Student Material

Modern-Day Enslavement



The enslavement of people is not a thing of the past; it still exists today, often evolving into new and hidden digital forms. Many children in the United States enjoy freedoms such as using cell phones, listening to their choice of music, and joining after-school sports. According to the Global Enslavement Index (GSI), there are more than 50 million people currently trapped in modern-day enslavement situations, with children making up more than a quarter of that number. That equates to 12.5 million children worldwide.

This crisis now increasingly involves digital-first exploitation, such as AI-driven grooming, where automated systems are used to find, contact, and trick thousands of vulnerable people at once into dangerous situations. It also includes the rise of online scam centers, where victims are trafficked and forced to commit cybercrime under threat of violence. Although outlawed in every nation, modern-day enslavement persists through these new methods as well as traditional forms like domestic servitude, bonded labor, and forced marriage.

Former President Barack Obama recognized the need for increased awareness regarding the issue of modern enslavement and dedicated January as National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. The U.S. Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services provide information and advocacy work regarding the issues of enslavement and human trafficking.

Have you heard the saying, “Think globally, act locally”? It usually references what we can do to help the environment; however, it is also applicable in this context. How could modern-day enslavement impact you or your community? Is it possible that we unknowingly contribute to the enslavement of others? How is modern-day enslavement like that experienced in the early days of the United States? Most importantly, how can we help end enslavement once and for all?

Let’s follow in the steps of former President Obama and raise awareness around this important issue. Inform others of the parallels between enslavement in America throughout history and today. Identify how modern-day enslavement may affect your own community and how to prevent it. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of those who are suffering.

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Modern-Day Enslavement *Rubric*

Student Material

	Novice	Apprentice	*Practitioner*	Expert
Research Journal: Modern-Day Enslavement	• identifies one form of modern-day enslavement • identifies at least one contributing factor leading to enslavement	• identifies two or more forms of modern-day enslavement • describes two or more causes and effects of modern-day enslavement • describes two or more groups of people vulnerable to modern-day enslavement	• identifies three or more forms of modern-day enslavement • creates cause and effect chain or web for modern-day enslavement • explains why certain groups of people are vulnerable to modern-day enslavement and provides two or more examples • identifies how modern-day enslavement impacts U.S., state, and/or local economy	all of *Practitioner* plus: hypothesizes impact on global society of abolishing modern-day enslavement
Research Journal: Enslavement in History	• describes two or more contributing factors to the establishment of enslavement in British colonies and United States • identifies key people (e.g., Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth William Lloyd Garrison, Fredrick Douglass, and Harriet Beecher Stowe) in the abolitionist movement	• describes three or more contributing factors to the establishment and expansion of enslavement in British colonies and United States • describes contributions of key people (e.g., Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth William Lloyd Garrison, Fredrick Douglass, and Harriet Beecher Stowe) in the abolitionist movement • describes the importance of the Emancipation Proclamation	• describes three or more contributing factors to the establishment of enslavement in British colonies and United States • synthesizes events leading to expansion of enslavement in the U.S. (e.g., Missouri Compromise, Manifest Destiny, Mexican-American war, Compromise of 1850, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Dred Scott decision, and John Brown's raid) • synthesizes contributions of key people (e.g., Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth William Lloyd Garrison, Fredrick Douglass, and Harriet Beecher Stowe) in the abolitionist movement • traces causes and effects of Emancipation Proclamation	all of *Practitioner* plus: hypothesizes an America in which enslavement was not outlawed

