



# SLAVERY

by Another Name

## Context

**GRADE LEVEL:** 9–12

**OVERVIEW:** In this session, students will critically analyze the Thirteenth Amendment and explore how a key loophole within it was exploited to force thousands of primarily African American men into labor after the Civil War. Students will examine the vital role that labor played in the development of the South after the Civil War as it moved toward industrialization. Students will compare and contrast post–Civil War and contemporary labor systems and analyze present-day employment rates for black and Latino men. Students will then devise recommendations to reduce the unemployment rates for black and Latino men. Using media, students will articulate how statistics only tell part of the reality of their lives. At the conclusion of this session, students will understand the historical, political, and economical context behind the forced labor systems enacted after the Civil War and how those labor systems helped to build the foundation for the industrialization of the South.

**ESTIMATED LENGTH:** Three class periods plus, if necessary, additional time to complete assignments.

### MATERIALS

- Image: Men in Cell (included on the curriculum homepage)
- Video: Why Forced Labor? (1:50 minutes) <http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/reconstruction/video-why-forced-labor/>.
- Video: The Economics of Labor (1:18 minutes) <http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/labor-types/video-economics-labor/>
- Article: The Urban Jobs Crisis  
Harvard Magazine  
James M. Quane, William Julius Wilson, and Jackelyn Hwang | May - June 2013  
<http://harvardmagazine.com/2013/05/the-urban-jobs-crisis>  
printable version: <http://harvardmag.com/pdf/2013/05-pdfs/0513-42.pdf>
- Video: The My Brother's Keeper Initiative (2:30 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZZLSUIPTk>  
The video can also be played from the homepage of the My Brother's Keeper Initiative: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper>
- Mobile device(s) equipped with a camera and loaded with Vine ([www.vine.co](http://www.vine.co)), an app for creating short videos

### OPENING ACTIVITY

1. Project Image: Men in Cell. Go around the room and have each student describe who or what they see in the photograph using one word. You can begin and serve as a model.
2. Facilitate a discussion about the image, which is of city convicts taken in Birmingham, Alabama between 1857-1923. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:
  - a. Describe who or what you see.
  - b. What's missing from the image? That is, who or what isn't in the picture's frame?
3. Project the following text from the Thirteenth Amendment:

*“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.”*

4. Facilitate a discussion about the text. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:
  - a. What is the significance of the Thirteenth Amendment?
  - b. What is involuntary servitude?
  - c. What is the significance of the inclusion of “except as a punishment for crime”?
  - d. Consider ways that this loophole in the Thirteenth Amendment could be used after slavery was abolished.

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that while the Thirteenth Amendment was intended to abolish slavery, a key loophole was exploited to ensnare newly freed blacks after the Civil War.

5. Project Image: Men in Cell (second time)

Continue facilitating a discussion. Possible questions to guide this part of the conversation include:

- a. How might this photo be interpreted differently?
- b. What role could context play in interpreting this photo?
- c. Who might be impacted now by the Thirteenth Amendment's inclusion of “except as a punishment for crime”?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand what context is and how proper context can expand interpretation and understanding.

## MULTIMEDIA MODULES + DISCUSSION

### 1. View Video: Why Forced Labor?

Facilitate a discussion about the role that labor played in the Southern economy. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:

- a. What was the major driver of the Southern economy before the Civil War?
- b. Before the Civil War, what was the primary type of labor that the South used?
- c. How did the end of slavery impact the Southern economy and its labor source?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that the end of slavery was also a major blow to the Southern economy and the loss of a major, free labor force.

### 2. Project again the following text from the Thirteenth Amendment:

*“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.”*

Facilitate a discussion to make further connections. Possible questions that could guide this part of the conversation include:

- a. What is the connection between the Thirteenth Amendment and the need for a labor force in the South following the Civil War?
- b. Who might have exploited the loophole for gain?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that it wasn't necessarily the intention of the Thirteenth Amendment to be used to curb the freedom of blacks. But different figures — from businessmen to law officials — in the South exploited this loophole in order to restrict the freedom of newly freed blacks and to gain financially.

### 3. View Video: The Economics of Labor

Facilitate a discussion about the role that labor plays in economics. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:

- a. What role does labor play in economics?
- b. How were economics and politics linked in identifying a labor source after slavery was abolished?

4. Project the following quote, which was excerpted from “Sloss Furnaces: A Story of Iron and the Men Who Made It” by Paige Wainwright (*Alabama Heritage* magazine, Summer 1994):

*“Birmingham prospered because the proximity of raw materials and the large pool of cheap labor, especially black labor, enabled local industries to produce the nation’s cheapest pig iron.”*

Facilitate a discussion. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:

- a. What do you think pig iron was used for?
- b. What is cheap labor?
- c. Who was fulfilling cheap labor jobs after slavery was abolished?
- d. What constitutes cheap labor today? What types of jobs are considered cheap labor?
- e. Which groups generally constitute America’s low-paying workforce today?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that after the Civil War in the South, some laborers were paid, while other laborers, the bulk of which were black men, were not paid, but instead forced to work because they were considered convicts or because they owed a debt that was often not legitimate.

