

## **Webquest: People not Property**

Target grade levels: 7-12

Explore Historic Hudson Valley's interactive documentary [People Not Property: Stories of Slavery in the Colonial North](#) to complete this webquest.

### **Chapter 1: Defining Slavery**

#### Labor Systems

1. Why were some indigenous peoples able to escape enslavement?
2. In what ways were indigenous communities devastated as a result of contact with Europeans?
3. What was the term for Europeans peasants who came to the colonies in a form of contracted labor? Explain this arrangement.

4. Why did this system fail?

5. Why did European colonists choose Africa as their source for enslaved labor?

6. What made it difficult for African captives to run away?

#### Establishing Slave Laws

7. Watch the video *The Impact of Slave Laws*. How did colonial laws affect the enslaved community?

#### The Middle Passage

8. Watch the video *The Story of the Charles*. How do you think a journey like this impacted the BaKongo captives who survived? Explain.

## The Business of Slavery

9. What were some of the ways that wealthy enslavers made money from the system of slavery?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. How many of the “founding fathers” who signed the Declaration of Independence were also enslavers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. What does it say about the founding of American democracy that many of the men who signed a document claiming that “all men are created equal” were also enslavers?

## **Chapter 2: Being Enslaved**

### Skilled Labor

12. After watching *Caesar's Skills*, identify two types of specialized knowledge developed by kingdoms in different regions of Africa.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. What kinds of knowledge and skills did Caesar, the enslaved master miller, need in order to do his job? How does this kind of specialized knowledge contradict the idea that enslaved labor was “unskilled labor”?

14. In *Recognition for Caesar*, what advantages might Caesar have gained by being a master miller?
15. Explain what Dr. Leslie Harris meant when she said that even a skilled worker like Caesar was “at the end of the day...still an enslaved person.”

### Family

16. Watch the three-part video *Joan & John Jackson's Story*. What methods did John Jackson use to try to reunite his family?
17. Do you think that John Jackson was a hero? Explain why or why not.

### Community

18. What are some examples of ways that African culture and traditions have become part of our American culture and identity? Identify at least five contemporary examples and explain their African origins.
- 1.
  - 2.

3.

4.

5.

19. Find the story of a person, family, or group from any of the sections in this chapter. Summarize their story. What can their story tell you about the institution of slavery?

### **Chapter 3: Choosing Resistance**

20. Identify four examples of individuals or groups who resisted enslavement. In what way did each resist? What were the results of their resistance?

1.

2.

3.

4.

21. What are the dangers involved in resisting? In spite of the dangers, why did enslaved individuals choose to resist?



## Fighting Back

25. Watch the two-part video series *Burning of the City of New York*.
- a. Explain the events that took place in New York City in 1741.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What similarities can be seen between enslaved individuals rebelling against their enslavers in 1741 and American patriots rebelling against England 35 years later?

## **Chapter 4: Pursuing Justice**

26. Explain how enslaved people took legal actions to gain freedom. Find one example in each section "Purchasing Freedom," "Using the Law," and "Emancipation and Abolition."

1.

2.

3.

27. What was gradual emancipation? How did these laws benefit the enslaved community? How did they benefit enslavers?

### Confronting the Past

28. Watch the video *Erasing History*.

a. Why don't many northerners learn about slavery in the North?

b. Why is it important to learn about slavery in the North and South?

### Finding Connections

29. Watch the video *A Legacy of Racism*. How does a deeper knowledge of the North's involvement in slavery help us to better understand the current issues with racism in America?