

Abolition

Lesson plans for primary sources at the Tennessee State Library & Archives

Author: Christina Rogers, Whitwell Elementary School

Grade Level: 4th grade

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Introduction: The goal of this lesson is to teach 4th grade students to look closely at primary sources in order to understand contributions made by citizens to abolish slavery. The lesson will explore Tennesseans active in the abolitionist movement including Frances Wright and Elihu Embree.

Guiding Questions:

- 1) Define subject area vocabulary: “abolish” and “slavery”
- 2) How would you describe slavery?
- 3) Can you explain how slavery affected African Americans?
- 4) Give examples of how individuals might have contributed to abolishing slavery in Tennessee.
- 5) What do you notice about this sketch, map and photograph? (A graphic organizer is provided to assess sources.)
- 6) Answer Who, What, When, Where and Why questions in response to “Nashoba” encyclopedia entry.

Learning Objectives:

In this lesson, the teacher uses a variety of strategies to actively engage students in analyzing vocabulary, answering source dependent questions, and facilitating group discussions. Students practice taking notes and identifying key information while using a graphic organizer in small groups.

Curriculum Standards:

4.60-Describe and explain the contributions of Virginia Hill and Free Hill, Tennessee, Frances Wright and Nashoba, and Elihu Embree and their efforts to abolish slavery in Tennessee.

RI.4.4- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to grade 4 topic or subject area.

RI.4.7- Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

Materials Needed:

- 1) Tennessee State Library Archives Website
- 2) [“Nashoba”](#) an entry in the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture
- 3) [Map of Nashoba location in Tennessee](#)
- 4) Print and copy the graphic organizer front to back for small group work.
- 5) Analyzing Primary Sources handouts.
 - A) http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Maps.pdf
 - B) http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Primary_Source_Analysis_Tool.pdf

Background:

[“Frances Wright”](#) **Author:** Anita S. Goodstein **Source Location:** [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture](#)

[“Nashoba”](#) **Author:** John Egerton **Source Location:** [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture](#)

[“Elihu Embree”](#) **Author:** Durwood Dunn **Source Location:** [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture](#)

Lesson Activities:

Introductory Activity: Teaching Vocabulary

Matchbook folding instructions to teach “Abolition of Slavery”

- 1) Fold a sheet of paper (8 1/2” x 11’) like a hamburger, but fold it so that one side is one inch longer than the other side.
- 2) Fold the one-inch tab over the short side to form an envelope-like fold.
- 3) Cut the front flap in half toward the mountain top to create two flaps.
- 4) Write “Abolition of Slavery” on the one inch tab
- 5) Write the word Abolish on the first tab and slavery on the 2nd tab.
- 6) Use a social studies textbook, dictionary or example below to define 1) abolish and 2) slavery under the tabs of the matchbook. Examples of definitions are found here:

<http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/abolish>

<http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/slavery>

Small Group Activity:

- In small groups assign students one of three documents (map, sketch or photograph) to analyze.
- Use the “Analyzing Primary Sources” guide to scaffold student learning and provide an opportunity to investigate the topic.
- Students will use a graphic organizer to investigate the documents related to Nashoba and report their observations to the class.

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Lesson Activities Continued:

Document 1: Map (example below)

<http://share.tn.gov/tsla/exhibits/utopia/index.htm>



Document 2: Sketch of Nashoba



Sketch of Nashoba, from *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, 1832

Sketch of Nashoba

This drawing of the colony depicts a dreary place in decline. “Short and stormy” is the way historian John Egerton describes the Nashoba experience. Wright’s vision of Utopia in West Tennessee began to materialize in 1826 with several whites and about a dozen former slaves. Disease and infighting among the pioneers doomed the community to failure. When Wright returned from fund raising in Europe she found thirty-one black colonists barely hanging on.

<http://share.tn.gov/tsla/exhibits/utopia/nashoba.htm>

Lesson Activities Continued:

Document 3: Photograph with caption (example below)

<http://share.tn.gov/tsla/exhibits/utopia/images/22franceswright.jpg>



Frances Wright

Tall and vivacious, Englishwoman Frances Wright established the experimental colony at Nashoba when she was 32 years old. The colony was begun in 1826 with the support of Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, and the Marquis de Lafayette.

Wright's idealistic mission was to buy slaves and to prepare them for freedom and self-sufficiency.

Whole Group Activity:

View or print the *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture* entry on "[Nashoba.](#)"

Read the passage to/with students and discuss observations of sources from small group work. From the reading passage, ask students to answer who, what, when, where and why questions. Connect information from the passage with student observations and ask them to elaborate on the importance of Nashoba. Continue the discussion with how the three documents helped with student understanding of the topic.

Small Group or Independent Assignment

Ask students to research Elihu Embree and Virginia Hill and Free Hill. Ask students to use the internet to answer who, what, where, when and why questions. Upon completion of this assignment students will develop a logical argument on the contributions of these individuals in an effort to abolish slavery.

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