



MINI UNIT INTRODUCTION: LESSON 2

“Liberty in Our Grasp” lesson plans were developed through a partnership between the Delaware Historical Society and the Hard History Project with financial support from the State of Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and M&T Bank.

Developed by: Kirsten Campbell

This mini unit is meant to be taught over 3–5-days and incorporates several resources from a range of sites and organizations.

Each lesson begins with a framework outlining essential knowledge and materials needed to carry out the lesson. The essential knowledge is taken from *Learning for Justice: Teaching Hard History* standards. Clicking the essential knowledge links on the slide deck will give the teacher a deeper understanding of the standard. The framework is followed by the information teachers will convey, including a slide deck, Student Activity Sheet(s), and resources. In addition, each lesson ends with a culminating activity for teachers to gauge each student’s level of understanding.

This mini unit is by no means a cumulative unit on American enslavement, rather, it is meant to be used within a larger history unit. As experts in their field, teachers may choose to extend or compact this mini unit depending on the age group, state standards, and level of discussion in their class. While the information in this mini unit is essential to student learning, it is sensitive information and is not meant to be rushed through or taken lightly. As you deliver content to students, please keep the focus on the humans behind these stories and their lived experiences.

Lesson 2: Enslavement Ads Continued

[Essential Knowledge:](#)

Learning for Justice Standards

Key Understandings for Students

Background Knowledge for

Essential Knowledge 2: Students should know that slavery is when a person owns another person as property.

Essential Knowledge 5: Students should know that enslaved people hated being enslaved, and resisted bondage in many ways.

Essential Knowledge 11: Students will know that the main purpose of American slavery was to make money for enslavers.

Essential Knowledge 14: Enslavers adopted and spread false beliefs about racial inferiority,

Educators	<p>including many that still impact us today.</p> <p>Essential Knowledge 15: In every place and time, enslaved people sought freedom.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Slide deck ● Letter from Delaware governor W.H. Ross to Wooten discusses the case of an "unruly" enslaved person named Minus, September 8, 1857 ● Six Enslavement Ads ● Enslavement Ad Analysis Worksheet ● Notes, Student Activity Sheet(s), and Exit Ticket
<p>Procedure:</p> <p>Introduction (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Slide 12</p> <p><u>Read to students:</u> <i>We are going to read a letter from 1857 written by W.H. Ross in Seaford, Delaware. The letter is written to Edward G. Wooten, a judge in Delaware, about a boy named Minus.</i></p> <p>Click on “Seaford, Delaware” to show students where it is on a map. Give students a copy of the letter to follow along. (Both the actual letter and the transcript).</p> <p><u>Read to students:</u> <i>As we read, picture what’s happening in your head. Who are the people involved? Why did W.H. Ross write this letter? Who is Minus? We will discuss it as a class after reading the letter.</i></p> <p>Read the letter aloud.</p> <p>Slide 13</p> <p>Ask: <i>What are some reasons W.H. Ross is upset?</i> (Minus ran away multiple times, caused “excitement” in town, he’s going to influence other enslaved people if there is not a big punishment)</p> <p>Ask: <i>Do you think Minus is “a very bad boy”?</i> <i>Why or why not?</i> (No; answers will vary. Encourage students to stick to the <u>facts</u> of what we know.)</p> <p>Ask: <i>In one part of the letter, W.H. Ross says, “<u>Within a few days past he ran away from his master, we believe without cause or provocation.</u>” Knowing what we do about enslavement, what do you think about this line in the letter? What does it tell you about the townspeople? About Minus?</i> (This question is meant to point out the enslaver-mindset during this time—they really believed deep down that they had a right to own other humans. Through discussion, reiterate that there were laws keeping African Americans enslaved, white landowners had economic benefits to keeping African Americans enslaved, and the belief of racial inferiority was being spread.)</p>

Ask: Who are the names signed at the bottom? (townspeople)

Why did they sign?

(To put more pressure on the judge to send Minus away, afraid the people they enslaved will try running away too/Minus could empower others, feel they need to stick together/us vs. them, the laws and misinformation at the time influenced their thinking, etc.)

