



Looking at Human Struggle Through The Language Arts Curriculum: The Faces of Slavery

Guide for Curriculum Unit 02.01.02
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This unit introduces students to the concept of slavery in America and puts a human face on this tragic period in American history. Students will read three books, one fiction and two nonfiction. Two of the readings tell the story of individuals who were kidnapped from their African homeland and forced into slavery in America. The other reading teaches students about the Amistad incident, which captured the American public's attention in 1839 -1840. Through this incident the American justice system took up the question of whether slaves had a legal right to be free. These three stories allow students to explore how individuals coped and survived within the confines of enslavement.

Other lessons in this unit provide students with an initial understanding of how and why the slave trade arose in Africa and America. They also provide students the opportunity to explore historical documents pertaining to the slave trade.

The activities in this unit were designed for the sixth grade, however, they may be modified for the upper elementary grades and for high school. Lesson plans are included, which align themselves with the New Haven Public Schools Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum. This unit will take between six to eight weeks to teach.

(Recommended for Language Arts, Reading, and Social Studies, grades 5-12.)

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