

Expanding the Story

Beyond the Essential Knowledge

The Role of Virginians during the Civil War

Lives and Perspectives: Six Virginians

The events of the Civil War meant different things to different people. Although it is impossible to fully understand the perspectives and experiences of other human beings – especially people from other time periods and culture groups – it is similarly impossible to construct an authentic understanding of our past without exploring diverse perspectives. Here are six Virginians who lived during this time. They are individuals – not representatives of particular groups – and they left incomplete records behind. But what we do know about them can help us examine America's past more fully. Introduce this chart to your students, perhaps using the thinking routine [Connect – Extend – Challenge](#). [This chart](#) will return throughout the unit, prompting students to explore multiple Virginians' perspectives when encountering texts and events.

**Elizabeth
Keckley**

Born into slavery, Keckley became an accomplished seamstress, purchased her own freedom, and built her own business designing clothing for politicians' wives, including Mary Todd Lincoln.

**William
Terrill Bradby**

A member of the Pamunkey tribe, Bradby enlisted in the Union Army and served as a spy for Allan Pinkerton's Secret Service, a land guide and scout for the Army of the Potomac, and a pilot on the James River.

**Richard
Stewart**

A free African American born in Powhatan County, Virginia in 1800, Stewart purchased a 160 acre farm in Michigan. Five of his sons fought as Union soldiers in the Civil War.

**Phoebe Yates
Levy Pember**

A member of a prominent Jewish-American family, Pember directed a division of one of the largest hospitals in the world, Chimborazo Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War.

**Fanny Virginia
Casseopia
Lawrence**

After escaping from slavery in Fauquier County, Virginia, she was adopted by white Civil War nurse Catherine Lawrence. Photographs of Fanny were used widely by prominent abolitionists to campaign against slavery.

**William
Biedler**

A sixteen-year-old Confederate soldier of Mosby's Virginia Cavalry Regiment, Biedler poses with a flintlock musket.

