
Black Genocide in the United States (High School United States History)

Prepared by the Working Group for Holocaust, Genocide of Indigenous Peoples, and Other Genocides Education pursuant to Laws of Minnesota 2023, Chapter 55, Article 2, Section 63 and in support of Minnesota Statutes 120B.252. Any modifications from this original version are not attributable to the work of the Working Group.

Exploring how freedom was contested during the American Revolution.

In this unit, students explore how slavery shaped the American Revolution and challenged the meaning of freedom in the founding of the United States. They will examine how enslaved and free Black people used the ideas of liberty to fight for their own rights—even when those rights were denied by law. Through primary and secondary source analysis, students will analyze how freedom was contested and redefined during this time, and how historians understand that struggle today. The unit ends with a Structured Academic Controversy that helps students connect past to struggles for justice today.

Table of Contents

Black Genocide in the United States (High School United States History).....	1
Inquiry Design Model (IDM)	1
Beyond the Lesson.....	2
Student Discussion Guide for Complex Topics	4
Class Discussion Norms	4
Sentence Stems for Evidence-Based Discussions	5
Educator Preparation Guide.....	6
Why This Unit Matters	6
Understanding Black Genocide in the Americas	6
Understanding the Process of Enslavement.....	7
Key Historical Themes	7
Framing, Language and Terminology	8
Supporting Question 1: How did slavery impact the development of what becomes the United States in the era leading up to the American Revolution?.....	10
Supporting Question 2: In what ways did free and enslaved people use the language of the Revolution to argue for their own rights?.....	11
Supporting Question 3: How did the institution of slavery impact America’s founding era documents (specifically the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution)?.....	12
Supporting Question 4: How do historians develop and support arguments surrounding slavery’s impact on the American Revolution?	13
Key Concepts for Educators.....	13
Genocide Pre-Lesson for High School.....	14
Learning Objective.....	14
Educator Prep Note	14
Core Video Resource	14
Lesson Structure	14

Definitions Related to the Concept of Genocide.....	16
Black Genocide in America (High School IDM).....	18

Inquiry Design Model (IDM)

The Inquiry Design Model (IDM) is a framework that supports student-centered, question-driven learning. The IDM was created by [C3 Teachers](#) to align with the C3 (College, Career and Civic Life) Framework for Social Studies State Standards from the National Council for the Social Studies. The template provided in these materials was adapted for use with [Minnesota’s 2021 K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies](#).

Each IDM is structured to promote student inquiry and critical thinking. Units include three basic parts:

Questions	Tasks	Featured Sources
Compelling question: A big-picture, open-ended question to anchor the unit (e.g., What makes a society vulnerable to genocide?). If a compelling question cannot be answered in more than one reasonable way—or if disagreeing with it would seem offensive or revisionist—it is not a safe or productive question to open for inquiry. Compelling questions should be open questions in the field—not settled questions. Supporting Questions: Smaller, guiding questions that build student understanding over time. They ask students to explain or describe settled ideas and concepts.	Formative tasks: Opportunities for students to explain, describe, and apply their learning throughout the unit. Formative tasks engage directly with the supporting question. Summative tasks: A final project, presentation, or argument using evidence from the inquiry in which students directly answer the compelling question. Taking informed action: Students connect their learning to real-world issues and consider how they can make a difference.	Carefully selected primary and secondary sources that support historical thinking and student analysis. Primary Source: Used to understand a perspective from the time period being studied. Secondary Source: A narrative interpretation of the past.

Beyond the Lesson

This guide is designed to support high school educators in teaching genocide through the Inquiry Design Models (IDMs) on the Holocaust, genocide of Indigenous Peoples, and Black genocide in the United States and Americas. It addresses key pedagogical considerations to ensure the teaching is historically accurate, emotionally responsible, developmentally appropriate and relevant to students.

