

Acts of Resistance

A FIGHT FOR
FREEDOM
& EQUALITY



Justice in the Classroom

&

DETERMINED

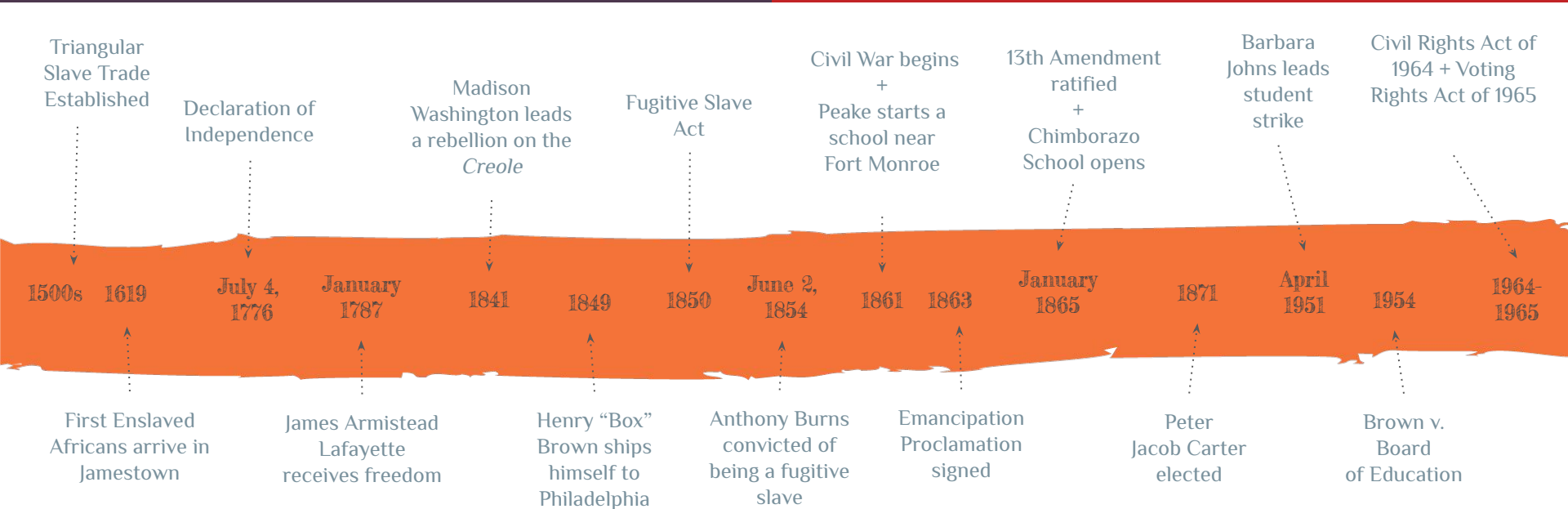
THE 400-YEAR STRUGGLE FOR BLACK EQUALITY

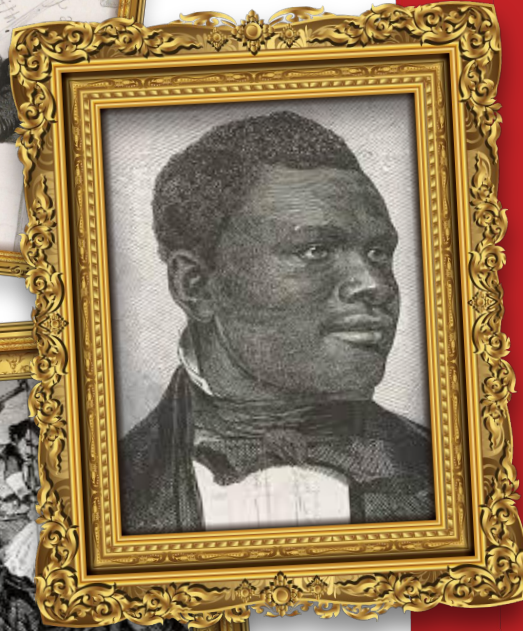
In a partnership with VMHC, the John Marshall Center has created a set of lesson plans to complement the VMHC's exhibition,

Determined: the 400-year struggle for Black Equality

This is lesson 2: Acts of Resistance

A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY (MS)





Over the past 400 years, African Americans and their allies have fought for freedom, opportunity, and justice. Their struggles have pushed American society to examine the meaning of democracy and its ideal of universal equality.

