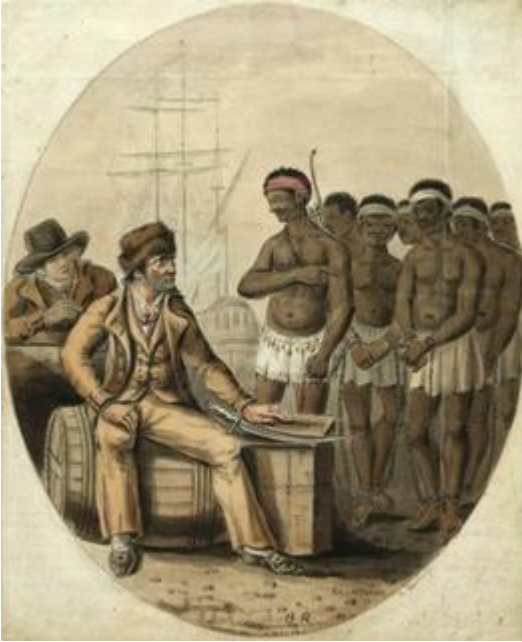


Behind The Big House Introduction



Who were the first slave owners in North America? Not Europeans, but several Native American tribes. The Klamath, Pawnee, Yurok, Creek, Mandan, and Comanche all had small numbers of slaves. The Shoshone woman Sacajawea—now famous for guiding the Lewis and Clark Expedition—had been captured as a slave and sold to the Mandan.

But white European-Americans created the institution of slavery that we are familiar with. Many people from northern states profited from the slave trade by shipping thousands of Africans to the Americas as slaves. Over time, most of these enslaved Africans went to the plantations of the American South. By 1860, there were nearly four million slaves in the country.

Why Africans? Europeans began enslaving Africans in the 1400s. For nearly a century, African slaves and European indentured servants lived similar lives of drudgery. But servants earned their freedom in exchange for several years of work. Slaves were forced into a lifetime of servitude.

Gradually, slaves lost their rights until they became mere property. The law gave masters total power over slaves, including the right to kill their slaves. Also, white slave owners thought they were superior to black people, which increased the gap between slave and free.

The American Civil War was fought, in part, over slavery. During the war, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all slaves in rebel states. The North's victory in 1865 brought the end of slavery throughout the United States.



Pre Visit Lesson Behind the Big House

Goal:

To introduce students to what a census is and what purpose it serves in preparation for the Behind The Big House presentation from Smith McDowell House Museum

Objective:

The students will explore the information that is gathered and used in a census.

Lesson:

Introduction: During the Behind The Big House program, students will be using census records to learn about slavery. Beginning in 1790, the U.S. government counted 3.9 million people in its first Population Census. The process has changed, but we continue to count our population every ten years. A census is very helpful for the government to understand demographics in certain regions, population growth and decline, and other trends relating to population. This information allows government agencies to make decisions about the allocation of funds for schools, community centers, nonprofit agencies and other organizations that receive government funding. For example, the decision to build bigger schools in certain areas is based on data from the Census.

The Census not only records the number of people in each household, but it also records the number of churches, schools and museums. In 1840, the census began recording the number of fisheries in the country. One problem with the act of counting people for the Census is that now everyone lives in a house. In the last 20 years the Census Bureau has undertaken the difficult task of counting our every growing population. Though hard to obtain, this information is important to the government for appropriating money for shelters, free lunch programs and job training services.

Your students may have seen Census Bureau commercials recently asking for help with the recent census. The Census has become more accurate with each new addition of technology. Early censuses took several years to conduct because there were no cars, mail was slow and the population was spread out or isolated. The invention of better modes of transportation along with telephone, television and computers has aided the Census Bureau in collecting their information both more quickly and more accurately.

Using the sample on the following page, have students take a census of everyone that lives in their household.

Behind the Big House On Site and Outreach

Goal:

To challenge students to consider the topic of slavery by examining primary source documents including letters, census records, wills and interviews.

Objectives:

- ❖ The students will examine census records, letters and wills and describe the slave’s way of life on Smith’s and McDowell’s plantations.
- ❖ The students will listen to interviews with former slaves.
- ❖ The students will use primary source documents to evaluate one slave’s transition to freedom.
- ❖ (On Site) The students will observe an 1840s kitchen and describe the changes over time from the 19th century to the 21st century.

NC Standard Course of Study Goals: Social Studies

| 3 rd grade | 4 th grade | 5 th grade |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3.01 | 2.03 | 2.03 |
| 3.02 | 2.04 | 3.02 |
| 3.03 | 3.01 | 3.04 |
| | 3.02 | 3.05 |
| | 4.03 | 4.03 |
| | 6.02 | 4.05 |

Lesson:

1. Begin by asking students about slavery.
 - a. Use a Circle Map about what they know about slavery and use the following questions to generate more knowledge for the map
 - i. What do you know about slavery? all age levels
 - ii. Where did slaves come from?
 - iii. What does it mean to be a slave? Where were the first slaves in the US?
 - iv. How was slavery different in WNC compared to other regions of the South? What type of work did slaves do?
 - b. Finish Circle Map outside the map with:
2. Have students look at the numbers on the first slide of Power Point.
 - a. Compare the numbers of slaves, north vs. south.
3. Discuss the types of work that slaves had to do. (Slide #4)
4. Read the text on Slide #4 about leisure time.
5. What kind of homes did slaves live in? See slides #5 & 6
 - a. How do these houses differ from ‘the big house’?