Deepen Understanding of Genocide

Before teaching, educators should:

- **Comprehend the Legal and Historical Definitions:** Familiarize themselves with the [1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide's](#) definition and understand its applications and limitations. Find the definitions used to guide the creation of these materials in the Glossary of Terms.
- **Recognize Genocide as a Process:** Acknowledge that genocide encompasses a series of actions, including discrimination, dehumanization, and systemic violence, not solely mass killings. Consider reading Gregory Stanton's resource on Genocide Watch about the [Ten Stages of Genocide](#).
- **Explore Genocide Studies:** Investigate various genocides to understand common patterns and unique circumstances, enhancing the depth of instruction.

Address Developmental Concerns

High school students are capable of engaging with complex and nuanced content. Educators should:

- **Foster Critical Thinking:** Encourage analysis of historical sources, identification of bias, and evaluation of differing perspectives.
- **Promote Ethical Reflection:** Facilitate discussions on moral dilemmas, individual and collective responsibility, and the consequences of action or inaction.
- **Support Emotional Processing:** Provide space for students to express and manage emotional responses to challenging content outside of graded or evaluated activities.

Include Agency and Resilience

Instruction should highlight:

- **Survivor Testimonies:** Incorporate firsthand accounts to humanize historical events and illustrate resilience.
- **Resistance Movements:** Study organized and individual acts of resistance to demonstrate agency amidst oppression. Support students in identifying and defining acts of agency in historical settings.
- **Cultural Continuity:** Explore how targeted communities have preserved and revitalized cultural identities post-genocide.

Implement Trauma-Informed Practices

To create a supportive learning environment:

- **Establish Clear Guidelines:** Set expectations for respectful discourse and provide content warnings as necessary.
- **Integrate Reflective Activities:** Use journaling, art, or discussion to help students process content outside of graded activities.
- **Collaborate with Support Staff:** Engage counselors or psychologists when addressing particularly sensitive topics.

Connect Past to Present

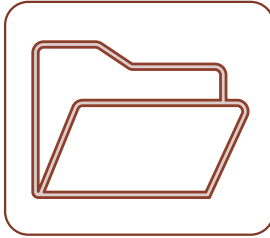
Encourage students to:

- **Identify Contemporary Parallels:** Analyze current events through the lens of historical genocides to understand ongoing issues of injustice.
- **Engage in Civic Action:** Develop projects or initiatives that promote awareness and prevention of genocide and mass atrocities.

Student Discussion Guide for Complex Topics

Classroom norms and sample language to support students engaging in complex and sensitive discussions.

Class Discussion Norms



1. Speak from Evidence, Not Assumptions

- Always support your ideas with a quote, source, or specific example.
- Focus on what the source shows or says—not stereotypes or generalizations.
- Refer to the author, speaker, or document by name when possible.



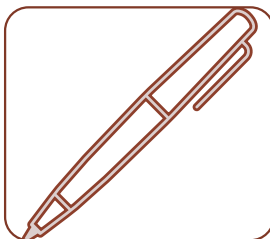
2. Listen to Understand

- Pay attention to what others say before responding.
- Don't interrupt—let others finish their thoughts.
- Reflect back what you heard others say.



3. Respect Different Perspectives

- Value the diverse ideas and experiences of classmates.
- Disagree with the idea, not the person.



4. Be Open to Revising Your Thinking

- It's okay to change your mind after hearing new information.

Sentence Stems for Evidence-Based Discussions

Sharing an Idea

- “According to the source titled ____, ...”
- “In the video/text by ____, it says, ____, which shows that...”
- “One piece of evidence that supports my idea is...”

Building on Ideas

- “I agree with ____ because the source also says...”
- “To add to what ____ said, I noticed that...”
- “That connects to another example from ____, where...”

Disagreeing Respectfully

- “I see it differently because the text says...”
- “I respectfully disagree. In ____, the evidence shows...”
- “While I understand your point, another interpretation could be...”

Asking for Clarification

- “Can you say more about where you saw that in the source?”
- “What part of the document made you think that?”
- “Can you explain how that connects to the idea of freedom/community?”

Reflecting or Revising

- “Now that I’ve heard ____, I’m rethinking...”
- “This makes me wonder if...”
- “I used to think ____, but now I think...”