Ask: How would you feel if you or your family member were Minus?

Ask: As stated in the letter, and ads we saw in Lesson 1, many of the enslaved were separated and sold from family members. Do you think this common practice was fair and lawful? If this were you and your family member, would you feel the same?

Tell students: We can learn a lot from this letter about Minus. When those who were enslaved tried to escape, there were ads like the ones we saw yesterday, put out in local newspapers. Enslavers offered large sums of money (during those times) for anyone who captured the person who escaped and brought them back to the enslaver. We are going to read six different ads from actual Delaware newspapers throughout history and analyze each one.

**Activity:
Enslavement
Ad Analysis**

(30 minutes)

Slide 14

Tape six enslavement ads around the room.

Create six groups and assign each group a different ad as a starting point. Students should be completing classwork as they rotate through each station.

Read directions to students: In small groups, read excerpts from various newspapers.

1. Choose if someone will read the ad or if you will each read to yourself. (remember "f" means "s")
2. After reading, fill out the items on your chart.
3. Discuss the prompt below the ad with your group and record your reflections on your work page.
4. Raise your hand if you have questions about the ad.

At the end of each 5-minute analysis, tell students where to go for their next ad. Continue rotating until students have seen each ad. As students talk, conference with different groups and point out details about each ad. Adjust the time if students need more or less time to read and discuss.

As you go around the room, you may ask some of these questions:

What was the problem?

Why was a reward offered?

What year was the first ad written? The last?

What did you notice about the mood of the ads? How does the person who wrote it feel?

What words tell you that?

Who were some of the people you read about? What were their stories? Where were they

	<p><i>headed? What skills did they have?</i></p> <p>Slides 15-20 Discuss each ad as a group. Take about a minute to go over each ad, review answers in notes, and have a quick group discussion about the discussion prompt(s).</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Slide 21 Students will complete the back of the paper on their own.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enslavement only lasted a few years in our American History. _____ ● People who were enslaved never tried to escape. _____ ● People who were enslaved had all kinds of different skills. _____ ● Enslavers didn't let the people they enslaved leave their house. _____ ● Enslavers would try and punish the people they enslaved who tried to escape. _____ <p>Use Google Maps to research where each of the enslavement ads came from. Record them on the map of Delaware below with an X and the name of the town or city.</p>

Letter from Delaware governor W.H. Ross to Wooten

Seaford Del. Sept. 8. 1857.

To the Hon. Edward Wooten
Sir.

The undersigned would respectfully represent that a certain negro boy named Minus belonging to W. Huffington Cannon Esq. of Northwest Fork Hundred, has earned for himself the character (and we believe he richly merits it) of being a very bad boy. Within a few days past he ran away from his master, we believe without cause or provocation, and subjected him to great inconvenience and cost in having him arrested. He showed himself a most stubborn and willful character by the efforts he made to get away after having been caught, and twice actually succeeded in doing so. For many days this neighborhood was kept in a state of excitement by parties of men riding in search of him, and it was only by great vigilance, and the offer of a considerable reward, that he was caught at all. We know of no adequate punishment to meet his case which will at the same time afford a wholesome and salutary example to our slaves, but his exportation beyond the limits of this state.

We therefore for our own security, and for the better government of our slave, respectfully ask that you will exercise the power vested in you by granting to said W. Huffington Cannon Esq. a permit to sell and remove his said boy Minus beyond the limits of this state.

W. H. Ross

<p>Alfred Giddingsham Geo. S. Fosber Nathaniel S. Jacoby Bro. Laws Nathaniel Horsey Hon. W. Dawson Robert A. Brewer Chas. Wright J. J. Horsey James Wright Wm. Harrison W. J. D. Price Thos. Coulborn Samuel S. Maynard</p>	<p>Wm. B. Rogers Leox by Willey Nehel Colburn Stephen B. Fields John Walsh J. E. Giddingsham C. A. Cottingham James D. Lister J. W. Robinson J. K. Windsor J. M. Rawlins Robt. Frame Wm. H. Wheatley John H. Ricardus</p>
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We therefore for our own security, and for the better government of our slave, respectfully

ask that you will exercise the power vested in you by granting to said W. Huffington Cannon Esq. a permit to sell and remove his said boy Minus beyond the limits of this state.

