



Lesson Plans

The Role and Status of Africans in Spanish St. Augustine

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Intended Grade: 3rd – 5th

Correlation to National or Sunshine State Standards:

- SS.A.1.2. The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective.
- SS.A.4.2. The student understands US history to 1880.
- LA.B.2.2. The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
- LA.E.2.2. The student responds critically to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

Performance Standards: [unspecified]

Objective:

The students will identify the rights of Africans in St. Augustine during the 18th Century.

Approximate Time Required: [unspecified]

Materials Required:

- Paper
- Scissors
- KWL foldable
- Chart paper
- Marker
- *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester (Scholastic Inc., New York, 1968)
- *Fort Mose Colonial America's Black Fortress of Freedom* by Kathleen Deagan & Darcie MacMahon (University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 1995).
- Sterling and Delaney Manumission Case (enough for each group)
- Bag filled with even numbers of **X**'s and **O**'s (enough for entire class).

Instructions:

Teacher Preparation:

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the texts, especially the sections of Fort Mose dealing with Spanish laws governing slavery, laws in Florida providing sanctuary for slaves running from the English colonies, and provisions for manumission (legal statement of freedom).

First Activity—the nature of injustice

Students will choose at random an **X** or **O** from bag at the start of day.

Throughout the day, the students who have **X**'s will have to do more work and will be treated differently than those who have **O**'s.

For example, teacher might move the **X** students' desks to the back of the room and the others to the front. The **X** students might have to clean out their desks while the **O**'s have free time to read.

Students then (with the aid of teacher) will create KWL foldables on the subject of their knowledge of the rights of Africans in St. Augustine (see example and instructions).

After completion of chart, teacher will read a section of *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester.

Teacher will explain to students that both enslaved and free Africans in the Spanish St. Augustine community had rights. See in particular *Fort Mose* pp. 1-8 and 15-22 and p. 30.

Vocabulary

- Enslaved: held against one's will as the property of a person or household
- Free: not controlled by the laws or will of others; having liberty
- Manumission: the act of freeing a slave from bondage
- Primary Source: a document, artifact, or evidence that is original to the event or time period being studied

In closing the students will complete the final parts of their KWL and then chose a topic to write about. Some possible choices are:

- Write to a slave or to a freed slave and share your feelings.
- Write about a time you were treated unfairly and how that made you feel.

Evaluation and Grading:

Writing sample and teacher observation.

Petition by Juana Sterling regarding the legal status of her children

Juana Sterling was a freed slave who had two children with a white landowner, Daniel A. Delany (her former master). They resided very close to the Georgia border in Florida. As news arrived that Florida would be ceded to the United States, Sterling and Delany feared their children might be turned into slaves. They wanted written proof that the children were free, and they wanted this proof to be included in the government files of St. Augustine. They asked Spanish officials in Florida to draw up documents stating that their children were free people of color, and had never been slaves.

From Senior Captain of the Post Santa Maria:

Juana Sterling a free mulatto and native of this province with due respect presents herself and says:

That the attached document of manumission in the English language was given to me by my owner, Don Daniel A. Delany, who is also the father of my two children, Bertha and Thomas. And wanting to safeguard the children and their legal status I ask your Majesty to order whoever you see fit to translate these documents, place them in the archives of the province, and give me proof that this has been done.

On the edge of the St. Mary River, on the 3rd day of August, 1818.

For M. Sterling

Response to Juana Sterling's Petition:

Juana Sterling received the following response to her petition to legally declare that her children were free. The individual who wrote the response was George J.F. Clarke, the governor's local magistrate for the section of Florida near Georgia.

St. Mary, 10 August 1818

Let it be done as she asks and to that effect Don Francisco and Don Pedro Pons are witnesses of assistance and Don Domingo Acosta is interpreter.

Clarke