Educator Preparation Guide

Teaching about the genocide of Black Americans during the Revolutionary era is a critical responsibility that demands historical accuracy, cultural humility, and a deep understanding of systemic oppression and survival. As educators prepare to facilitate this high school IDM unit, it is essential to approach the content with care, respect, and a willingness to confront the contradictions at the heart of the nation's founding. This guide is designed to help you build the confidence and grounding needed to support meaningful, inquiry-based conversations about slavery, resistance, freedom, and belonging. By deepening your understanding of Black genocide and cultural survival, you honor the voices and visions of Black communities—then and now—and empower your students to think critically and compassionately about the foundations of American democracy.

Why This Unit Matters

This unit challenges students to investigate the central paradox of the American founding: how a revolution premised on liberty coexisted with the institution of slavery. Through a close study of the Revolutionary era, students examine how Black Americans navigated and contested systems of power, redefining freedom on their own terms—even when denied basic rights. By analyzing primary sources, arguments from historians, and founding documents, students gain insight into how Black resistance shaped, and continues to shape, our understanding of American democracy.

By engaging in this unit, educators support students to:

- Analyze how slavery and racism shaped the founding of the United States.
- Understand freedom as a contested and evolving idea.
- Center Black voices in conversations about liberty, revolution, and resistance.

Understanding Black Genocide in the Americas

Understanding Black genocide in the U.S. requires educators to take a broad, historically grounded view of the term. Genocide includes not only mass killings, but also systemic efforts to destroy the cultural, political, social, or familial fabric of a group. For Black Americans, genocide has included chattel slavery, forced family separation, legal exclusion, cultural erasure, and mass incarceration.

Yet even in the face of such destruction, Black families and organizations have consistently resisted through cultural creation and survival. They built churches, schools, mutual aid societies, legal cases, and newspapers that preserved identity, demanded dignity, and fought for liberation.

This broader framing helps educators and students understand how the process of enslavement—and the resistance to it—fit within a longer continuum of historical oppression and cultural resilience.

Understanding the Process of Enslavement

To help students engage with the questions of resistance, liberation, and redefinition of community, educators must first understand the process of enslavement itself. This includes how people became enslaved and what they endured at every stage—from capture and forced migration, to sale, labor exploitation, and legal dehumanization.

Black genocide in America began long before the founding of the United States. Enslavement was not simply a labor system; it was a carefully structured process designed to sever connection to family, history, language, and culture. Understanding this helps educators teach with empathy and context as students examine how Black individuals and communities resisted and survived.

The process typically included

- Capture and forced removal from West Africa
- The Middle Passage across the Atlantic, often under brutal, dehumanizing conditions
- Auction and sale in American markets, where individuals were commodified and family members separated
- Assignment to specific labor roles (field work, domestic labor, skilled trades) based on perceived economic value
- Constant surveillance and legal codification of control (e.g., slave codes, punishments for literacy or movement)

By grounding instruction in the process of enslavement and its role in early America, educators can help students engage more critically with the contradictions at the heart of the founding era—particularly how ideals of liberty coexisted with systemic slavery. This historical grounding deepens student analysis across all four supporting questions: from examining how slavery shaped the early republic (Question 1), to how Black Americans redefined freedom (Question 2), to how founding documents encoded both rights and exclusion (Question 3), and how historians continue to debate these legacies (Question 4).

Key Historical Themes

- Slavery was not peripheral to the founding—it was foundational. Many signers of the Declaration of Independence were enslavers, and slavery shaped both the economy and legal structure of the new nation.
- Despite this, Black Americans—both free and enslaved—claimed the language of freedom for themselves and resisted through petitions, rebellion, service, writing, and intellectual argument.
- Freedom was never a finished project. This unit shows how it was—and remains—fiercely debated and reshaped by those excluded from it.
- Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, publicly condemned the slave trade but continued to enslave hundreds of people throughout his life. His writings and choices illustrate the

moral contradictions embedded in the founding and help students understand how white supremacy was rationalized and preserved—even by those who claimed to value liberty.

