

What dreams do ordinary people have?

What was everyday life like for enslaved African Americans?

Subject: History and Social Sciences, Language Arts

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Topic: Civil War

Guiding Questions: What dreams do ordinary people have?
What was everyday life like for enslaved African Americans?

VA SOL: VS.7 The student will demonstrate an understanding of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by

- A. explaining the major events and the differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia
- C. describing the roles of American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans.

Materials: Primary source illustration of a slave auction (Appendix A), See Feel Think Wonder template (Appendix B), [Freedom Over Me](#) picture book by Ashley Bryan, copies of selected poem sets, post-its, chart paper, and paper/pencils. (Optional materials - additional post-it notes and large chart paper)

Before you begin:

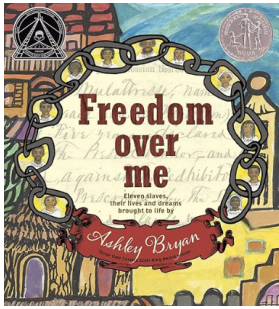
Make a copy of the illustration of a slave auction (Appendix A) and the “See-Feel-Think-Wonder” paper (Appendix B) for each group of students. If you choose, copy each poem set (poem and accompanying dream) for each group. (Optional - gather 4 different colored post-its for each group. Using a large piece of chart paper, make four quadrants with “See-Feel-Think-Wonder” written for the quadrants.)

Introduction

Ask students the guiding question for the lesson, “What dreams do ordinary people have?” What do you dream for your life? Is there anything that could stop you from achieving your dream? Allow time for students to respond before engaging in the pre-reading activity.

Pre-Reading Activity

Pass out the illustration (Appendix A) to each group of students, giving them an opportunity to look over the illustration. Pass out a copy of the “See-Feel-Think-Wonder” sheet (Appendix B). Allow students time to discuss then complete the sheet. Ask for responses to the “See-Feel-Think-Wonder” sheet. (This can also be done on post-its using different colored post-its for each part of the sheet. Then, a student from each group can put the post-its on a large piece of chart paper.)



Read the Book

Now that students have been introduced to the topic, ask students the second guiding question, “What was life like for enslaved African Americans?” Ask students to look for the answer to this question as you read the book *Freedom over me*. (If time is limited, read the poem for Mrs. Mary Fairchilds and both the descriptions and dreams of several slaves.)

Understanding through a [word, phrase, and sentence activity](#)

Pass out poem sets to student groups. Student groups select a word that got their attention, a phrase that made them think, and a sentence that demonstrated the main focus of the text. Student groups will do this with both selected poems.

Word Cloud

Using the poems for one of the enslaved African Americans, create a word cloud. Groups select 15-25 words that were meaningful and/or repeated multiple times to create a word cloud. To do so digitally, use <https://wordart.com/>

Closing Discussion

After groups share their word clouds, go back to the original illustration (Appendix A). Student groups draft a short poem about the dreams a person in the illustration might have for his/her life. Revisit the original guiding questions, What dreams do ordinary people have? What was everyday life like for enslaved African Americans?

Optional Extension

- Write a poem for a person from the illustration (Appendix A) to pair with the dream of a person in the illustration. Create an original illustration to accompany the poem.

Lesson Created by Melissa Irby, 4th grade teacher, Gordon-Barbour Elementary in Orange County, Virginia.

Appendix A

SEPT. 27, 1856.]

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

315



Image retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3a17645/>

Appendix B

See - What do you see in the illustration?

Feel - What feelings do you have as you look at this illustration? Think - What does this illustration make you think about?

Wonder - What do you wonder about this illustration?

Template adapted from: https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/See%20Feel%20Think%20Wonder_o.pdf