

American Abolitionists

"Let every slave throughout the land do this (revolt) and the days of slavery are numbered. You cannot be more oppressed than you have been -- you cannot suffer greater cruelties than you have already." ~Henry Highland Garnet

Overview

Through decades of strife, and often at the risk of their lives, brave people joined forces as anti-slavery activists and fought for justice despite powerful opposition. In this lesson, students will explore the American abolitionist movement through reading, discussion, and analyzing various primary source documents. Students will also participate in a group project in which they research one abolitionist in depth and create a "Digital Picture Frame" based on their assigned abolitionist's life and accomplishments.

Grade

8

Essential Questions

- What was the mission of the abolitionist movement?
- What were the various tactics the abolitionists used to fight for freedom and equality?
- What were abolitionists risking by speaking out and fighting for emancipation of slaves?
- If you feel something occurring in society is unjust, what are the various ways you can make your opposition known or strive for change?

Materials

- American Abolitionists Power Point accompaniment, available in the Database of K-12 Resources (in PDF format) at <https://k12database.unc.edu/files/2012/04/AmericanAbolitionistsPPT.pdf>
 - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click "View" in the top menu bar of the file, and select "Full Screen Mode"
 - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to CarolinaK12@unc.edu
- Runaway Slave Ads for "Emily" and "Tom," attached and also available on slides 2 & 3 of the PPT
 - Teachers may also want to substitute these ads for one from their own county or region. This site offers the ability to search for runaway slave advertisements by NC county: <http://libcdm1.uncg.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/RAS>
- The American Abolitionist Movement, reading and questions attached
- "Create a Digital Picture Frame Representing an Abolitionist," assignment sheet attached
- Abolitionists (21 attached)
- Research materials (i.e. internet access, library access, encyclopedias, etc.)
- Digital Picture Frame Reflection Sheet, attached

Duration

- 45 minutes for initial lesson and project description
- Additional class time (teacher's discretion) will need to be provided for working on the Digital Picture Frame Project, as well as for presenting the completed projects

Preparation

- Prior to facilitating this lesson, assign the attached "The American Abolitionist Movement" reading and questions for homework.

- Teachers should determine how much class time and homework time will be allotted for completion of the Digital Picture Frame Project (at least a partial period for research and brainstorming, a partial period for writing, and a partial period for rehearsal is recommended).

Procedure

Warm-Up: Exploring the Fugitive Slave Act through Primary Source Documents

1. As a brief 5-minute warm up, partner students up and provide half of the classroom's partners with the "Primary Source Documents – EMILY" and the other half of partners with "Primary Source Documents – TOM." These can be printed from slides 3 & 4 of the accompanying PPT, or they are also attached at the end of this lesson. Project slide 2 of the accompanying PPT and instruct students to review the primary source document provided to them and together discuss:
 - What do you first notice about the document provided to you? What strikes you?
 - What is the purpose of this document?
 - Who do you think created this document? What evidence makes you think this?
 - What can we learn about the institution of slavery and the lives of enslaved people from this document?
 - Specifically, what does this advertisement tell us about Emily or Tom? What inferences can you make regarding this person's life, personality, ambitions, skills, etc.?
2. Once students have discussed their document, ask volunteers from the pairs that examined the advertisement for Emily to report their thoughts to class. Project each advertisement (see slides 3 & 4 of the accompanying PPT) so that the entire class can examine it while it is being talked about. Afterwards, follow the same process for the advertisement for Tom. After both ads have been reviewed, further discuss:
 - What traits or characteristics would have been required of an enslaved person to escape?
 - What traits or characteristics would have been required of a free person to help an enslaved person to freedom?
3. Next, project slide 5, which contains an image of a poster issuing caution to runaway slaves. Ask students to examine the image and share with the class:
 - What do you see? What first strikes you?
 - What information is being shared? Who is the intended audience?
 - What is the purpose of this document?
 - Who do you think created this document?
 - What do you think prompted the creation of this document?
4. Project slide 6 and review the **Fugitive Slave Act/Law** with students, reminding them that the number of successful runaway slaves prompted Congress to pass the infamous Act in 1850 in an attempt to recapture slaves who escaped to the North, as well as to deter slaves considering running away. As a result, both enslaved and free blacks were arrested, since the only proof needed for capture was the slave owners' sworn testimony. Additionally, blacks could not defend themselves in a court of law to prove their freedom. Thus, unscrupulous marshals kidnapped blacks solely for the reward money, even if they owned documents attesting their freedom. After the Fugitive Slave Law's passage, the safety of free blacks became even more tenuous. Advertisements such as this one were created by **abolitionists** to warn people of the pending danger. Discuss:
 - What do you already know about abolitionists?
 - Running away was one of the many ways enslaved people would try to resist the cruel institution they were forced into. What are some other ways people resisted their enslavement?