Recommended Resources

- Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement | [We Charge Genocide: The crime of government against the negro people](#) (1951, full text)
- PBS | [The African Americans Many Rivers to Cross Episode 1: The Black Atlantic \(1500-1800\)](#) (53:00)

Framing, Language and Terminology

How we frame content—through language, historical emphasis, and guiding questions—directly shapes students’ understanding of Black genocide and cultural survival. Many students (and educators) carry unexamined assumptions about slavery, resistance, and the founding ideals of the United States. This unit is an opportunity to actively disrupt those assumptions and replace them with more historically grounded, humanizing, and justice-oriented understandings.

Language

Instead of	Consider	Because
Slaves	Enslaved people	Centers personhood and conditions, not identity
Freedom	Freedom and Liberation	Liberation emphasizes active struggle and collective vision
Passive resistance	Adaptive resistance	Reflects strategic survival and subversion, not weakness or inaction.
Rebellion or riot	Resistance or defiance	Avoids criminalizing Black agency; invites understanding of intent

Common Misconceptions to Disrupt

Misconception	Reframing Guidance
Enslaved people were passive victims	Emphasize adaptive resistance and cultural survival as intentional acts of agency.

Slavery was only in the South	Include evidence that slavery existed in the North and underpinned the national economy.
The U.S. was founded on freedom for all	Help students analyze contradictions in founding documents through Black voices like Wheatley or Douglass.
Black people had no culture before or during slavery	Highlight oral traditions, spirituals, kinship networks, and maroon communities as rich cultural sites.
Emancipation was the end of oppression	Trace ongoing exclusion through Jim Crow, mass incarceration, and voter suppression.

Recommended Resources

- Common Place | [Reparative Semantics: On slavery and the language of history](#)

Supporting Question 1: How did slavery impact the development of what becomes the United States in the era leading up to the American Revolution?

Historical and Cultural Context

- The colonial economy was built on slavery, which financed trade, labor, and territorial expansion.
- Laws and social systems were designed to maintain racial hierarchy and control Black bodies.
- As independence approached, slavery was both entrenched and contested, sometimes even by its beneficiaries.

Key Concepts for Educators

- Slavery influenced how early Americans understood property, power, and citizenship.
- The Revolution did not disrupt slavery, it often reinforced it.
- Some founders criticized the slave trade without criticizing slavery itself.
- Debates over the morality of slavery have been a consistent conversation of American history, and are not over.

Recommended Resources

- Smithsonian Magazine | [The Dark Side of Thomas Jefferson](#)
- Museum of the American Revolution | [Finding Freedom Big Idea 5: Slavery and revolutionary ideals](#)
- Minnesota Humanities Center and OMG Media Solutions | [Juneteenth Reckoning with Slavery: MN African American History Film Tour](#)

Supporting Question 2: In what ways did free and enslaved people use the language of the Revolution to argue for their own rights?

Historical and Cultural Context

- Enslaved people and free Black petitioners quoted the Declaration of Independence to demand their liberty.
- The rhetoric of freedom, equality, and natural rights became a powerful tool, even when denied in law or practice.
- More free and enslaved Black people fought on the side of the British because of the promise of emancipation.

Key Concepts for Educators

- The Revolution's ideals were repurposed by those it excluded.
- Primary sources—like petitions, letters, and enlistment records—show Black people as thinkers and political actors, well aware of the discourse of the day.
- Black Americans were not passive observers but shaped the meaning of the Revolution.

Recommended Resources

- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History | [African Americans in the Revolutionary War](#)
- The American Revolution Institute | [African American Women and the American Revolution](#)

Supporting Question 3: How did the institution of slavery impact America's founding era documents (specifically the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution)?

Historical and Cultural Context

- The Declaration originally included a grievance against the slave trade, which was removed to appease Southern colonies.
- The Constitution contained multiple clauses protecting slavery without naming it: the Three-Fifths Clause, Fugitive Slave Clause, and delayed ban on the slave trade.
- The founding documents reflect both revolutionary ideals and compromises with systemic injustice.

