

Liberty to Go to See: Writing and Reflection

Lesson Plan Design

Cliveden and Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia partnered in 2018 as a result of a grant from the Haley Foundation and the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation with support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to apply Breakthrough's unique students-teaching-students model to developing cross-curricular lesson plans.

These lesson plans were designed by college-aged teaching fellows and field tested by 7th and 8th grade student participants in a lesson-study model. The final lesson plans were adapted and formalized by professional educators for use in traditional educational environments. The lesson plan format used by Breakthrough of Greater Philadelphia includes individualized student packets that are aligned to the order of the lesson steps.

Goals

Students will interpret the concepts of liberty and legacy through the lens of *Liberty to Go to See* by writing paragraphs in response to prompts.

Timing

This lesson can be expanded or contracted over several days depending on the amount of time the teacher wants to spend on each scene and how you choose to balance writing time in class versus out of class.

- Day 1: Background, Setting and Characters
- Day 2: Scenes 1 - 3 with written reflection after the completion of each scene on the ideas of liberty
- Day 3: Scene 6 with discussion and written reflection on the impact of inheritance and gender roles on liberty
- Day 4: Scene 10 with discussion and written reflection on the lives of indentured servants and the experience of slaves, as well as continuation of the impact of gender roles and inheritance and Scene 11 with discussion of concepts of home and liberty.

Differentiation

The overall lesson is written as one extended block and adaptations to meet the learning needs of the individual classes.

Suggestions for Reading:

- If students struggle with fluency and comprehension, plan the lessons to include extra time to perform different scenes in character.
- If students are fluent but struggle with comprehension, pace out breaks in the scenes periodically to summarize what is occurring.
- If students are advanced readers with strong comprehension, consider flipping the model and having the students perform the scenes rather than the teacher.
 - You might consider casting the performance as part of an ongoing lesson and having the students perform the scenes for their peers in younger grades.

Suggestions for Writing:

- If students struggle with evidence-based writing, use smaller questions to build up the writing skills, focusing on responsive sentences or paragraphs rather than essays.

- Depending on the strength of the students, teachers can give the writing prompts in advance or save them to ask after the reading/performance.
- Giving the prompts in advance allows the students to begin thinking about their outline and take less time going back to research, but distracts from the in the moment understanding of the performance
- Use group discussions around the questions to produce different perspectives around the room, and have students cite comments from conversation in their essays. For example, in responding to the question “Based on this scene, what do you think the role and responsibilities of the wife of Benjamin Chew Sr. were? What liberty did she have, and what liberty did she lack?”, a student might say something like “I thought that the wife of Benjamin Chew Sr. would have a lot of freedom, but I changed my mind during the discussion Taina said, ‘he disagreed with his wife and she ignored him.’ I hadn’t thought about it that way, and I began to wonder how else she didn’t have choices.”

Standards Addressed

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.6: Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.7: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

GETTING YOURSELF READY			
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberty to Go to See Script, Modified • Student Handouts • Color Photos and Descriptions of Cliveden sites • Poster Paper 	Your Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearse scene • Handout Copies 	Objective(s) and Proving Behavior: Students will interpret the concepts of liberty and legacy through the lens of <i>Liberty to Go to See</i> by writing paragraphs in response to prompts.	Agenda (w/times): Do Now/Introduction (5 min) Building the Skill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: 4 min • Step 2: 12 min • Step 3: Performance of Scene I Watching Performance (7 min) Responding to Writing Prompt (20 minutes) Closure (5 min)
GETTING YOUR STUDENTS READY			
Do Now: Look at the primary source on the page and make as many observations about it as possible. Can you read the handwriting to make out any of what it says? What questions do you have about it?			
Purpose: Cliveden embodies the historical complexity of Philadelphia. This assignment will require students to think critically about historical moments and the relevance of their themes today.			
BUILDING THE SKILL (SAY, SEE, DO)			
Step 1: Background and Research	<p>SAY: Today, we are going to be looking at selections from a play that is performed every year at Cliveden in historic Germantown. The play is based on research about a real family that lived in Germantown from the 1700s through the 1970s, and the enslaved persons and servants that worked for the family. The play itself will introduce the setting and characters. We will be focusing on the period of time from 1776 - 1871. In order to write this play, students worked with researchers who studied real documents like the one you reviewed in your do now. What sorts of observations did you have about this document?</p> <p>SEE: Do Now document</p> <p>DO: Whip share: Ask each student to share something that they observed or a question that they have about the document.</p> <p>FOLLOW UP: What sorts of challenges do you think that a group of young people writing this play might have had?</p>		