W.H. Ross

Enslavement Ads

Each enslavement ad tells a story of an actual human trying to free themselves from enslavement. As students read each ad they should use the worksheet below to note the year it was published, the age of the person who is enslaved, and anything else that sticks out to you.

[Advertisement for sale of enslaved girl in the American Watchman, January 1, 1812](#)

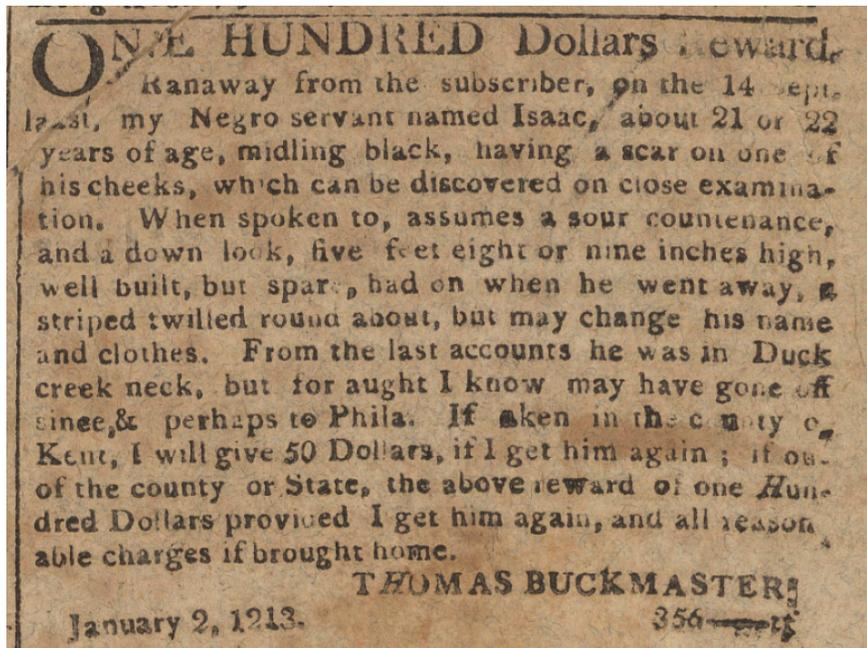


“FOR SALE—the time of a stout, healthy negro girl, who has been accustomed to house work, and is an excellent cook. She is about 14 or 15 years of age, and has about 17 years to serve. Enquire at the Watchman Office. Wilmington, December 18, 1811”

Discussion Prompts:

- What skills does the girl who is enslaved have?
- How is her age described? Do you find that odd?
- What does “has 17 years to serve” mean?

[Advertisement, reward for freedom seeker Isaac in the American Watchman, January 2 1813](#)



“ONE HUNDRED Dollars - Ranaway from the subscriber, on the 14 September. My Negro servant named Isaac, about 21 or 22 years of age, midling black, having a scar on one of his cheeks, which can be discovered on close examination. When spoken to, assumes a sour countenance, and a down look, five feet eight or nine inches high, well built, but spar, had on when he went away, a striped twilled round about, but may change his name and clothes. From the last accounts he was in Duck creek neck, but for aught I know may have gone off since & perhaps to Philadelphia. If taken in the county of Kent, I will give 50 Dollars, if I get him again; if out of the county or State, the above reward of one Hundred Dollars provided I get him again, and all reasonable charges if brought home. Thomas Buckmaster; January 2, 1813 (typo)”

Discussion Prompt:

- Reread how Isaac is described by his enslaver. Look specifically at, “When spoken to, assumes a sour countenance.” What is a “sour countenance”? Why may Isaac act this way?

TEN POUNDS Reward.



RAN AWAY from the subscriber, living in Broad-creek, Sussex county and state of Delaware, on the 6th Sept. last, a NEGROE MAN, named CÆSAR, nearly 6 feet high, stout and well made: he has a scar on one of his wrists, which is much whiter than the rest of his skin; and a scar on his nose resembling a pit of the small pox: he has a large beard, a stern and surly look, and is very short in his answers to questions asked him. Had on when he went away, a light brown surtout coat, claret colored coat, blue and white striped linsey waistcoat, red and white chequered trowsers, and an old hat turned almost yellow. Whoever takes up the said Negroe, and secures him, so that his master may have him again, shall receive *Five Pounds*, but if lodged in Dover Gaol, or brought home, then the above reward.

FRANCIS L. GODDARD

MAY 16, 1789.

“TEN POUNDS Reward. Ran away from the subscriber, living in Broad-creek, Sussex county and state of Delaware, on the 6th September last, a negro man named Caesar, nearly 6 feet high, stout and well made: he has a scar on one of his wrists, which is much whiter than the rest of his skin; and a scar on his nose resembling a pit of the small pox: he has a large beard, a stern and surly look, and is very short in his answers to questions asked him. Had on when he went away, a light brown surtout coat, claret colored coat, blue and white striped linsey waistcoat, red and white chequered [trousers], and an old hat turned almost yellow. Whoever takes up the said Negroe, and secures him, so that his master may have him again, shall receive Five Pounds, but if lodged in Dover Gaol, or brought home, then the above reward. Francis L. Goddard. May 16, 1789.”

Discussion Prompt:

- Reread how Caesar is described by his enslaver. Look specifically at, “a stern and surly look, and is very short in his answers to questions asked him.” What is a “stern and surly look”? Why may Caesar look this way?

\$100 Reward.

RANAWAY from the subscribers, on the first day of January, 1824, a negro man named HARRY, about five feet eight or ten inches high, slender made, stoops forward as he walks, holds his head very upright, turns out his feet and has rings in his ears; his face spare and neck rather thick for the proportion of his make—when addressed, or spoken to, he has a habit of clearing his throat by a *hem* before he answers, there are no natural or artificial mark by which he can be described on any part of his person. His colour is neither black or mulatto, but between them both a dark brown. His dress was a deep blue coat and pantalons, the colour of his vest not recollected, a fur hat, and good shoes and stockings; this was his best clothes; he had a variety of sailor clothing which he put on and off at pleasure. This fellow is a good pilot on most of the waters of the Chesapeake and has had the command of a schooner belonging to us for some years, and traded to Baltimore, we have entrusted him to do all the business of the vessel, such as selling the cargoes and bringing home the money for us, all which he has done to our satisfaction until this trip, when he sold the load of wood, received the money and absconded from the vessel in Baltimore, the hands on board waited for him two days and nights, and hearing no tidings of him they pushed off the schooner and brought her home. We are inclined to believe that he has either gone to sea or settled down in or near Baltimore with a white girl, as the crew informs us he had a white miss on board when at the wharf at Baltimore. Fifty dollars will be paid for securing him in Baltimore Jail, or any other Jail on the western shore of Maryland, so that we get him again, or the above reward with reasonable charges if delivered to us at Cannon's Ferry, Sussex county, in the state of Delaware.

J. & C. Wright.

N. B. His age is about twenty three years. Jan. 13—1824

[Advertisement, reward for freedom seeker Harry in the Delaware Gazette, January 13, 1824](#)

“\$100 Reward. Ranaway from the subscribers on the first day of January, 1824, a negro man named Harry, about five feet eight or ten inches high, slender made, stoops forward as he walks holds his head very upright, turns out his feet and has rings in his ears; his face spare and neck rather thick for the proportion of his make—when addressed, or spoken to, he has a habit of clearing his throat by a *hem* before he answers, there are no natural or artificial mark by which he can be described on any part of his person. His colour is neither black or mulatto, but between them both a dark brown. His dress was a deep blue coat and pantalons, the colour of his vest, not recollected, a fur hat, and good shoes and stockings; this was his best clothes; he had a variety of sailor clothing which he put on and off at pleasure. This fellow is a good pilot on most of the waters of the Chesapeake and has had the command of a schooner (boat) belonging to us for some years, and traded to Baltimore, we have entrusted him to do all the business in the vessel, such as selling the cargoes and bringing home the money for us, all which he has done to our satisfaction until this trip, when he sold the load of wood, received the money and absconded from the vessel in Baltimore, the hands on board waited for him two days and nights, and hearing no tidings of him they pushed off the schooner and brought her home. We are inclined to believe that he has either gone to sea or settled down in or near Baltimore with a white girl, as the crew informs us he had a white miss on board when at the wharf at Baltimore. Fifty dollars will be paid for securing him in Baltimore Jail, or any other Jail on the western shore of Maryland, so that we get him again, or the above reward with reasonable charges if delivered to us at Cannon’s Ferry, Sussex county in the state of Delaware. J.C. Wright. N.B. His age is about twenty three years. Jan 13.”

Discussion Prompts:

- What was Harry’s skill?
- How did Harry try to escape?
- Why do you think his description was so specific?

Twenty Dollars Reward.

RAN away from the subscriber, living in Kent county, state of Delaware, on Sunday the 3d inst. a slave Negro Man, named Yorkshire, Spare made, about 21 years of age, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, very black; he holds his head down, has a high forehead, long wool before and cut close on the top of his head, remarkable large feet and big teeth, which he shews very when talking; he has an impediment in his speech, and keeps continually snorting when conversing, and if interrogated stutters tolerably bad; his eyes generally very red; he has heretofore pretended to be very religious, and probably may affect the same yet. He took with him a light coloured striped nankeen coat, a striped waistcoat with yellow welts along the edges and round the pockets, a pair of olive coloured jean overalls, with strings at the ankles, one pair of good homespun yarn stockings, good shoes and plated buckles, a felt hat about half worn, one white linen shirt, a striped elastic cloth waistcoat and tow shirt. As he took the advantage of harvest for to start in, it is presumed he will work till harvest is over, and then make for Philadelphia, as his father, who calls himself Peter Hicks, resides there.

Whoever apprehends said Yorkshire, so that his master may get him again, shall receive the above reward, and if brought home all reasonable charges, paid by

JACOB BIDDLE.
July 4, 1796.

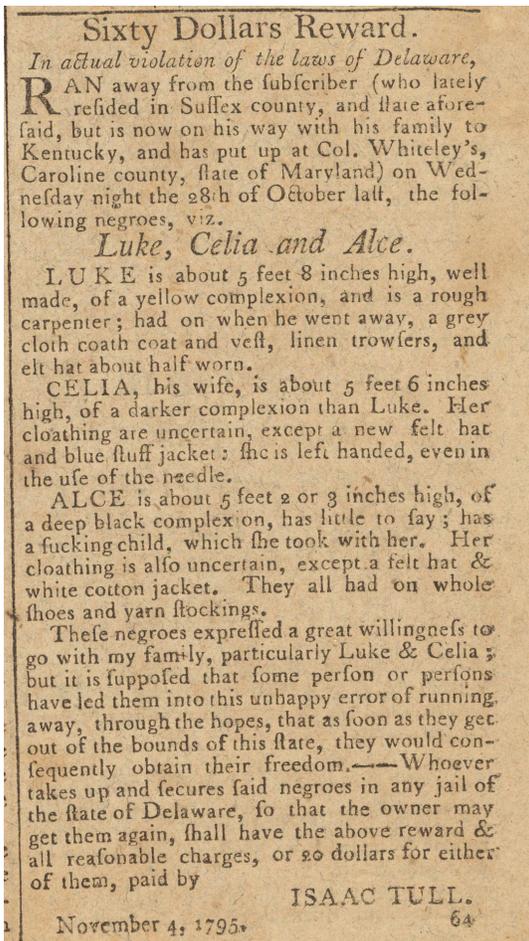
[Advertisement, reward for freedom seeker Yorkshire in the Delaware Gazette, July 12, 1796](#)