Key Concepts for Educators

- Slavery was baked into the nation's founding legal framework.
- Omissions and inclusions related to slavery, race, and gender were strategic, not accidental.
- Understanding the Constitution requires understanding what was left unsaid—and why.

Recommended Resources

- Bill of Rights Institute | [Founding Documents Clauses Pertaining to Slavery, Annotated](#)
- American Battlefield Trust | [Jefferson Condemns the Slave Trade in the Declaration of Independence](#)

Supporting Question 4: How do historians develop and support arguments surrounding slavery's impact on the American Revolution?

Historical and Cultural Context

Historians use diverse sources—letters, laws, speeches, census data, newspaper ads, and petitions. Newer scholarship (e.g., Daina Ramey Berry, Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Annette Gordon-Reed) centers Black agency and questions dominant narratives. Debates over slavery and its role in America's founding, however, are not new.

Key Concepts for Educators

Key Concepts for Educators

- History is not static. It's shaped by evidence, context, and perspective.
- Students must learn to recognize whose voices were preserved, whose were silenced, and how to read between the lines.
- The goal of a historian is not to memorize what happened but to analyze how we know what we know, and to give meaning and relevance to the past.

Recommended Resources

Digital History | [Slavery, the American Revolution, and the Constitution](#)

Genocide Pre-Lesson for High School

A structured introduction that prepares students emotionally and intellectually to engage with genocide-related content.

Grade Level: 9th—12th Grade

Time Required: 45—60 minutes

Purpose: To introduce the concept of genocide in a manner that prepares high school students for in-depth study in forthcoming units on the Holocaust, the genocide of Indigenous Peoples, Black genocide in America, and other genocides.

Learning Objective

Students will be able to construct a basic answer to the question: Why is genocide a complex and contested idea?

Educator Prep Note

Connect with other educators in your building to understand if and how this resource has been used with students in the past. If students have already been introduced to this concept, consider connecting that learning to this pre-lesson.

Core Video Resource

- **Title:** What is Genocide?—CBC Kids News
- **Length:** 2:17
- **Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsCmz0XxECQ>

Lesson Structure

1. Warm-up (5-10 min)
 - a. Ask students to respond in writing or in a pair-share:
 - i. “What comes to mind when you hear the word ‘genocide’?”
 - b. Facilitate a brief class discussion to share and compare responses.
2. Watch and Discuss (5-10 min)
 - a. Frame the video as a starting point for creating a definition of genocide.
 - b. Play the video: What is Genocide?—CBC News
 - c. Have students write a definition of genocide with their partner.
 - d. Share definitions with the class
3. Dig Deeper into Definitions (20 min)

- a. Put students in groups of four.
 - b. Each group gets a definition of genocide from the resource below.
 - c. Have students read and discuss the definition.
 - d. Half of each group rotates to a new group, sharing previous definitions and new ideas added with their new partners.
 - e. Continue rotating until students have met with groups representing all three additional definitions.
4. Reflect (15 min)
- a. Using notes, write a new definition of genocide.
 - b. Individually write:
 - i. Why is genocide a complex and contested idea?

Definitions Related to the Concept of Genocide

Definition One: United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (1948)

[Definitions of Genocide and Related Crimes | United Nations](#)

Genocide means an internationally recognized crime where acts are committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. Acts of genocide, as defined by the United Nations and the Rome Statute, include the following categories:

- (1) killing members of the group;
 - (2) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
 - (3) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
 - (4) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; or
- (5) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Definition Two: Raphael Lemkin in *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, 1944

["Axis Rule in Occupied Europe," Chapter IX: Genocide, by Raphael Lemkin, 1944 - - Prevent Genocide International](#)

“By ‘genocide’ we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. This new word, coined by the author to denote an old practice in its modern development, is made from the ancient Greek word *genos* (race, tribe) and the Latin *cide* (killing).... Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group”

Definition Three: The Cambridge Handbook of Social Problems (2018)

[The Cambridge Handbook of Social Problems](#), pp. 173 - 196

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108550710.012>

Publisher: Cambridge University Press

Print publication year: 2018

Genocide is a political concept designed to guarantee cultural groups a right to life comparable to that guaranteed to individuals by human rights.