Before the 13th amendment officially ended slavery in the United States, Black Virginians, enslaved and free, fought for their liberty, society's recognition of their humanity, and the promise of equality.

-Determined signage

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be able to examine three acts of resistance and determine how enslaved and free African Americans fought for freedom and equality and outline the significance of those acts.

V O C A B U L A R Y

You Will Find The Following Terms Throughout Your Activity.
Understanding These Terms Will Be Important For Completing This Assignment

Fugitive Slave Act

A U.S. law that required enslaved people who had escaped to freedom to be returned to their enslavers, even if they were living in a free state.

Abolition

The act of getting rid of a system or practice (such as slavery).

Abolitionists

A person who favors the ending of a system or practice (such as slavery).

Mutiny

A revolt among a group of people to overthrow someone in a position of power. Often used to describe revolts on boats or vessels.

13TH Amendment

An Amendment to the Constitution that legally ended slavery in the U.S.

“Throughout American history, enslaved people have resisted bondage in a variety of ways: some escaped, rebelled, or sabotaged work tools or work product. They also resisted in more subtle ways, refusing privately to use names given to them by enslavers and maintaining their identity by keeping track of family members. Music, folk tales, and other African cultural forms also became weapons of resistance.”

Stephanie Townrow, Gilder Lehrman

LOOK AT THE TERMS BELOW: WE WILL USE THESE TERMS TO GUIDE US IN EXAMINING THE ACTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THEIR FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.

LEGAL ACTION
USING THE COURT
SYSTEM OR ACTION
OF VOTING TO
CREATE CHANGE

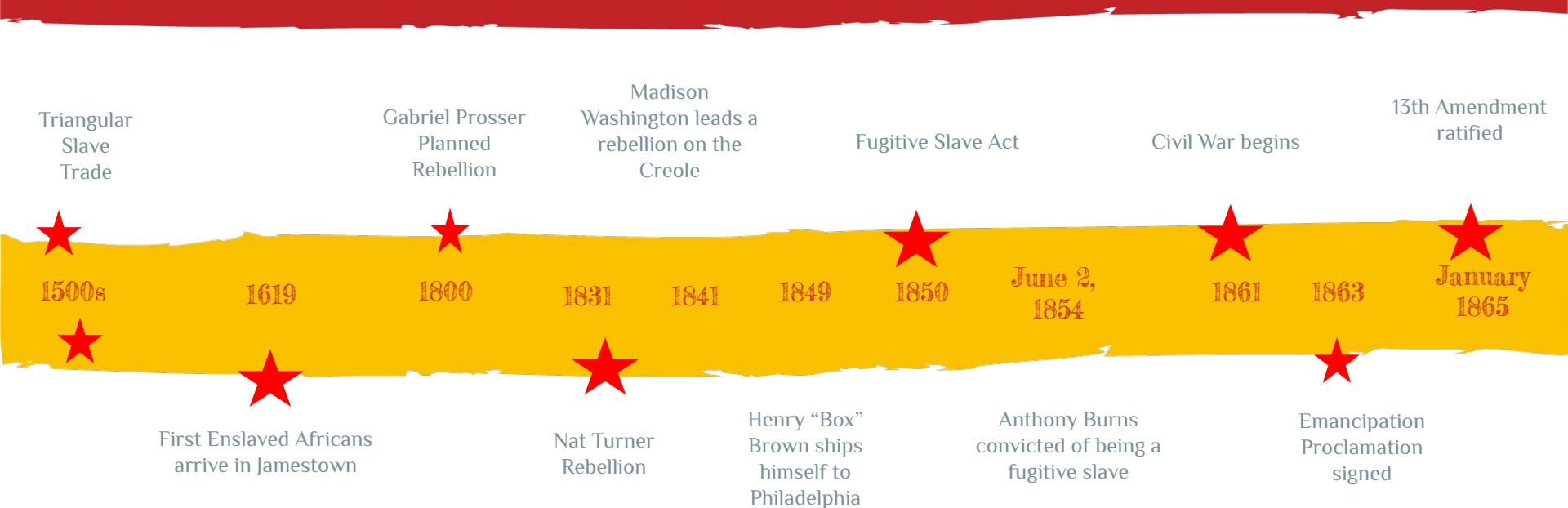
NON-VIOLENT
RESISTANCE
USING PEACEFUL
ACTIONS TO RESIST
OPPRESSION AND
CREATE CHANGE

