

CURATING THE SLAVE QUARTERS

LEVEL:

High School

TIMEFRAME:

Approximately one class session

OBJECTIVES:

Students will analyze diverse sources including paintings, archaeological objects, documents, and a biography.

Students will create an evidence based visual representation of the Slave Quarters at Mount Vernon to understand enslaved life in the 18th century.

Students will act as curators to interpret a space based on evidence.

STANDARDS:

- Colonial America
- Slavery
- Analysis of Primary Sources
- Evaluating Sources
- Speaking and Listening
- Working in Teams
- Using Multiple Historical Sources to Identify Further Areas of Inquiry
- Critique the Usefulness of Historical Sources for a Specific Inquiry
- Evaluate the Relevancy and Utility of a Historical Source Based on Information such as Maker, Date, Place of Origin, Intended Audience, and Purpose
- Integrate Evidence of Multiple Relevant Historical Sources into a Reasoned Argument about the Past

WARM UP:

1. Define and discuss with students the role of a curator.
2. Introduce students to diverse primary and secondary sources including their differences and what types of information can be inferred from them.

PROCEDURE:

1. Create four stations in your classroom, one each for Paintings, Archaeological Objects, Documents, and Biography. See *Sources in the Slave Quarters* (below) to identify which sources to distribute at each station. Individual sources, as well as a combined PDF of all the sources, can be found in the *Primary Sources* folder (included in the ZIP file download).
2. Divide students into four groups, and assign each group a starting station. Instruct each group to explore the sources at their assigned station. Instruct students to complete the handout *Worksheet: Guiding Questions* found in the *Student Handouts*

folder (included in the ZIP file download). Encourage students to discuss their answers with their group.

3. Rotate the groups every 5 minutes (times may change depending on class length) to ensure each group visits each station.
4. After students have explored all four stations, instruct each group to work together to complete the handout *Worksheet: Furnishing and Interpretation Plan* found in the *Student Handouts* folder (included in the ZIP file download.)
5. Ask students to use their answers from the group discussion to create a drawing of the Greenhouse Slave Quarters at Mount Vernon.
6. Allow each group to present their drawings to the class and encourage them to discuss what evidence from the sources they used in their Furnishing and Interpretation Plan for the Greenhouse Slave Quarters at Mount Vernon.
7. Following the presentations complete the handout *Comparison Questions for Furnishing and Interpretation* found in the *Student Handouts* folder (included in the ZIP file download) as a class or in groups using the Mount Vernon Virtual Tour: <http://www.mountvernon.org/sites/virtual-tour>

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SOURCES IN THE SLAVE QUARTERS

IMAGES:

1. *Washington's Kitchen, Mount Vernon* by Eastman Johnson, 1864
Source Type: Painting
2. *The Old Plantation* Attributed to John Rose, 1785-1795
Source Type: Painting
3. *East Front of Mount Vernon* by Edward Savage, 1787-1792
Source Type: Painting

4. *Milk Pan*
Source Type: Archaeological Object
5. *Pigeon Bones*
Source Type: Archaeological Object
6. *Shot, Round*
Source Type: Archaeological Object
7. *Tobacco Pipe*
Source Type: Archaeological Object

DOCUMENTS:

OBJECTS:

8. Farm Report, Week of April 1792
Source Type: Farm Report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Pomp and circumstance
Using Political Cartoons to Understand Historical Events

9. Julian Ursyn Niemcewics, Mount Vernon,
June 4, 1798
Source Type: Book
10. George Augustine Washington to George
Washington, April 8-9, 1792

Source Type: Letter

BIOGRAPHY:

11. Hercules
Source Type: Biography

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SOURCES:

Mount Vernon Museum Collections
www.mountvernon.org/MuseumCollections

Mount Vernon's Midden Project
<http://mountvernonmidden.org/>

Digital Encyclopedia of George Washington
www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/

Lives Bound Together: Slavery at George Washington's Mount Vernon
www.mountvernon.org/livesboundtogether/