

CLASSROOM COMPANION

**Online
Curriculum**

**Price of
Freedom**

ATLANTA

HISTORY

CENTER

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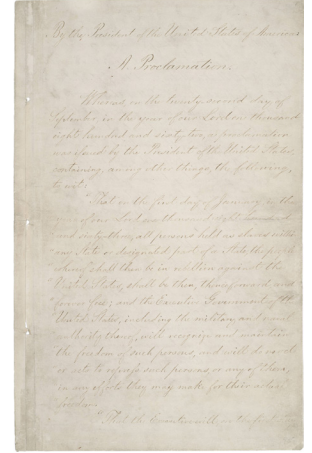
ACTIVITY

ONE

What Does the Emancipation Proclamation Say?

One of the educational goals of the *Price of Freedom* is to shed light on the meaning and real-life effects of the famed Emancipation Proclamation. Students will view a monologue about Mrs. Johnstone, a middle class planter's wife who discovers a diary belonging to her slave. In reading the diary, it becomes evident that Bitsy, the slave, knows about Lincoln's order, which enrages the planter's wife. "How could she possibly know about that blasted Proclamation?!"

The monologue poses questions about Lincoln's intentions for writing the Emancipation Proclamation and whether or not any slaves were actually freed as a result of its existence.



Before coming to the Atlanta History Center, ask your students what they know about this legendary document. If they are familiar with the basic ideas surrounding it, they will be able to enjoy and understand the monologue on a deeper level.

Full text available [here](#).

Primary documents related to the proclamation as well as comprehensive lesson plans are available at **EDSITEment**.

About the Emancipation Proclamation

- It is widely known that President Lincoln did not support slavery. However, he understood that it would be unconstitutional for the government to take “property” away from its citizens. Therefore, the proclamation was issued as a “necessary war measure.” It was hoped that freeing the slaves would reduce the South’s capacity for war-making and allow more soldiers to join the Union army. In issuing it as a war tactic, even those northerners who did not support abolition in itself could perhaps support a tactic that would help win the war.
- Lincoln read his initial draft of the proclamation to his cabinet as early as July 22, 1862, but he decided to wait to unveil it publicly until after Union victory at Antietam in September of the same year.
- It freed only slaves in states “rebellious against the United States.”
- There were 4 states on the Union side which had slaves, but were not affected by the proclamation: Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware.

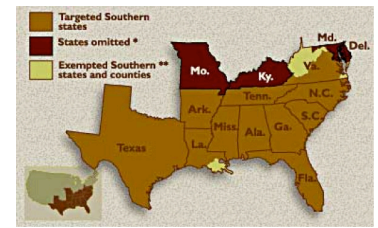
Links

Emancipation Proclamation Text
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation-proclamation/transcript.html

EDSITEment
<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/emancipation-proclamation-freedoms-first-steps#sect->

- The proclamation also did not apply to certain counties in conquered areas of the South, since they were no longer rebelling.
- Since the South considered itself an independent country, the Confederacy felt no need to enforce the order.
- William Seward, Lincoln’s Secretary of State, commented, “We show our sympathy with slavery by emancipating slaves where we cannot reach them and holding them in bondage where we can set them free.” Lincoln was fully aware of the irony, but he did not want to antagonize the slave states loyal to the Union by setting their slaves free. (from pbs.org)
- While the proclamation did not actually set many slaves free, its biggest impact was in changing the purpose of the war and setting the stage for permanent and complete abolition. This would be not merely a war to reunite the country, but to reunite a country without slavery.
- The 13th amendment, passed in 1865, legally freed all slaves in all states. “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”
- Georgia was the last state to ratify the amendment.

The proclamation included a provision which made it legal to accept African Americans into the Union army.



ACTIVITY

TWO

“The Price of Freedom” Fact-Based Post-Test

- 1. According to the “The Declaration of Causes for Secession” written by South Carolina and Mississippi, why did the southern states secede from the Union?**

- 2. The “Declaration of Causes for Secession” written by South Carolina in 1860 points out the North’s failure to follow what part of the Constitution?**

- A. The right to own property (like slaves)
- B. The requirement to return runaway slaves
- C. The power of the government to set tariffs

- 3. Name one advantage the North had over the South at the start of the war. Hint: Think about numbers of soldiers**

- 4. What invisible killer left more soldiers dead than bullets?**

- 5. African Americans were allowed to enlist in the Union Army after what huge battle?**

- A. Battle of Gettysburg
- B. Battle of Atlanta
- C. Battle of Antietam

- 6. The Emancipation Proclamation was designed as a war tactic to free the slaves in what states?**

- 7. During the time of the Civil War in Georgia, it was illegal for a slave to...**

- A. Read and write
- B. Buy supplies at a store
- C. Have children

8. Why was Atlanta a military target for the Union?

9. Trench warfare a common tactic used during the war. Why did armies resort to this type of fighting instead of standing in rows in an open field?

“The Price of Freedom” Fact-Based Post-Test Answers

1. According to the “The Declaration of Causes for Secession” written by South Carolina and Mississippi, why did the southern states secede from the Union?

[Secession Documents Station]

Possible answer: Both states have slightly different reasoning, but both are objecting to the Northern states’ stance on slavery. Mississippi and South Carolina believe that it is their right to own slaves and that the Northern states are making it harder (legally and politically) to do so.

2. The “Declaration of Causes for Secession” written by South Carolina in 1860 points out the North’s failure to follow what part of the Constitution?

[Secession Documents Station]

- A. The right to own property (like slaves)
- B. The requirement to return runaway slaves**
- C. The power of the government to set tariffs

3. Name one advantage the North had over the South at the start of the war. Hint: Think about numbers of soldiers

[Soldier Role-Playing Station]

- The North had roughly twice as many soldiers - 2,200,000 to +/- 1,000,000
- The North had greater capabilities to manufacture war materials - as evidenced by the fact that only Union soldiers could purchase the armored vest.
- Other information not in the tour:

	Union	Confederacy
Number of States	23	11
Population	22 million	9 million (includes 4 million slaves)
RR	20,000 miles of track	9,000 miles of track
Factories	100,000	20,000
Bank Deposits	81%	19%

4. What invisible killer left more soldiers dead than bullets?

[Soldier Role-Playing Station]

Disease, specifically dysentery. Over 57,000 men died of this disease in the Union Army alone. Dysentery is caused by microscopic bacteria (invisible to the naked eye) that come from fecal matter. Camp latrines were often situated near the same water source that the soldiers were drinking from. Also, so many dirty soldiers living in such close proximity made things worse. Germ theory was not widely accepted by doctors until the late 19th century.