Cultural Genocide / Culturicide: Destruction of cultural identity—traditions, language, artifacts, heritage—without necessarily physically harming individuals.

Linguistic Genocide / Linguicide: Erasure of group identity by eliminating language—from banning languages to imposing monolingual education—effectively undermining culture and identity without direct physical violence.

Ethnic Cleansing / Ethnocide: Extermination of culture (killing the "spirit" of a people), distinct from physical genocide but aiming to destroy cultural identity through forced assimilation or suppression of ways of life.

Identicide: Targeted destruction of places, symbols, and cultural property to erase a group's memory and presence—like burning libraries or bombing monuments—cutting ties between people and place.

Paper Genocide: Systematic removal of a group from official records (e.g., school, census), erasing their historical presence and supporting the illusion of extinction, even as descendants remain.

Urbicide: Deliberate destruction of urban space to undermine group heterogeneity and memory—not focused on people but on erasing the physical urban environment that defines culture and identity.

Classicide: While similar to genocide, it targets social class rather than protected ethnic/religious groups—demonstrating that genocide-related concepts can apply to broader systems of targeted mass killing.

Black Genocide in America (High School IDM)

Compelling question:	How fully did the promises of the American Revolution translate into freedom for people living in the United States?		
Staging the question	Warm-up: Students individually write a definition of freedom on a scratch piece of paper. Ask students to include specific characteristics and examples from their own lives. Analysis: In small groups, students review the Declaration of Independence (DOI) (Source A), using a T-chart, students highlight/annotate the different examples/references to freedom and “unfreedom”. Then students return to their definition of freedom and refine it based on what they learned in this activity. In pairs or small groups, students compare and contrast their definitions. Source A: National Archives Declaration of Independence: A Transcription Reflection: As a class, in small groups, or independently, students reflect on how the word has changed or stayed the same over time. Optional Extension: To extend this, the teacher could direct small group discussions or a large group discussion where the class develops a consensus on a class definition of freedom.		
Benchmark	Benchmark	Benchmark	Benchmark
9.4.21.10 Develop an argument based on multiple historical sources about the relationship between revolutions and/or rebellions in the Americas, including, but not limited to, the American Revolution and the Haitian Revolution. Distinguish between long-term causes and triggering	9.4.19.9 - Examine Black, Indigenous, working class and/or women’s perspectives on a major issue that occurred during the American Revolution and the early Republic.	9.4.22.9 Examine the meaning of freedom in the Revolutionary era and today. Examine how groups and communities have fought for freedom, revolution and anti-colonialism.	9.4.18.10 Identify and analyze dominant and non-dominant narratives about the American Revolution.

events in developing a historical argument.			
Supporting question	Supporting question	Supporting question	Supporting question
How did slavery impact the development of what becomes the United States in the era leading up to the American Revolution?	How did free and enslaved black people decide whether to support the patriot cause, the loyalist cause, or neither?	How did the institution of slavery impact America's founding era documents (specifically the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution)?	How do historians develop and support arguments surrounding slavery's impact on the American Revolution?
Formative performance task(s)	Formative performance task(s)	Formative performance task(s)	Formative performance task(s)
Task 1: One Virginia Laws Students read each law (Source A) out loud with a partner. On a sticky-note, they write what change or new rule the law created. Using their sticky-notes, they describe how slavery in Virginia changed in the era before the American Revolution.	Task 1: Patriots Students use the Library of Congress Observe, Reflect, Question model for analyzing Primary Sources on Sources A-C. Using the sources, students write a claim to answer: Why did some black people support the patriot cause?	Task 1: Declaration of Independence Omissions Students read the Declaration of Independence (DOI) omitted grievance on slavery (Source A). Comparison: Students look back to the DOI (Source B) and compare Source A's grievance to the others listed in the DOI. Reflection: Students reflect on the following questions: • Why do you think the grievance was originally included? • Why might it have been removed from the final version?	Task 1: Dueling Sources Students complete a dueling sources exercise where students are asked to pick two sources from the list provided in Source A. Students put the two selected sources at the top of a T-Chart. In the T-Chart students summarize the argument, identify the key argument the historian is making about the American Revolution, and include a key quote from each source to support their argument. Example Graphic Organizer: Dueling Sources Comparison: After completion, students

