

THE CONCEPT OF OWNERSHIP

LEVEL:

High School

TIMEFRAME:

Two class periods or less, depending on if assigned as an individual or group project

OBJECTIVES:

Students will analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources in order to recognize change over time

Students will respond to a writing prompt in a clear, thesis-driven essay that uses evidence from the provided sources

STANDARDS:

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|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| · Primary Source Analysis | · Civic Values and Social Norms |
| · Writing Standards | · Contextualization |
| · Evaluating Sources | · Colonial America |
| · Early American History | · Communicating |
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PROCEDURE:

1. Distribute the handout *The Concept of Ownership Source Set* (included in ZIP file download). Ask students to think about the concept of ownership using the following prompt.

If your parents buy you a cellphone, does it belong to you or your parents?

Although George Washington purchased the items you will see, they were used primarily by or intended for his enslaved population. Whose possessions are they and what do they tell us about the daily life of the enslaved community and their enslavers at Mount Vernon and elsewhere?

- A. *House Bell*, 1784-88
- B. *Punch Bowl*, 1735-57
- C. *George Washington's Dressing Table*, 1787-89
- D. *Argand Lamp*, 1790
- E. *Traveling Razor Case*, 1775
- F. *Artifacts Recovered From the Site of the Mount Vernon Slave Quarters*
- G. *Martha Washington's Silk Gown*, 1790-1800

OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Independently or in groups, encourage students to explore the [Mount Vernon Collection](#) online. Ask them to choose three items from the collection, not used in this DBQ, and explain to the class how they fit into the concept of ownership.