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### **NEH Thomas Jefferson:**

**Title of Unit:** Legacy of Thomas Jefferson on slavery and his relationship with African Americans.

**Rationale:** Students will use this unit to gain a better understanding of the complex attitudes Thomas Jefferson had about African Americans and enslaved people. They will acquire understanding through a completion of a magazine project. The Institute has provided me with a diverse, and very detailed account of Jefferson, his views, attitudes, toward African American people. These accounts come from both primary and secondary sources from the readings and lectures.

**Setting:** The setting will be my African American history class. The students will be coming from a diverse background; both academically and ethnically.

**Purpose:** The purpose for this lesson will be for my students to gain a more well rounded and complete account of Thomas Jefferson's view of African-Americans, and slavery.

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes:** 1. Students will be able to use their reading, writing, and analytical skills to explain, and describe the connection between Thomas Jefferson African Americans, and slavery. 2. Students will be able to use media (computer specifically) to create a magazine format for a unit assessment. 3. Students will gain a more composite view of Thomas Jefferson, his slaves, and the place African Americans in the ante-bellum era.

**Instructional Resources:** 1. Social Science computer lab (at the end of this lesson I will provide you with some helpful websites). 2. Brockton High School I.R.C. (Information Resource Center-Library). 3. Book of Readings NEH Institute Thomas Jefferson: Personality, Character, and Public Life July 13- August 8, 2008 (Specifically Week three Monday July 28 "Jefferson: Race and Slavery 4. Richard Bernstein: Thomas Jefferson. 5. Joseph Ellis: American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson. 6. Thomas Jefferson Writings: (Library of America) Selected by Merrill D. Peterson.

**Instructional Process:**

**Day 1:** Students will be asked what do they know about Thomas Jefferson, this will be done by a brainstorm of 5 to 10 minutes. They will then share their responses with the class-responses will also be placed on the board. After students share they will be given three articles that gives the reader a brief synopsis view on Jefferson and his opinions on enslaved Negroes. The three articles are found in the Library of America Thomas Jefferson Writings. The articles are as follows: “Emancipation and the younger generation,” “The Negro Race,” “Hope for our Black Brethren To Benjamin Banneker.” Students must complete a written document analysis sheet using a very helpful student version by Joan Musbach our master teacher for the Institute. I would be happy to forward copies of her analysis sheets.

**Day 2:** Students will review the readings with the teacher. We will discuss what were some things that stuck out? What are Thomas Jefferson’s view on emancipation? and his overall views of “Negros.” This will be done for about 10 to 15 minutes. After the class discussion, students will then be given instructions on the Legacy Magazine they have to create on Thomas Jefferson, and his connection with African Americans and enslaved people. Students will receive a copy of “American Legacy” magazine so they can have an idea on how it is set up aesthetically and as far as written articles. If you do not have “American Legacy” you can use a “U.S. News and World Report,” “Time,” etc. Students just need to know that they will complete the assignment as an accurate magazine look.

**Day 3:** Students will receive a packet of primary and secondary source information so they have plenty of detail for their magazine. The packet will consist of the sources mentioned in the “Instructional Resources” section of the Unit. The students will then receive the directions for completing their magazines. The directions are as follows:

**Cover: The cover should have some visuals and some key topics which will be discussed in their magazine.**

**Page 1: Editor’s note: Questions which should be answered; Why is it important for us to understand Thomas Jefferson in general (and specifically for our course-African American History)? What is Jefferson’s legacy in regards to race and slavery?**

**Page 2: Students choice: Using the sources they will gather or have received, they will write an article on Jefferson’s view on colonization, slavery or African Americans.**

**Page 3: Profile of an African American of the time period and what are their accomplishments, biography, and legacy. You could also possibly use someone that Thomas Jefferson has mentioned in any of the readings.**

**Page 4: Students will then complete the magazine by focusing on “historicizing” Jefferson and his time period with an op-ed write up. Students can be critical yet they must make sure they have the understanding of the historical context.**

**Page 5 to 10: This will be the students choice, they can create political cartoons, maps, or primary source material as visuals.**

**Remember to let the students know that the magazine should be no more than 10 pages and no less than 7 pages.**

**Day 4 through Day 7:**

Students will have three days of research in the Library, where they will collect more information and create their bibliography (which should have at least 10 sources-remember they have at least five from the previous material given).

**Day 8 through Day 10:**

Students will have class time (at teacher's discretion) and homework time to complete their project. The students will then pass in their completed work on Day 12.

Remember: Student's should be doing other assignments. This assignment should count as a term grade.

## Bibliography:

Bernstein, R.B, Thomas Jefferson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003

Ellis, Joseph, American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson. Vintage books 1996

(edited) Peterson, Merrill D. Thomas Jefferson writings..... Oxford University Press, 1986

Book of Readings NEH Institute: Thomas Jefferson: Personality, Character and Public Life: July 13- August 8, 2008

## Websites:

Taken from Richard Bernstein essay "Thomas Jefferson and The World of The Web" and Joan Musbach handout from the Institute. These should be a good starting point

[www.monticello.org](http://www.monticello.org)

[www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/)  
Library of Congress website

[www.thomasjeffersonpapers.org](http://www.thomasjeffersonpapers.org)  
Massachusetts Historical Society

\*\*\*As far as a rubric, you should use one that you have for projects. One suggestion that I have is <http://rubistar.4teachers.org> It is a custom rubric website that can guide you in creating a rubric that would fit your assignment.