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Research Journal: Synthesis of Information	• identifies two or more similarities and differences between causes and effects modern-day enslavement and enslavement in America's past	• describes two or more similarities and differences between causes and effects modern-day enslavement and enslavement in America's past • compares actions of one modern-day abolitionist or abolitionist group with those of a historical abolitionist	• explains three or more similarities and differences between causes and effects modern-day enslavement and enslavement in America's past • compares and contrasts actions of two or more modern-day abolitionist or abolitionist group with those of a historical abolitionist • compares and contrasts experiences of modern-day slaves and those from America's past using primary sources	all of *Practitioner* plus: creates visual representation comparing modern-day and historical enslavement
Informational Writing: Content	explanation of modern-day enslavement includes: • organized structure using transitions to create cohesion throughout text • development of topic using three or more facts, definitions, quotations, and examples regarding modern-day enslavement • two or more comparisons to enslavement of America's past • conclusion informing audience of next steps to take at local level	explanation of modern-day enslavement includes: • organized structure using formatting and transitions to create cohesion throughout text • development of topic using four or more facts, definitions, quotations, and examples regarding modern-day enslavement • three or more comparisons to enslavement of America's past using at least one metaphor, simile, or analogy • conclusion informing audience of next steps to take at local level	explanation of modern-day enslavement includes: • organized structure using formatting, graphics, and transitions to create cohesion throughout text • development of topic using five or more facts, definitions, quotations, and examples regarding modern-day enslavement • three or more comparisons to enslavement of America's past using at least one metaphor, simile, or analogy • conclusion informing audience of next steps to take at local level	all of *Practitioner* plus: publishes digitally for wider consumption
Informational Writing: Mechanics	edits final product to include: • citations • parallel structure • correct use of prepositional phrases • correct spelling throughout	edits final product to include: • citations • parallel structure • correct use of participial and prepositional phrases • correct use of independent and dependent clauses • correct spelling throughout	edits final product to include: • citations • parallel structure • correct use of participial and prepositional phrases • correct use of independent and dependent clauses • correct spelling throughout	all of *Practitioner* plus: hyperlinks citations to original sources when available

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Modern-Day Enslavement *Scaffold for Learning*

Teacher Material

Benchmark Video and Discussions
- Forms of Enslavement
- The Tech Frontier



Instructional Activities: Learning

Instructional Texts
- Bodies Are Not Commodities
- The Middle Passage
- Profits and Poverty **(HW)**
- AI-Driven Grooming

Instructional Videos
- Identify a source
- Research instances of modern-day enslavement **(HW)**
- The Cobalt Pipeline
- Escaping Scam City **(IV)**

How-to Sheets
- Think like a historian
- Identify a source
- Identify credible internet resources
- Identify AI-Generated Content & Deepfakes

Interactive Websites
- National Park Service Middle Passage
- Explore Columbian Exchange
- Enslavement Footprint
- Products of Enslavement
- Global Slavery Index

Learning Centers
- Differentiate primary and secondary sources
- Determine credibility of sources
- Map the Middle Passage
- Map modern-day enslavement
- Map "Digital Scam Compound" Crisis
- Analyze graphic: Population by race in the British colonies

Small-Group Mini-Lessons
- Impact of point-of-view on primary sources
- Writing an objective summary
- Digital Safety

Instructional Activities: Additional

Practice
- Compare/summarize two primary sources — Middle Passage **(I,P,SG)**
- Describe one form of modern-day enslavement **(I,P)**
- Compare historical ledgers tracking slaves versus modern traffickers using cryptocurrency and encrypted apps **(SG)**

Application
- Local impact analysis – identify how modern-day enslavement impacts the US, state, or local economy **(SG)**
- Consumer decision making – influence personal purchasing decisions based on knowledge of products likely made by slaves **(I,P,SG)**

Assessment
- Rubric Self-Assessment **(I)**
- Informative Essay **(I)**
- Synthesis Task — Hypothesize the impact on global society of abolishing modern-day enslavement **(P, SG)**

Reflection
- What was challenging about this unit?
- How has your perspective on simple freedoms, such as using a cell phone or choosing your clothes, shifted?

Key: Individual **(I)**, Pairs **(P)**, Small Groups **(SG)**, Activities suitable for homework **(HW)**, Insights Video **(IV)**

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Modern-Day Enslavement *Content Facilitation Grid (Week 1 Sample)*

Teacher Material

Students	Defines primary source	Defines secondary source	Differentiates primary and secondary sources	Defines *enslavement*	Identifies example of modern-day enslavement	Identifies forms of modern-day enslavement	Categorizes forms of modern-day enslavement	Identifies cause(s) of enslavement in Western Hemisphere	Defines Middle Passage	Maps Middle Passage	Explains importance of Middle Passage and enslavement in British colonies	Summarizes primary source on Middle Passage	Analyzes impact of POV when comparing two texts on Middle Passage	Identifies similarities of modern-day human trafficking and slave trade of the Middle Passage	Identifies differences of modern-day human trafficking and slave trade of the Middle Passage	Compares Middle Passage and Columbian Exchange

