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**Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness:
The History of Democracy in America**

Title: The Journey of Slaves Toward Freedom

Possible Subject Area(s): Middle School Social Studies (these may be integrated Language Arts lessons)

Overview: Prior to these lessons students should have some background knowledge of slavery in our country in addition to having read the Declaration of Independence. Students will become aware of the origin and meaning of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. They will gain an understanding of the lives of enslaved men, women, children and their pursuit of liberty in American history. Students will utilize the following levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: Knowledge, Comprehension, Evaluation, Synthesis and Analysis.

Essential Understanding: The experience of slaves; the pain, the sorrow and the reality of being physically owned by another human being along with their struggle from slavery toward liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The origin and meaning of the second sentence of our Declaration of Independence.

Essential Questions: 1) What is the meaning of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?
2) If the Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776, why were human beings still enslaved for many years after?
3) When and how did slaves begin to pursue freedom?
4) Who were some people and what events had a significant role/impact in seeking freedom for slaves?

CT Standards:

#1) Historical Thinking:

(6.1) - Gather information from multiple sources to have experience with historical sources and to appreciate the need for multiple perspectives.

(6.3) - Develop written narratives and short interpretive essays.

#3) Historical Themes: (6.2) – Explain how roles and status of people have differed and changed throughout history based on gender, age, class, racial identity.

Objectives:

- The student will use historical information from various sources, including primary documents to gain an understanding of: life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, America's history of slavery and the journey to gain freedom.
- The student will define the unit's required vocabulary terms
- The student will review events on a historical timeline as an overview of slavery
- The student will synthesize and apply information studied, to compose a five paragraph essay on a topic of their choice (topics must be related to matter covered in these lessons)

Materials Needed: Slavery Pre-test, Background information on slavery in America (Slavery Timeline), Primary Document: Public Sale of Negroes, "Background-Declaration of Independence" and "The Declaration of Independence: A Look at the Meaning" documents, Biography of Harriet Tubman, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* video, access to computer and library for research of final project/assessment sources.

Suggested Activities/Procedures:

Day 1 (60 minutes)

- Teacher and students will do a shared reading (whole group) of the primary document: *Public Sale of Negroes*.
- Teacher will present unit vocabulary and engage students with 'brainstorm' session with possible meanings/definitions. Teacher will ensure students have correct meaning by end of session.
- Students will work in small groups to: 1) complete a pre-assessment on slavery 2) read the Slavery Timeline 3) compose three discussion questions the group has after reading the timeline.
- **Homework** : 1) **study** vocabulary terms {*liberty, pursuit, consequential, unalienable, endowed, arbiter, mulatto, indentured, wench, abolitionist*} 2) **write** answers for 3 discussion questions

Day 2 (60 minutes)

- Students will meet in groups to compare answers from homework questions and then decide on the 3 best answers which will be presented by the group to the whole class following group work.
- Students will present their group's questions and answers.
- Students will view the first half of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* movie.
- **Homework**: 1) **Write** a journal entry for one of the characters in the movie.(must be at least two paragraphs) ; 2) **Read** the "Background-Declaration of Independence" and "The Declaration of Independence: A Look at the Meaning" documents (attached) in preparation for next class meeting. Be sure to document any questions you have while reading!

Day 3 (75 minutes – or material may be split into 2 different sessions)

- Students will meet in small groups to 'TAG' (**T**ell something you like; **A**sk a question; **G**ive a suggestion) a peer's homework journal entry and then submit homework to teacher for feedback.
- Students will view the second half of Uncle Tom's Cabin movie.
- Students will return to a group forum to discuss the "Background-Declaration of Independence" and "The Declaration of Independence: A Look at the Meaning." After a general discussion of everyone's interpretation, each group will work together to answer the question: *Why do you think people were still enslaved in America AFTER the adoption of the Declaration of Independence document by our government?*
- **Homework**: Students will create two new versions of the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
In the first new version, students will rewrite the sentence reflecting what may have been Thomas Jefferson's views on race and slavery. **In the second version**, students will rewrite the sentence with a reflection on America's modern society and /or their own personal beliefs.

Day 4 (TBD) Students would present their homework in small group and then in whole group.

Unit may continue with more lessons or end with presentations of assessment projects.

Suggested Assessment/Evaluation

- Students will compose a five paragraph essay about a topic or person you have learned about in this unit and impose it into a poster. Be creative and include photos and/or drawings. Students will use poster as a focal point for an oral presentation to class. (Rubric attached)

Possible Extensions/Resources

- Students may perform a Reader's Theatre using material from "*Bullwhip Days, The Slaves Remember: An Oral History*"
- Students work in groups to analyze the article "*Aetna Weighs Payment Over Slavery Charges*" (The New York Times 3/2000). Continue group work with a mock debate or trial using material. Students would portray the 34 year old woman lawyer and activist, Deadria Farmer-Paellman, along with Board members from Aetna arguing for/against a public apology and restitution payment over profits the company made from insuring slaves in America.
- Attend a live presentation of "Voices: Those Who Wore The Shoe" by Harlin C. Kearsley
- Read the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- Visit to the New Haven Historical Society and explore the slavery exhibits. Also, there is an opportunity, by appointment, for students to participate in a mock trial after the 1839 Amistad Revolt during their visit.

