

## TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

### *Lesson Title – The Role of the Connecticut Abolitionists with the Amistad Case*

Grade – 10<sup>th</sup> grade, U.S. History

Length of class period – 45 minutes

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

1. What types of people helped runaway slaves and the Mende tribe of the Amistad case?
2. What are some similarities and differences between these people?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

1. Students will research the leading Connecticut abolitionists (Austin Williams, John Treadwell Norton, Samuel Deming, Williams and Horace Cowles) who were involved in both the Underground Railroad and the Amistad Case.
2. Students will create and possibly perform a dialogue where these individuals discuss the activities of the Underground Railroad and the Amistad case.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?) – (please attach)

1. Map of the Connecticut Freedom Trail in Farmington with info on the houses used and their owners—<http://www.ctfreedomtrail.com/site/trailtour.html>
2. Map of Connecticut Underground Railroad sites--  
<http://www.ctfreedomtrail.com/site/urailroad.html>
3. Farmington Historical Society's map of the Underground Railroad sites and Amistad sites, 1830-1861—<http://www.farmingtonhistoricalsociety-ct.org/freedomtrail.html>
4. Amistad sources:
  - CT Freedom Trail website on Amistad—
  - <http://www.ctfreedomtrail.com/site/urailroad.html>
  - Amistad America Schooner Tours has a nice two page history of the Amistad revolt and trial <http://www.amistadamerica.org/content/blogcategory/177/201/>
  - The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition has a brief one page summary of incident by professor from University of Houston—  
<http://www.yale.edu/glc/curriculum/amistad/incident.html>
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5. Study on Underground Railroad by National Parks Service—**UNDERGROUND RAILROAD: Special Resource Study. Management Concepts, Environmental Assessment**, September 1995.

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)  
THREE (3) Day Activity

Day 1—THINK-PAIR-SHARE about Amistad incident

1. Student will have read one of the two Amistad readings (Amistad America and Gilder Lehrman) for homework. There will be a Think-Pair-Share activity where students first write down what they think is important from their reading (~5-10 minutes). Then they pair up with someone else who had the same reading and combine lists (~5-10 minutes). Finally, there will be a whole class discussion where students can add information from the other source to their list of facts (~25-35 minutes)
2. For homework student will research one of the 4 Connecticut abolitionists who were active in the Underground Railroad and the Amistad case. Students need to make sure they found information for U.R. and Amistad case. Students should start with the Connecticut Freedom Trail website, <http://www.ctfreedomtrail.com/site/trailtour.html> and add any other source information available.

Day 2—Getting to know Samuel, Austin, John, and Horace

1. Group together all the students that had the same individual so they can share their research about that particular individual. Students will be given the “Getting to Know Samuel Austin, John, and Horace” worksheet. (~10 minutes)
2. Group together one student from each of the 4 groups. Here each student will share information about their “person” (~5 minutes per individual)
3. As a whole class, discuss similarities and differences between the 4 individuals in their involvement in the abolition of slavery. (~10 minutes)
4. For homework, student should create a dialogue between the 4 individuals based on their knowledge of these men. The dialogue should be at least a page in length and there should be 4 copies of the dialogue.

Day 3—Sharing Dialogues

1. Divide class into 4 groups no matter how many students there are. Have each read through their dialogue. (~10-15 minutes).
2. Then select one dialogue to be performed for the class. Have 4 students assigned to the 4 parts and practice their lines. (~10 minutes)
3. Finally, perform the 4 dialogues (~20-25 minutes)

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

1. Dialogue—Their dialogue should include details/facts/information from the previous two days of activities and their understanding of the risks the men were taking.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources;

- gather, analyze and reconcile historical information, including contradictory data, from primary and secondary sources to support or reject hypotheses;
- interpret oral traditions and legends as “histories”;
- evaluate data within the historical, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias;
- describe the multiple intersecting causes of events; and
- use primary source documents to analyze multiple perspectives.
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways that cultural encounters and the interaction of people of different cultures in pre-modern as well as modern times have shaped new identities and ways of life;
- identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods;
- describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of conflict;
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways race, gender, ethnicity and class issues have affected individuals and societies in the past;