



LESSON PLAN

Subject: Grades 6 and 7 ELA

Lesson: The Eye of the Beholder

Standards:

- **Grade 6**
 - Integrate information presented in different media or formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. (RI.6.7)
 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (W.6.3)
- **Grade 7**
 - Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject. (RI.7.7)
 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (W.7.3)

Objectives:

- **Grade 6**
 - Students will be able to integrate information presented in a video to develop a coherent understanding of enslaved people in the Carolinas.
 - Students will be able to write a narrative about a real or imagined experience about finding themselves in a place where they are treated as they have never been treated before. Students will be able to use effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured even sequences.
- **Grade 7**
 - Students will be able to compare and contrast “The Eye of the Beholder” video to the video script, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject.
 - Students will be able to write a narrative about a real or imagined experience about finding themselves in a place where they are treated as they have never been treated before. Students will be able to use effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured even sequences.

Materials Needed:

- A device for watching “The Eye of the Beholder” video (<https://youtu.be/DbNaDXe3sDw>)
- A copy of the video script for “The Eye of the Beholder” (attached)
- Students will bring an object that is personally meaningful to them





LESSON PLAN

Outline:

- Prior to beginning the lesson, students should not have shared their objects with other students.
- Show “The Eye of the Beholder” video. (6 ½ minutes)
- **Grade 6**
 - As a class, brainstorm and list what is learned about enslaved people in the Carolinas.
 - Discuss how point of view impacts the experience of people living in the Carolinas during that time.
- **Grade 7**
 - Using a T-Chart, have students compare and contrast “The Eye of the Beholder” video script to the video.
 - Analyze how the setting, objects, music, and visuals added to the portrayal of the subject.

Take It Further:

Break students into pairs. Student A will describe the perceived significance of Student B’s object. Student B will then explain the true significance of their object. The exercise will be repeated with the students switching roles. Students will then compare their differing perspectives, writing a short essay about these differences.

Cross-Curriculum Connection:

Lead students in a discussion regarding how primary source documents can reflect the biases of the people writing them. Focus on the primary source documents listed in the video script.





VIDEO SCRIPT FOR *The Eye of the Beholder*, page 1

Video Setting	Narration	Graphics/Visual Cut-ins
MESDA	<p><i>Once upon a time, there was a magnificent warrior, born to a great family. He was a very brave man who traveled across half of the world, battling challenges and experiencing new things all along the way. He was very intelligent, learning to speak the languages of every group of people he interacted with and demonstrating numerous skills to them as well. During his adventures, he met a traveler. But this man was nothing like the warrior. After becoming ill on his journey, he was nursed back to health by a uniquely charitable village. He responded by disrespecting their religion, picking fights with the villagers, and even trying to join up with an enemy army intent on capturing the land on which these kindhearted people lived. Even through all of this, that village continued to offer him opportunities to do the right thing. After years of convincing, he eventually chose to give up his mean-spirited ways and contribute to the community, even starting a family of his own. Unfortunately for our good, kind warrior, his story did not end as pleasantly. He was captured by a strange people, forced into a life of bondage, and never saw his family or his homeland again.</i></p> <p><i>When you heard that story, what conclusions did you make about the people in it? Did you think the warrior was noble? Or that the other traveler was wicked? Whatever conclusions you came to, they were influenced by the way I told the story. My perspective, the way that I view things, influenced your feelings about these two men. I wanted you to view the warrior in a certain way and the traveler in another. And to do so, I overlooked two key components of this story: The warrior and the traveler were the same person. And this person was enslaved.</i></p>	<p>B roll of: Wallpaper in MESDA Direct shots of me talking in that room as I continue the story.</p>
The Log Church	<p>TRANSITION: <i>The lebenslauf, a German word for “life path”, was a document used to give a short account of the lives of members of the Moravian church upon their passing. It is in this document that we first learn about our warrior, Sambo. According to his lebenslauf, he was born in about 1730 and was a member of the Mandinka Nation on the coast of Guinea. The son of a respected community leader, Sambo became a target in an ongoing war with a rival West Africa nation. He was captured and released once, but after capturing him a second time in the conflict, they sold him and his comrades to European slave traders. Sambo was</i></p>	<p>Abraham’s lebenslauf Image of Guinea Murals in the Log Church</p>