<p>Step 2a: Setting</p>	<p>SAY: To begin, we are going to review the activities of the main characters of the play. We want to understand who they were and what their motivations and experiences were. Our lives today are so different from life in the 1700s and 1800s, and it can be hard to imagine what life would have been like in Germantown in those days. Take an activity like Doing Laundry. Today, we might wash the laundry in a washer and dryer in our homes or go down the street to a laundromat. We can buy laundry soap at the store, and use machines that automatically fill, wash, rinse, and squeeze water out of the clothes. How do you think laundry was done in the 1700s?</p> <p>SEE: Pictures of Philadelphia in the 1700s and 1800s.</p> <p>DO: Pair-Share Ideas for doing laundry. Have a whole group discussion after all groups pair and share. Guide students in understanding resources that didn't exist in the 1700s/1800s.</p>
<p>Step 2b: Setting Jigsaw</p>	<p>Jigsaw Activity: Split students into four groups and have each one considers the challenges associated with the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking food • Traveling from Germantown to Philadelphia • Traveling to New York • Taking a Bath <p>Each group will have four minutes to discuss and identify the differences between Then and Now for their subject. Groups can use poster paper for visual presentation. After four minutes, each group will prepare to present their comparisons to the group, and other students should take notes.</p>
<p>Step 3a: Characters</p>	<p>SAY: First, I'm going to read the background of James Smith of your script. Please follow along and take notes on information that you think is important or questions that you have about James Smith. We're going to split the characters in the script up and do a quick jigsaw to understand the background of five of the main characters in this performance. Let's begin together with the narrator of the play, James Smith. Read background of James Smith to the class.</p> <p>SEE: Read summary of background of James Smith from the play script.</p> <p>DO: Pair-share summary notes on James Smith. <i>(After the read aloud, have students share their key notes and document them on the board or on a handout/projector).</i></p>

<p>Step 3b: Characters Jigsaw</p>	<p>Jigsaw Activity: Split students into four groups and have each one summarize the following characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Sophia Penn Chew • Hannah Welsh • Benjamin Chew Sr. • Benjamin Chew III <p>Each group will have four minutes to discuss and identify the key characteristics of their individual. Groups can use poster paper for visual presentation. After four minutes, each group will prepare to present their summary to the group, and other students should take notes.</p>
<p>Step 4: Perform Scenes 1 - 3</p>	<p>SAY: We're going to begin today with Scene 1. I will be reading the part of James. I would like to ask (<i>name a Strong Reader who is good at playing characters</i>) to read the part of Benjamin Chew Sr. and (<i>name a student who tries to be helpful but can also be outspoken</i>) to read for Michael. As we perform, think about what you are learning from each character and what their ideas about Liberty and Freedom might be based on their words and experiences.</p> <p>SEE: Classroom presentation. Teacher may have given guided questions in advance.</p> <p>DO: Take notes on the scenes.</p>

PRACTICING THE SKILL

Depending on the age, reading, and writing levels of your class, you may break the remaining scenes over several class periods in order to get the most out of their ideas and skills. In some classes, the students can read for different characters, whereas in other classes, the teacher might need to vocalize key parts to demonstrate the idea of the drama of the character. At various breaking points, you can lead students in a discussion of the questions below and/or have them write written responses (paragraphs) about each scene or write a more cumulative essay over the whole play.

Writing and Reflection Questions Practice:

In all cases, students should use evidence from the text and or classroom conversations to support their responses.

Scene 1:

- “You never know when you might be at liberty and have to give proof that you are a free man.” How is this idea different from the life of a “free man” today? Do people have liberty to travel without their liberty papers today?
- Who considers Cliveden to be (part of) their home?
- What is Benjamin Chew Sr.’s responsibility in the colony of Pennsylvania? What sorts of responsibilities did he have?

Scene 2:

- “My overseer, a negro himself, is concerned by slaves made bold by their masters’ talk of revolution.” What request does the overseer make of Benjamin Chew Sr.? Why does he make that request? The play does not tell us the result of the letter, but what do you think happened?
- Based on this scene, what do you think the role and responsibilities of the wife of Benjamin Chew Sr. were? What liberty did she have, and what liberty did she lack?

Scene 3:

- In this scene, Benjamin Chew Sr. has his liberty taken from him by his friend, General Washington, when he is forced away from his family because of the war. How does his loss of liberty impact him and those around him?
- How would you characterize the relationship between Benjamin Chew Sr. and Michael?
- How does the Revolutionary War affect Cliveden?

Scene 6:

- “Benjamin Chew Sr. “He may think that you are unimportant, but that is not the case. Anne: “Do you really mean that? Am I really as important as Ben?” Benjamin Chew Sr. “In your own way, my dear.” Why does Anne think that she is unimportant? Based on the rest of the scene, what do you think that her grandfather meant when he said she was important in her own way?
- Think about Anne’s age in this scene. The script describes her as a young girl - she was born in 1805 and Benjamin Chew Sr. died in 1810. At the age of four or five years old, she is having a conversation with her grandfather. What was emphasized to her as important by her grandfather? What was her place in the world?

Scene 10:

- During this scene, James Smith and Hannah have an exchange about the hardships of their conditions. How are the conditions that Hannah lives in similar to and different from the conditions that James Smith lived in? Based on the text, how do you think James views Hannah’s behavior toward her work and her liberty?
- How has Anne been able to improve her liberty in this scene, as compared to what her grandfather told her in scene six? Why does she make the choices that she does? (Why do you think she chooses to keep Cliveden, add an addition, and move in her nephew and his wife?)

Scene 11:

- “The blood and sweat of my, no - our ancestors is in this place. We must preserve it for those who come after us. May we all reset - and go - in piece.” Why does Anne correct herself and say “our” in this final scene? Who does the “our” represent to her, and why is that change significant?

Overall Topics for Essay:

- Compare and contrast several different types of liberty seen in this text. How do you think that an individual’s experience impacts their sense of liberty?
- What constitutes liberty to you? Do any of the characters always have liberty? If not, what restrictions do they face and why?

Closure (Whipshare or Exit Slip)

What additional questions do you wish to research and explore about history and liberty? If you could focus on one character’s experience to understand more, who would it be and why?

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