Resistance to Slavery and the American Abolitionist Movement

5. Project [slide 7](#) and explain to students that to the best of their ability, given each of their individual circumstances, those enslaved resisted the unjust situation they were in. Efforts of resistance were varied among slaves--covert methods of sabotaging or breaking machines and collectively working at a slower pace were employed. As evidenced in the advertisements examined at the start of the lesson, slaves would also attempt to escape. Sometimes, even more dangerous overt resistance was demonstrated, such as open defiance to a master or even slave revolts and rebellions. It is estimated that over two hundred separate slave revolts and conspiracies took place from the 1600's to the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865, although it is impossible to know just how many passive or "invisible" acts of resistance took place among the slaves. At its most basic level, the very act of resistance aimed to restore a sense of dignity lost to slaves by the institution's tyranny. (See the Carolina K-12's lesson "[Slave Resistance](#)" to explore the subject of slave resistance in detail.)

Not only did those enslaved fight for their own freedom, many freed Blacks, escaped slaves, and members of the white community (North and South) advocated in various ways for the end of slavery and assisted slaves in escaping. These **abolitionists** used a variety of strategies and tactics to fight for social justice during the 1800s.

6. Project [slide 8](#), which contains a poster advertising an "Anti-Slavery Meeting" and continue discussing:
- What is the purpose of this document and who do you think created it?
 - What do you think prompted the creation of this document?
 - How might the following people respond to this advertisement when coming across it?
 - A freed Black
 - A slave owner
 - A housewife and mother of three
 - An escaped slave
 - A member of the Democratic Party
 - A Radical Republican
 - A Southern plantation owner
 - A minister
 - Note that in some of these cases, varied inferences can be correct. For example, a student could argue that a minister would want to attend the meeting, claiming surely a religious person would not support such an inhumane institution of slavery. Yet, another student might note that a minister would be outraged by the meeting, since many people used religion as a way to defend slavery.
 - What do you think will be discussed at this meeting? What types of decisions might be made?
7. Next, project [slide 9](#) and review student answers to the questions posed at the end of their homework reading, "The American Abolitionist Movement," discussing the following further:
- Who were some leading abolitionists, either who were mentioned in the article or who you've learned about before? What strategies did they use to resist slavery? What facilitated and constrained their actions?
 - It has been said that the pen is mightier than the sword. Do you think it was more effective for abolitionists to participate in armed rebellions, or to advocate through non-violent means, such as through anti-slavery writings? Explain.
 - What was the constitutional and legal context that framed and legalized slavery?
 - Review the various clauses in the Constitution that legalized slavery, as well as additional legal measures, such as
 - Article I, Section. 2 - Slaves count as 3/5 persons
 - Article I, Section. 9, clause 1 - No power to ban slavery until 1808
 - Article IV, Section, 2 - Free states cannot protect slaves

- Article V - No Constitutional Amendment to Ban Slavery Until 1808
 - Gag rule instituted in 1836, tabling all petitions to end slavery
 - Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 – slaves were to be returned to masters
 - The Supreme Court, in its infamous decision in *Dred Scott v Sandford* (1857), ruled that Congress lacked the power to prohibit slavery in its territories and that slaves had no rights in the courts.
- In many ways, abolitionists were often breaking the law by assisting runaways and/or advocating for emancipation. What risks were people taking by involving themselves in the abolitionist movement?
8. Project [slide 10](#) containing the “Outrage at Abolitionists” poster and ask a student volunteer to read the text to the class. Discuss:
- What do you first notice about this poster?
 - What is the tone/mood of the text?
 - Why do you think this tone was used? What is the goal of the poster?
 - Do any words stand out to you that don’t necessarily match the tone/mood you identified? (Interestingly, the poster specifically notes that “peaceable means” will be employed.)
 - What do you think will be discussed at this meeting? What might occur after the meeting?
 - Who might attend such a meeting and why?
9. Explain to students that as noted in the article they read and as evidenced by this primary source, abolitionists were often targeted and harassed, sometimes violently. Slavery was an incredibly controversial issue and abolitionists were not only risking being fined or arrested, they were also risking their own safety. For example, on May 17, 1838, an abolitionist convention was held in Philadelphia’s Pennsylvania Hall. A large mob burned the building to the ground, protesting against abolitionism. The city was plagued at the time with anti-black and anti-abolitionist violence, particularly from Philadelphian workers who feared that they would have to compete for jobs with freed slaves. Pennsylvania Hall had been open only three days when it was destroyed.

Discuss:

- Considering that this is just one example of the risks faced by abolitionists, imagine that you are living in 1850 and that you have been approached by abolitionists to join their fight. What do you think you would do?