5. African Americans were allowed to enlist in the Union Army after what huge battle?

[Soldier Role-Playing Station]

- A. Battle of Gettysburg
- B. Battle of Atlanta

C. Battle of Antietam

The Battle of Antietam, fought September 17, 1862. This was a major turning point in the war for many reasons.

- Lincoln’s narrow victory gave him enough confidence to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. In the text of the proclamation there was a provision allowing African Americans to officially enlist in the Union army. By the end of the war, over 200,000 African Americans served (but were paid \$10/month compared with \$13/month for white soldiers)
- General Lee lost a quarter of his army and had to retreat – a major blow to the South
- Because General McClellan did not pursue Lee across the Potomac to end the war, President Lincoln fired him.

6. The Emancipation Proclamation was designed as a war tactic to free the slaves in what states?

[Monologue Station]

The rebelling states (The Confederacy). The proclamation did not free slaves in the so-called “border states”. The border states (Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland) were states that were officially loyal to the Union, but also had slaves. Even in the South, many slaves were not freed by the proclamation since the Confederacy felt no obligation to follow orders of another country’s president. It did however inspire the idea of freedom for those slaves who knew about it, and when Union troops captured cities in the South, the slaves in those areas were freed. All slaves weren’t officially freed until the 13th amendment was added to the Constitution in 1865.

7. During the time of the Civil War in Georgia, it was illegal for a slave to...

[Monologue Station]

A. Read and write

- B. Buy supplies at a store
- C. Have children

8. Why was Atlanta a military target for the Union?

[Soldier Role-Playing Station]

By 1864, Atlanta was producing half of the Confederacy’s war supplies; it also had several valuable rail lines to ship the supplies out to the soldiers. General Sherman’s campaign to capture the city and cut off the rail lines was a part of Lincoln’s new “total war” strategy, which included attacking civilian areas if they proved valuable to the war effort. The campaign was a success for the Union. The capture of Atlanta was not pleasant for civilians but resulted in Lincoln’s re-election and the near end of the Confederacy and the war itself.

9. Trench warfare was used for the first time during the Civil War. Why did armies resort to this type of fighting instead of standing in rows in an open field?

[Soldier Role-playing Station]

Because of new inventions like the aerodynamic “minié ball,” soldiers had to dig trenches to defend themselves. This war ushered in new, more accurate weapons and a new type of warfare that was more defensive. But fighting in trenches makes progress much slower. It took 120 days of fighting in trenches (digging trenches, fighting, moving a little closer, digging new trenches, etc.) just for General Sherman’s troops to reach Atlanta in order to fight the 5 battles there.

ACTIVITY

THREE

Create an Illustrated Diary For Your Soldier

How do historians know what soldiers ate, how much they missed home, and what it felt like to be wounded? The written words from the soldiers themselves are, perhaps, the greatest source of information. Soldiers who could read and write often kept detailed diaries throughout the war.

In creating the Soldier Experience role-playing game for the Price of Freedom tour, many soldier diaries and letters were consulted. One such journal was written by Union Private Alfred Bellard. His artistic abilities allowed him to document his experiences in picture-form, as well as written narrative.

Alfred's drawings are a valuable resource for historians because they provide details about camp life, battles, and even uniforms that give a more complete picture of the war.



Make Your Own Illustrated Diary

On tour, you assumed the identity of a real Civil War soldier (including Alfred Bellard). Throughout the role-playing game, decisions you made, along with pure luck, affected your soldier's experiences and survival. In all there were 8 different stops during the tour. These are listed on your profile sheet.

Use events that happened to you during each stop in this simulated war to create an illustrated diary for your soldier.

Project Requirements

- Write one diary entry to match each stop on the tour. (8 entries in all)
- Draw a picture to show how your soldier experienced that part of the war.
- Diary entries have dates on each page. Do some research to estimate an approximate date that your soldier could have been writing each entry.
- Creatively weave real facts into each entry that show what you learned about the Civil War.

Example

Fact learned: There were twice as many Union soldiers as Confederate.

As written in diary: "Well it's the first day of drills and we're all excited to whip the Yankees. Rumor has it that

there's twice as many of them, but I don't care. One Rebel can whip 2 Yankees any day!"

Your diary should include other creative details that make it sound real. You can make up family member's names. Or maybe someone stole your canteen? The idea is to be creative while still showing that you learned about the causes and consequences of the Civil War.

Here are some questions that will help jog your memory and serve as a guide for what to consider as you write:

Introduction to war

1. Look at your profile sheet. What kind of background does your soldier come from? What were his reasons for joining the army? Were these reasons different than the reasons his government chose to go to war? Imagine what he must have been thinking and feeling as he signed his name to the enlistment papers.
2. Your soldier should feel optimistic and excited about the adventure of war. Remember, he doesn't know how hard it will be. How does your soldier feel about the difference in the number of soldiers on each side (Union vs. Confederate)?

Getting Ready for War

1. Soldiers often bought things from small shops or mail-order catalogs to help them prepare for war. What did your soldier buy? Most soldiers had no idea what war would be like. They didn't know how much they would have to carry or how far they would have to walk (average of 15 miles/day). What happened to your soldier as a result of buying this item?

Battle of Antietam

1. What happened to you at the Battle of Antietam? Did you win a medal of honor? Did you get wounded? Or maybe your soldier was African American and could not participate? This battle was the bloodiest day in American history. Over 23,000 people were dead, wounded, or missing by the end. What kinds of details could you write that would show how gruesome it was?
2. How did this battle change the course of the war? Not only did the battle result in a narrow victory for the Union, but it also inspired President Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. What would you soldier think of the proclamation?

Battlefield Doctor

1. If a soldier's wound was deep enough to reach his bone, a doctor had to amputate the limb to save the soldier's life. If the amputation was not performed, the bullet or shrapnel could infect the limb and cause a deadly infection. Did you soldier receive an amputation? If so describe the process and how you would feel about the loss of a limb. Remember, if your soldier loses a limb, this will affect his role in rest of the war. If he didn't have an amputation, pretend that your soldier witnessed one.