		What does this omission tell us about how freedom was defined by the founders? What does this reveal about the tension between the ideals of freedom and the realities of slavery in U.S. history?	discuss their comparisons in small groups using the following prompts: - How are the two historians' arguments similar? - How are they different? - Which arguments do you find more convincing? Why? - What does comparing perspectives teach us about how historians interpret the past? Finally, students write their answer to the supporting question below the T-Chart on their worksheet.
Task 2: Historical Interpretation Students watch the two videos (Source B and C), then discuss how the historians' conclusions about the development of slavery in the era changes, challenges, or confirms their conclusions from task one.	Task 2: Loyalists Students use the Library of Congress Observe, Reflect, Question model for analyzing Primary Sources on Sources D-G. Using the sources, students should write a claim to answer: Why did some black people support the patriot cause?	Task 2: Analysis Students watch the video clip (Source C). Analysis: Students analyze the sections of the Constitution connected to slavery (Source D). Students discuss how the different parts of the constitution relate to each other and how they protect the institution of slavery.	Task 2: Reflection As a large group the teacher will discuss the Supporting question above and have students write their answer to the supporting question below the T-Chart on their paper.

		This could be done in small groups where the teacher assigns each group a section of the Constitution to analyze and then brings back the entire class to discuss how the different sections of the Constitution are interconnected and support slavery.	
Task 3: Analysis and Rebellions Students analyze different examples of rebellions in the American colonies and how these illustrate the concept of freedom and the impact of these rebellions on the colonies at large. Using the Library of Congress Observe, Reflect, Question model for analyzing Primary Sources, students analyze each source (Sources D and E). After using the ORQ strategy for the primary sources, students read the secondary narrative (Source F) and discuss how that historian's interpretation changes, challenges or confirms	Task 3: Narrative Creation After watching the Crash Course Black American History episode on the American Revolution (Episode 8), students identify how their claims in task one and two are changed, challenged or confirmed by the claims about why black people supported one side or the other.	Task 3: Examine and Explain Finally, students read and examine Douglass' argument (Source E) and how it is supported by the DOI and Constitution. Students start with a close reading of Douglass' speech led by the teacher. Exit Ticket: Students use their analysis of the DOI and Constitution to explain how Douglass' argument is supported by the text of the Constitution and DOI.	Task 3: Exit Ticket Revisit the genocide graffiti wall or definition from the Genocide Pre-Lesson for High School. Discuss how what was learned in this unit changes, challenges, or confirms this definition of genocide.

what they saw in the primary source			
Task 4: Narrative Creation Students use sources from tasks 1-3 to answer the supporting question in a paragraph. How did slavery impact the development of what becomes the United States in the era leading up to the American Revolution?			
Featured sources	Featured sources	Featured sources	Featured sources
Task 1: Virginia Laws Source A: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation Virginia Laws Dealing with Enslavement Task 2: Key Events Source B: Crash Course Elizabeth Key: Crash Course Black American History #3 (7:52) Source C: Learning for Justice Adam Rothman – Teaching Hard History: American Slavery, Key Concept 2 (4:49)	Task 1: Patriots Source A: Hartford Web Publishing Petition of 1788 by slaves of New Haven Source B: The New Haven Gazette and Connecticut Magazine The New Haven Gazette and the Connecticut Magazine 1788-10-30: Vol 3 Iss 43 Source C: National Humanities Center Narrative of Boyrereau Brinch Source D: The Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society Slaves' Petition for	Task 1: Declaration of Independence Omission Source A: The National Humanities Center The anti-slavery clause in Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence, 1776 Source B: National Archives Declaration of Independence: A Transcription	Task 1: Dueling Sources Source A: Various Sources Historians Arguments – American Revolution Source List

