

UNIT OVERVIEW

Unit Length	<p>This mini-unit, part of a longer food science course, contains three lessons for class sessions that are two hours in length.</p> <p>Students will be expected to read materials prior to class, conduct work in class, and finish some assignments afterward. The course also includes a community garden students cared for throughout.</p>
Grade Level(s)/Subject(s)	College-level Food Science (adaptable for K-12)
Unit Overview	<p>The central themes explored in these lessons concern public history and slavery. In her introductory essay to <i>The 1619 Project</i>, Nikole Hannah-Jones explores the mythologized past of the United States – arguing that freedom and democracy were never built into the fabric of the nation for Black people, but were only gained unevenly over time through resistance and struggle. In these lessons, students will interrogate how local histories of slavery in East Florida are commemorated at former plantations. Students are asked to consider whose stories are told, which histories are missing, and why this is the case. We encourage students to be actively engaged in addressing silences in the public record as well as the archive.</p> <p>A key component to these lesson plans will be a community garden or what we refer to as a “learning landscape,” which will allow students to make direct connections to the past by growing two key crops in our region: indigo and sugar cane. Through the study of primary source documents as well as the experiential learning in the community garden, students will be asked to reimagine how stories about slavery are told. As this project takes place in a state prison, we will also be making explicit reference to the long historical legacies of chattel slavery and the modern carceral system.</p>
Program Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the political nature of historical narratives, and more specifically, local public history ● Develop innovative ways to connect classroom learning in the community garden to the broader community ● Interrogate agricultural production and consumption under slavery and its historical relationship to the contemporary prison system
Course Objectives	<p>(A) To develop an understanding of key themes and patterns in histories of slavery</p> <p>(B) Consider how local histories of slavery have been represented in public history</p> <p>(C) Develop techniques, practices, and skills to think and write historically</p>

	<p>(D) Utilize creative writing and food as tools for self-representation and empowerment (E) Analyze systems of oppression in the food systems through community engaged work</p>
<p>Performance Task(s)</p>	<p>There will be three main lessons connected to <i>The 1619 Project</i>. Each lesson will culminate in a short essay responses, creative writing, or public history pieces designed by participants to share with members of our community. We will draw from various essays and creative pieces made available through <i>The 1619 Project</i>, including, Reginald Dwayne Betts’ “The Slavery Act 1793,” Khalil Gibran Muhammad’s “Sugar,” Nikole Hannah-Jones’ introductory essay, and Bryan Stevenson’s “Mass Incarceration.”</p> <p>After comparing public histories of former sugar plantations in East Florida to the Whitney Sugar Plantation Museum in Louisiana, students will begin to write brief accounts of sugar and indigo production to be shared with our community. Students will be asked to focus on the following two questions: How do we write public histories that center the lives of enslaved and formerly enslaved persons? How do we make this writing and narrative storytelling compelling? Over the course of several weeks, students will grow indigo harvested from a local plantation as well as sugar cane. The unit will conclude with students sharing their writings, indigo seed, and sugar cane stalks with the community.</p>
<p>Assessment/Evaluation</p>	<p>Rubrics forthcoming</p>