Make Connections

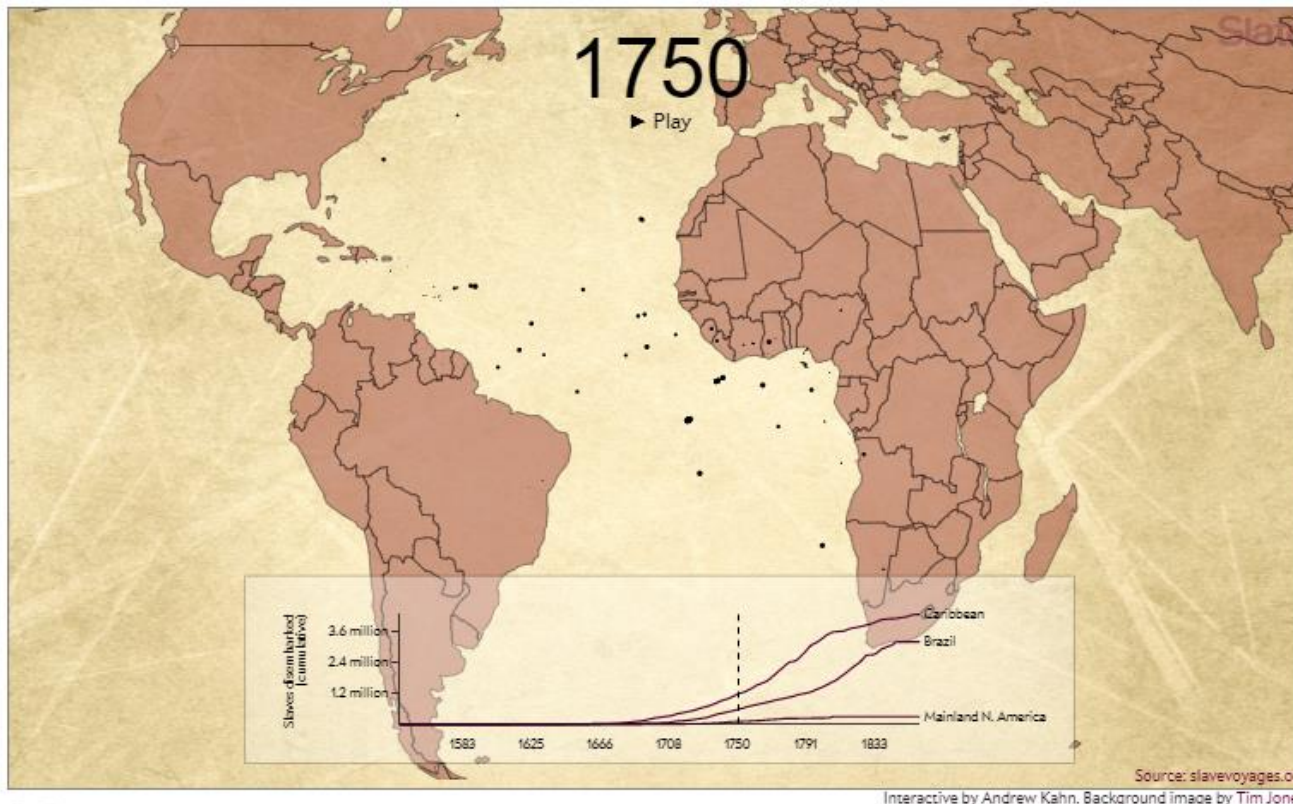
Use Information Sources

A Visual History of the Atlantic Slave Trade

The first two of the ten Key Concepts in the [Teaching Hard History Framework](#) are:

1. Slavery, which Europeans practiced before they invaded the Americas, was important to all colonial powers and existed in all North American colonies.
2. Slavery and the slave trade were central to the development and growth of the colonial economies and what is now the United States.

This [interactive visualization of the Atlantic Slave Trade](#) can support students in constructing an understanding of these concepts. Share the following information with students before inviting them to interact with the infographic. Then, engage in the [3 Ys thinking routine](#).



[Interactive Map of the Atlantic Slave Trade](#)

“The dots—which represent individual slave ships—also correspond to the size of each voyage. The larger the dot, the more enslaved people on board. And if you pause the map and click on a dot, you’ll learn about the ship’s flag—was it British? Portuguese? French?—its origin point, its destination, and its history in the slave trade. The interactive animates more than 20,000 voyages cataloged in the [Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database](#).”

[The 3 Ys](#)

Why might this [topic, question] matter to me?

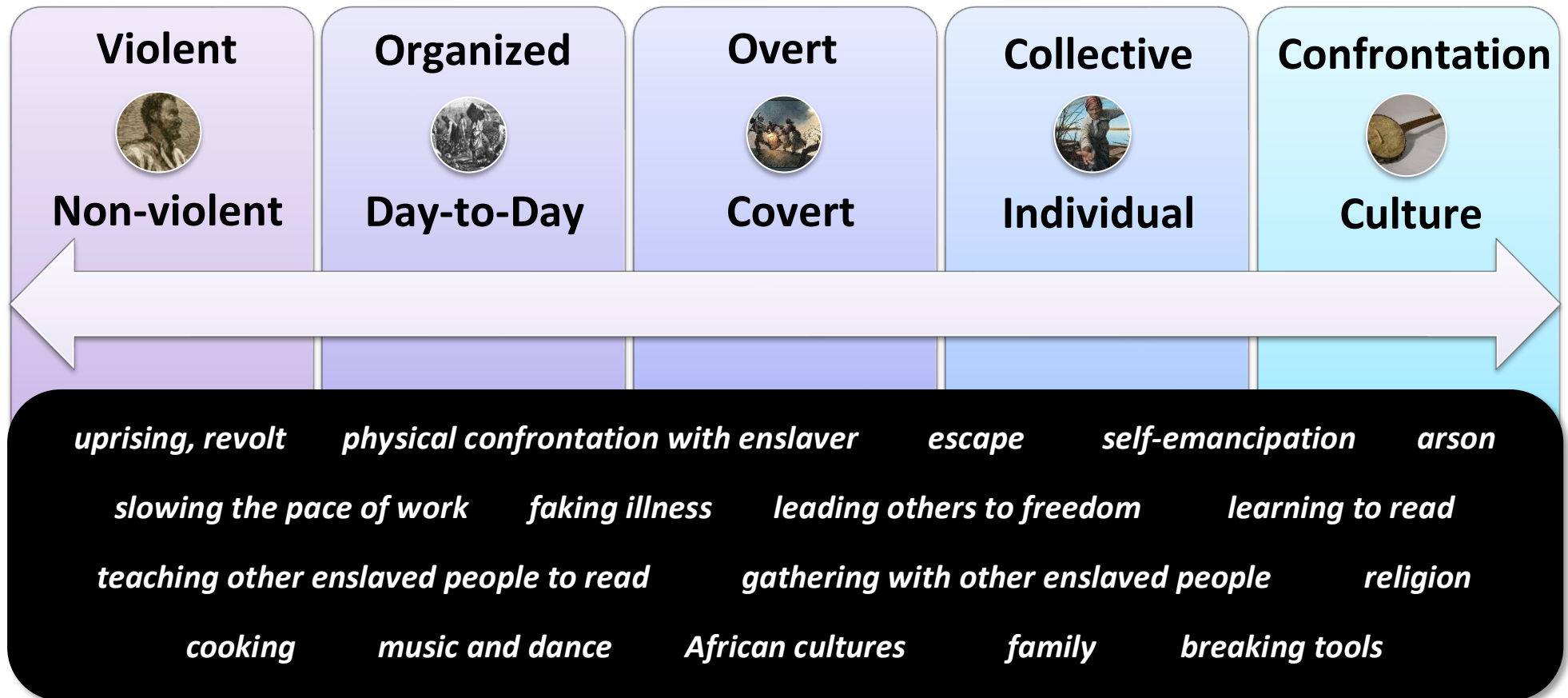
Why might it matter to people around me [family, friends, city, nation]?