6. Distribute the YELLOW laminated pages with the James Smith sale of slaves information. See Slide #7 for questions to ask.
7. Distribute script for a portion of a slave interview so the students can understand what he is saying. Slide #8 and CD.
8. Have students line up to go down to the 1840s kitchen.
 - a. Let's see where household slaves would have to work.
 - b. Take up the script papers, but have students leave their yellow page.
9. In the kitchen use some of the following questions.
 - a. What do you have in your own home kitchen that you do not see here?
 - b. How did they cook?
 - c. What are some tools in this kitchen that would have been used in place of things you have at home?
 - d. What did you have for breakfast? How were these things made back then? What things in here do you NOT recognize?
10. Have students turn the Yellow sheet over and look at the document on the Gold sheet. What is it? What is a will?
 - a. Slide #12. Answer questions
11. Distribute the other laminated sheets and have students look at the Census Sheets on the GREEN and the PURPLE side.
 - a. Slide #.13 Answer questions
12. Have students listen to another brief slave interview. Slide #14. This is Fountain Hughes. See if you can understand his words without a script.
13. Slide #15. George Avery.
 - a. Using the points on the slide, tell the story of Mr. McDowell sending George Avery to join the US Army.
 - b. Have students look at the enlistments papers and see the X for George Avery's signature. Why did he not sign his name?
14. Slides 16 to 18 show photographs of the South Asheville Cemetery, Avery's graves.
15. Conclude with the question: "What did you learn today that you didn't know before you came?"

Post Visit Lessons Behind The Big House

Family Tree

Goal: To introduce children to how important genealogy is to understanding all types of history and how understanding who their ancestors are is a vital part of history for both descendants of slaves and slave owners.

Objective:

The students will create a family tree, tracing their ancestors back as far as they can.

Lesson:

1. Have students record a family tree and/or record any interesting stories they may uncover about their ancestors.

Free printable charts are available at: <http://www.misbach.org/pdfcharts/>
These are designed with children in mind and are free to print.

Compare Homes Over Time

Goal: To utilize the students' visit to Smith McDowell House to assist in the understanding of changes over time.

Objective:

The students will compare and contrast their house or kitchen with their own house or kitchen.

Lesson:

1. Use a Bubble Map to identify words that describe the kitchen (or house) at Smith McDowell House Museum. These are "describing" words.
2. Use a Double-Bubble Map to compare and contrast describing words comparing their own kitchen (or house) to Smith McDowell House Museum.

Creative Writing Activity

Goal: To utilize student writing to write imaginatively about a time long ago.

Objective:

The students will write a journal entry about a day as a slave.

Lesson:

1. Have your students pretend they were slaves in Western North Carolina in 1850. Using information from their Behind The Big House presentation and classroom discussion, have your students write a journal entry about a day as a slave.
 - a. What kind of work would they do?
 - b. Would they work in the house or in the farm?
 - c. What would they eat?
 - d. How would they feel about being someone else's property?
2. Have the students share their entries with the class.

Books about Slavery

Picture Books

* * Erickson, Paul. **Daily Life on a Southern Plantation 1863.** (Bound to Stay Bound, 2001. ISBN 0613284593.)

This is an excellent vehicle for bringing slavery, and the plantation life it enabled, into focus. Starting with some brief history about the origins and conventions of slavery, the book goes on to follow individual inhabitants of the plantation for a single day. The plantation owners Mr. And Mrs. Henderson and their three children, in addition to the overseer, live a nice life. Rosena and Daddy Major and their two sons are the slaves.

* * Feelings, Tom. **The Middle Passage: White Ships Black Cargo.** (Dial, 1995. ISBN 0803718047.)

This intense picture book spares the viewer little in portraying the horrors of the middle passage for slaves. The pain, sadness, anger and grief are palpable.

* * * Hopkinson, Deborah. **Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt.** Illustrated by James Ransome. (Random, 1995. ISBN 0679874720.)

Clara is taught to sew by another slave on the plantation so that she can work in the big house instead of in the fields. Soon afterward, Clara learns about maps and the Underground Railroad. She constructs a quilt with a map in the pattern so that she'll remember the way to the Ohio River. Other slaves, realizing what Clara is doing, add details to the map. When Clara is ready, she leaves the quilt behind for others to use. She knows the way now.

* * McKissack, Patricia. **Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters.** Illustrated by John Thompson. (Scholastic, 1994. ISBN 0590430270.)

The contrast between the way the two cultures lived on the Virginia plantation in 1859 is stark and intensely revealing. The holiday brings forward the complex relationship between the slaves and the owners.

* * Turner, Ann. **Nettie's Trip South.** Illustrated by Ronald Himler. (Simon & Schuster, 1987. ISBN 0027892409.)

Through a series of letters, a girl from the North communicates her glimpses of slavery in the American South.