Primary Document: Public Sale of Negroes

Public Sale of Negroes,

By RICHARD CLAGETT.

On Tuesday, March 5th, 1833 at 1:00 P. M. the following Slaves will be sold at Potters Mart, in Charleston, S. C.

Miscellaneous Lots of Negroes, mostly house servants, some for field work.

Conditions: ½ cash, balance by bond, bearing interest from date of sale. Payable in one to two years to be secured by a mortgage of the Negroes, and appraised personal security. Auctioneer will pay for the papers.

A valuable Negro woman, accustomed to all kinds of house work. Is a good plain cook, and excellent dairy maid, washes and irons. She has four children, one a girl about 13 years of age, another 7, a boy about 5, and an infant 11 months old. 2 of the children will be sold with mother, the others separately, if it best suits the purchaser.

A very valuable Blacksmith, wife and daughters; the Smith is in the prime of life, and a perfect master at his trade. His wife about 27 years old, and his daughters 12 and 10 years old have been brought up as house servants, and as such are very valuable. Also for sale 2 likely young negro wenches, one of whom is 16 the other 13, both of whom have been taught and accustomed to the duties of house servants. The 16 year old wench has one eye.

A likely yellow girl about 17 or 18 years old, has been accustomed to all kinds of house and garden work. She is sold for no fault. Sound as a dollar.

House servants: The owner of a family described herein, would sell them for a good price only, they are offered for no fault whatever, but because they can be done without, and money is needed, He has been offered \$1250. They consist of a man 30 to 33 years old, who has been raised in a genteel Virginia family as house servant, Carriage driver etc., in all which he excels. His wife a likely wench of 25 to 30 raised in like manner, as chamber maid, seamstress, nurse etc., their two children, girls of 12 and 4 or 5. They are bright mulattoes, of mild tractable dispositions, unassuming manners, and of genteel appearance and well worthy the notice of a gentleman of fortune needing such.

Also 14 Negro Wenches ranging from 16 to 25 years of age, all sound and capable of doing a good days work in the house or field.

1581 Slaves in Florida Spanish residents in St. Augustine, the first permanent settlement in Florida, import African slaves.

1619 Slaves in Virginia Africans brought to Jamestown are the first slaves imported into Britain's North American colonies. Like indentured servants, they were probably freed after a fixed period of service.

1662 Hereditary Slavery Virginia law decrees that children of black mothers "shall be bond or free according to the condition of the mother."

1705 Slaves as Property Describing slaves as real estate, Virginia lawmakers allow owners to bequeath their slaves. The same law allowed masters to "kill and destroy" runaways.

1712 Slave Revolt: New York Slaves in New York City kill whites during an uprising, later squelched by the militia. Nineteen rebels are executed.

1739 Slave Revolt: South Carolina Crying "Liberty!" some 75 slaves in South Carolina steal weapons and flee toward freedom in Florida (then under Spanish rule). Crushed by the South Carolina militia, the revolt results in the deaths of 40 blacks and 20 whites.

1775 American Revolution Begins Battles at the Massachusetts towns of Lexington and Concord on April 19 spark the war for American independence from Britain.

1775 Abolitionist Society Anthony Benezet of Philadelphia found the world's first abolitionist society. Benjamin Franklin becomes its president in 1787.

1776 Declaration of Independence The Continental Congress asserts "that these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States".

1783 American Revolution Ends Britain and the infant United States sign the Peace of Paris treaty.

1784 Abolition Effort Congress narrowly defeats Thomas Jefferson's proposal to ban slavery in new territories after 1800.

1790—First United States Census Nearly 700,000 slaves live and toil in a nation of 3.9 million people.

1793 Fugitive Slave Act The United States outlaws any efforts to impede the capture of runaway slaves.

1794—Cotton Gin Eli Whitney patents his device for pulling seeds from cotton. The invention turns cotton into the cash crop of the American South—and creates a huge demand for slave labor.

1808 United States Bans Slave Trade Importing African slaves is outlawed, but smuggling continues.

1820—Missouri Compromise Missouri is admitted to the Union as a slave state, Maine as a free state. Slavery is forbidden in any subsequent territories north of latitude 36°30'.

1822 Slave Revolt: South Carolina Freed slave Denmark Vesey attempts a rebellion in Charleston. Thirty-five participants in the ill-fated uprising are hanged.

1831 Slave Revolt: Virginia Slave preacher Nat Turner leads a two-day uprising against whites, killing about 60. Militiamen crush the revolt then spend two months searching for Turner, who is eventually caught and hanged. Enraged Southerners impose harsher restrictions on their slaves.

1835 Censorship Southern states expel abolitionists and forbid the mailing of antislavery propaganda.

1846-48 Mexican-American War Defeated, Mexico yields an enormous amount of territory to the United States. Americans then wrestle with a controversial topic: Is slavery permitted in the new lands?

