

Using Pictures from the Library of Congress to Teach “Seeking Freedom”

- Subject:** History and Social Sciences, Language Arts
- Grade Level:** Fourth Grade
- Topic:** Fort Monroe
- Guiding Questions:** What was the Contraband Decision?
What were the effects of the Contraband Decision on slavery and the outcome of the Civil War?
- VA SOL:** VS.7 - The student will demonstrate an understanding of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by
B. describing Virginia’s role in the war, including identifying major battles that took place in Virginia;
- Materials:** [Seeking Freedom by Selene Castrovilla](#), Photo of Gen. Butler with Mallory, Baker & Townsend (Appendix A), Photo of Slabtown (Appendix B), Photo of Reliable Contraband (Appendix C), Cause and Effect chart, Timeline, [OPTIC activity instructions](#)

Before you begin:

Print photos, timeline, cause and effect chart, and OPTIC activity instructions

Introduction

Explain the contraband decision.

Overview of the Contraband decision: The Confederates were using slaves to help them in the war effort. Three men (Shepherd Mallory, Frank Baker, and James Townsend) refused and escaped to Fort Monroe. This led to the Contraband decision, which led to tens of thousands of enslaved people to seek refuge with the Union Army.

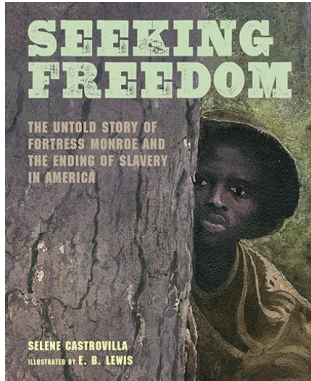
Show photo of Gen. Butler with Mallory, Baker & Townsend (Appendix A). Students will do an [OPTIC analysis](#) chart on the picture.

- O Overview
- P Parts of Picture
- T Title/text
- I Interrelationships
- C Conclusion

Pre-Reading Activity

Draw conclusions about why General Butler might have agreed to accept these men as contraband.

Based on the intro information about the Contraband Decision and the photo, create a comic strip detailing what the men are discussing.



Read the Book

While reading, students will write down effects of the Contraband Decision based on information in the book

After Reading (Choose 1 or more)

CAUSE & EFFECT DIAGRAM –Student groups will work together to create a cause and effect diagram. Each group should have a copy of the book.

NOTICE & WONDER CHART: Student groups will be given photos of Slabtown from the Library of Congress (Appendix B). Ask them to write down what they notice and wonder about the town created near Fort Monroe.

NOTICE & WONDER CHART: Student groups will be given photos of “Reliable Contraband” from the Library of Congress (Appendix C). Ask them to write down what they notice and wonder about this photo.

Optional Extension

- Create a timeline of Fort Monroe and the Contraband Decision

Lesson Created by Kristi Martin, Fourth Grade Teacher at Breckinridge Elementary.

Appendix A



Image retrieved from <https://fortmonroe.org/contraband-decision/>

Appendix B



Photo retrieved from: https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/pnp/cwpb/04300/04363_150px.jpg

Appendix C



Photo retrieved from: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.20755/>