VIDEO SCRIPT FOR *The Eye of the Beholder*, page 2

	<p><i>marched to the coast and forced onboard a slave ship, where the first of his travels and challenges began.</i></p>	
<p>The Log Church</p>	<p><i>The experience of being onboard a slaving vessel was a brutal one, and many people did not survive. Sambo’s warrior mentality probably helped him, as did the support of his enslaved comrades. The next time he stepped foot on dry land, it was on a French island colony in the Caribbean. Which colony exactly is unknown, but we do know that he spent a few years doing the grueling work of harvesting sugar cane and learned some French in order to survive. Sambo was then sold away to the English colony of Virginia, where he worked harvesting tobacco for a few years before being put up for sale in 1770. According to his lebenslauf, Brother Heinrich Herbst of Salem purchased Sambo because he “seemed to be of good humor” and could “perhaps be won for the Lord.” But remember what we said about perspective.</i></p>	<p>Images of slave ship Images of sugar cane B-roll of Salem Square</p>
	<p><i>Though it is a primary source, or a document written during the time period being studied, this lebenslauf was written from the perspective of Sambo’s enslavers. Not only did they not understand his culture or his perspective, but they were also trying to paint themselves in a positive light. Salem as a community had failed to stick to their initial plans to prohibit slavery within their town, and Brother Heinrich Herbst was one of the first congregants to break the rules. Considering that he knew Sambo better than anyone else, Brother Herbst likely contributed in a significant way to the writing of his lebenslauf. describing the decision to purchase Sambo as one inspired by religious beliefs rather than the more practical desire for free labor would make Brother Herbst sound less like an enslaver and more like a savior, wouldn’t it?</i></p>	



VIDEO SCRIPT FOR *The Eye of the Beholder*, page 3

	<p><i>Sambo eventually accepted the Moravian religion and was baptized as Abraham in 1780, but not before fighting valiantly to free himself and return to his home. Likely responding to the announcement of the Dunmore Proclamation, an announcement from the British Army guaranteeing freedom in exchange for service to enslaved people willing to run away from enslavers loyal to the American cause, Sambo attempted an escape but was recaptured and punished for the effort. It took a decade in Salem before he converted to the Moravian religion, with the skewed words of his lebenslauf noting that “For quite a while he stayed in his heathen ways and mores.”</i></p>	<p>Dunmore proclamation</p>
	<p><i>Even then, Sambo’s acceptance of the name Abraham and his conversion to the Moravian church were not necessarily born of a change of heart. Membership in the Moravian church changed one’s status in the community, opening the door to ownership of property and the ability to give away that property upon one’s death. It is more likely that Sambo saw how important conversion was to social status and ownership, than it is that he converted because he suddenly rejected the religious beliefs he had carried for the first fifty years of his life.</i></p> <p><i>Sambo, or Abraham, died in Salem on April 6, 1797. He left behind two lives, one of which came down to us through the perspective of his enslavers, and another which we must continue to uncover.</i></p>	<p>Video of Joel talking at the Log Church</p>
<p>MESDA</p>	<p><i>Let’s take another look at the wallpaper you saw in the beginning of this episode. This hand painted scenic wallpaper was originally hung and painted for the home of Joshua Billington Griffin and Sara Jane Griffin in Columbia County, Georgia. It depicts a shipwreck off the coast of Africa and the subsequent experiences of the travelers once they make it to dry land. It is a beautiful decorative piece, yes, but it also immediately begins to shape your perspective of Africa and the people who live there.</i></p>	<p>More b-roll of wallpaper</p>



VIDEO SCRIPT FOR *The Eye of the Beholder*, page 4

<p>MESDA</p>	<p><i>But if you look a bit closer, there are things about this wallpaper that aren't quite correct. The dogs in the painting look quite similar to a typical American bird dog, the foliage, save for the palm trees, doesn't look much different than what you might see out your window. The white men in the images with the leopard and the lion are both placed into positions of being the leader of the hunt or conflict, with the African participants playing a secondary role, when in reality quite the opposite would have been true.</i></p> <p><i>What this tells us is that the person who painted this wallpaper had probably never even been to Africa, and likely had some racial biases playing a part in what their perspective on what that experience actually was.</i></p> <p><i>Just like Sambo, the black people represented by this wallpaper were not able to tell the truth of their experience. When we look at history, it is essential for us to always consider the biases at play (including our own) and do our best to uncover the hidden truth.</i></p>	<p>Close ups of dog, foliage, lion hunt.</p>
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