

The Emancipation Proclamation and Under the Freedom Tree

- Subject:** History and Social Sciences, Language Arts
- Grade Level:** 5th Grade
- Topic:** How did the Union and Confederate armies utilize slaves and escaped slaves and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation?
- Guiding Questions:** What effect did the Emancipation Proclamation have?
How did the Confederacy use slaves?
What did the Union do with escaped slaves?
- VA SOL:** Us 1.9 E - Describe critical developments in the war
US1. 9 F - Describe the effects of war from the perspectives of enslaved African Americans
- Materials:** Primary source photo (Appendix A)
Text of Emancipation Proclamation (Appendix B)
Book: [Under the Freedom Tree by Susan VanHecke](#)
Slideshow: [Contraband of War](#)

Before you begin:

Provide links for students with the Emancipation Proclamation and/or print out.

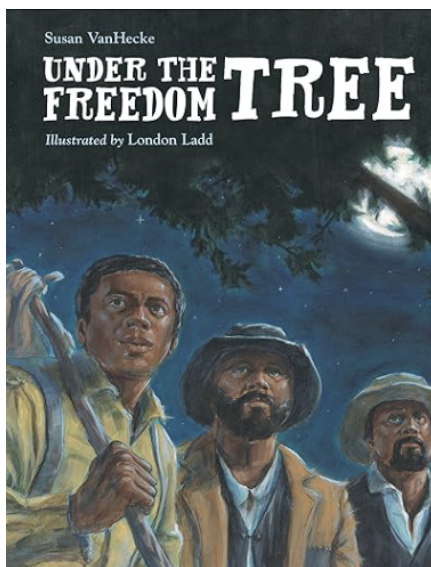
Obtain copies of *Under the Freedom Tree* by Susan VanHecke

Introduction

Do a photo walk using the contraband of war slideshow.

This leads to discussion of the following questions:

- What was happening with the slaves during the Civil War?
- When were the slaves freed?



Read the Book

Read *Under the Freedom Tree* by Susan VanHecke. Because the book is written more like a poem, students may benefit from hearing it read aloud.

Identifying figurative language in *Under the Freedom Tree*.

Break students into groups of two and three have students review the text and identify three uses of figurative language by the author. This can be adjusted based on reading level. Student should review text or [listen to audio of the text](#) to identify figurative language being used.

Each group will create a Google slide identifying their figurative language selection, what the selection means, and what form of figurative language it is.

Identifying and utilizing primary resources

Class discussion: After reviewing *Under the Freedom Tree*, identify ways in which slaves and escaped slaves were utilized by the Confederacy and the Union.

Place students in groups of two to three and read the Emancipation Proclamation with their group. While the full, handwritten text is available via the link in Appendix A, you will also wish to provide students with a copy that is easier to read, included in Appendix B. Students should identify who Abraham Lincoln freed in the Emancipation Proclamation and who he did not.

Closing Discussion

As a whole class, students should discuss why all slaves were not freed in the Emancipation Proclamation using the questions below:

- What difficulty would Abraham Lincoln face by freeing all slaves?
- How did the Union and Confederate armies utilize slaves and escaped slaves and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation?
- What effect did the Emancipation Proclamation have?

Lesson Created by Michael Hobbs, Carroll County Public Schools

Appendix A

By the President of the
United States of America
Proclamation.

I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, and Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States, and each of the states, and the people thereof, in which states that relation ~~is~~ may be suspended, or disturbed.

That it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all slave states, so called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which states ^{not} may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their respective limits; and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent upon this continent, or elsewhere, ^{with the consent of their owners & the Government} will be continued.

Image retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/resource/lprbscsm.scsm0231/?st=gallery>

Appendix B
Transcript of the Proclamation

January 1, 1863

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth[)], and which excepted parts, are for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State