

Resources for an Interdisciplinary African American History and Social Justice Curriculum
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Middle School: United States History

The information below should be considered as a framework or suggestions for integrating comprehensive content on African American history into the middle school curriculum for United States History (1600-1875). There are different levels of instruction for students with diverse learning styles and abilities and the local district should make the decisions for what is taught and how it is taught.

The curriculum process needs to support best practice lessons encouraging inquiry, research, problem solving, decision-making, and interdisciplinary learning with assessments that provide data on the depth of student learning and understanding.

There are also many media sources (not included in this document) that teachers should review. These include photographs, newspaper reports, original video scenes, documentaries, and audio files.)

Below are the revised 2020 Standards with links underlined that apply to the Amistad curriculum mandate.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time.

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.d: Use data and other evidence to determine the extent to which demographics influenced the debate on representation in Congress and federalism by examining the New Jersey and Virginia plans.

6.1.8.CivicsPD.3.a: Cite evidence to determine the role that compromise played in the creation and adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.

6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States.

6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.c: Use geographic tools and resources to investigate how conflicts and alliances among European countries and Native American groups impacted the expansion of American territory.

6.1.8.HistoryUP.3.a: Use primary sources as evidence to explain why the Declaration of Independence was written and how its key principles evolved to become unifying ideas of American democracy.

6.1.8.HistoryUP.3.b: Examine the roles and perspectives of various socioeconomic groups (e.g., rural farmers, urban craftsmen, northern merchants, and southern planters), African Americans, Native Americans, and women during the American Revolution, and determine how these groups were impacted by the war.

6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.a: Research and prioritize the most significant events that led to the expansion of voting rights during the Jacksonian period.

6.1.8.CivicsHR.4.a: Examine [a variety of] sources from a variety of perspectives to describe efforts to reform education, women's rights, slavery, and other issues during the Antebellum period.

6.1.8.GeoSV.4.a: Map territorial expansion and settlement, highlighting the locations of conflicts with and resettlement of Native Americans.

6.1.8.EconET.4.a: Assess the impact of the Louisiana Purchase and western exploration on the expansion and economic development of the United States.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.b: Explain the growing resistance to slavery and New Jersey's role in the Underground Railroad.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.c: Analyze how the concept of Manifest Destiny influenced the acquisition of land through annexation, diplomacy, and war.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.d: Analyze the push-pull factors that led to increase in immigration and explain why ethnic and cultural conflicts resulted.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.a: Prioritize the causes and events that led to the Civil War from different perspectives.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.c: Assess the human and material costs of the Civil War in the North and South.

6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.a: Analyze the effectiveness of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution from multiple perspectives.

6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.[a]b: Examine the roles of women, African Americans, and Native Americans in the Civil War.

6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.c: Explain how and why the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address continue to impact American life.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.d: Assess the role of various factors [(i.e., geography, natural resources, demographics, transportation, leadership, and technology)] that affected the course and outcome of the Civil War (i.e., geography, natural resources, demographics, transportation, leadership, and technology).

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.e: Compare and contrast the approaches of Congress and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson toward the reconstruction of the South.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.f: Analyze the economic impact of Reconstruction on the South from different perspectives.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.g: Construct an argument that prioritizes the causes and events that led to the Civil War using multiple sources from different perspectives.

Colonial Era and American Revolution

6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.

6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.b: Evaluate the impact of the institution of slavery on the political and economic expansion of the United States.

6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals.

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6.1.8.HistoryUP.3.b: Examine the roles and perspectives of various socioeconomic groups (e.g., rural farmers, urban craftsmen, northern merchants, and southern planters), African Americans, Native Americans, and women during the American Revolution, and determine how these groups were impacted by the war.

Analyze The Middle Passage and the Atlantic slave trade with specific attention on the following:

Spanish asiento tax system

Family structure of slave families

Personalized slave narratives of slaves living in New Jersey

Role of the Dutch in the slave trade, African Americans in northern and Middle colonies

Evaluate the impact of the Revolutionary War on the dream of liberty for slaves by both the British and the colonists, stories of freedom during the Revolutionary War.

Design an inquiry lesson on how someone like Thomas Jefferson could own slaves and write about liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the Declaration of Independence.

Essential Question

1. Why did New Jersey (and other colonies) continue with slavery after signing the Declaration of Independence?

Digital Resources:

[Slavery in Colonial New Jersey](#) (SlaveNorth.com)

[The Manumission of Prime](#) (1780's) (Princeton University)

[Onesimus, Cotton Mather, and the Origin of the Smallpox Vaccine](#) (History Channel)

[African Americans Before the Courts in NJ](#) (1704-1783) (NJ State Archives)

The U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic

6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time.

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6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.c: Use geographic tools and resources to investigate how conflicts and alliances among European countries and Native American groups impacted the expansion of American territory.

Explain the significance of the 3/5 compromise in the constitution

Design an inquiry lesson if Washington, D.C. (nation's capital) should have legally permitted slavery

Provide examples of discrimination or systemic racism (denial of the vote, property, education) of Black Americans then and now.