Why might it matter to the world?

Forms of Resistance

"Resistance [to slavery] could take many ... forms. Enslaved people could physically confront their masters as individuals, or they could slow the pace of work, break tools, feign illness, engage in acts of thievery, run away, or learn to read. Enslaved people also resisted by carving out areas of their lives that were independent of their masters. This is certainly the case with African American religion."

Kenneth Greenberg, "Slave Resistance," *Understanding and Teaching American Slavery* (2016)



Help students identify and discuss resistance to slavery by engaging in this learning activity.

Suggested Time: 3-4 weeks

Use Information Sources

Demonstrate Critical Thinking

Learning about Slavery and Freedom through Artifacts

Start with a See-Think-Wonder as you share these images with students. After students have shared their thinking, share the background knowledge about these objects prior to having students engage in the thinking routine, [Connect-Extend-Challenge](#).

Connect-Extend-Challenge

As students examine these images of artifacts, support them in activating prior knowledge and extending their understanding by engaging them in this thinking routine.

- How does this **connect** to what you already know about slavery and freedom?
- How does this **extend** your thinking about slavery and freedom?
- What **challenges** or puzzles does this create for you?

After students have engaged in the thinking routine, debrief the experience and share new ideas. Ask students to consider the Reflection Question with a thought partner or in writing.

Reflection Question:

Which artifact most interested you? Why?



[Joseph Trammell's Freedom Papers](#), Loudoun County, VA, 1852



[Cowrie shell](#) found at Monticello dating to the late 18th century. Cowrie shells have been featured in the clothing, jewelry, and practices of some African and South Asian cultures for thousands of years.



Jesse Burke's violin, 1850-1860. [From NMAAHC](#): "Burke's daughter, Darkus Burke Freeland, remembered her father's skill and that he was assigned the task of playing for the slave owner, his family, and guests."

Suggested Time: 3-4 weeks

Demonstrate Critical Thinking

Make Connections

Perspectives on the Civil War

Use the steps within the [Step Inside Thinking Routine](#) to help students learn more about specific historical events through the lens of a particular Virginian. Invite students to choose a perspective to explore from the chart below. Next, print or project the recruitment poster (right). Students will study the corresponding image by working to answer the questions which appear on the Step Inside Graphic Organizer. Finally, continue with the last steps, which are to come together as a whole class to *share thinking* and perspectives, then break into small groups based on their choices to discuss their thinking further.

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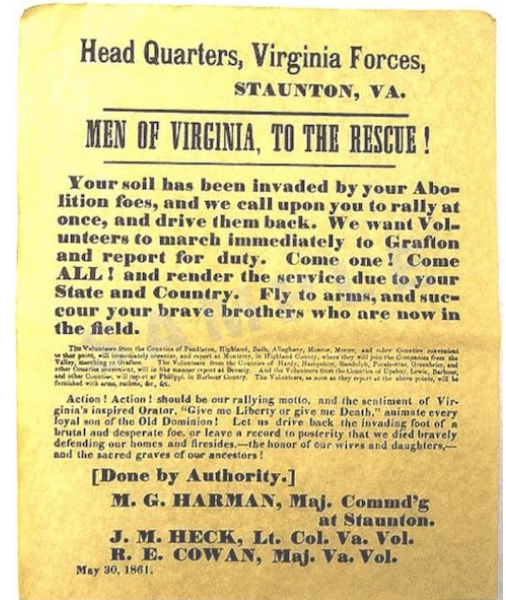
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An 1861 [Confederate recruiting poster from Virginia](#), urging men to join the Confederate cause and fight off the U.S. Army, which it refers to as the "Abolition foes".

Step Inside

What might this person observe or notice?
What might this person believe?
What might this person care deeply about?
What might this person wonder?

Reflection Question:

What effects did the conflicts between the North and the South have on the people of those regions?