Digital Picture Frames Representing America’s Abolitionist Movement

10. Project [slide 11](#) and tell students that they will be further exploring the brave individuals who comprised the abolitionist movement by creating a “Digital Picture Frame Project.” Pass out the attached assignment sheet and point out to students that when a digital picture frame is turned on, a picture appears (just like in a regular picture frame). Thus, they will first be creating a still image using their own bodies that represents an important moment in their assigned abolitionist’s life. Digital picture frames don’t just stay on one picture however, they move and change through various images, and some even play video clips – explain to students that they will do this as well. They will come to life from their frozen image and act out a short scene regarding the life and accomplishments of their assigned abolitionist.
11. Go through the assignment step by step with students to ensure understanding. Teachers should use their discretion regarding whether to allow students to choose their own group. Also, teachers should determine how much class and homework time they can devote to the project, and let students know up front so that they can plan accordingly. (At least a partial period for research and brainstorming, a partial period for writing, and a partial period for rehearsal is recommended. In addition, class time will need to be provided for presentations of final projects.) Teachers who can devote additional time may want to have a preliminary first draft due date, as well as a date for bringing in props, costumes, set pieces, etc.

12. When explaining the project to students, explicitly discuss with students the importance of being respectful in their portrayal, with particular sensitivity given to race and gender. Teachers should determine how to guide students who are researching and portraying an abolitionist of a different race or gender, as well as abolitionists who were also enslaved. Be clear with students and their families that the goal is to honor these brave advocates of justice in creative ways. In this regard, teachers and students can also think outside the box. For instance, rather than have any student assume the role of Sojourner Truth, the group could instead assume fictional “friends” of her and share about her accomplishments. Other creative ideas include scenes in which several abolitionists meet, or perhaps their scene is performed as a musical.)
13. Let students know when the due date is, explaining that they should be prepared to present their project in front of the class that day. Students will begin by assuming their frozen image in front of the class, holding it for a minute or so in order for the class to observe it. (Teachers can determine whether to allow audience members to even come up and closely observe the frozen image.) They will then launch into their scene.
14. There are several short bios of abolitionists attached, which can be distributed among the groups. As the names attached are not exhaustive of the abolitionists involved in the movement, teachers should feel free to assign alternate people.
15. On the due date of the project, provide the attached presentation reflection sheet. Students should fill this in as they observe each presentation. Before presentations begin, go over the expectations for respectful audience members. Also, let students know that after each presentation, the class will participate in a feedback session in which they share what they liked about and learned from what they viewed.
16. After all students have presented, culminate with a discussion:
 - Of the abolitionists portrayed in the Digital Picture Frames, who do you most admire and why? Or, who do you think made the wisest choice in how to resist slavery and why? What do you think determines what strategies various abolitionists employed?
 - Given the constraints of the day, whose abolitionist choices were most effective and why? Or, who do you think made the biggest impact and why?

100 DOLLARS REWARD!

Ranaway from the subscriber on the 27th of July, my Black Woman, named

EMILY,

Seventeen years of age, well grown, black color, has a whining voice. She took with her one dark calico and one blue and white dress, a red corded gingham bonnet; a white striped shawl and slippers. I will pay the above reward if taken near the Ohio river on the Kentucky side, or THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS, if taken in the State of Ohio, and delivered to me near Lewisburg, Mason County, Ky.

THO'S. H. WILLIAMS.

August 4, 1853.

\$150 REWARD.

RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Monday the 11th July, a negro man named

T O M,

about 30 years of age, 5 feet 6 or 7 inches high; of dark color; heavy in the chest; several of his jaw teeth out; and upon his body are several old marks of the whip, one of them straight down the back. He took with him a quantity of clothing, and several hats.

A reward of \$150 will be paid for his apprehension and security, if taken out of the State of Kentucky; \$100 if taken in any county bordering on the Ohio river; \$50 if taken in any of the interior counties except Fayette; or \$20 if taken in the latter county.

july 12-84-tf

B. L. BOSTON.

The American Abolitionist Movement

An **abolitionist** was a person who wanted to do away with slavery and/or contributed to the cause of freeing slaves in some way (signing petitions, delivering protest speeches, harboring runaway slaves, etc.) While public opinion regarding slavery varied widely and different branches of the abolitionist movement disagreed on how to achieve their aims, abolitionists found enough strength in their common belief in individual liberty to move their agenda forward. Through decades of strife, and often at the risk of their lives, free Blacks, slaves, white men and women, and Native Americans joined forces as anti-slavery activists who fought for justice despite powerful opposition. Their efforts ultimately forced the issue of slavery to the forefront of national politics, fueling the split between the North and South that led to the **Civil War**.

Abolitionists employed all manner of strategies to persuade the American public and its leadership to end slavery. One of their first strategies was to unite groups of like-minded individuals to fight as a group. As early as 1786, organizations had been founded to protest the practice of slavery in the United States. For instance, America's first abolition society, the **Pennsylvania Abolition Society**, was founded on April 14, 1775, in Philadelphia and included members such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine.

Although antislavery sentiment had existed during the American Revolution, the abolitionist movement did not reach crusading proportions until the 1830s. The contradictions between a national defense of slavery on American soil on the one hand, and the universal freedoms declared in the Declaration of Independence on the other hand, had created a deep moral divide in the national culture. Thus, during the thirty years leading up to the Civil War, anti-slavery organizations spread and became increasingly effective in their methods of resistance. By 1838, more than 1,350 antislavery societies existed with almost 250,000 members, including many women.