Explain the impact of ending slave trade 1808.

Read documents on the biography of Alexander Hamilton in the West Indies, his assimilation into American society and analyze his role in the development of the government of the United States.

Essential Question

1. How did the U.S. Constitution institutionalize slavery in the United States?

Digital Resources

[The Three-Fifths Compromise](#) (Digital History & Gilder Lehrman Institute)

[Was the Electoral College Designed to Protect Slavery?](#) (Sean Wilentz, *NY Times* article)

[African Americans in NJ](#) (Giles Wright) (pp. 25-45)

[Harriet Jacobs](#) (PBS)

[Solomon Northrup: 12 Years a Slave](#) (Documenting the South, UNC)

[Born into Slavery](#) (Federal Writers Project Narratives 1936-1938, Library of Congress)

[The Enslaved Family](#) (National Humanities Center)

[Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase](#) (Library of Congress Exhibit)

Manifest Destiny and Westward Expansion

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6.1.8.HistoryCC.4.d: Analyze the push-pull factors that led to increase in immigration and explain why ethnic and cultural conflicts resulted.

Explain how Manifest Destiny supported the expansion of slavery

Analyze the impact of the cotton gin on the economy, increase in slave labor, cotton, rice, tobacco economy, origins of abolition movement

Describe the role of African Americans in NJ, free communities. (i.e. Lawnside, NJ)

Explain the role of African Americans in the gold rush.

Explain how slaves were treated in towns, countryside, and working conditions on plantations and ships on rivers.

Explain gradual emancipation laws after 1789 in northern states.

The role of African American newspapers (The North Star, The Mirror Times, etc.)

Debate the plans of the American Colonization Society to establish the colony of Liberia for the exportation of slaves.

Essential Question

1. Why did the United States fail to abolish slavery without the secession of some states?

Digital Resources

[National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum](#)

[Underground Railroad Resources](#) (National Park Service)

[Did African American Slaves Rebel?](#) (PBS with Henry Louis Gates)

[Slave Rebellions](#) (National Park Service)

[Slave Revolts in the Caribbean](#) (National Archives United Kingdom)

[Lesson Plans on The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave](#) (UNC)

[Frederick Douglass](#) (PBS Learning)

[Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs](#) (Gilder Lehrman)

[Manifest Destiny](#) (Interactive maps from PBS Learning)

[Manifest Destiny](#) (University of Oregon – see links to slavery)

[Compromise of 1850 and Maps Relating to Slavery](#)

[Expansion of Slavery in the United States](#) (Maps) (Smithsonian.org)

[Resources about Slavery in New Jersey and Emancipation Laws](#) (NJ State Archives)

[African Americans and the Gold Rush](#) (PBS)

[African American History and the Gold Rush](#) (California Department of Education)

Civil War and Reconstruction

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6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.e: Compare and contrast the approaches of Congress and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson toward the reconstruction of the South.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.f: Analyze the economic impact of Reconstruction on the South from different perspectives.

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.g: Construct an argument that prioritizes the causes and events that led to the Civil War using multiple sources from different perspectives.

Analyze how the cotton economy, Dred Scott decision, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Fugitive Slave Law, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Lincoln-Douglas Debates, John Brown, and slave rebellions, contributed to the secession of some southern states.

Design lessons with examples of segregation in northern states (employment, residences), underground railroad in New Jersey, attempts to escape to freedom.

Describe and evaluate the contributions of African Americans as entrepreneurs, abolitionists, clergy. (James Forten, Paul Cuffe, John Jones, James Beckworth, Ira Aldridge, Frances Harper, Alexandre Dumas, Victor Sejour, William Brown, Tom Molineux, Lewis Temple, etc.)

Explain the role of African Americans in Civil War and the impact of the war on the southern plantation.

Explain Lincoln's position and evolution to free the slaves.

Debate Lincoln's decision in issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, especially his limited proclamation.

Analyze the debate (and delayed actions) on the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments in New Jersey.

Design lessons for students to study images of Black Americans in the South, North, and in the Civil War.

Essential Question

1. Why did the United States fail to prevent segregation in both the north and the south after the Civil War?

Digital Resources

[African American Soldiers During the Civil War](#) (Library of Congress)

[African American Contributions to Union Intelligence During the Civil War](#) (Central intelligence Agency)

[African Americans in the Civil War](#) (NJ State Library)

[History of Right to Vote in the United States](#) (Teaching Tolerance)

[Ratification of the 13th Amendment](#) (National Constitution Center)

[New Jersey's Vote on the 13th Amendment](#) (NJ State Archives) (after it became a law)

[New Jersey's Vote on the 14th Amendment](#) (NJ State Archives)

[African Americans in Reconstruction: The Full Quest for Citizenship](#) (Library of Congress)

[New Jersey's Vote on the 15th Amendment](#) (NJ State Archives) (after it became a law)

[Reconstruction and the Formerly Enslaved](#) (National Humanities Center)

[Black Office Holders in the South During Reconstruction](#) (Facing History)