Task 3: Analysis Source D - Stono: National Humanities Center Resource Toolbox Two Views of the Stono Rebellion, South Carolina, 1739 Source E: The Gilder Lehrman Institute The New York Conspiracy of 1741 Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.pdf Additional Source: Many Rivers to Cross Episode 1 (Start at minute 36 minute 40 focused on the Stono Rebellion)	Freedom to the Massachusetts Legislature (1777) Task 2: Loyalists Source E: Gilder Lehrman Institute Lord Dunmore's Proclamation Source F: Nova Scotia Archives Passport for Cato Ramsay to Immigrate to Nova Scotia Source G: Nova Scotia Archives Passport and certificate of John Williams Source H: PBS British pass issued to black Loyalist Task 3: Narrative Creation Source I: Crash Course Black American History The American Revolution, video (11:29)	Task 2: Analysis Source D: Teaching Hard History American Slavery Framework Slavery and the Constitution Sections Task 3: Examine and Explain Source E: Teaching American History What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July? (an excerpt)	
Summative performance task	Argument: Students complete a Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) using Source A. Resolution: "African Americans fighting for the British were the only people fighting for actual freedom during the American Revolution." Source A: Various Sources SAC Summative Assessment Directions for SAC Day 1: Students use a graphic organizer (T-Chart with resolution listed at the top) and the provided sources as well as the sources from the entire unit. Students will		

	be provided a class period to analyze the sources and compile evidence to support both the affirmative and negative sides to the resolution as well as questions to ask their peers during the SAC. Day 2: Students are assigned into groups of 4 with two students arguing for the affirmative and two students arguing for the negative side. The affirmative side will present their arguments then the negative will present. Students ask questions and add to their graphic organizers as each side presents. Then the small groups will be asked to come to consensus on their positions to the resolution. After small groups have done this the teacher can pull the whole class together to discuss and find consensus as a large group. Students will be assessed on their graphic organizer (prep for the SAC) as well as their participation in the discussion. Specifically focusing on their use of sources, reasoning to link the sources to their overall argument, and their overall engagement in the process of the SAC. Extension: After participating in the SAC, students create a brief digital or visual campaign (e.g., poster, infographic, short video) that challenges a myth or dominant narrative about African Americans during the American Revolution. Their work should highlight a primary source or quote they found powerful during the unit and explain its relevance today. These projects can be shared in a classroom gallery or school display to educate peers.
Taking informed action	Understand: Students investigate and define the core values that were debated and fought for during the American Revolution (e.g., liberty, equality, self-governance, justice). They analyze how these values were expressed in founding documents and contested among different groups (e.g., Patriots, Loyalists, enslaved people, Native nations, women). Assess: Students evaluate the extent to which these founding values were achieved at the time and identify which value remains the most difficult to realize fully in contemporary American society. They use historical and current examples to support their conclusions. Act: Students draft and present a proposed constitutional amendment designed to better fulfill one of the founding values they identified as still contested today. Their proposal should include: • A rationale rooted in historical and current evidence,

	• A brief persuasive statement or video advocating for their amendment/initiative, A reflection on how this action connects to the ongoing struggle over the meaning of freedom.
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To access featured sources in the IDMs created by the Working Group, review the SharePoint instructions below and complete the access request form:

Access Request Form:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/geU1t252wi>

Important:

Access requires a **Microsoft account email address**.

If your district does not use Microsoft accounts, you may create a free one (e.g., Outlook.com) at:

<https://account.microsoft.com>

Please ensure the email you provide in the form is a Microsoft account, as it will be used to grant SharePoint access.

The form will request:

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- District/organization
- Job title
- District/organization type
- District/organization name
- Primary purpose for access

After submitting your request, it will be reviewed. You will then receive an invitation sent directly to the **Microsoft email account** you provided on the form. Please check the inbox for that account. If you don't see the invitation within several days, check your spam/junk folder.