VIOLENT
RESISTANCE
USING PHYSICAL
VIOLENCE TO RESIST
OPPRESSION AND
CREATE CHANGE

PERSEVERANCE
CONTINUING IN
ONE'S EFFORTS
DESPITE DIFFICULTY
OR DELAY IN
ACHIEVING SUCCESS

USE THE FOLLOWING TIMELINE TO UNDERSTAND KEY EVENTS THROUGHOUT THIS TIME PERIOD + U.S. HISTORY

CLICK ON THE RED  TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH EVENT



Henry "Box" Brown was born into bondage in Louisa County and was taken from his mother and father when he was 15 years old. Brown was sold and sent to work in a Richmond tobacco factory while living in a rented house. In 1848 his pregnant wife, who was owned by another enslaver, was sold to a plantation in North Carolina along with their three children. This loss fueled Brown's desire to escape enslavement.

Brown, an active member of a local church, enlisted a fellow parishioner and a white shoemaker to aid him in his escape to the North. Brown's plan was to have himself shipped as cargo from Richmond to Philadelphia, where slavery had been abolished.

In March 1849 Henry, packaged in a 3 feet long by 2 feet 8 inches deep by 2 feet wide box, was sent as "dry goods." Brown traveled in the box lined with baize, a coarse woollen cloth, carrying with him some water and a few biscuits. There was a hole cut in the box for air and it was nailed and tied with straps. In large words, "this side up" was written on the box. Brown traveled by a variety of wagons, railroads, steamboats, ferries, and finally, for added safety, a delivery wagon that brought the box to the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society.

As a free man, Brown lectured across New England on the evils of slavery and participated in the publication of his story, the Narrative of Henry Box Brown (1849). The following year after his escape, fearing capture and reenslavement because of the the Fugitive Slave Act, moved to England and continued to advocated for the abolition of slavery.

Using the highlight tool, highlight the actions of resistance in **yellow**.

Using the highlight tool, highlight the consequences of the resistance in **green**.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU FIND SURPRISING, INTERESTING, OR TROUBLING ABOUT THIS STORY?

HOW WERE PEOPLE ABLE TO SUPPORT BROWN AND HIS ESCAPE?

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE WORD "RESISTANCE." WHAT DOES IT MEAN "TO RESIST"?

DESCRIPTION/DEFINITION

HOW COULD THIS TERM BE USED IN CONNECTION
WITH A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM + EQUALITY?

RESISTANCE

IMAGE

SYNONYM(S)

WELCOME to THE
Level Up
Game Center

**YOU WILL MOVE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING
3 LEVELS TO LEARN ABOUT SEVERAL INCREDIBLE
ACTS OF RESISTANCE BY AFRICAN AMERICANS
IN THEIR FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.**

