

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title: The Log Book of a Connecticut Slave Trade Ship From Lisa Romasanta

Grade: 7

Length of class period: 45 minutes

Inquiry: How do slave ship logs illustrate life on the "Middle Passage"?

Objectives: Students will be able to describe African slaves' conditions on the slave trade ship by analyzing actual slave ship logs. Students will also understand why geography played such an important role in ships. Students will also imagine how the ship's captain feels about the journey and his cargo, slaves.

Materials:

- ❖ Log Book of Slave Traders between New London and Africa, 1757-8, pages 40 & 44 (<http://www.cslib.org/slaverlog.htm>) (*note: the image of the logs are clearer on the website than print*)

- ❖ Student Questions

- ❖ Keeping a Record
<http://www.courant.com/media/acrobat/2005-03/16917958.pdf>

- ❖ Sam's Log
<http://www.courant.com/media/acrobat/2005-03/16889564.pdf>

Background information of Materials:

During the 18th century, Connecticut men were involved in the maritime slave trade. Ships would sail from New London to make several stops along the West African coast to purchase African slaves. Often these enslaved Africans would have been previously kidnapped from the interior of Africa by other blacks. Then the ship would proceed to the Caribbean, where slaves would be sold to labor in the rice and sugar plantations or to be sold in Connecticut along with molasses and spices. The following primary source comes from Samuel Gould, a Connecticut resident who was a first mate aboard the slave ship, *Good Hope*. The slave ship log includes information about the details of the ship's course, such as speed, weather conditions, shipboard life, deaths, and ship repairs. For information on how to decipher the log descriptions, see "Keeping a Record" or the voyage map of *Good Hope*, see "Sam's Log".

Activities:

1. Students have been introduced to the Middle Passage journeys.
2. Students will then review the "Keeping A Record" learn how to decode a log.
3. Students will also be given "Sam's Log" so they can visually see the mapped journey of the slave ship.
4. Then students in groups of two, will have online access to the slave logs and work on answering the questions provided to them.
5. When finished the class will review the questions and answers with the teacher.
6. Students then will raise additional inquiry questions they have about the slave ship log and work on answering those questions at a later lesson plan.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed by their answered questions, teacher verbally asking questions as students work on assignment, and by the student produced inquiry unanswered questions from this assignment.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:

- analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context, understand causal factors and appreciate changeover time;
- locate the events, peoples and places they have studied in time and place
- identify and analyze the various causes and effects of movements of groups of people;
- initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events being studied;
- display empathy for people who have lived in the past
- explain the patterns and characteristics of human migrations at various levels;
- explain how patterns of international trade change technology, transportation and communication, and affect economic activities and human migration

The Log Book of a Connecticut Slave Trade Ship

Directions: Answer the following questions from the online website,
<http://www.cslib.org/slaverlog.htm>

ONLY LOOK AT PAGES 40 & 44" to answer the following questions.

This will need to be completed a separate sheet of paper.

1. Look at the slave trade logs, what would be the ship's destination point? Why would they be heading towards that particular area?
2. How many slaves are on board on April 27, 1757? May 10, 1757?
3. What happened to the number of slaves? Increased or Decreased? Why do you think the number of slaves changed?
4. A typical slave trade ship journey across the Atlantic Ocean could take a few months. How many slaves do you think might have died while on board the ship? What might be some causes of death?
5. In the log books, how is the weather?
6. Map the ship's position (using latitude and longitude) on a map. Determine the departed location of this ship.
7. Describe the similarities between the logs and the differences between the logs.
8. What do these logs tell you about life on a slave trade ship?
9. In what other kinds of primary sources might you find more information about experiences on a slave trade ship?
10. Imagine you are a slave on this slave trade ship. You were taken away from your family and will never see them again. Describe how you would feel about the experience and what you would miss about your family, friends and home.
11. Pretend you are the ship's captain. Write a diary entry of the point of view of this ship's captain about the ship's journey and the slaves.

Hope Alexander Urghart Com. 40

Tuesday 26 April 1757.

This 24 Hours the first Part fresh Breeze at SW at 6 AM
 from the Edde's bore SWS Dist. ab. 8 Leagues
 Course made good about N.W. Dis. 24 Miles Lat. 9. 59

Wednesday 27 April 1757

This 24 Hours the first Part fresh Breeze at SW, the later
 Part Calm at 6 AM saw the Land of Cape Vargas being
 S. N. E. Distance ab. 8 Leagues Lat. 9. 06 N.
 We have now on board 169 Slaves all in Health
 at 9 AM follow Cape Vargas to Bore ab. S. Dis. 10 Leagues

Hour	W	S	W	Course	Wind	Transactions on Thursday 28 April 1757
2	2			WNW	SW	Light Breeze at mid Tack, My Log from Cape Vargas on the Lat. 10. 9 N Long. 15. 30 W. when in Bore ab. S. 10 Leagues Distance
4	2					
6	2					
8	2					
10	Calms					
12	S					
2						
4						
6	1					
8	1					
10	2					
12	2					

Lat 9. 06 N.

Course	Dir.	S. Lat.	Dep.	Exp. Dir.	S. Long.	Long. in	Mer. Dist.
WNW	289	0. 58 S.	0. 27 W.	10. 3 N	0. 27 W.	14. 28	58 Miles

Hour	W	S	W	Course	Wind	Friday 29 April 1757
2	2			WNW	NW	Friday 29 April 1757 Light Breeze & Clear Weather S. H. to the S.
4	2					
6	1	1		WNW	WSW	
8	3			WNW	SW	
10	3					
12	3			NW	SW	
2	2			SW	WNW	
4	2					
6	2	1		SW	SW	
8	2					
10	2			WNW	NW	
12	2					

Lat 9. 46 N.

