

Florida: A Slave Sanctuary

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Intended Grade: High School

Subject Area: U.S. history

Correlation to National or Florida Sunshine State Standards:

Standard A4: The student understands how religious, social, political, and economic developments shaped the settlement patterns of the North American colonies.

Objective:

To explain the reasons the Spanish provided sanctuary for British colonial slaves and the impact of that on both the Spanish and the British.

Approximate Time Required: one class period

Materials required:

Computer with internet access or can use the computer information as a handout

The website *Slavery in America*

http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs_es_florida_slavery.htm

Instructions:

Students will go to the section of *Slavery in America* entitled "Florida: Sanctuary for Slaves." Read and answer the following questions:

1. When did the first fugitive slaves arrive in Florida?
2. What religious requirement did they meet?
3. What work did they do?
4. What is a *cédula*?
5. Summarize what it said.
6. Why do you think the Spanish who practiced slavery declared Florida to be a sanctuary for fugitive slaves? (Hint: how could free blacks contribute to Spanish Florida?)

Read the following from the *South Carolina Report of the Committee of Conference on the Case of the Negroes' Desertion to St. Augustine*, April 2, 1739:

"That an Encouragement be given to white Men and free Indian for taking up and bringing in all Negro Slaves that are already deserted or shall hereafter desert from this province according to the rates and proportions following, to wit,

For Negro men taken up beyond the Savannah River and brought home alive the sum of 40lb a piece,

For women taken and brought as above 25lb each,

For children under the age of 12 years 10lb each, which sums shall be paid by

Their respective owners.

And that encouragement be given for bringing in the scalps of such men and women Negro slaves that are already deserted or shall hereafter desert who shall be found beyond the Savannah River and cannot be taken and brought home alive, to wit, for each scalp with the

two ears 20lb to be paid out of the Publick Treasury. Such Negroes as shall be executed for the desertion of their owners shall be reimbursed by the Publick.”

7. What response did the British make to the *cédula*? Is this an appropriate response?

Read the following from the *South Carolina House of Assembly Records*, July 23, 1740:

“It is with great Reason, we apprehend, that that Part of our Calamities, proceeding from the frequent Attempts of our Slaves, arises from the Designs and Intrigues of our Enemies the Spaniards in St. Augustine and Florida, who have had the Ruin and Destruction of these your Majesty’s Colonies in South Carolina and Georgia long in View. Witness..a proclamation published at St. Augustine, in his Catholic Majesty’s Name, promising Freedom and other Encouragement to all slaves that should desert from your Majesty’s Subjects of this Province and join them. In Consequence of which Proclamation, many have already deserted, and others encouraged daily to do the same; and even those who have committed the most inhuman Murders, are there harboured, and entertained and caressed.”

8. Based on your previous reading, is this record correct? Why or why not?

Evaluation:

This assignment can be treated as daily work and can be the basis of quiz or test.

Resources:

http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs_es_florida_slavery.htm

Deagan, Kathleen, and Darcie MacMahon, *Fort Mose Colonial America’s Black Fortress of Freedom* (University Press of Florida, Gainesville), 1995.