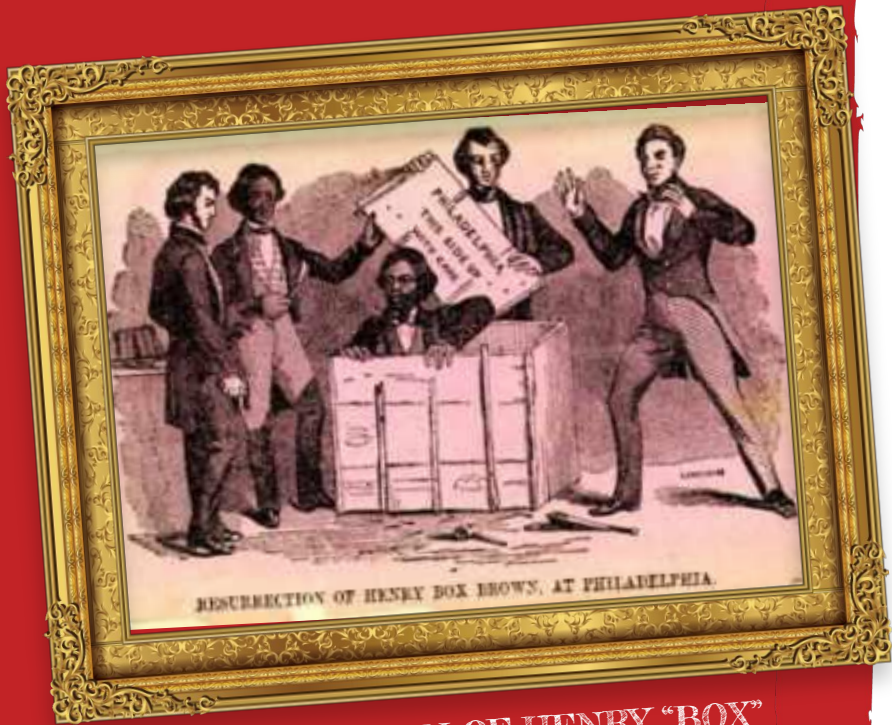
PLEASE NOTE THESE STORIES DO NOT FULLY ENCOMPASS THE THOUSANDS OF ACTS
AFRICAN AMERICANS ENGAGED IN TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.



WELCOME to THE
Level Up
Game Center

LEVEL ONE

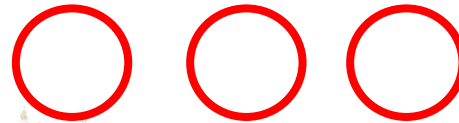
YOU ARE GOING TO READ A DESCRIPTION AND ANALYZE PRIMARY SOURCES TO EXAMINE AN ACT OF RESISTANCE. YOU WILL USE THIS INFORMATION TO DETERMINE HOW AFRICAN AMERICANS FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.



**“RESURRECTION OF HENRY “BOX”
BROWN AT PHILADELPHIA”**



WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THIS IMAGE? CLICK + DRAG THE CIRCLES BELOW TO THE AREAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON.



USING WHAT YOU SEE IN YOUR CIRCLES, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS HAPPENING? BE SPECIFIC!

AFTER INVESTIGATING THIS IMAGE, WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU NOW HAVE?

Dear Gay,

Here is a man who has been the hero of one of the most extraordinary achievements I ever heard of. He came to me on Saturday morning last in a box tightly hooped, marked "this side up" by overland express, from the city of Richmond!! Did you ever hear of anything in your life to beat that?

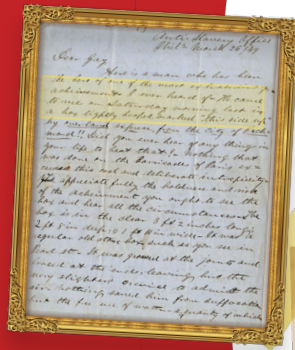
...To appreciate fully the boldness and risk of the achievement you ought to see the box and hear all the circumstances. The box is in the clear 3 ft 2 inches long; 2 ft 8 in deep; + 1 ft 11 in wide. It was a regular old store box. It was grooved at the joints and braced at the ends, leaving but the very slightest crevice to admit the air. Nothing saved him from suffocation but the free use of water – a quantity [sic] if which he took in with him in a beef's bladder, and with which he bathed face, and the constant fanning of himself with his hat. He fanned himself unremittingly all the time.

