

The Port Royal Experiment

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I. A. Summary

This lesson is designed as a critical thinking group activity for students to investigate, debate, and write about the issues examined by the Port Royal Experiment over the possible roles of African Americans in Society during and after the Civil War. This lesson is designed as one segment of an overall Unit on the Civil War /Reconstruction. Prior to this lesson students should have previous knowledge of the causes of the Civil War, Civil War's progression, and some information about the debate over emancipation. This lesson uses primary source documents from *Discovering America's Past A Look at the Evidence Vol 1 to 1877*. This lesson specifically looks at how the Port Royal Experiment during the Civil war examined the abilities of African Americans to obtain an education, work in a free labor system, and serve in the military to determine if African Americans could successfully be absorbed into society as free men and women. This Lesson takes approximately two 50 minute class periods and 1 week outside of class for the assessment. Reconstruction and other topics in the chapter would be addressed latter on in the week using separate activities not provided. Materials include: A History of the Port Royal Experiment and Primary Sources Documents from *Discovering America's Past A Look at the Evidence Vol. 1 to 1877, 6th ed.* by William Wheeler and Susan Becker. Also, includes Teacher Directions, Discussion Worksheets and the DBQ Assessment Handout with Rubric.

B. Objectives

1. This lesson addresses Sunshine State Standards SS.A.1.4.2., SS.A.1.4.3a, and SS.A.4.4.3
2. Students will use prior knowledge and primary sources to draw conclusions about the effectiveness and shortcomings of the Port Royal Experiment.
3. Students will use prior knowledge and primary sources to evaluate varying points of view within the Port Royal Experiment.
4. Students will use prior knowledge and primary sources to determine fact from opinion by identifying and examining racial biases within the historical context of the Port Royal Experiment.
5. Students will be able to use prior knowledge and primary sources to answer a document based question in the form of a 3.5 paragraph essay including a well written thesis sentence.
6. Students will be able to use prior knowledge and primary sources to write a persuasive essay that shows organization, uses proper grammatical techniques, and provides supporting arguments centered around proving a thesis.

C. U.S. History Time Period

Civil War prior to Reconstruction

D. Grade Levels

The handouts and materials are geared more towards high school or advanced middle school students.

The types of activities can be used for any grade level if you

II. Lesson Procedures

- A. Start by having students in five home groups of six students per group (red, orange, green, blue and purple). Give each student an activity/DBQ packet.
- B. Have students hold a discussion in their home group on a scrap sheet of paper using a graphic organizer of your choice such as a tree map or KWL. Ask them to discuss what they

- think the union troops will and should do when they acquire contraband or “escaped slaves” during the war. What obstacles will the union army face based on their groups’ responses. Have them also discuss what they think should happen with the contraband after the civil war under the Union controlled government. What obstacles will be encountered. (5-7 minutes)
- C. Next have the student number off 1 through six. Have all the students of the same numbers join together into new groups based on the three topics. There should be two groups for each of the three topics Education, Land and Military Service. (1 minute)
 - D. In their topic groups have the students read only the documents for their assigned topics. Documents= (A-B Education), (C-E Land) and (F-H Military Service). (5-10 min)
 - E. Next have them discuss the documents in their topic groups. They should discuss and answer the worksheet questions for only their topic’s documents. They need to write their answers on the worksheet to bring back to their home color group. (10 min)
 - F. Now have student return to their home color groups. Have them share and discuss their reactions and conclusions to each of the documents. They should record notes on their activity worksheet of their reactions to the discussion questions. (20-30 min)
 - G. Optional if your students are not used to analyzing documents or are struggling readers you can add in or substitute a class discussion of the documents as well.
 - H. For an assessment you have two options. You can have the students work in class or at home writing a DBQ. First have them create a brace map for their preplanning. A brace map is a thinking map that organizes or outlines the thesis statement, main points and supporting details before writing the essay. (With practice 5-7 minutes)
 - I. Have the student either in class, or at home use their brace map and packet to write their essay or answer to the DBQ question. If they are new to DBQ’s you may want to either work on it in groups, or give feed back to them on their brace map before having them write their essay.
 - J. Using the rubric have student score each others essays. Make sure the names are covered up. Have three different students score the same essays with your own score having the final say. For AP use the AP rubric

References

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