5. Project the following quote from John T. Milner, an industrialist who was considered a father of Southern industrialization because of his role in helping to develop the city of Birmingham, Alabama. Milner used forced laborers.

*“Negro labor can be made exceedingly profitable in manufacturing iron, and in rolling mills provided [there is] an overseer – a southern man, who knows how to manage Negroes.” — John T. Milner*

Facilitate a discussion about the quote that considers similarities and differences between slavery and the forced labor systems that operated after the Civil War. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:

- a. How did some industrialists like John T. Milner secure the majority of their labor forces?
- b. In addition to forced labor, in what other systems was an overseer used?
- c. What role did power play in forced labor systems? Who held power and what type of power did they hold? In what ways was that power abused?
- d. Does convict leasing exist today?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that after the Civil War industrialists exploited free labor, which included free blacks, immigrants and Southern whites to rebuild the South.

## MAIN ACTIVITY

1. Distribute Article: The Urban Jobs Crisis. Read the article as a class. While reading, have students highlight causes and effects of the “urban jobs crisis.” Stop after each page to facilitate a discussion and add causes and effects to a class T-chart. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:
  - a. Who is impacted by the urban jobs crisis?
  - b. Do you know anyone who is unemployed? What are some of the reasons why they are unemployed?
  - c. What are some of the consequences (economic, social, political, psychological) of high unemployment rates for black and Latino males?
  - d. What role does education play in the “urban jobs crisis”?
  - e. What role does incarceration play in the “urban jobs crisis”?

By the end of the discussion, students should understand that there are various geographic, social, economic and political causes and effects of high unemployment rates among black and Latino males, which provide context to this complicated reality.

2. View Video: The My Brother’s Keeper Initiative. Facilitate a discussion about the initiative. Possible questions to guide the conversation include:
  - a. Why do you think this initiative was started?
  - b. What does the initiative plan to do?
  - c. Do you think it will be helpful to young men of color? Why or why not?
  - d. What do you need to succeed?
  - e. What recommendations would you suggest to make this initiative successful?
3. Divide students into small groups. Tell students that they have been charged by the [White House’s My Brother’s Keeper Initiative](#) to provide three recommendations to the White House to help decrease the unemployment rate among black and Latino males.

In their groups, students will work together to brainstorm and evaluate possible solutions before choosing three. Have students present their solutions to the class and have students comment on their peers’ suggestions after presentations.

4. Independently, have students select one of their group’s recommendations and write two paragraphs that further support the recommendation’s effectiveness and importance in helping to decrease the unemployment rate among black and Latino males. Have students post their responses on the class blog and invite peer-to-peer commenting and online discussion.

## CULMINATING ACTIVITY

1. Facilitate a closing discussion with students about the statistics and quotes that they've read about the plight of black and Latino males. Possible questions that guide this conversation include:
  - a. Do statistics tell the entire story about these groups?
  - b. What's missing from the statistics? What's not being said?
  - c. How can black and Latino males be helped? What can black and Latino males do to improve these statistics?
2. Using a mobile device, such as an iPod, cell phone or tablet, have students record a Vine ([www.vine.co](http://www.vine.co)) video that completes the following statement: I am more than a statistic because \_\_\_\_\_.

See the Getting Started Guide for tips about using technology in the classroom. Additionally, here's an article about Using Vine in the classroom: <http://www.edudemic.com/how-to-use-vine-in-the-classroom/>. Note to Educators: This activity can be completed for homework or outside of class.

Embed the Vine videos into the class blog. Instructions for embedding Vines can be found here: <http://blog.vine.co/post/55514921892/embed-vine-posts>.

For a low-tech option, have students complete the statement in a Tweet-like style (around 140 characters) and have students share their responses, standing as a group in a circle. On the class blog, students can post their statement along with an image from the Web that illustrates their response. Invite peer-to-peer commenting and online discussion.

## STANDARDS

[Common Core State Standards](#) (Grades 11–12)

### English Language Arts Standards - Reading: Literature

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging or beautiful.

### English Language Arts Standards - Reading: Informational Text

- Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Analyze seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century foundational U.S. documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes and rhetorical features.

### **English Language Arts Standards - Speaking and Listening**

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9 through 12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
- Present information, findings and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

### **English Language Arts Standards - Language**

- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

### **English Language Arts Standards - History/Social Studies**

- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social or economic aspects of history/social science.
- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

### **English Language Arts Standards - Science and Technical Subjects**

- Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms.

### **CREDITS**

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