The "this side up" on the box was not regarded, and he was twice put with his head downwards – resting with his back against the end of the box, his feet braced against the other. The first time he succeeded in shifting his position; but the second time was on board the steamboat, where people were sitting and standing about the box, and where any motions inside would have been overheard and have led to discovery; he was therefore obliged to keep his position for 20 miles. This nearly killed him. He says the veins in his temples were as thick as his finger.

I had been expecting him for several days, and was in mortal fear all the time lest his arrival should only be a signal for calling the coroner. You can better imagine [sic] than I can describe my sensations when in answer to my rap on the box and question – "all right?" the prompt response came "all right sir." The man weighs 200 lbs and is almost 5 ft 8 in height...Please send him on to Francis Jackson, Boston, with this letter to save me the time it would take to write another.

And now I have one request to make for Heaven's sake don't publish this affair or allow it to be published. It would compromise the Express, and prevent all others from escaping in the same way.

Yours truly, J.M. McKim



READ THE LETTER FROM J.M. McKIM, A PHILADELPHIA ABOLITIONIST, THE MAN WHO OPENED THE BOX THAT DELIVERED HENRY BROWN.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

What evidence does this letter provide describing the dangers Henry Brown faced?

Why is it important to have an eyewitness account of this incredible story?

Anthony Burn was born into bondage in Virginia and eventually escaped to Boston Massachusetts. Despite several precautions, Burn's former enslaver intercepted a letter between the Boston fugitive and his brother who was still enslaved. Learning of Burn's whereabouts, his former enslaver traveled to Boston to reclaim Anthony as his property. In May of 1854, Burns was eventually captured and arrested under the Fugitive Slave Act.

During this time the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 forced Northern law enforcement officers to aid in the recapturing of African Americans who escaped bondage. This law was controversial and forced many Northerners to become more defiant in their support of fugitives.

Anthony Burns was arrested and jailed in Boston's federal courthouse. Overnight this became one of America's most famous court cases of its time. Boston abolitionists responded to his arrest by mobilizing. Outside the courthouse and throughout the city groups met to protest and riot. Some antislavery members even attempted to rescue Burns from jail. After one day of particularly violent riots, federal troops were called in to guard the courthouse and surrounding areas.

The courts eventually declared Burns to be a fugitive slave, and they sent over 1,500 soldiers to come and collect Burns from Boston and bring him back into enslavement in Virginia. After his return to Virginia, abolitionists purchased his freedom.

Using the highlight tool, highlight the actions of resistance in **yellow**.

Using the highlight tool, highlight the consequences of the resistance in **green**.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU FIND SURPRISING, INTERESTING, OR TROUBLING ABOUT THIS STORY?

HOW DID THE FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT INCREASE TENSIONS AROUND SLAVERY?

LEVEL UP GameCenter

LEVEL ONE CHALLENGE

DESCRIBE THE ACTIONS HENRY “BOX” BROWN AND ABOLITIONISTS USED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.

CLICK + DRAG THE TERM ABOVE THAT BEST DESCRIBES THE TYPE OF RESISTANCE IN THIS LEVEL + PLACE IN THIS BOX

WHY IS HENRY “BOX” BROWN’S STORY SIGNIFICANT?



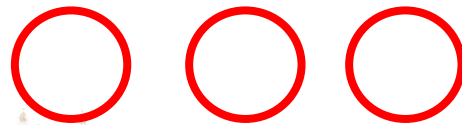
Level Up Game Center

LEVEL TWO

YOU ARE GOING TO READ A DESCRIPTION AND ANALYZE PRIMARY SOURCES TO EXAMINE AN ACT OF RESISTANCE. YOU WILL USE THIS INFORMATION TO DETERMINE HOW AFRICAN AMERICANS FOUGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.



WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THIS IMAGE? CLICK + DRAG THE CIRCLES BELOW TO THE AREAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON.



USING WHAT YOU SEE IN YOUR CIRCLES, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS HAPPENING? BE SPECIFIC!

AFTER INVESTIGATING THIS IMAGE, WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU NOW HAVE?