One of the most influential abolitionists of the 1830s was **William Lloyd Garrison**, who used the press to spread the abolitionist message. On January 1, 1831, he published the first issue of his abolitionist journal, ***The Liberator***. In this issue, he wrote:

"I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population.... On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation.... I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch AND I WILL BE HEARD."

Garrison was often attacked, verbally and physically, by anti-abolitionist Northerners. But he also awakened other Northerners to the evil in the institution of slavery that many had decided was unchangeable. He sought to inform and remind the public of the repulsive aspects of slavery and to show how slave holders were torturers and traffickers in human life. He recognized no rights of the masters, acknowledged no compromise, and felt there should be no delay in emancipation.

Garrison was joined by another powerful voice, that of **Frederick Douglass**, an escaped slave who inspired Northern audiences as a spokesman for the **Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society**, and later as the eloquent editor of the abolitionist weekly newspaper, ***Northern Star***.

Garrison was also one of the principal organizers of the **American Anti-Slavery Society**, founded in Philadelphia in Dec., 1833. The primary concern of the society was the denunciation of slavery as a moral evil and its members called for immediate action to free the slaves. In 1835, the society launched a massive propaganda campaign. It flooded the slave states with abolitionist literature, sent agents throughout the North to organize state and local antislavery societies, and poured petitions into Congress demanding the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

Another tactic of the antislavery movement involved helping slaves escape to safe refuges in the North or over the border into Canada. Known as the "**Underground Railroad**," an elaborate network of secret routes and safe houses was firmly established in the 1830s in all parts of the North, with its most successful operation being in the old Northwest Territory. The Underground Railroad provided shelter, safety, and guidance for thousands of runaway slaves until 1865.

The number of antislavery societies increased at such a rate during this period that by 1840, there were about 2,000 antislavery societies with a membership of perhaps 200,000. Yet, even with support for their cause growing, abolitionists still faced danger and violations of their rights. For example, many abolitionists spread their message through publications such as pamphlets and leaflets which contained anti-slavery poems, slogans, essays, sermons, and songs. However, these materials were deemed so threatening in slave states that they were outlawed, ultimately a violation of the First Amendment's promise to freedom of speech and the press.

Another strategy abolitionists employed was addressing Congress, flooding representatives with petitions calling for a ban on slavery in the District of Columbia. However, in 1836 the House instituted a **gag rule**, which enabled legislators to table such petitions automatically, thus effectively killing them. Former President **John Quincy Adams**, elected to the House of Representatives in 1830, fought this so-called gag rule as a violation of the **First Amendment**. The House finally repealed the gag rule in 1844.

Throughout the abolitionist movement, women played an important part in working against enslavement. Black women spoke from their experience, bringing their stories to audiences to elicit empathy and action. White women came out of their domestic sphere to support the cause in various ways. For example, the National Anti-Slavery Bazaar was a large fundraising fair run by the **Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society** in 1846. Members crafted and sold abolitionist paraphernalia, household items, and publications to raise money for abolitionist activities, especially the American Anti-Slavery Society's newspaper, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*.

The abolitionist movement was further motivated to fight for freedom when on September 18th, 1850, the US Congress passed the **Fugitive Slave Act /Law**, as part of the **Compromise of 1850**. The law declared that all runaway slaves be brought back to their masters. Abolitionists nicknamed it the "**Bloodhound Law**" for the dogs that were used to track down runaway slaves.

As time passed, some abolitionists became more radical in their fight for freedom. Militant abolitionists felt that violence was the only way to end slavery and resorted to extreme and deadly tactics, such as inciting violent insurrections. One such example was **John Brown**, who led a raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (located in modern-day West Virginia) in 1859. During the raid, Brown seized the armory, intending to arm slaves with the weapons stolen from the arsenal. The attack failed and Brown was captured and hanged.

The majority of abolitionists stood with the Union throughout the secession crisis and became militant champions of emancipation during the Civil War. Such insistent abolitionist demands for immediate freeing of the slaves, supported by radical Republicans in Congress, pushed **President Lincoln** in his decision to issue the **Emancipation Proclamation**. However, the Emancipation Proclamation was criticized at the time for freeing only the slaves over which the Union had no power. But, the Proclamation did provide the legal framework for the emancipation of nearly all four million slaves in the South as the Union armies advanced.

While the Emancipation Proclamation freed Southern slaves as a war measure, abolitionists were concerned that it had not made slavery officially illegal in all the states. Though several former slave states had already passed legislation prohibiting slavery, in a few states, slavery continued to exist. Finally, on December 18, 1865, the **Thirteenth Amendment** was enacted, bringing a legal end to slavery in all states.