Soldier Food

1. Food shortages were a problem for both Union and Confederate soldiers. Soldiers often tried to find food on the land where they were encamped. Problems arose when soldiers stole from local farmer's crops. According to army rules, if officers made the decision to take food from civilians, then they had to issue a receipt to that civilian. Even so, locals weren't usually happy to lose their harvest for the season. What did your soldier decide to do: raid the farmer's crops or wait for food? How did that decision affect him? How did his hunger affect his decision?

Missing Home

1. After 2 and ½ years of war, how would it feel to be away from home that long? Your only contact with home is the mail. Did you get a letter? What did it say? You can add creative details here. Did anyone back home get engaged? How is your family? Your dog?
2. Does missing home reduce your commitment to your country's cause? How do you feel now in comparison to the start of war in your first entry?

Battle of Atlanta

1. Because of new weapons like the accurate minié ball bullet, almost all of the fighting leading up to and around Atlanta was done in trenches. You saw a trench on tour. What would it be like to sit in one all day and launch attacks without really seeing your enemy? Include details about trenches in this diary entry.
2. Because of this Union victory, important Confederate supply lines (railroads) were cut off and the South was near defeat. What happened to your soldier during this battle and how did he feel about the outcome?

War is Over

1. When General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant in April of 1865, this meant the end of the Confederacy. After 4 years of fighting, soldiers were relieved that it was all over— regardless of the outcome. But defeated Southern soldiers would have been returning to a much different place than they had left. Northern soldiers would be going home with a victory but might have mixed feelings about the abolition of slavery. What do you think your soldier would be feeling at the end of the war? Would the costs of war be worth it for him?

ACTIVITY FOUR

Celeste: Slaveholder & Woman

Summary

In groups, students use the *Price of Freedom* monologue script to examine the powerlessness that both women and slaves would have felt during the Civil War era. Ultimately students will have a deeper understanding about why Celeste felt a sense of solidarity with Bitsy, her slave, at the end of the monologue.

Time

50 minutes

Essential Question

How did white women and slaves share some of the same challenges in the antebellum south, with respect to power and legal rights?

Specific Understandings

- Slaves, despite sometimes being thought of fondly by slaveholders, were still considered property.
- Relationships between slaveholders and slaves were often complex.
- Married white women were also considered property— the property of their husbands— but not in the same way that slaves were property.
- Both women and African Americans in the mid-19th century began a quest for civil rights. In some ways, women were slower than black men to obtain the full rights of a citizen (see Legal Rights section).

Procedure

1. **The Hook** Ask students to recall the plot of the monologue they viewed on the *Price of Freedom* tour. What was it about? Review student's opinions about whether Celeste should have told her husband about Bitsy's writings. Did Celeste empathize with Bitsy by the end? Why? Explain that students will examine Celeste's role as both a slaveholder and a woman.
2. Split up the class into groups of 3 or 4 students. Half of the class will use the script to answer and discuss the questions about Celeste's role as a woman, and the other half will answer and discuss the questions about Celeste's role as a slaveholder. (There are two copies of the script. The "woman's role" and the "slaveholder role" scripts contain highlighted lines that pertain to each topic.)
3. **Debriefing** After groups have finished answering questions. Using the questions below, have a class discussion to synthesize the information they learned in their groups.
 - To students who analyzed Celeste's role as a woman: "Explain how Celeste's role as a woman affected her relationship with her husband. (Give examples from the script). How would it feel to a married woman in this time period?"
 - To students who analyzed Celeste's role as a slaveholder: "Do you think Celeste thought of Bitsy as a person or a piece of property? Do you think

Bitsy had a good life? (Give examples from the script.) What is the best life a slave could hope to have?

- At the end of the script, after reading a speech, Celeste reads one of Bitsy’s writings that says:

“I see the Miss. She is sad. She fear...fear like the rest of us. She got good parts. All folk got good and bad parts... She like we is.”

Then Celeste says:

“Am I really so different than Bitsy? Are we the same?”

Now that you’ve read the script, why would Bitsy say that Celeste is sad or has fears?

Why does Celeste start to identify with Bitsy?

4. **Looking at history** Show students “Legal Rights of Women and Slaves” as a class.

Find out more about the Legal Rights of Women and Slaves on page 39.

Make two columns on the board: “Similar” and “Different”

- What are the similarities and differences between the legal rights of women and slaves in the Civil War era?
 - Why do you think black men got the constitutional right to vote before white women?
5. **Conclusion** Do any of these practices exist in some ways in today’s society?

Student Questions

Celeste’s role as a woman

Read all the parts in the script that are highlighted. Then answer the questions as a group.

1. How can you tell Mr. Johnstone has more power in the household than Celeste? Give examples.
2. Does Celeste accept her lack of power in the household? Give examples.
3. How does this couple’s relationship compare to couples today?

Celeste’s role as a slaveholder

1. Give examples in the script where Celeste values Bitsy as piece of property.
2. Give examples in the script where Celeste values Bitsy as a human being.
3. When Celeste says “They’re not like us” on p. __, what does she mean? In her view, how are slaves different than white people?

[Click here for Teacher’s Script](#)

Teacher's Script: "Celeste"

(As we enter, Celeste is reading through a small stack of papers. Slightly fidgety or perhaps pacing, but obviously nervous. She is initially startled by the audience's intrusion and immediately hides the papers. Relaxing a bit she exhales.)

CELESTE

You startled me....didn't expect to see you so soon!

Please. Sit. I...I wish...Heavens, I wish we were meeting under better circumstance— or at the very least with more notice. That would have given me time to have Bitsy...— she could have prepared something.

As you know, my husband... Mr. Johnstone, has gone to Decatur to sell a few swine... So, I assumed this would be the opportune time to speak with you in private. I must be brief though, that man is an exceptional salesman and he should be back momentarily.

