**Slavery in America**

**Section 1**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: What was life like for enslaved African |
| 00:00:03 | Americans, and how did they resist enslavement? You just learned how being enslaved meant having a life of extremely hard work. In this lesson, we'll look at the typical life of an enslaved person, including how enslaved people kept their own culture and traditions, and how they resisted enslavement. Let's start by looking at what daily life was like for the enslaved. |

**Section 2**

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| 00:00:01 | TEACHER: Conditions for enslaved persons varied |
| 00:00:03 | greatly from region to region and from slaveholder to slaveholder, but always resulted in hard work and oppression. Enslaved persons had no civil or political rights. Their marriages were not recognized. And they had few protections from cruel punishment or even murder. Despite the common image of enslaved people working on |
| 00:00:26 | plantations, many also worked on small farms and in cities. All enslaved people were considered property. This meant they could be bought and sold. This was especially hard on families. Often husbands and wives were separated and children were sold away from their parents. This drawing shows the sale of enslaved people in New Orleans. |
| 00:00:52 | Enslaved people worked both outside in the fields and in their owners' homes. Enslaved people planted and harvested crops such as cotton, rice, sugar cane, and tobacco. They also cleared land, took care of livestock, repaired buildings, and worked as mechanics, blacksmiths, or drivers. Enslaved people worked in houses, too. |
| 00:01:20 | They cooked and cleaned and cared for children. It was often incorrectly assumed that the life of an enslaved person who worked in a house was easier. Their lives were certainly very different, but not better, than the lives of enslaved field workers. Enslaved people in cities often worked in industry and in skilled trades. They worked in shipyards and brickyards |
| 00:01:47 | and on cotton presses. They also worked for tailors, butchers, masons, and saddle makers. Skilled workers could earn wages and purchase their freedom. Their owner would hire them out to others, allowing enslaved people to keep a portion of what they earned. Over time, they would be able to purchase their freedom. |
| 00:02:10 | One example was Elizabeth Keckley, pictured here, who was a seamstress in St. Louis before becoming the personal dressmaker to Mary Todd Lincoln. |

**Section 4**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Enslaved people suffered through long days, |
| 00:00:04 | hard labor, and often violence. Violence sometimes came from an overseer or supervisor of enslaved field workers. Many used physical punishment for those who broke rules or worked too slowly. And punishment included whippings and beatings. Enslaved people lived in very harsh conditions. Their food, clothing, and shelter was all determined by |
| 00:00:30 | whoever they worked for. The food was handed out once a week and included flour, a little meat and some vegetables. Some slaveholders allowed enslaved workers to grow their own vegetables. Still, their diets were not nutritionally balanced and did not provide enough calories which led to diseases and starvation. |
| 00:00:52 | Clothing was handed out by the slaveholder once a year. Enslaved house workers got the best clothing-- often hand me downs from the slaveholders family. Young field workers got the next best, including extra layers for winter work. Those who could not work, such as the very elderly and very young, got nothing. Most lived in simple cabins. |
| 00:01:19 | Unhealthy, unsanitary conditions were common and some enslaved house workers had rooms in the main house. Life was very different for enslaved people in cities, yet no matter where they lived, they were still considered property. Abolitionists and former enslaved person Frederick Douglass described the difference this way. "A city slave is almost a free man, compared with a slave on |
| 00:01:47 | the plantation. He is much better fed and clothed, and enjoys privileges altogether unknown to slave on the plantation." |

**Section 6**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: In addition to working hard and living in |
| 00:00:03 | poor conditions, enslaved people also had to follow slave codes. Slave codes were rules that controlled the lives of enslaved people and applied only to them. The first slave codes were created in colonial days. They were put in place to keep control over enslaved people and to make sure they did not rebel. Under the codes, enslaved people couldn't testify |
| 00:00:26 | against whites. They couldn't leave the plantation without permission, and they couldn't buy or sell things or learn to read and write. Violation of these rules and codes could result in any number of punishments, including physical assault and abuse. |

**Section 8**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: As you've seen, the lives of enslaved people were |
| 00:00:03 | strictly controlled. Slaveholders controlled their food and clothing. Slave codes prohibited their education and travel. Still, enslaved people maintained their own culture and traditions. We'll look at them now. |

