choosing a path in freedom

### pre-visit activity

# thought exercise—who made hampton possible?

Broadly introduce the history of Hampton and explain its significance as one of Maryland’s largest plantations.

## Group activity

Divide students into 7 groups.

Assign each group a different aspect of life at Hampton.

* Domestic life in the mansion
* Falling gardens and Grand Terrace
* Recreation and Sport
* Dining at Hampton
* Tending Livestock
* Farming for Profit
* Entertaining at Hampton

Ask each group to write down on a large sheet of paper, all of the jobs, skills, or tasks they think were necessary to make their assigned part of life at Hampton possible? (10—15 minutes)

Prompting Questions:

* How were meals prepared?
* What kinds of skills do you need to get a thoroughbred horse ready to race?
* What kinds of things are part of regular housekeeping tasks? Remember, there are no appliances nor plumbing, nor electricity.

## Class discussion

As a class, discuss each group’s ideas and determine where skills/tasks overlap. (15—20 minutes)

Ask students probing questions to explain the reasoning behind their answers.

Ask students to think about:

* How many people were needed to do these many jobs.
* How skilled were these workers?
* How much do you think these people would earn? (generally based on modern standards)
* How much do you think these workers were actually paid?

Ask students to imagine what it might be like for an enslaved person to suddenly become free, and what kinds of challenges and opportunities that kind of change would present to someone’s life.

Remind students that during their visit to Hampton they will be learning about individuals who faced these questions.

# Online resources

Specific information about places and people at Hampton National Historic Site is available online:

[Places - Hampton National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)](https://www.nps.gov/hamp/learn/historyculture/places.htm)

[People of Hampton - Hampton National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)](https://www.nps.gov/hamp/learn/historyculture/people-of-hampton.htm)

[Virtual Tours and Exhibits - Hampton National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)](https://www.nps.gov/hamp/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtour.htm)