(Holding the papers before her)

While tending to the garden I found these. They were hidden beneath the steps near the front porch... next to the rose bushes. I wasn't sure what it was. Our slave girl Bitsy usually tends to the garden, but Clara has taken ill so Bitsy has been doing the kitchen duties as well as the sewing. So, as you can imagine, I have been short on help. My daughter Mary and son James Jr. are away visiting relatives - and I wouldn't have any of those farm hands touch my delicate plants, so I figured I could handle it myself.

(Looking at the papers)

I assumed it was garbage...until...I began to read it.

Crass, primitive print...looks like it was written with charcoal.

(Reading)

"This day is full of heat. Hands sore and hard. Fingers hurt and colored with the blue Miss wants the cloth to be..."

It's very hard to read any of this.

"Cry all night. Ma Clara awful sick. Head and face warm. Food keep coming up...Cry all night. Hope she make it to day light..."

Ma Clara?... That's when it dawned on me that it was Bitsy... *She* had written this?!

That is why I called you here.

You are so much better with these matters than I am. I know you do not agree with...our way of life...—with slavery, but you are such a dear friend and a wonderful listener.

...I am not sure what I should do. **This is a crime! Mr. Johnstone would be livid if he had found this and not me!**

No, he's not cruel. My husband is a very fair man, mind you— a good man— but he is also a man with great respect for the law. And the 1848 slave code clearly states that an owner in possession of a slave that reads will be fined.

We can't *afford* to pay any fines! Not with things as they are now! Not with the rumors of Sherman's army of savages approaching! We're trying to stay alive!

(Suddenly aware of her volume)

Wait one moment...

(She walks over to what might be a door. To make sure that no one is listening. When she returns the tone is a bit more secretive, but just as intense.)

Bitsy is my best girl. No other slave in this area can sew or quilt with such speed and produce such graceful work.

She has been Mary's only real playmate. She is like a part of the family and... well—I always assumed Bitsy would make a wonderful wedding gift for Mary— when that glorious day occurs. But now...

The code also states that the punishment for the slave would be a whipping at the discretion of the court... the very idea of Bitsy being whipped would absolutely devastate Mary. She would surely blame her father and I, if such a thing were to happen.

So, that is why I need your help. I have to decide whether or not to tell Mr. Johnstone about Bitsy's writings.

Listen to what she's written:

"Emancipation. Not sure if I spell it right, but they say it means for us to be free. They say that Lincoln wrote down and say we is to be free."

How could she possibly know about that blasted Proclamation?!!

...I know it has been well over a year since it was issued, but Mr. Johnstone says that the document is "just words on a page." Something Lincoln and his people came up with and dispersed to all of the papers to publish. War propaganda.

"They are just trying to start a ruckus!" he says, "No blasted Proclamation will set slaves free! It is clearly stated in the document that this so-called freedom only applies during war... It is not an *Amendment*! It is not LAW! Unless, perhaps, the Union wins the war... Which is why we CANNOT let them win!!"

Talk. All of this talk...as Sherman approaches.

Of course I despise the Yankees... they *are* savages. Each city they march into, destroying crops, making people leave their homes— homes that many of us have built with our own hands—...we...well— the slaves did help build those homes... and tend those crops...but that's why we purchased them. That is their job.

You have to understand, we do not have a plantation with hundreds of acres to tend. Our farm is small. We have just enough to survive...just enough to feed our family *and* our slaves.

We are not cruel people... We treat our slaves with kindness. At least I do... I am sure Mr. Johnstone does.

Of course I do not know what occurs on the farm...I mean...it's not my place to know is it? Either way the slaves should show us some gratitude for providing them with food and shelter. Shouldn't they?...

Who is going to feed them and take care of them as we do?...Sure, they know how to farm and build but they are like children, they can't survive on their own... they need us...Don't they? Without us they will easily fall prey to the trickery of the Yankees!

What would poor Clara or Bitsy do without us? Clara needs us in order to get well. She needs us to care for her.

...I was not aware of how sick Clara is... I am sure Mr. Johnstone knows.

My husband is much more aware of what is going on amongst the slaves than I am.

"A woman should not be concerned with such things." He is fond of saying that.

If something happens to Clara...I can only imagine how hurtful that might be for Bitsy. Clara is her grandmother after all...she practically raised her after her mother died.

(Beat)

...I am aware that you...*sympathize*...with those Northern abolitionist types. You are entitled to have your own opinion.... but I think they are a bunch of hypocrites! They say one thing and do another. All of this talk of human decency...of the rights of slaves, as human beings, to control their own destinies.

They're not...well, they're not like us. Anyone who's ever been around them can see that. It's all talk, talk, talk! If this war was about slaves being treated like human beings then why is *that not* mentioned in the Emancipation Proclamation?! Why doesn't this Lincoln fellow have the courage to clearly state that in the document?

Yes, I memorized it! Have you read it? Do you know what it's about?

Well, this is what it says: "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..."

So, Mr. Lincoln—Mr. *Commander-in-Chief*—is saying that if the Southern States had *not* seceded...that if there was *no war*...that not a single slave would be freed. It sounds as if he's more dedicated to defeating us than ending slavery. Then, he lists all of the slave-holding states the proclamation applies to... but did you know that there are states that are still allowed to keep their slaves? Yes, in four Union states—Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky and Missouri, slavery will be allowed to continue...

Does that sound moral to you? Is that *humane*?

I tried to explain this to my cousin, Elizabeth... she can be a little slow at times... all those years in Philadelphia.

You would like her, though...you share many of the same ideas.

We began an intense correspondence, writing letters back and forth, stating our opinions. My husband thought the whole thing was hilarious.

“Why are you ladies worrying your little heads— not to mention wasting time, ink and paper debating the ideas of men?”

I had to inform my husband.

“Dear...these may be the ideas of men, but when the entire world is in shambles because of your bad decisions it will be women who will have to clean up the mess and bury the bodies.”

(Smugly)

He did not find that humorous at all.

(Celeste goes to her desk and looks for the letter. She leaves Bitsy's papers on the desk. Once she finds the letter she turns back to the audience...)

In her last correspondence, Elizabeth sent me a speech she'd heard a few years back - a speech given by a woman, can you imagine? Normally I would have ignored such abolitionist babble, but this woman speaker was from Charleston and had come from a slave-owning family herself. I was curious. What could this “Angelina Grimké” have to say about our lives?

My husband should be back at any moment. I'll just read a couple of lines.