1847 Frederick Douglass's Newspaper Escaped slave Frederick Douglass begins publishing the North Star in Rochester, New York.

1849 Harriet Tubman Escapes; After fleeing slavery, Tubman returns south at least 15 times to help rescue several hundred others.

1850 Compromise of 1850 In exchange for California's entering the Union as a free state, northern congressmen accept a harsher Fugitive Slave Act.

1852 Uncle Tom's Cabin Published Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel about the horrors of slavery sells 300,000 copies within a year of publication.

1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act Setting aside the Missouri Compromise of 1820, Congress allows these two new territories to choose whether to allow slavery. Violent clashes erupt.

1857 Dred Scott Decision; The United States Supreme Court decides, seven to two, that blacks can never be citizens and that Congress has no authority to outlaw slavery in any territory.

1860 Abraham Lincoln Elected ; Abraham Lincoln of Illinois becomes the first Republican to win the United States Presidency.

1861-65 United States Civil War Four years of brutal conflict claim 623,000 lives.

1863 Emancipation Proclamation; President Abraham Lincoln decrees that all slaves in Rebel territory are free on January 1, 1863.

1865 Slavery Abolished: The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution outlaws slavery.

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

W

hen in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected, whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefit of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & Perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Background – Declaration of Independence

(Source: Wikipedia -- The following is an excerpt. I have bolded and/or underlined some of the material for teaching emphasis.)

The United States Declaration of Independence is a statement adopted by the Continental Congress in 1776, which announced that the thirteen American colonies then at war with Great Britain were now independent states, and thus no longer a part of the British Empire. Written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, the Declaration is a formal explanation of why Congress had voted on July 2 to declare independence from Great Britain, more than a year after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War. The birthday of the United States of America—Independence Day—is celebrated on July 4, the day the wording of the Declaration was approved by Congress. However, according to most historians, Congress signed this document on August 2, 1776, and not on July 4, as is often believed. After finalizing the text on July 4, Congress issued the Declaration of Independence in several forms. It was initially published as a printed broadside that was widely distributed and read to the public. The most famous version of the Declaration, a signed copy that is usually regarded as *the* Declaration of Independence, is on display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

The Declaration's stature grew over the years, particularly the second sentence, a sweeping statement of human rights:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men are created equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**.

This sentence has been called "one of the best-known sentences in the English language" and "the most potent and consequential words in American history" and is based on the writings of English writer John Locke, who expressed that "no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions." The passage is one of the most famous phrases in the Declaration of Independence and has often been used to promote the rights of marginalized groups, and came to represent for many people a moral standard for which the United States should strive. This view was greatly influenced by Abraham Lincoln, who considered the Declaration to be the foundation of his political philosophy, and promoted the idea that the Declaration is a statement of principles through which the United States Constitution should be interpreted.

The Declaration of Independence: A Look at the Meaning

(The following is an excerpt. I have bolded and/or underlined some of the material for teaching emphasis.)

Any discussion about the proper role of government can be improved by an appeal back to the ideas upon which our nation was founded. In the Declaration of Independence, we find perhaps the most concise expression of those very ideas and beliefs. The Declaration is clear: the Founders believed in individual liberty, defined by the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, secured by a government created for that purpose, gaining its legitimate power from the consent of the governed.

There are an infinite number of rights that can be summed up in one right: the right to be free. This sentiment is captured in this phrase, which points out that “among” our inalienable rights are the rights to “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” These words add further strength to the distinction between rights and values. One’s pursuit of happiness may take an entirely different form than another’s, but that is not the concern of the judge of power. That arbiter, as we will soon find out, is limited in using its power to securing our rights. We are not told how to pursue happiness but rather that we are born with a right to do so, as our own personal sets of values direct us. Having already set forth the notion of equality, however, we have no superior right over others, and are thus obligated to respect the equal rights of others to pursue happiness as they so desire.

Assessment Rubric Final Project Presentation

Student: _____

Date presented: _____

Title of Project: _____

Presentation Criteria					Earned Points
	1	2	3	4	
Organization	Audience can't understand presentation because there is no sequence of information	Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around.	Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow.	Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.	
Content Knowledge	Student does not have grasp of information or provides irrelevant information.	Student is uncomfortable with information and provides only basic information.	Student is at ease with content, but fails to elaborate.	Student demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) with explanations and elaboration.	
Creativity	Photos, drawings, embellishments to project are not aligned with topic.	Some photos, drawings, embellishments do not support the topic.	Most photos, drawings, embellishments support the topic.	Photos, drawings, embellishments effectively support the topic.	
Delivery	Student mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, speaks too quietly.	Student mispronounces terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing the presenter.	Student's voice is clear. Student pronounces most words correctly.	Student uses a clear voice and correctly pronounces terms.	

16 = A+ 15 = A 14 = A- 13 = B+ 12 = B 11 = B-
A score of 10 points or lower must be redone.

Teacher Comments: