



Length: 45-60 minutes

Grade: 6th-12th

Subject: ELA; Social Studies

Overview

This lesson introduces students to Jupiter Hammon, America's first published Black poet. After a presentation on Jupiter Hammon's life and writing, students listen to and read Jupiter Hammon's final poem, "An Essay on Slavery," and discuss themes of liberty, resistance, and the power of writing. The lesson closes with a conversation about the historical legacy of slavery.

Essential Question:

- How did Jupiter Hammon use his writing as a form of resistance?
- How did Hammon's religious beliefs shape his views on liberty and emancipation?
- How did the legacy of slavery impact Black communities on Long Island?

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain who Jupiter Hammon was and why he was significant
- Interpret poetry as form of literature and historical source
- Synthesize individual historical narratives

NYS Social Studies Standards

7.2e Over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, slavery grew in the colonies. Enslaved Africans utilized a variety of strategies to both survive and resist their conditions.

11.3c Long-standing disputes over States rights and slavery and the secession of Southern states from the Union, sparked by the election of Abraham Lincoln, led to the Civil War. After the

issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves became a major Union goal. The Civil War resulted in tremendous human loss and physical destruction.

11.4a Between 1865 and 1900, constitutional rights were extended to African Americans. However, their ability to exercise these rights was undermined by individuals, groups, and government institutions.

NYS Social Studies Standards

6-12R1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences, including determining where the text is ambiguous; develop questions for deeper understanding and for further exploration. (RI&RL)

6-12R2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas in a text and analyze its development, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; objectively and accurately summarize a complex text. (RI&RL)

6-12R4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, and mood, including words with multiple meanings. Analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of technical or key term(s) over the course of a text. (RI&RL)

6-12R6: Analyze how authors employ point of view, perspective, and purpose, to shape explicit and implicit messages (e.g., examine rhetorical strategies, literary elements and devices). (RI&RL)

6-12SL1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on complex topics, texts, and issues; express ideas clearly and persuasively, and build on those of others.

6-12SL2: Interpret information presented in diverse formats (e.g., including visual, quantitative, and oral)

7SL2: Analyze the central ideas and supporting details presented in diverse formats (e.g., including visual, quantitative, and oral) and explain how the ideas clarify and/or contribute to a topic, text, or issue under study

6-12L5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Materials

- [Slides](#)
- [Slide Notes and Questions](#)
- [“An Essay on Slavery” Handout](#)

Process

Activity	Materials	Time
1. Introduction to Jupiter Hammon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slides• Slide Notes and Questions	20 minutes
2. Discussion of an Essay on Slavery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slides• Slide Notes and Questions• “An Essay on Slavery” Handout	15 minutes
3. Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slides• Slide Notes and Questions	10 minutes

Additional Resources

[The Jupiter Hammon Project](#)

Preservation Long Island's multi-year initiative to develop a more critical interpretation of Joseph Lloyd Manor by centering the stories of Jupiter Hammon and others enslaved at the site. The project website includes links to public programs, resources, and bibliographies.

[Joseph Lloyd Manor Educator Resources](#)

These digital materials were produced for Educators leading tours of Joseph Lloyd Manor for the public. They include a timeline, a detailed historical narrative, a guide to the architecture of the house, a Lloyd family tree, a 3D scan of the house with information about the artifacts, and a self-guided tour. Teachers may find specific details or images relevant for their students, and the information will allow classes to explore the history in greater depth.