Please don't tell my husband I shared this with you. He would shudder at the thought of having this type of literature lying around. Promise me...?

(**She makes the audience promise. Then Celeste begins to read the excerpts of the speech. During certain moments she stops and reflects- discovering the meaning of what she reads as she reads it.)

Miss Grimké begins:

“As a Southerner and a Christian, I feel that it is my duty to stand up here tonight and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing.”

“Horrors?” I think that's a bit extreme. Bitsy and Clara would surely disagree with that description.

“Do you follow the teachings of our compassionate Savior, Jesus Christ?”

Well, of course. I am a good Christian woman.

“If you do, then you are familiar with the charge to treat others as you would wish to be treated. Then let every slaveholder apply these questions to his own heart: Am I willing to be a slave—Am I willing to see my wife the slave of another—Am I willing to see my mother a slave, or my father, my sister, my brother—Am I willing to reduce my very own child to slavery?”

(Pausing to think)

Mary, James Jr. ? No.

“If not, then in holding others as slaves, I am doing what I would not wish to be

done to me or any relative I have; and thus I have broken this golden rule which was given to me to walk by.

You stare back in horror and indignation at such questions. But why, if slavery is no wrong to those upon whom it is imposed.”

(Shakes head, still not persuaded)

She also enclosed a copy of an illustration enclosed with the letter. What do you make of this? Hmm. There is a boat arriving on the shore. A Negro woman is being pulled away by a white gentleman. Her child seems very upset at her side. She's looking at the Negro man. I don't understand what is happening here. Can you offer any explanations?

(Takes explanations from students)

You think they were a family? Family. I suppose Bitsy and Clara have families. I just never thought about who they might be...where they might be.

...Elizabeth ends her note with-

(reading)

“There is nothing more for me to say.” It has been two years since I've heard from Elizabeth. Heavens...Being in possession of this speech and this illustration. This is truly dangerous. What if other slaves learned to read and had access to these words, these ideas?

(Celeste hurriedly returns to the desk and picks up Bitsy's papers. She looks through them and begins to read.)

Bitsy writes:

“I see the Miss. She is sad. She fear...fear like the rest of us. She got good parts. All folk got good and bad parts... She like we is.”

Am I really so different than Bitsy? Are we the same?

What do you think I should do? Should I tell my husband about this letter or should I keep Bitsy's secret?

*** (Celeste opens up the question to the audience. They take a vote on it.)

If the audience decides that she should tell her husband

Well...The Emancipation Proclamation may not free the slaves...but we would be foolish to think that our world isn't changing. This is war and we have to do what is best for our country, regardless if it's right or wrong.

(Celeste gently folds Bitsy's papers)

I agree with you. I can't break our laws....I have to tell Mr. Johnstone.

(To the audience.)

It is a difficult decision, but when you are at war- nothing is ever easy.

If the audience decides she should keep the secret

Well...The Emancipation Proclamation may not free the slaves...but we would be foolish to think that our world isn't changing.

(Celeste gently folds Bity's papers.)

I believe that my husband does not need to know everything... **the business of women should stay between *women*.**

(To the audience.)

I will return Bitsy's papers to their hiding place... I think she is entitled to her own thoughts. Don't you?

Celeste: Slaveholder & Woman

Celeste's role as a slaveholder

Read all the parts in the script that are highlighted. Then answer the questions as a group.

1. Give examples in the script where Celeste values Bitsy as piece of property.

2. Give examples in the script where Celeste values Bitsy as a human being.

3. When Celeste says “They’re not like us,” what does she mean? In her view, how are slaves different than white people?

Script: “Celeste”

Slaveholder’s Role: A Closer Look

(As we enter, Celeste is reading through a small stack of papers. Slightly fidgety or perhaps pacing, but obviously nervous. She is initially startled by the audience’s intrusion and immediately hides the papers. Relaxing a bit she exhales.)

CELESTE

You startled me....didn’t expect to see you so soon!

Please. Sit. I...I wish...Heavens, I wish we were meeting under better circumstance— or at the very least with more notice. That would have given me time to have Bitsy...— she could have prepared something.

As you know, my husband... Mr. Johnstone, has gone to Decatur to sell a few swine... So, I assumed this would be the opportune time to speak with you in private. I must be brief though, that man is an exceptional salesman and he should be back momentarily.

(Holding the papers before her)

While tending to the garden I found these. They were hidden beneath the steps near the front porch... next to the rose bushes. I wasn’t sure what it was. Our slave girl Bitsy usually tends to the garden, but Clara has taken ill so Bitsy has been doing the kitchen duties as well as the sewing. So, as you can imagine, I have been short on help. My daughter Mary and son James Jr. are away visiting relatives – and I wouldn’t have any of those farm hands touch my delicate plants, so I figured I could handle it myself.

(Looking at the papers)

I assumed it was garbage...until...I began to read it.

Crass, primitive print...looks like it was written with charcoal.

(Reading)

“This day is full of heat. Hands sore and hard. Fingers hurt and colored with the blue Miss wants the cloth to be...”

It’s very hard to read any of this.

“Cry all night. Ma Clara awful sick. Head and face warm. Food keep coming up...Cry all night. Hope she make it to day light...”

Ma Clara?... That’s when it dawned on me that it was Bitsy... *She* had written this?!

That is why I called you here.

You are so much better with these matters than I am. I know you do not agree with...our way of life...—with slavery, but you are such a dear friend and a wonderful listener.

...I am not sure what I should do. *This* is a crime! Mr. Johnstone would be livid if he had found this and not me!

No, he's not cruel. My husband is a very fair man, mind you— a good man— but he is also a man with great respect for the law. And the 1848 slave code clearly states that an owner in possession of a slave that reads will be fined.

We can't *afford* to pay any fines! Not with things as they are now! Not with the rumors of Sherman's army of savages approaching! We're trying to stay alive!

(Suddenly aware of her volume)

Wait one moment...

(She walks over to what might be a door. To make sure that no one is listening. When she returns the tone is a bit more secretive, but just as intense.)

Bitsy is my best girl. No other slave in this area can sew or quilt with such speed and produce such graceful work.

She has been Mary's only real playmate. She is like a part of the family and... well—I always assumed Bitsy would make a wonderful wedding gift for Mary— when that glorious day occurs. But now...

