



Slavery.....

Practices Then and Now





Lesson Plan

Objectives:

Students will be able to discuss the use of code language during the Underground Railroad and how it relates to current times.

Students will be able to analyze how practices used in slavery have manifested the African American culture today.

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Objectives:

Students will be able to evaluate the impact of carry over practices on African American culture today.

Students will be able to develop ways to deal with the carry over practices today.


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Plantation

- Slaves could not congregate in groups of more than two
- Slaves could not speak to each other without permission
- Slaves could sing while at work

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Monday, July 22, 13

There were many restrictions imposed upon slaves to prevent the opportunity for slaves to organize and revolt.

Preventing slaves from congregating in groups of more than two and speaking to each other without permission --- they could not share information or have the opportunity to gang up against the overseer and master.


Allowing slaves to sing while at work – harmless entertainment.



Code Language

- Communicate to members of the Underground Railroad
- Communicate instructions to slaves who were traveling on the Underground Railroad

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The restrictions imposed on slaves to control them led to slaves creating a variety of ways to communicate including the use of code language. Code language was used to communicate important information about the Underground Railroad among slaves and members of the Underground Railroad.




Code Language

Two packages of dry goods and one package of hardware will be arriving. We hope it will be delivered before sunrise although it may arrive at midnight.

Glory to God

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This is a telegram that was sent a member of the Underground Railroad. He was a botanist who was an agent with the Underground Railroad and would get permission to investigate plants on the plantation and inform slaves about the Underground Railroad. After recruiting some freedom seekers, he sent this telegram to agents up North in code language. What do you think the message is saying?

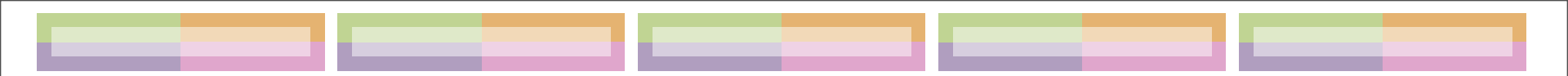
Code Language

•Hardware	•Males
•Dry goods	•Females
•Packages	•Slaves
•Hope	•Cleveland, Ohio
•Sunrise	•Sandusky, Ohio
•Midnight	•Detroit, Michigan
•Glory to God	•Windsor, Ontario
•God be praised	•Port Stanley
•Steal away	•Run away
•Canaan	•Canada

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Use this decipher to understand what the coded message really means.



Underground Railroad Quilts


Quilt Blocks

- Code Language

Quilt Stitching

- Topographical Map

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Code language was not limited to written codes. Quilt designs or blocks acted as code language when quilts were washed and hung out to dry.


Topographical maps were embedded in quilts through “decorative stitching”.



Impact

- Do you see these practices today?
- What is the impact of these practices today?

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After discussing these practices during slavery – look at practices today, especially in African American communities and schools.




Impact Today

Code Language

- Slang
- Tagging
- Rap Music

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Returning to current times – we see some interesting similarities and patterns between practices during slavery and practices and policies today.

For example, code language is still in use today among African Americans – especially African American youth. Examples of this can be found in slang, rap music, and even in “tagging” -- gang members’ writing on buildings and walls conveying messages.


In



Impact Today

- Loitering
- “Why are all the Black kids sitting at the cafeteria together.”

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Policies that prevent teenagers and young adults from congregating in public places such as shopping malls are common today. In those places where African American teens and young adults gather, policies are often reinforced with the presence of police and security guards. In some shopping malls in the US, there are even curfews and requirements that teenagers be with an adult in the mall.


The natural tendency of African American (as well as other ethnic groups) students sitting together in the cafeteria or gathering today in the school yard brings a sense of discomfort to teachers and administrators in many schools in the US. So much so that books have been written about it and programs have been designed to deter this practice.



Impact

- What can be done to prevent these practices?
- What can you do?

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After discussing these current practices and relating them to the past, discuss the impact of these practices.

Coming up with possible alternatives will then lead to discussing not only what can be done about these current practices but also what students individually can do as well.