“Twenty Dollars Reward. Ran away from the subscriber, living in Kent county, state of Delaware, on Sunday the 3rd inst. a slave negro man, named Yorkshire, spare made, about 21 years of age, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, very black; he holds his head down, has a high forehead, long wool before and cut close on the top of his head, remarkable large feet and big teeth, which he shows very when talking; he has an impediment in his speech, and keeps continually snorting when conversing, and if interrogated stutters tolerably bad; his eyes generally very red; he has heretofore pretended to be very religious, and probably may affect the same yet. He took with him a light coloured striped nankeen coat, a striped waistcoat with yellow welts along the edges and round the pockets, a pair of olive coloured jean overalls, with strings at the [ankles], one pair of good homespun yarn stockings, good shoes and plated buckles, a felt hat about half worn, one white linen shirt, a striped elastic cloth waistcoat and tow shirt. As he took the advantage of harvest for to start in, it is presumed he will work till harvest is over, and then make for Philadelphia, as his father, who calls himself Peter Hicks, resides there. Whoever apprehends said Yorkshire, so that his master may get him again, shall receive the above reward, and if brought home all reasonable charges paid by Jacob Biddle. July 4, 1796.”

Discussion Prompts:

- Reread the following description of Yorkshire: “About 21 years of age, 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, very black; he holds his head down, has a high forehead, long wool before and cut close on the top of his head, remarkable large feet and big teeth, which he shows very when talking.” Think about how he is described. Does he have many specific characteristics? Why could that be problematic?
- Where does the enslaver think Yorkshire is headed? Why?

[Advertisement, reward for freedom seekers Luke, Celia, and Alce in the Delaware Gazette, November 11, 1795](#)



“Sixty Dollars Reward. In actual violation of the laws of Delaware, Ran away from the subscriber (who lately resided in Sussex county, and state aforesaid, but is now on his way with his family to Kentucky, and has put up at Col. Whiteley's, Caroline county, state of Maryland) on Wednesday night the 28th of October last, the following negroes, viz. Luke, Celia, and Alce. Luke is about 5 feet 8 inches high, well made, of a yellow complexion, and is a rough carpenter; had on when he went away, a grey cloth coat and vest, linen [trousers], and elt hat about half worn. Celia, his wife, is about 5 feet 6 inches high, of a darker complexion than Luke. Her cloathing are uncertain, except a new felt hat and blue stuff jacket; she is left-handed, even in the use of the needle. Alce is about 5 feet 2 or 3 inches high, of a deep black complexion, has little to say; has a sucking child (baby), which she took with her. Her cloathing is also uncertain, except a felt hat & white cotton jacket. They all had on whole shoes and yarn stockings. These negroes expressed a great willingness to go with my family, particularly Luke & Celia; but it is supposed that some person or persons have led them into this unhappy error of running away, through the hopes, that as soon as they get out of the bounds of this state, they would consequently obtain their freedom.—Whoever takes up and secures said negroes in any jail of the state of Delaware, so that the owner may get them again, shall have the above reward & all reasonable charges, or 20 dollars for either of them, paid by Isaac Tull. November 4, 1795.”

Discussion Prompts:

- How is this ad different from the others?
- What is Luke’s job? Celia’s?
- What was interesting about Alce’s description? Do you think that played a significant role in her trying to escape?
- Reread the last paragraph: “These negroes expressed...”. Who wrote this ad? Do you think this sentence played a part in their escape?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Enslavement Ad Analysis Worksheet

Each enslavement ad tells a story of an actual human trying to free themselves from enslavement. As you read each ad, note the year it was published, the age of the person who is enslaved, and anything else that sticks out to you.

Use the questions below if you need help with your reflection:

- How does the enslaver describe the enslaved?
- Did they have specific skills?
- Were they headed somewhere in particular?
- Where were they coming from?
- Did anything you read spark emotion?

Ad Number	Year Published	Age	Location	Other Descriptors, Notes, & Reflections
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Use the chart you just completed to answer the questions below. Record "True" or "False" on the line. Correct any FALSE answers by writing the truth.

1. Enslavement only lasted a few years in our American History. _____
2. People who were enslaved never tried to escape. _____
3. People who were enslaved had all kinds of different skills. _____
4. Enslavers didn't let the people they enslaved leave their house. _____
5. Enslavers would try and punish the people they enslaved who tried to escape. _____



Early Finishers: Use Google Maps to research where each of the enslavement ads came from. Record them on the map of Delaware below with an X and the name of the town or city.