**Section 9**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: After the Second Great Awakening, most enslaved |
| 00:00:03 | persons became Christians. They often mixed Christian beliefs with some an African practices. Some slaveholders hoped that Christian enslaved people would be more obedient because of their religion. Instead, many enslaved people took the ideas of freedom from Christian stories, such as the biblical story in which Moses frees the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. |

**Section 11**

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| 00:00:01 | Enslaved people used music in many aspects of their lives. |
| 00:00:06 | Religious songs were inspired by both Christian and African traditions. The songs became the roots of modern gospel music. Work songs established a rhythm that helped workers work together. Singing also made the hard work seem easier. These songs often used a call-and-response pattern. One person would sing the first part of the |
| 00:00:29 | song, or the call. And another would sing the second part, or the response. Enslaved people also sang and played music as a form of entertainment. They played musical instruments, clapped, stomped their feet, and danced. Songs were also used as a code to share secrets, often about escaping slavery. |
| 00:00:51 | Songs such as "Wade in the Water" and "Follow the Drinking Gourd" helped escapees travel the Underground Railroad and avoid capture. These songs pointed enslaved people in the right direction, without calling attention to themselves. "Follow the Drinking Gourd," for example, instructed people to move toward the Big Dipper as they walked at night. These song traditions evolved to modern day gospel music, |
| 00:01:16 | ragtime, blues, and jazz. Enslaved persons kept their family histories alive by passing them down from generation to generation. Many such histories were published during the 1800s, and inspired the abolitionist cause. A federal project in the early 1900s recorded the personal histories of enslaved persons in order to record their experiences for future generations. |

**Section 13**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Despite the strict controls based on their lives, |
| 00:00:04 | enslaved people managed to create their own culture and traditions. They incorporated African elements into their religion, their storytelling, and their music, which often provided an escape, sometimes literally, from slavery. They were also able to resist enslavement in other ways. |

**Section 14**

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| 00:00:00 | TEACHER: Resistance to enslavement took many forms. |
| 00:00:04 | Including inciting rebellions, running away, causing work slowdowns, damaging tools and conducting other forms of sabotage. And breaking the rules, such as learning to read. Slaveholders were always afraid of revolts. A revolt is a violent uprising against authority. Armed revolts were actually very rare. Far more common were other types of resistance, such as |
| 00:00:36 | breaking equipment or working slowly. Freed man Denmark Vesey planned a huge revolt in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1822. Slaveholders found out about the revolt the night before it was supposed to take place and about 130 African Americans were arrested. Many were hanged, including Bessie. Enslaved man Nat Turner, seen here, led an armed revolt in |
| 00:01:06 | Virginia in 1831 in which 60 white people were killed. Turner was pursued by authorities, as shown in the illustration, and was hanged. |

**Section 16**

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| 00:00:01 | Thousands of enslaved persons escaped |
| 00:00:03 | slavery by running away. Many used the Underground Railroad to make the journey. The Underground Railroad was a secret system that helped enslaved people escape to freedom in the North and Canada. Safe houses were located along the railroad, where escaped enslaved people could hide as they make their way North. It was run by free African Americans and abolitionists in |
| 00:00:27 | the North, who use rail terms, including routes, or lines and helpers, and conductors to describe parts of it. It helped at least 40,000 enslaved people escape the South. This may seem like a large number, but in fact it represents a very small percentage of the total enslaved population, which was about 4 million when the Civil War began. |
| 00:00:53 | Harriet Tubman, nicknamed Moses, was one of the best known conductors on the Underground Railroad. After she escaped enslavement, Harriet Tubman returned to the South to help others escape. She returned to the South 19 times in 10 years, and saved more than 300 passengers, or enslaved people. She never lost a passenger. She also took part in anti-slavery meetings with |
| 00:01:19 | other leading abolitionists. |

**Section 18**

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| 00:00:01 | TEACHER: Enslaved people not only escaped to the north, to |
| 00:00:04 | Canada, and the free states. Some ran south to Spanish territories, or hid locally in protest. Others formed what were called maroon communities of escapees in the wilderness, where they were unlikely to be found. |