Even with the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment however, many abolitionists, such as **Wendell Phillips**, insisted the movement's work was not complete. Phillips and his followers believed the American Anti-Slavery Society should continue its work until complete political equality for all black males was granted. The Society continued until 1870, working to demand land, the right to vote, and education for the freedman. Only when the **Fifteenth Amendment** (extending male suffrage to African-American men) was passed did the society declare its mission completed.

Through their courage, perseverance, and activism, abolitionists brought hope to those enslaved, spread anti-slavery sentiment, and ultimately had a hand in ensuring the institution of slavery ended. The fight for equality begun by abolitionists lived on to inspire the subsequent founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909 and the fight for civil rights throughout the 1900s.

Sources: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/abolitionists.aspx>
<http://countrystudies.us/united-states/history-59.htm>
<http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/abolitionism/index.htm>
<http://afgen.com/abmovement.html> (link block by UNC ITS)

Answer the following on notebook paper:

1. What was the mission of the abolitionist movement?
2. What were the various tactics the abolitionists used to fight for freedom and equality? (List at least 4 examples.)
3. Of the tactics employed by various abolitionists, which do you think was most effective in bringing about an end to slavery and why?
4. What were abolitionists risking by speaking out and fighting for emancipation of slaves?
5. Why do you think the abolitionist movement and the women's suffrage movement often joined forces?
6. Imagine you, as an enslaved person, have runaway and are relying on abolitionists along the Underground Railroad to assist you. What would be exciting about this situation? What would be frightening?
7. Why do you think some abolitionists grew more militant in their fight for justice and equality?

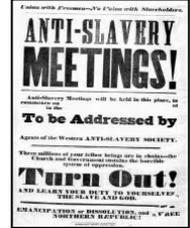
8. Summarize the purpose of the Emancipation Proclamation. In your opinion, was it an effective document (for freeing the slaves or for other purposes)? Why or why not?

9. Why did some abolitionists continue their work, even after the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified?

10. If you feel something occurring in society is unjust, what are the various ways you can make your opposition known or strive for change?

Assignment:

Create a Digital Picture Frame Representing an Abolitionist



Digital picture frames are neat inventions. When a digital picture frame is turned on, the viewer first sees a frozen image – a picture. Then, the image in the digital picture frame switches to a new picture, showing the viewer something different; some digital picture frames even play video clips.

Your group will create a digital picture frame project based on the abolitionist assigned to your group. Your project will begin with your group frozen in a 3-D picture that represents an important moment in the life of the abolitionist assigned to you. Then, that image will switch to something different – a “video.” Your group will do this by coming to life from your frozen image and acting out a short scene regarding the life and accomplishments of your abolitionist.

Step 1: Review the roles below and determine who in your group will be responsible for each. While one group member will be in charge of each aspect of the project, all group members must actively contribute to each step.

Research Manager: Lead the group during Step 2, during which you will ensure everyone in your group engages in productive research about your abolitionist. Make sure each person consults a different source and keeps track of the sources consulted.

Director: Lead the group during Step 3, in which your group will brainstorm, decide upon, and place one or more of you in a frozen image that represents an important moment from your abolitionist’s life. You will also lead the group during Step 6, ensuring everyone is participating and stays on task during the rehearsal of your scene.

Script Writer: Lead the group during Step 4, during which your group will brainstorm and write down a short scene that will be acted out when the digital picture frame image turns to video. While you will be responsible for writing down each actor’s lines on paper, everyone must contribute and offer ideas as to what they think they would say. Make sure everyone is equally involved in developing the script.

Artistic Designer: Lead the group during Step 5, brainstorming what materials can be brought to class or prepared to enhance your frozen image and scene. This can include costumes, props, set pieces, music, etc.

Step 2: Research the abolitionist assigned to you. Learn everything you can about this person, such as:

- Background, life experiences, and interesting facts
- Talents, interests, and skills (i.e. writing, public speaking, etc.)
- Why he/she became an abolitionist
- The ways he/she worked to ensure slavery was ended (What tactics did he/she use?)
- Affiliations with other prominent abolitionists or abolitionist groups
- Impact on the abolitionist movement

Take detailed notes and ensure you write down your sources. You will use this information to create your frozen image and scene.

Step 3: Brainstorm what you think is the most important moment in this person’s life as an abolitionist, or what you feel is the most important accomplishment this person made in regards to the abolitionist movement. Design one or more of your bodies into a frozen image representing this moment.

Step 4: From this frozen moment, your picture will switch to a video, at which point you will all act out a scene regarding this abolitionist. Write the script by working together. Each person must contribute ideas.

Your final script:

- Should be written with the purpose of educating your classmates about this abolitionist
- Must contain accurate information (including at least the information from the questions answered during Frame 2)
- Should be respectful, sensitive to issues of race and gender, and honor this person's significance
- Should be creative
- Will be turned in and must include your list of resources

Step 5: Brainstorm and prepare materials to enhance your frozen image and scene. Consider how the use of props, scenery, costumes, music, etc. can make your presentation more believable and entertaining. Items can be brought from home or created in class. If you will need particular supplies, consult with your teacher.