The code also states that the punishment for the slave would be a whipping at the discretion of the court... the very idea of Bitsy being whipped would absolutely devastate Mary. She would surely blame her father and I, if such a thing were to happen.

So, that is why I need your help. I have to decide whether or not to tell Mr. Johnstone about Bitsy's writings.

Listen to what she's written:

"Emancipation. Not sure if I spell it right, but they say it means for us to be free. They say that Lincoln wrote down and say we is to be free."

How could she possibly know about that blasted Proclamation?!!

...I know it has been well over a year since it was issued, but Mr. Johnstone says that the document is "just words on a page." Something Lincoln and his people came up with and dispersed to all of the papers to publish. War propaganda.

"They are just trying to start a ruckus!" he says, "No blasted Proclamation will set slaves free! It is clearly stated in the document that this so-called freedom only applies during war... It is not an *Amendment*! It is not LAW! Unless, perhaps, the Union wins the war... Which is why we CANNOT let them win!!"

Talk. All of this talk...as Sherman approaches.

Of course I despise the Yankees... they *are* savages. Each city they march into, destroying crops, making people leave their homes— homes that many of us have built with our own hands—...we...well— the slaves did help build those homes... and tend those crops...but that's why we purchased them. That is their job.

You have to understand, we do not have a plantation with hundreds of acres to tend. Our farm is small. We have just enough to survive...just enough to feed our family *and* our slaves.

We are not cruel people... We treat our slaves with kindness. At least I do... I am sure Mr. Johnstone does.

Of course I do not know what occurs on the farm...I mean...it's not my place to know is it? Either way the slaves should show us some gratitude for providing them with food and shelter. Shouldn't they?...

Who is going to feed them and take care of them as we do?...Sure, they know how to farm and build but they are like children, they can't survive on their own... they need us...Don't they? Without us they will easily fall prey to the trickery of the Yankees!

What would poor Clara or Bitsy do without us? Clara needs us in order to get well. She needs us to care for her.

...I was not aware of how sick Clara is... I am sure Mr. Johnstone knows. My husband is much more aware of what is going on amongst the slaves than I am.

"A woman should not be concerned with such things." He is fond of saying that.

If something happens to Clara...I can only imagine how hurtful that might be for Bitsy. Clara is her grandmother after all...she practically raised her after her mother died.

(Beat)

...I am aware that you...*sympathize*...with those Northern abolitionist types. You are entitled to have your own opinion.... but I think they are a bunch of hypocrites! They say one thing and do another. All of this talk of human decency...of the rights of slaves, as human beings, to control their own destinies.

They're not...well, they're not like us. Anyone who's ever been around them can see that. It's all talk, talk, talk! If this war was about slaves being treated like human beings then why is *that not* mentioned in the Emancipation Proclamation?! Why doesn't this Lincoln fellow have the courage to clearly state that in the document?

Yes, I memorized it! Have you read it? Do you know what it's about?

Well, this is what it says: "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..."

So, Mr. Lincoln—Mr. *Commander-in-Chief*—is saying that if the Southern States had *not* seceded...that if there was *no war*...that not a single slave would be freed. It sounds as if he's more dedicated to defeating us than ending slavery. Then, he lists all of the slave-holding states the proclamation applies to... but did you know that there are states that are still allowed to keep their slaves? Yes, in four Union states—Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky and Missouri, slavery will be allowed to continue...

Does that sound moral to you? Is that *humane*?

I tried to explain this to my cousin, Elizabeth... she can be a little slow at times... all those years in Philadelphia.

You would like her, though...you share many of the same ideas.

We began an intense correspondence, writing letters back and forth, stating our opinions. My husband thought the whole thing was hilarious.

“Why are you ladies worrying your little heads— not to mention wasting time, ink and paper debating the ideas of men?”

I had to inform my husband.

“Dear...these may be the ideas of men, but when the entire world is in shambles because of your bad decisions it will be women who will have to clean up the mess and bury the bodies.”

(Smugly)

He did not find that humorous at all.

(Celeste goes to her desk and looks for the letter. She leaves Bitsy's papers on the desk. Once she finds the letter she turns back to the audience...)

In her last correspondence, Elizabeth sent me a speech she'd heard a few years back - a speech given by a woman, can you imagine? Normally I would have ignored such abolitionist babble, but this woman speaker was from Charleston and had come from a slave-owning family herself. I was curious. What could this “Angelina Grimké” have to say about our lives?

My husband should be back at any moment. I'll just read a couple of lines. Please don't tell my husband I shared this with you. He would shudder at the thought of having this type of literature lying around. Promise me...?

(*She makes the audience promise. Then Celeste begins to read the excerpts of the speech. During certain moments she stops and reflects- discovering the meaning of what she reads as she reads it.)

Miss Grimké begins:

“As a Southerner and a Christian, I feel that it is my duty to stand up here tonight and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing.”

“Horrors?” I think that's a bit extreme. Bitsy and Clara would surely disagree with that description.

“Do you follow the teachings of our compassionate Savior, Jesus Christ?”

Well, of course. I am a good Christian woman.

“If you do, then you are familiar with the charge to treat others as you would wish to be treated. Then let every slaveholder apply these questions to his own heart: Am I willing to be a slave—Am I willing to see my wife the slave of another—Am I willing to see my mother a slave, or my father, my sister, my brother—Am I willing to reduce my very own child to slavery?”

(Pausing to think)

Mary, James Jr. ? No.

“If not, then in holding others as slaves, I am doing what I would not wish to be done to me or any relative I have; and thus I have broken this golden rule which was given to me to walk by.

You stare back in horror and indignation at such questions. But why, if slavery is no wrong to those upon whom it is imposed.”

(Shakes head, still not persuaded)

She also enclosed a copy of an illustration enclosed with the letter. What do you make of this? Hmm. There is a boat arriving on the shore. A Negro woman is being pulled away by a white gentleman. Her child seems very upset at her side. She’s looking at the Negro man. I don’t understand what is happening here. Can you offer any explanations?

(Takes explanations from students)

You think they were a family? Family. I suppose Bitsy and Clara have families. I just never thought about who they might be...where they might be.