DAILY LESSONS AND RESOURCES

***Day 1:* History of Slavery and Sugar Plantations**

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Students will learn fundamental histories of slavery and sugar, and the connections between slavery and sugar production and consumption B. Study local public histories of Florida sugar plantations and begin to assess the narratives found at various local former plantations. C. Reflect on the political nature of local public history
Lesson Materials & Resources
<p>Khalil Gibran Muhammad’s “Sugar” Nikole Hannah-Jones’ “The Idea of America” Whitney Plantation video clip Photographs of the displays at the former East Florida plantations</p>
Lesson Activities
<p>Introduction: Split class into four groups. Each group will be tasked with discussing and providing a written bullet point response to their assigned question. Appoint a spokesperson to the group to explain what they discussed. Be sure to collect their written responses as these same groups will reconvene at the end of the unit to assess what they’ve learned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group 1: What has been underreported about the history of slavery nationally and locally, and what do those underreported stories reflect about the connections between slavery and modern-day systems? ● Group 2: What is the historical relationship between agricultural production and consumption under slavery and to the contemporary prison system? ● Group 3: What is the political nature of historical narratives, and more specifically, local public history? ● Group 4: What are the impacts of storytelling and historical research that communicate underreported stories to our local communities? <p>Reading comprehension, and class reflection: Participants will have read the text "Sugar" by Khalil Gibran Muhammad on their own. Now, they will utilize details from the text to discuss the following questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Khalil Gibran Muhammad writes, “It was the introduction of sugar slavery in the New World that changed everything (72).” What does he mean by this? Provide specific examples from the text. B. Why does Louisiana become a center for sugar production in the United States? How are areas in the United States outside of the South impacted by the sugar trade? C. Ask students to identify what they know about slavery and sugar production in Florida. Write their answers on the board.

Public History and *The 1619 Project*

1. Ask students to summarize the major arguments made in Nikole Hannah-Jones' introductory essay. What do they agree with? Disagree? What questions do students have about the piece?
2. Ask: Why has it been so challenging for the public to engage in accurate histories of slavery? As students respond to this question, and hopefully draw from Hannah-Jones' essay, introduce and ask students to comment on the following passage from Muhammad's "Sugar":
 - a. "Most of these stories of brutality, torture, and premature death have never been told in classroom textbooks or historical museums. They have been refined and whitewashed in the mills and factories of Southern folklore: the romantic South, the Lost Cause, the popular 'moonlight magnolias' plantation tours so important to Louisiana's agrotourism today (73)."
3. Share the following video on the [Whitney Plantation Museum](#). After screening the short clip, ask students what they think makes the Whitney Plantation unique (p. 73 – 74, Muhammad).

Additional follow-up questions:

How does the Whitney Plantation document and share histories of slavery in the U.S.? How does that compare to the way that slavery is often discussed in schools and other public forums?

4. Break students up into four different groups. Each group will have photographs of the displays currently available to visitors at the following plantations in East Florida (Spring Garden Plantation, Bulow Plantation, Dummet Planation, and Cruger-de-Peyster Plantation.)

Asks students to compare the East Florida plantation they are examining with the way slavery is depicted at the Whitney Plantation.

- What histories are foregrounded? How do you know? Why does this matter?

-Whose stories are missing?

-What do we know about the lives of enslaved persons who lived on these plantations?

-Are stories about resistance told? Why does this matter?

5. Finally, ask students to consider what historical documents they'd need to tell more complete stories about sugar and slavery in East Florida.

Ask students to write a two-page reflection on the following: How do you think a visitor's experience at the East Florida plantation you studied would differ from someone visiting the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana? Why?

Day 2: Sugar and Mass Incarceration in a Local Context

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
Explore the historical connections between slavery, sugar, and mass incarceration.
Lesson Materials & Resources
Khalil Gibran Muhammad’s “Sugar” Bryan Stevenson’s “Mass Incarceration” Florida Black Codes “Slavery by Another Name” clip Commissary lists with wrappers from materials found in the commissary.
Lesson Activities
<p>Introduction: Prior to this lesson, provide students with a copy of Florida’s Black Codes. Also, ask students to track their sugar intake as best as possible over the course of a week, to collect wrappers from items available for purchase in the canteen, and to make note of the sugar content in the items available on the prison’s commissary list.</p> <p>Exploring the criminal justice system post-emancipation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students read Bryan Stevenson’s essay “Mass Incarceration” prior to arriving to class. Begin by asking students to make sense of Bryan Stevenson’s quote: “Slavery gave America a fear of black people and a taste for violent punishment. Both still define our criminal justice system.” What evidence does Stevenson provide in this piece?2. Share the following clip from the PBS Documentary, Slavery By Another Name (13:38 – 28:00)3. Ask students to respond to the following:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Why does the film contend that in some ways the system of convict labor was worse than slavery? In what ways was it similar?b. According to the film, how was the law used to criminalize Black life following the Civil War?4. Ask students to reflect on Florida’s Black Codes. How do those compare to the policies and practices depicted in the film? What freedoms were granted to newly freed people? Which ones were denied and why? <p>The second part of the day will ask student to consider the historical relationship between slavery and contemporary mass incarceration. Begin by asking students to brainstorm how histories of slavery continue to inform the present.</p> <p>Sugar, incarceration, and the carceral legacies of slavery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Begin with a simple recall exercise, asking students to remember takeaways from the previous class. According to Muhammad, how does sugar slavery “change everything in the New World?”

