at the conclusion of the discussion.

*Closing*: Students should write a 2-3 paragraph response to the original question, using the contents of the discussion in their response. This may need to be completed for homework.

**Assessment**: Students will be asked to conduct research on the abolitionist movement and identify an abolitionist who directly contradicted the claims made in the readings they completed for this lesson. Students will be asked to write an analytical essay comparing and contrasting the two viewpoints, both of the individuals and of the pro-slavery and anti-slavery movements themselves.