Step 6: Practice! Practice! Practice! Your final presentation should be around 3 minutes long when performed. Do your best to memorize your lines; if you must keep your script in hand, do not read directly from it.

Your final presentation should:

- Start with a frozen image that then turns to video (at which point your scene is acted out).
- Be presented as a serious performance (i.e. assume the appropriate persona of your character, keep a straight face, memorize your lines and deliver them as believably as possible, support your fellow actors, etc.)
- Be organized and well rehearsed; props, music, costumes etc. if present in scene should be used effectively
- Be engaging and creative
- Teach all of us about your abolitionist, his/her life and accomplishments, his/her tactics in combating slavery, etc.
- Make sure each of you speaks at an appropriate volume and uses appropriate emotion to convey your character

Due Date: _____

Abolitionists

Harriet Beecher Stowe



Harriet Beecher Stowe (June 14, 1811 – July 1, 1896) was an abolitionist and author. Her famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* depicted what life was like for African-Americans under slavery. Published in 1852, the novel (which was later made into a play) is credited for helping Americans become aware of the cruel reality of life for a slave and made the political issues of the 1850s regarding slavery tangible to millions. As the book spread, it energized anti-slavery forces in the North, while provoking widespread anger in the South, where the book was banned. Upon meeting Stowe, Abraham Lincoln allegedly remarked, "So you're the little lady who started this great war!"

William Lloyd Garrison



William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), the lightning rod of the abolitionist movement, promoted "moral suasion," or nonviolent and non-political resistance, to achieve emancipation. In 1831, he began publishing *The Liberator*, the single most important abolitionist publication, and later led the American Anti-Slavery Society. His avid support for a woman's right to participate in the movement and his attack on the American Constitution as a pro-slavery document created deep divisions in the abolitionist movement. However, his unflinching conviction and his influence in promoting "immediatism" shaped the course of abolitionism in America.

Levi Coffin



Levi Coffin (1798-1867), a Quaker and successful merchant, along with his wife Catharine, helped thousands of slaves on their way North and to Canada on the Underground Railroad. Raised in a religious Southern family who never owned slaves, Coffin hated oppression. Coffin stated that the Bible did not mention race when it urged people to be charitable to one another. Because of his prominent role in helping slaves to freedom, Coffin's home was given the title of "Grand Central Station" and he, the "President" of the Underground Railroad.

Wendell Phillips



Wendell Phillips (1811-1884) was one of the abolitionist movement's most powerful orators. The Harvard-educated lawyer came from a wealthy and influential Boston family, many of whom were appalled by his activism in support of the abolitionist cause. However, he was undaunted in his work and was thrust into prominence when he gave a riveting speech in Boston's Faneuil Hall in defense of Elijah Lovejoy in 1837. The Rev. Lovejoy had been murdered for his repeated attempts to run a printing press sympathetic to the abolitionist cause. Phillips used plain, yet metaphorical language to convey his message. He also gave generously to abolitionists in need of financial assistance.

Lucretia Mott



Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) was a Quaker and a “non-resistant” pacifist who was committed to black emancipation and women’s rights. As a woman, her role in official abolitionist movements was fraught with difficulties. In 1840, she and six other American female delegates to the World Anti-Slavery Convention in England were refused seats. Because of her opposition to violence of any kind, Mott did not support the Civil War as a means of liberating slaves. She did, however, welcome the War’s hastening of emancipation. Of her principles she wrote, “I have no idea, because I am a non-resistant, of submitting tamely to injustice inflicted either on me or on the slave. I will oppose it with all the moral powers with which I am endowed. I am no advocate of passivity.”

Lydia Maria Child



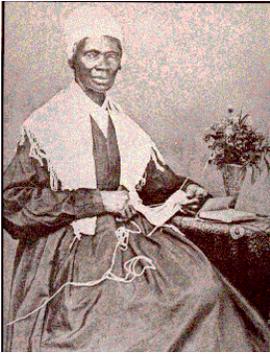
Novelist, scholar, and activist for women’s rights, Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) became an abolitionist after she began reading Garrison’s news journal, *The Liberator*. In 1833, Child wrote “An Appeal to that Class of Americans Called Africans,” an anti-slavery tract in which she declared her willingness to battle for emancipation. Her new abolitionist rhetoric so repelled readers that Child's books sold poorly, and she could not find a publisher willing to accept her work. From 1841-43, Child was the editor of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, the American Anti-Slavery Society’s newspaper. She later resigned because of infighting among the society's members, who were divided in their support for the diverging philosophies, “moral suasion” and political persuasion. Child revitalized her role as an opponent of slavery after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850 and John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry in 1859. She continued publishing letters, edited Harriet Jacob’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, and wrote primers and anti-slavery tracts to combat racial injustice.

