



## *Snuff Box and Hogshead:* Tobacco, Trade, and Slavery

### Students will learn...

- The economics of tobacco in the 18th century
- How government, economics, and slavery were intricately linked through tobacco production

### You will need...

- Snuff Box and Hogshead pictures
- Tobacco and Snuff Advertisements Handouts
- Big poster paper and markers or the Question Notes Worksheet

### *Opener: Tobacco Review*

- This activity assumes that your class has previous knowledge about tobacco production in the 18th century.
- Review some of the key aspects of tobacco production- that it was a cash crop (definition), raw tobacco was sent to England to be traded for goods, and enslaved Africans were sold to American slaveholders to farm tobacco

### *Task: Snuff Box and Hogshead*

- Tell your class that they will examine two containers for tobacco that are very different: a hogshead and a snuff box.
- Split your class into mini-groups. Half of the groups will be given a hogshead to look at and the other will be given the snuff box.

- Write the following questions on big sheets of paper (one question per page so they have a lot of room) and have them answer them using objects. It doesn't need to be in full sentences, just jotting down notes.

- **Description:** Write down 5-7 words to describe your object.
- **Trade:** Draw a basic diagram of how tobacco was traded with England and where your object fits on that process).
- **People:** Who would have used your object? Who would have made your object?
- **Value:** How valuable is your object? Why?
- **Labor:** What skills and materials were needed to make this object? How is enslaved labor reflected in these objects (obvious and less visible)? How easy was this to use and transport?

- Give each group the advertisement that corresponds with their object, and ask them to discuss what the advertisement tells them about how their object was bought and sold.

### *Closer: Presentation*

- Pair up one group that has the snuff box and one that has the hogshead and have them present their answers to each other.
- Then, have them discuss how their objects are connected to each other.
- *Optional:* Have them ponder the question: Why do you think that England was so concerned about maintaining control of Virginia and the Colonies at this time?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reference back to this activity later on in the year- ex. how the declining prices for tobacco contributed to the Revolutionary War, and how the founding fathers wanted to protect their economic interests by writing slavery into the Constitution.