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Modern-Day Enslavement *Facilitation Questions*

Teacher Material

COMPREHENSION *Ask questions that ensure students understand content and skills needed to solve the problem.*	• What is enslavement? • What is an abolitionist? • What is the transatlantic slave trade? • What are common forms of modern-day enslavement? • Name five countries that presently have enslavement.
APPLICATION *Ask questions that ensure the ability of students to apply learning to new situations.*	• Compare the use of slaves in the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies. • What is one way you could get involved with the current abolitionist movement? • How have demographics shaped enslavement in the past? • How is the economy of a country tied to the drive for enslavement? • How do race, gender, and economic status (demographics) contribute to the issue of enslavement today?
CONNECTION *Ask questions that ensure the ability of students to apply learning to their lives.*	• What impact does modern-day enslavement have on your local community or in your state? • How will the information you have learned help to influence your decisions when purchasing products? • Share examples of products that you personally own that were most likely made by slaves.
SYNTHESIS *Ask questions that encourage students to create new information from existing data.*	• Given what you know about the successes and failures of the past, what is the best way to support the abolitionist movement today? • Why is enslavement still an issue today? How can we ensure freedom for all? • Explain which forms of enslavement children are most used for today and why you think that is.
METACOGNITION *Ask questions that prompt students to think about their own thinking process.*	• What factors influenced you when you were deciding forms of enslavement to research? • What challenges might you face in taking a stand against enslavement? • How were you able to make connections between enslavement in the British colonies and the early United States and modern-day enslavement? • How would you describe your group's ability to work together? What could you do to be more effective in the future?

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Modern Day-Enslavement *Transfer Task*

Writing is a powerful tool. Throughout history, people have used the power of words to inform others of injustices. You've made a difference in the world by spreading awareness about modern-day enslavement. Let's reach beyond our community. The National Council for the Social Studies determines and publishes the national social studies standards. How could you convince this group to include the study of modern-day enslavement as part of the standards? In an informative essay, draw connections between enslavement in the British colonies/the early United States and modern-day enslavement.

Be sure to reference:

- local and global economies
- abolitionist movements
- laws legalizing or outlawing enslavement
- transportation networks

Your writing should include:

- formatted, organized structure
- at least one fact, example, and/or quotation for each of the topics above
- at least one metaphor, simile, or analogy
- conclusion

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Teacher Material

Modern-Day Enslavement *Teacher Notes Guide*

Unit Overview

Enslavement still exists in today's society. In this *authentic learning unit*, students investigate modern-day enslavement and compare it with the enslavement that existed as part of America's history. They will consider causes and effects of both historic and modern-day enslavement. They will research modern abolitionist movements and compare them with those recorded as part of history. Students will inform others of modern-day enslavement, potential impacts at the local and/or state level, and next steps to ensure freedom for all in the future.

Common Core State Standards Addressed

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.8; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.9; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.8; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.9

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.11-12.2

Other National Standards Addressed

NSS-USH.5-12.1; NSS-USH.5-12.2; NSS-USH.5-12.3; NSS-USH.5-12.4; NSS-USH.5-12.5

Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions
• Knowledge of the past helps us understand the present and make decisions about the future. • Collaboration is necessary in order to be an effective learner and citizen. • Examining social and civic issues helps us expand our understanding of the world and its people. • The research process requires the use of a variety of resources to ensure validity.	• How am I connected to those in the past? • How does the evaluation of past events help us to make future decisions? • How do my personal decisions and actions affect others? • How can I impact social change? • How do I know my information is reliable (accurate, unbiased, current, and appropriate)?

21st Century Skills Addressed

Core Content and Interdisciplinary Themes • Subject-Area Mastery • Global Awareness *Learning and Innovation* • Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Communication and Collaboration	*Information and Media Literacy* • Information Literacy • Media Literacy • Information and Communication Technology *Life and Career* • Initiative and Self-Direction • Productivity and Accountability • Leadership and Responsibility

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