Samuel May



Samuel May’s life was forever changed when he heard William Lloyd Garrison lecture about immediate, unconditional emancipation without expatriation in 1830. May (1797-1871) wrote of that experience, “my soul was baptized in his spirit, and ever since I have been a disciple and fellow-laborer of Wm. Lloyd Garrison.” May, a Unitarian minister, was a pacifist and practiced non-violent resistance by lecturing, acting as a general agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and sheltering slaves on the Underground Railroad. In one notable case, May helped to liberate William “Jerry” Henry, who had been taken into custody in Syracuse under the Fugitive Slave Law, and was to be returned to slavery. After the “Jerry Rescue,” a pro-slavery mob attacked May and other rescuers and burned the unwavering May in effigy.

Sojourner Truth



Despite her inability to read or write, Sojourner Truth (ca. 1797-1883) had a commanding presence and considerable oratorical powers. She was one of the best known and esteemed black women of the nineteenth century. Born a New York slave and given the name Isabella Baumfree, Sojourner Truth gained her freedom when New York abolished slavery in 1827. A pacifist, she transformed herself into an activist for abolitionism and proclaimed her new identity by changing her name to Sojourner Truth. Her anti-slavery activities included recruiting black troops, publishing her narrative, and winning a civil rights lawsuit. Her circle of influence included both black and white allies as well as several presidents. (President Abraham Lincoln chose her to be a counselor to the freedmen in Washington.) Sojourner Truth drew upon her experience as a black woman and former slave, advocating the abolition of slavery, civil liberties for African Americans, and women's rights.

Lewis Tappan



Lewis Tappan (1788-1873), a wealthy merchant from a strong Calvinist family, is best known for his role in organizing the defense of Joseph Cinque in the Amistad trial. Tappan also funded anti-slavery journals and helped to form the American Anti-Slavery Society, which he later abandoned because of his disapproval of women's involvement in the society. Tappan and other disaffected former members of the American Anti-Slavery Society formed the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which employed political abolitionism. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, Tappan supported the Underground Railroad, and he fought for black civil rights in the North. His abolitionist deeds were often met with hostility, which extended as far as the destruction of a church built by Tappan and his brother.

William Seward



William Seward (1801-1872), of Auburn, New York, served as governor of New York from 1838 to 1842. He was elected to the U.S. Senate as a Whig party member in 1847, primarily because of his anti-slavery stance. He fought a hard political battle against the Missouri Compromise of 1850 and in favor of the admission of California as a free state. Seward later softened his stance on slavery to appease Southerners during his unsuccessful run for president on the Republican ticket. Lincoln made Seward his Secretary of State, and called upon Seward to help compose the Emancipation Proclamation. Seward also sheltered slaves on the Underground Railroad. He admired the work of Harriet Tubman, and sold her the land in Auburn, New York, where she built her home.

Frederick Douglass



As a lecturer, writer, editor and ex-slave, Frederick Douglass (ca. 1818-1895) emerged as the most prominent African American of the nineteenth century to fight for racial justice. Under Garrison's mentorship, Douglass adopted "moral suasion" as an abolitionist strategy. Impatient with this approach, Douglass later broke from Garrison, believing that political activism was the only way to achieve freedom. Although vehement in his rhetoric, Douglas refused to use violence. Indeed, he refused to defend or take part in John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry. Douglass wrote three autobiographies, edited four newspapers, lectured nationally and internationally, and recruited black soldiers for the Civil War. He advised and pressured Lincoln to make slavery the single most important issue of the Civil War and remained committed to integration and civil rights for all Americans throughout his life.

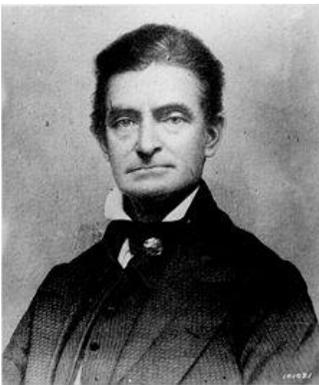
Gerrit Smith



Gerrit Smith (1797-1874) was a wealthy abolitionist from Utica, New York. His conversion to abolitionism occurred in 1835, when he attended an abolitionist conference in Utica, New York. The meeting was disrupted by a violent mob of anti-abolitionists. Consequently, Smith offered his Peterboro, New York estate to house the conference and, there, made a powerful speech on behalf of the cause. He became the president of the New York Anti-Slavery Society for three years. Smith served as Station Master of the Underground railroad and sold portions of his land to fugitive slaves for the nominal fee of one dollar. Gerrit Smith was also one of the Secret Six, a group of supporters who gave financial assistance to John Brown for his raid at Harper's Ferry. Smith ran for president three times and was the only abolitionist to hold a

Congressional office.