...Elizabeth ends her note with-

(reading)

“There is nothing more for me to say.” It has been two years since I’ve heard from Elizabeth. Heavens...Being in possession of this speech and this illustration. This is truly dangerous. What if other slaves learned to read and had access to these words, these ideas?

(Celeste hurriedly returns to the desk and picks up Bitsy’s papers. She looks through them and begins to read.)

Bitsy writes:

“I see the Miss. She is sad. She fear...fear like the rest of us. She got good parts. All folk got good and bad parts... She like we is.”

Am I really so different than Bitsy? Are we the same?

What do you think I should do? Should I tell my husband about this letter or should I keep Bitsy’s secret?

***(Celeste opens up the question to the audience. The take a vote on it.)

If the audience decides that she should tell her husband

Well...The Emancipation Proclamation may not free the slaves...but we would be foolish to think that our world isn’t changing. This is war and we have to do what is best for our country, regardless if it’s right or wrong.

(Celeste gently folds Bitsy’s papers)

I agree with you. I can’t break our laws....I have to tell Mr. Johnstone.

(To the audience.)

It is a difficult decision, but when you are at war— nothing is ever easy.

If the audience decides she should keep the secret

Well...The Emancipation Proclamation may not free the slaves...but we would be foolish to think that our world isn't changing.

(Celeste gently folds Bitsy's papers.)

I believe that my husband does not need to know everything... **the business of women should stay between women.**

(To the audience.)

I will return Bitsy's papers to their hiding place... I think she is entitled to her own thoughts. Don't you?

Celeste: Slaveholder & Woman

Celeste's role as a woman

Read all the parts in the script that are highlighted. Then answer the questions as a group.

How can you tell Mr. Johnstone has more power in the household than Celeste? Give examples.

1. Does Celeste accept her lack of power in the household? Give examples.

2. How does this couple's relationship compare to couples today? Be specific.

Script: “Celeste”

Womans’s Role: A Closer Look

(As we enter, Celeste is reading through a small stack of papers. Slightly fidgety or perhaps pacing, but obviously nervous. She is initially startled by the audience’s intrusion and immediately hides the papers. Relaxing a bit she exhales.)

CELESTE

You startled me....didn’t expect to see you so soon!

Please. Sit. I...I wish...Heavens, I wish we were meeting under better circumstance— or at the very least with more notice. That would have given me time to have Bitsy...— she could have prepared something.

As you know, my husband... Mr. Johnstone, has gone to Decatur to sell a few swine... So, I assumed this would be the opportune time to speak with you in private. I must be brief though, that man is an exceptional salesman and he should be back momentarily.

(Holding the papers before her)

While tending to the garden I found these. They were hidden beneath the steps near the front porch... next to the rose bushes. I wasn’t sure what it was. Our slave girl Bitsy usually tends to the garden, but Clara has taken ill so Bitsy has been doing the kitchen duties as well as the sewing. So, as you can imagine, I have been short on help. My daughter Mary and son James Jr. are away visiting relatives – and I wouldn’t have any of those farm hands touch my delicate plants, so I figured I could handle it myself.

(Looking at the papers)

I assumed it was garbage...until...I began to read it.

Crass, primitive print...looks like it was written with charcoal.

(Reading)

“This day is full of heat. Hands sore and hard. Fingers hurt and colored with the blue Miss wants the cloth to be...”

It’s very hard to read any of this.

“Cry all night. Ma Clara awful sick. Head and face warm. Food keep coming up...Cry all night. Hope she make it to day light...”

Ma Clara?... That’s when it dawned on me that it was Bitsy...
She had written this?!

That is why I called you here.

You are so much better with these matters than I am. I know you do not agree with...our way of life...—with slavery, but you are such a dear friend and a wonderful listener.

...I am not sure what I should do. **This is a crime! Mr. Johnstone would be livid if he had found this and not me!**

No, he's not cruel. My husband is a very fair man, mind you— a good man— but he is also a man with great respect for the law. And the 1848 slave code clearly states that an owner in possession of a slave that reads will be fined.

We can't *afford* to pay any fines! Not with things as they are now! Not with the rumors of Sherman's army of savages approaching! We're trying to stay alive!

(Suddenly aware of her volume)

Wait one moment...

(She walks over to what might be a door. To make sure that no one is listening. When she returns the tone is a bit more secretive, but just as intense.)

Bitsy is my best girl. No other slave in this area can sew or quilt with such speed and produce such graceful work.

She has been Mary's only real playmate. She is like a part of the family and... well—I always assumed Bitsy would make a wonderful wedding gift for Mary— when that glorious day occurs. But now...

The code also states that the punishment for the slave would be a whipping at the discretion of the court... the very idea of Bitsy being whipped would absolutely devastate Mary. She would surely blame her father and I, if such a thing were to happen.

So, that is why I need your help. I have to decide whether or not to tell Mr. Johnstone about Bitsy's writings.

Listen to what she's written:

"Emancipation. Not sure if I spell it right, but they say it means for us to be free. They say that Lincoln wrote down and say we is to be free."

How could she possibly know about that blasted Proclamation?!!

...I know it has been well over a year since it was issued, but Mr. Johnstone says that the document is "just words on a page." Something Lincoln and his people came up with and dispersed to all of the papers to publish. War propaganda.

"They are just trying to start a ruckus!" he says, "No blasted Proclamation will set slaves free! It is clearly stated in the document that this so-called freedom only applies during war... It is not an *Amendment*! It is not LAW! Unless, perhaps, the Union wins the war... Which is why we CANNOT let them win!!"

Talk. All of this talk...as Sherman approaches.

Of course I despise the Yankees... they *are* savages. Each city they march into, destroying crops, making people leave their homes— homes that many of us have built with our own hands—...we...well— the slaves did help build those homes... and tend those crops...but that's why we purchased them. That is their job.

You have to understand, we do not have a plantation with hundreds of acres to tend. Our farm is small. We have just enough to survive...just enough to feed our family *and* our slaves.

We are not cruel people... We treat our slaves with kindness. At least I do... I am sure Mr. Johnstone does.

Of course I do not know what occurs on the farm...I mean...it's not my place to know is it? Either way the slaves should show us some gratitude for providing them with food and shelter. Shouldn't they?...

