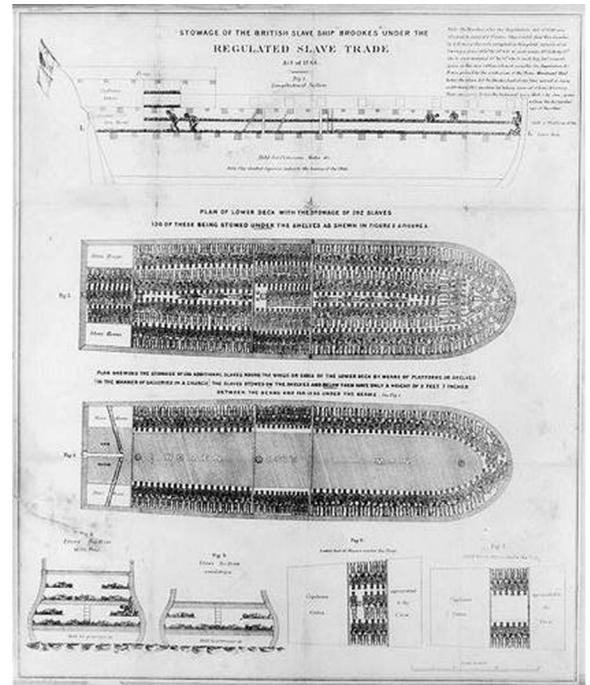




Jameson Jenkins: Conductor on the Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad was a movement to conduct slaves from plantations in the south to freedom in the North. Black people were taken from Africa and brought to America as slaves. Slaves worked in the fields all day without getting paid for their labor. They did not have any rights and were not considered American citizens; they were property of the slave master. Many of the slave masters thought this was just a way of life, but others thought it was wrong and against the Declaration of Independence that told the world we were a free and independent nation. These people were called abolitionists and lived mostly in the North where people were paid for their work. The Underground Railroad was a way for slaves to escape slavery and pursue freedom. Jameson Jenkins was a conductor on the Underground Railroad and lived in Springfield, Illinois.



Plan of lower deck with the stowage of 192 slaves

Purpose:

The goal of this curriculum based education program is to illustrate the reality of slavery through firsthand accounts by those who endured it. Slavery began with slave merchants sailing to Africa to buy, trade for or kidnap African people for the purpose of being slaves in America. The beginning passage from capture and trek to the coastline killed millions of Africans who fought their captors or died during the travel. The middle passage would kill even more Africans crossing the Atlantic Ocean by mistreatment, illness, torture and suicide. Upon arrival in America many more Africans died during docking, in slave pens, illness, and slave auctions. Once in the fields working, many more Africans would die from malnutrition, exhaustion, illness, punishment, attempting escape and some were killed to intimidate slaves and demoralize hope. The only inspiration Africans had was secretly serving their faith/religion and escape. The Underground Railroad was one of the best opportunity for Africans to escape the harsh reality of Slavery.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain the slave trade, slave pen and slave auction from first person accounts recorded by Africans taken into bondage.
2. Name three ways freedom seekers left clues on the Underground Railroad.
3. Name five reasons slavery did not support the beliefs written in the Declaration of Independence.
4. Describe Jameson Jenkins role as a conductor on the Underground Railroad.
5. Explain the importance Springfield had as a depot on the Underground Railroad.

Activities:

Activities were selected to allow teachers to utilize a variety of media to support the objectives

Slavery in America

Pre-Site Activity

1. Visit web site <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/slaveship.htm> to learn firsthand depiction of the beginning and middle passages of slavery.

2. Visit interactive website “Slavery and the Making of America” at www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery

3. *Request Lincoln Home NHS to send a copy or you can purchase and view DVD “Making Freedom: Afro-Americans in U.S. History” and read excerpts from “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” by Harriet Beecher Stowe 1856, detailing a slave auction.

4. *Request Lincoln Home NHS to send a copy or you can purchase and view DVD “Making Freedom: Afro-Americans in U.S. History” and read a slave’s first person recollection of a slave pen and consequences slaves endured.



*DVD can be purchased for \$32.00 online at www.Heinemann.com (Search Making Freedom)

Slavery in America

On-Site Activity

1. Students will be introduced to Jameson Jenkins life through story or first person reenactment learning about Jenkins escape from a slave state to Underground Railroad (UGRR) conductor to driving President Lincoln to the Great Western Depot where he delivered his famous Farewell Address.



2. Although it cannot be determined if Mr. Jenkins ever discussed the UGRR with Abraham Lincoln or if, as a dray man, he drove Mr. Lincoln to the depot on the president-elect’s last day in Springfield, the students will role play Jenkins and Lincoln on a hypothetical trip to the Depot. The students will dialogue possible topics important to each man particularly pertaining to the UGRR. (Alternative beginning sentence: Create an imaginary conversation between Jameson Jenkins and Abraham Lincoln on the way to the depot).

3. Park Ranger takes group on tour through Abraham Lincoln’s home and neighborhood to see Jameson Jenkins lot.

Slavery in America

Post-Site activity

1. Students participate in round table forum discussing if, and how their view of slavery has changed. Ask students if they would risk their lives like Jameson Jenkins did to help others who were still enslaved. If so, connect new perspective by stating for a long time the Underground Railroad was the only hope for many slaves gaining their freedom and if not for people like Jameson Jenkins many more would have lived in slavery for the rest of their lives.
2. Revisit Jameson Jenkins neighbor, Abraham Lincoln and discuss belief that America is “to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life.” As president, Abraham Lincoln upheld those words and helped end Slavery in America.



Post-Site activity (continued)

1. Watch DVD, “Abraham Lincoln: A Journey to Greatness” to compare and contrast Lincoln’s rise from humble beginnings to Jenkins’ rise from slave state to business owner and slaves rise from slavery by Underground Railroad to enslaved people’s lack of opportunity.
2. View interactive DVD Maryland and the Underground Railroad and explore several topics in the web site <http://pathways.thinkport.org/about/ugrr.cfm>: Following the Footsteps, Eyewitness to history, Secrets: Signs and Symbols, and Create a Quilt Block. Create a song similar to Follow the Drinking Gourd that gives clues to lead the listener to a place of your choosing or make your own secret quilt message as you are invited to do on the web site.