John Brown



John Brown (May 9, 1800 – December 2, 1859) was a radical abolitionist who advocated and practiced armed insurrection as a means to end all slavery. He led the Pottawatomie Massacre in 1856 in Bleeding Kansas and made his name in the unsuccessful raid at Harpers Ferry in 1859. Brown attempted to start a liberation movement among enslaved African Americans in Harpers Ferry by stealing weapons from the federal arsenal located there and arming slaves. His attempt was unsuccessful and he was tried for treason against the state of Virginia, the murder of five proslavery Southerners, and inciting a slave insurrection and was subsequently hanged. The Harpers Ferry raid in 1859 escalated tensions that a year later

led to secession and the American Civil War.

William Still



William Still (November 1819 or October 7, 1821 – July 14, 1902) was an African-abolitionist, conductor on the Underground Railroad, writer, historian and civil rights activist. In 1844, he moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he began working as a clerk for the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. When Philadelphia abolitionists organized a committee to aid runaway slaves reaching Philadelphia, Still became its chairman. By the 1850s, Still was a leader of Philadelphia's African-American community. In 1859 he attempted to desegregate the city's public transit system.

Harriet Jacobs



Harriet Ann Jacobs (February 11, 1813 - March 7, 1897) was born a slave in Edenton, North Carolina in 1813. She escaped slavery in 1835 and became a writer, abolitionist speaker and reformer. Jacobs' single work, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, published in 1861 under the pseudonym "Linda Brent", was one of the first autobiographical narratives about the struggle for freedom by female slaves and an account of the sexual abuse they endured.

Harriet Tubman



Harriet Tubman (born Araminta Ross; [c.](#) 1822 – March 10, 1913) was an African-American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union spy during the Civil War. After escaping from slavery, into which she was born, she made thirteen missions to rescue over seventy slaves using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad. She later helped John Brown recruit men for his raid on Harpers Ferry, and in the post-war era struggled for women's suffrage.

Nat Turner



Nathaniel "Nat" Turner (October 2, 1800 – November 11, 1831) was a slave who led a slave rebellion in Virginia on August 21, 1831 that resulted in 60 deaths, the largest number of fatalities to occur in one uprising in the antebellum southern United States. He gathered supporters in Southampton County, Virginia. Turner's killing of whites during the uprising makes his legacy controversial. For his actions, Turner was convicted, sentenced to death, and executed.

Paul Cuffe



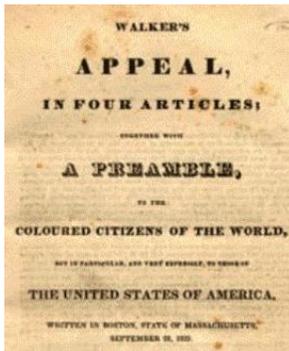
Paul Cuffee (January 17, 1759 – September 9, 1817) was a Quaker businessman, patriot, and abolitionist of Aquinnah Wampanoag and African Ashanti descent. Cuffee built a lucrative shipping empire and established the first school in Westport, Massachusetts to be racially integrated. A devout Christian, Cuffee often preached and spoke at the Sunday services at the multi-racial Society of Friends meeting house in Westport. In 1813 he donated most of the money to build a new meeting house in 1813. He became involved in the British effort to resettle former slaves in the colony of Sierra Leone. (Many had been transported from the US to Nova Scotia after the American Revolution after gaining freedom with the British.) Cuffee helped to establish The Friendly Society of Sierra Leone, to gather financial support for the colony.

Henry Highland Garnet



Henry Highland Garnet (December 23, 1815 – February 13, 1882) was an abolitionist and orator. An advocate of militant abolitionism, Garnet was a prominent member of the abolition movement that led against moral suasion toward more political action. Renowned for his skills as a public speaker, he urged blacks to take action and claim their own destinies. Garnet was the first black minister to preach to the United States House of Representatives

David Walker



David Walker was a black abolitionist who was born as a free black in Wilmington, North Carolina. Although he was free, Walker witnessed the cruelty of slavery during his childhood in North Carolina. Walker is most famous for his pamphlet *David Walker's Appeal To the Coloured Citizens of the World*. Walker denounced the American institution of slavery as the most oppressive in world history and called on people of African descent to resist slavery and racism by any means. The book was notable for refusing to conform to the period's conventions of polite and deferential etiquette, and terrified southern slave owners, who immediately labeled it seditious. A price was placed on Walker's head: \$10,000 if he were brought in alive, \$1,000 if dead.

Henry "Box" Brown



Henry "Box" Brown was a 19th century Virginia slave who escaped to freedom by arranging to have himself mailed to Philadelphia abolitionists in a dry goods container. For a short time he became a noted abolitionist speaker and later a showman, but later lost the support of the abolitionist community, notably Frederick Douglass, who wished Brown had kept quiet about his escape so that more slaves could have escaped using similar means.

Name: _____

Digital Picture Frame Reflection Sheet

| Abolitionist's Name | Important Facts/Accomplishments (Note at least 3 things you learned from the presentation) |
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Which abolitionist presented to you most admire and why?