2. How does Muhammad connect histories of sugar slavery to the present? Take note of each time that Muhammad mentions prisons.
3. Ask students to get in groups and compare their homework. What did they find in studying their own sugar consumption over the past week, the sugary items on the commissary list, as well as wrappers they saved from the canteen? What did they learn, if anything, from taking stock of the sugar in the diets of incarcerated persons?
4. Conclude by **asking students to write a 2-page reflection** paper answering the following: Why is sugar so prevalent in the prison and in what ways is this connected to histories of slavery?

Day 3: Culminating Projects

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)

In the concluding activity that draws from the previous two lessons above, students will begin rewriting histories of slavery in East Florida and share them with our community.

Lesson Materials & Resources

Khalil Gibran Muhammad’s [“Sugar”](#)
Nikole Hannah-Jones’ [“The Idea of America”](#)
Bryan Stevenson’s [“Mass Incarceration”](#)
Reginald Dwayne Betts’ [“Fugitive Slave Act of 1793”](#)
NPR author interview, [Indigo: The Indelible Color that Ruled the World](#)
The 1619 Podcast [two-part episode](#), [“Land of our Fathers.”](#)

Lesson Activities

Project Options:

1. **Community Garden**

Students will have planted indigo that still grows wild and was harvested from the Bulow Plantation. This will have occurred in the weeks prior to the start of the semester. As students plant the seeds, ask them to consider the histories of the seeds they hold in their hands. Who likely planted them? What were they thinking as they placed seeds in the soil? What were their dreams? What did they hope for themselves? For their families? Sugar cane does not grow wild in the region. We will purchase sugar cane seeds and then plant them in the garden as well. Over the course of weeks, ask students to note the development of the plants.

2. **Public History**

As the plants mature, have students harvest the seeds from the indigo and sugar cane stalks. Students will be asked to reflect on what they’ve learned in the previous two lessons and then to write brief histories concerning the agricultural production and consumption of indigo and sugarcane in the region. These writings will accompany the seeds and stalks, which will then be given away at our local Farmers Market. Individuals taking the seeds and stalks will be asked to post a photo of where they plant the crop on social media with a brief reflection on students’ historical description of the project.

3. **Creative alternative**

Students will be given the option to write a creative piece rather than a narrative history of the crop. Share with students Reginald Dwayne Betts’ “Fugitive Slave Act of 1793” to provide ideas on how to creatively interact with historical documents. Students will be given primary documents from the Spring Garden Plantation (inventory lists, bills of sale, deeds, wills, and journals) to create their own creative piece.

Conclusion:

To conclude the unit, ask students to reconvene in their original groups and provide them with their bullet-point responses to their group questions:

- **Group 1:** What has been underreported about the history of slavery nationally and locally, and what

do those underreported stories reflect about the connections between slavery and modern-day systems?

- **Group 2:** What is the historical relationship between agricultural production and consumption under slavery and to the contemporary prison system?
- **Group 3:** What is the political nature of historical narratives, and more specifically, local public history?
- **Group 4:** What are the impacts of storytelling and historical research that communicate underreported stories to our local communities?

Give students 15 minutes to discuss their original response. Have your ideas changed since starting this unit? Which sources were most helpful in your rearticulation of these ideas? Why? Give students ample time to discuss as a class how their ideas have changed over the course of the unit and to share their research and creative pieces with others.