



TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
TOLERANCE.ORG

Introduction

In these videos, scholars and historians explore the Key Concepts of the Teaching Hard History framework by discussing slavery's impact on the lives of enslaved people in the United States and the nation's development around the institution. They also explain how enslaved people influenced the nation, its culture and its history.

The resources below can help you analyze each video's content and its connection to the related Key Concept with your students or with colleagues. You can also use them to help build your own content knowledge.

Resources

For each video, we have included the following:

- the **Key Concept** that the video explores
- an **essential question** to help viewers explore the connection between the video and its related Key Concept
- **vocabulary** words that students may need defined to better understand the video
- **text-dependent questions** that can help viewers understand and analyze the videos

Note: There are two sets of text-dependent questions for each video. **Set A** focuses on *identifying* key ideas and details in each video. **Set B** focuses on *analyzing* key ideas and details in each video. Select whichever set is better suited for your classroom.



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TEACHING HARD HISTORY: AMERICAN SLAVERY

Text-Dependent Questions

ANNETTE GORDON-REED | KEY CONCEPT 10

Key Concept 10

By knowing how to read and interpret the sources that tell the story of American slavery, we gain insight into some of what enslaving and enslaved Americans aspired to, created, thought and desired.

Essential Question

What are the limitations of learning about the lives of enslaved people from the accounts of their enslavers?

Vocabulary

➤ **benevolent** (adj.) [*buh-nev-uh-luhnt*]

marked by doing good

➤ **corroborate** (v.) [*kuh-rob-uh-reyt*]

to confirm or support

➤ **endnote** (n.) [*end-noht*]

a note, as of explanation, correction or the like, added at the end of an article, chapter, etc.

➤ **footnote** (n.) [*foo t-noht*]

an explanatory or documenting note or comment at the bottom of a page, referring to a specific part of the text on the page

➤ **inventory** (n.) [*in-vuhn-tawr-ee*]

a detailed list of articles, goods, property, etc.

Sources

Dictionary.com, Merriam-Webster.com

Text-Dependent Questions

Set A

1. What type of record did Annette Gordon-Reed have access to for her research on the Hemings family? What information did it include about enslaved people?
2. What perspective of Thomas Jefferson's does Gordon-Reed dislike?
3. What does Gordon-Reed suggest researchers do to assess the validity of information in documents about enslaved people?

Set B

1. Gordon-Reed mentions that Jefferson recorded items he'd given to enslaved people, such as food and clothing, their family relations and their occupations. The images also show the location of each enslaved person, the number of free and enslaved people in their "family" and some death dates. What might a researcher be able to glean about the lives of people enslaved by Jefferson from this information?
2. Can you think of any types of texts, or particular texts, that might help develop a fuller, more accurate narrative about the lives of enslaved Africans? How might those texts also be limited?
3. In the video, Gordon-Reed encourages researchers to identify with enslaved people and trust their own instincts about the feelings and actions of enslaved Africans as they review documents. Why might it be important for researchers to adopt this perspective when examining documents about enslaved Africans?

TEACHING HARD HISTORY: AMERICAN SLAVERY

Text-Dependent Questions

ANNETTE GORDON-REED | KEY CONCEPT 10

RESPONSES

Set A

1. What type of record did Annette Gordon-Reed have access to for her research on the Hemings family? What information did it include about enslaved people?

She had access to Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book. In that book, Jefferson recorded items he'd given to enslaved people, such as clothing and food, the family relations of the people and their skills.

2. What perspective of Thomas Jefferson's does Gordon-Reed dislike?

Gordon dislikes Jefferson's view of himself as a benevolent enslaver or "father" to the people he enslaved.

3. What does Gordon-Reed suggest researchers do to assess the validity of information in documents about enslaved people?

Gordon-Reed suggests using sources outside of the document to confirm information, using endnotes and footnotes for further research, and trusting one's own instincts about how enslaved people might have acted or felt in a particular situation.

Set B

1. Gordon-Reed mentions that Jefferson recorded items he'd given to enslaved people, such as food and clothing, their family relations and their occupations. The images also show the location of each enslaved person, the number of free and enslaved people in their "family" and some death dates. What might a researcher be able to glean about the lives of people enslaved by Jefferson from this information?

Researchers might be able to gain some understanding of the conditions under which enslaved people worked and lived and how that might have varied based on their location or type of work they did.

2. Can you think of any types of texts, or particular texts, that might help develop a fuller, more accurate narrative about the lives of enslaved Africans? How might those texts also be limited?

Answers will vary but may include autobiographies and memoirs written by formerly enslaved Africans and African Americans (e.g., Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Keckley), abolitionist texts written by people of African descent (e.g., David Walker's *Appeal*), oral histories of formerly enslaved people (e.g., *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives From the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938*), literature written by enslaved people (e.g., Phillis Wheatley) and photography of enslaved people. Literature and photography require interpretation and speculation. Literature published by people of African descent during the antebellum period would likely have been vetted by white people and written for a largely white audience, and abolitionist texts would have been persuasive in nature and likely focused on particular aspects of enslavement.

3. In the video, Gordon-Reed encourages researchers to identify with enslaved people and trust their own instincts about the feelings and actions of enslaved Africans as they review documents. Why might it be important for researchers to adopt this perspective when examining documents about enslaved Africans? **Answers will vary but will likely indicate that if researchers adopt a perspective that views enslaved Africans as humans—not property—who are not so different from them, this can help them critique the information and perspectives in documents written about enslaved people.**