Who is going to feed them and take care of them as we do?...Sure, they know how to farm and build but they are like children, they can't survive on their own... they need us...Don't they? Without us they will easily fall prey to the trickery of the Yankees!

What would poor Clara or Bitsy do without us? Clara needs us in order to get well. She needs us to care for her.

...I was not aware of how sick Clara is... I am sure Mr. Johnstone knows.

My husband is much more aware of what is going on amongst the slaves than I am.

"A woman should not be concerned with such things." He is fond of saying that.

If something happens to Clara...I can only imagine how hurtful that might be for Bitsy. Clara is her grandmother after all...she practically raised her after her mother died.

(Beat)

...I am aware that you...*sympathize*...with those Northern abolitionist types. You are entitled to have your own opinion.... but I think they are a bunch of hypocrites! They say one thing and do another. All of this talk of human decency...of the rights of slaves, as human beings, to control their own destinies.

They're not...well, they're not like us. Anyone who's ever been around them can see that. It's all talk, talk, talk! If this war was about slaves being treated like human beings then why is *that not* mentioned in the Emancipation Proclamation?! Why doesn't this Lincoln fellow have the courage to clearly state that in the document?

Yes, I memorized it! Have you read it? Do you know what it's about?

Well, this is what it says: "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..."

So, Mr. Lincoln—Mr. *Commander-in-Chief*—is saying that if the Southern States had *not* seceded...that if there was *no war*...that not a single slave would be freed. It sounds as if he's more dedicated to defeating us than ending slavery. Then, he lists all of the slave-holding states the proclamation applies to... but did you know that there are states that are still allowed to keep their slaves? Yes, in four Union states—Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky and Missouri, slavery will be allowed to continue...

Does that sound moral to you? Is that *humane*?

I tried to explain this to my cousin, Elizabeth... she can be a little slow at times... all those years in Philadelphia.

You would like her, though...you share many of the same ideas.

We began an intense correspondence, writing letters back and forth, stating our opinions. **My husband thought the whole thing was hilarious.**

“Why are you ladies worrying your little heads— not to mention wasting time, ink and paper debating the ideas of men?”

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“Dear...these may be the ideas of men, but when the entire world is in shambles because of your bad decisions it will be women who will have to clean up the mess and bury the bodies.”

(Smugly)

He did not find that humorous at all.

(Celeste goes to her desk and looks for the letter. She leaves Bitsy's papers on the desk. Once she finds the letter she turns back to the audience...)

In her last correspondence, Elizabeth sent me a speech she'd heard a few years back - a speech given by a woman, can you imagine? Normally I would have ignored such abolitionist babble, but this woman speaker was from Charleston and had come from a slave-owning family herself. I was curious. What could this “Angelina Grimké” have to say about our lives?

My husband should be back at any moment. I'll just read a couple of lines. **Please don't tell my husband I shared this with you. He would shudder at the thought of having this type of literature lying around.** Promise me...?

(**She makes the audience promise. Then Celeste begins to read the excerpts of the speech. During certain moments she stops and reflects- discovering the meaning of what she reads as she reads it.)

Miss Grimké begins:

“As a Southerner and a Christian, I feel that it is my duty to stand up here tonight and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing.”

“Horrors?” I think that's a bit extreme. Bitsy and Clara would surely disagree with that description.

“Do you follow the teachings of our compassionate Savior, Jesus Christ?”

Well, of course. I am a good Christian woman.

“If you do, then you are familiar with the charge to treat others as you would wish to be treated. Then let every slaveholder apply these questions to his own heart: Am I willing to be a slave—Am I willing to see my wife the slave of another—Am I willing to see my mother a slave, or my father, my sister, my brother—Am I willing to reduce my very own child to slavery?”

(Pausing to think)

Mary, James Jr. ? No.

“If not, then in holding others as slaves, I am doing what I would not wish to be done to me or any relative I have; and thus I have broken this golden rule which was given to me to walk by.

You stare back in horror and indignation at such questions. But why, if slavery is no wrong to those upon whom it is imposed.”

(Shakes head, still not persuaded)

She also enclosed a copy of an illustration enclosed with the letter. What do you make of this? Hmm. There is a boat arriving on the shore. A Negro woman is being pulled away by a white gentleman. Her child seems very upset at her side. She's looking at the Negro man. I don't understand what is happening here. Can you offer any explanations?

(Takes explanations from students)

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...Elizabeth ends her note with-

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*** (Celeste opens up the question to the audience. The take a vote on it.)

If the audience decides that she should tell her husband

Well...The Emancipation Proclamation may not free the slaves...but we would be foolish to think that our world isn't changing. This is war and we have to do what is best for our country, regardless if it's right or wrong.

(Celeste gently folds Bitsy's papers)

I agree with you. I can't break our laws....I have to tell Mr. Johnstone.

(To the audience.)

It is a difficult decision, but when you are at war— nothing is ever easy.

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(Celeste gently folds Bitsy's papers.)

I believe that my husband does not need to know everything...the business of women should stay between women.

(To the audience.)

I will return Bitsy's papers to their hiding place... I think she is entitled to her own thoughts. Don't you?

Legal Rights for Women (Civil War Era):*

- Getting married meant that women lost their rights. They could not own property. In fact they were considered the property of their husbands. If someone hit a man's wife, the husband could sue for damages to his property. If a woman had land or property before she was married, it became her husband's after she was married.
- Women did not have the right to divorce their husbands unless they could prove they were severely abused or their husband had been unfaithful.
- Women could not vote. In 1920 women were given the right to vote.
- Single women could own property and own businesses.
- Women were not accepted into most colleges. By custom, women weren't supposed to have careers unless they were widows or single women, and these careers were only in fields that were considered womanly, like teaching.

Legal Rights for Slaves' (Civil War Era):*

- Slaves were bought and sold, usually at an auction, and were legally considered property.
- It was illegal for slaves to read and write.
- Slaves were not citizens and could not vote or participate in politics. In 1865, African American men were given the right to vote.
- It was illegal for whites to do business with slaves.
- Neither slaves nor free blacks could gather in groups to practice their religion without a special permit.
- Slaves could be put to death for trying to run away, for having a weapon, for circulating a pamphlet that encouraged running away (and many other offenses).

*Laws varied slightly from state to state.