Course	Dir.	S. Lat.	Dep.	Exp. Dir.	S. Long.	Long. in	Mer. Dist.
WNW	40	0. 10 S.	0. 59 W.	9. 56 N.	0. 40 W.	15. 2 W.	97 Miles

Reproduction information available from the Connecticut State Library, State Archives. File name: SLAVELOG40

From Africa Towards S. Cruis							
12 th day	W. S.	W. W.	W. S.	Remarks			
2 5	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.	Munday May 9. 1757			
4 6				Fresh Breeze & Cloudy			
6 5							
8 6							
10 5							
12 5	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.				
2 5							
4 5							
6 2							
8 2							
10 3							
12 3							
11 3							
				Lat. Obs. 10. 9. N.			
Course	Dir.	D. Lat.	Dep.	Lat. Obs.	Long. in	Mer. Dis.	
W. 10. N.	110. m	0. 19. N	1. 28. W.	10. 9. N.	1. 49. W.	28. 20. W.	824 m
2 7	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.	Tuesday May 10. 1757			
4 6				Fresh Breeze & Cloudy			
6 7							
8 6				We have Now on Board			
10 6				164 Slaves in health			
12 6							
2 7							
4 8							
6 6							
8 5	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.				
10 4							
12 4							
				Lat. Obs. 10. 54 North			
W. 10. N.	143. m	0. 25. N	2. 20. W.	10. 34. N.	2. 20. W.	30. 40. W.	964 m
2 6	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.	Wednesday May 11. 1757			
4 6				Fresh Breeze & Hazy			
6 6							
8 6							
10 5							
12 5							
2 4	W. S.	W. S.	W. S.				
4 4							
6 5				at 3. AM Died a Small Boy			
8 6				Slave with a Flux			
10 6							
12 6							
				Lat. Obs. 10. 45 N.			
W. 5. N.	134.	0. 11. N.	2. 10. W.	10. 45.	2. 15. W.	22. 57.	1097 m

Reproduction information available from the Connecticut State Library, State Archives.

File name: SLAVELOG44

Keeping a Record

Logbooks like the one kept by Sam Gould of the voyages of the Africa, Good Hope and Fox recorded hourly details of a ship's course and speed as well as observations of weather conditions, wind direction and details of shipboard life: when a crewman or slave was ill, when the carpenter had to caulk a longboat, when sails had to be reefed in high winds, when a cask of salt pork or water was "broacht" – opened – or when the ship met another vessel mid-ocean. But the information they provide about 18th-century maritime history – and, in this rare log, the routine events of the New England slave trade – is invaluable.

DECODING THE LOG

The nautical day began at noon; numbers in these columns correspond to each even-numbered hour that followed, until noon of the following day.

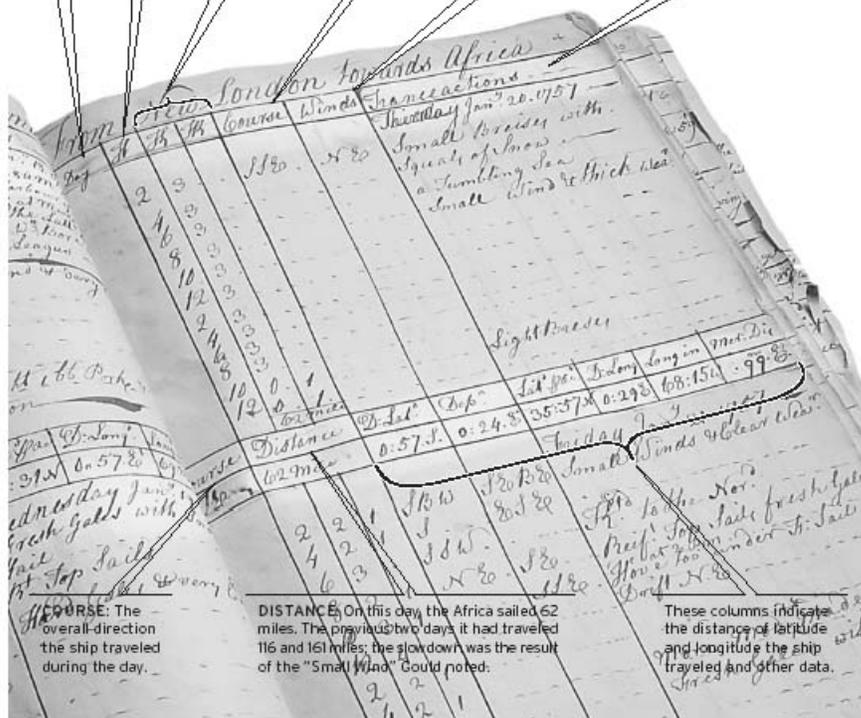
The course is direction of the ship's travel at the various hours of the day. Note that on the third day of the voyage, on the top half of the page, the Africa maintained a course of south-southeast – SSE – all day; on the fourth day, shown on the lower half of the page, the course changed several times.

The day of the voyage being recorded.

The ship's speed in knots, or nautical miles per hour: A nautical mile is about 1.15 miles.

The direction from which the wind is blowing.

The date and a weather report: "Small breises with Squalls of snow – a Tumbling Sea – Small Wind & thick Wea.r," an abbreviation for "weather."



SOURCE: Don Treworgy, Planetarium Supervisor and Associate Director of Museum Education, Mystic Seaport