Madison Washington, an enslaved man who escaped bondage to Canada in 1840, was captured and sold when he returned to Virginia in search of his wife, Susan.

In the fall of 1841, the ship *Creole*, which was owned by the Johnson and Eperson Company of Richmond, Virginia, transported Washington and 134 enslaved humans from Richmond to sell in New Orleans. On November 7, 1841, Washington and 18 enslaved males broke out of the *Creole's* slave hold.

Washington and the others grabbed improvised weapons such as a marlinspike- used to work the ship's ropes- to overpower the crew. The ship's captain, Robert Ensor, along with several crew members, were wounded but survived. Two men died including an enslaved man who was badly wounded and later succumbed to his injuries.

After gaining control of the ship and demanding freedom, the *Creole* headed to Nassau in the British territory, where the British Slave Abolition Act of 1833 had deemed slavery illegal. While most of the enslaved people on board gained immediate freedom, Washington and his collaborators were seized under charges of mutiny to answer for a slave trader killed in the revolt. The charges were ultimately dropped. It was decided that the African Americans on board the *Creole* were illegally enslaved and had the right to use force to gain their freedom.

In total, 128 enslaved people gained their freedom, which made the *Creole* mutiny the most successful slave revolt in US history.



Using the highlight tool, highlight the actions of resistance in **yellow**.

Using the highlight tool, highlight the consequences of the resistance in **green**.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU FIND SURPRISING, INTERESTING, OR TROUBLING ABOUT THIS STORY?

HOW WAS WASHINGTON ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OTHER NATIONS'S DECISIONS TO ABOLISH SLAVERY?

FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT ON THE CREOLE, NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE U.S WERE QUICK TO REPORT THESE EVENTS.



PROTEST
Of the Officers and Crew of the American Brig Creole, bound from Richmond to New Orleans whose cargo of slaves mutinied on the 7th of November, 1841, off the Hole in the Wall—murdered a passenger—wounded the Captain and others and put into Nassau, N. P., where the authorities confined 19 of the mutineers, and forcibly liberated nearly all the slaves.
By this public instrument of protest be it known that on this second day of December, eighteen hundred and forty-one, before me, WILLIAM YOUNG LEWIS, Notary Public in and for the city of New Orleans, duly commissioned and sworn to.
Personally came and appeared Zephaniah C. Gifford, acting master of the American brig called the Creole, of Richmond, who declared that the said vessel sailed from the Port of Norfolk, in the State of Virginia, on the 30th day of October last past, laden with manufactured tobacco in boxes and slaves, then under the command of Captain Robert Ensor, bound for the port of New Orleans in the State of Louisiana:
That when about 130 miles to the North North East of the Hole in the Wall, the slaves, or a party thereof on board of said vessel, rose on the officers and crew and passengers, killed one officer, wounded the Captain, one passenger, several of the crew; compelled said appearer and party to navigate said vessel to Nassau in the Island of New Providence, where she arrived, and a portion of the ringleaders of said insurrection, and a portion thereof, were confined in prison, and the remainder were confined and liberated by the British authorities of said Island.

WHY DO YOU THINK NEWSPAPERS AROUND THE UNITED STATES WANTED TO REPORT THIS STORY?

HOW DO YOU THINK PEOPLE RESPONDED TO HEARING ABOUT THE EVENTS ON THE CREOLE?

LEVEL UP GameCenter

LEVEL two CHALLENGE

DESCRIBE THE ACTIONS MADISON WASHINGTON AND THE CREOLE USED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.

CLICK + DRAG THE TERM ABOVE THAT BEST DESCRIBES THE TYPE OF RESISTANCE IN THIS LEVEL + PLACE IN THIS BOX

WHY IS MADISON WASHINGTON AND THE CREOLE REVOLT SIGNIFICANT?



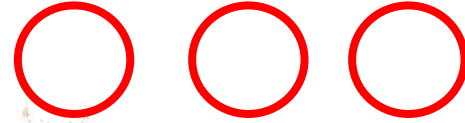
WELCOME to THE
Level Up
Game Center

LEVEL THEORY

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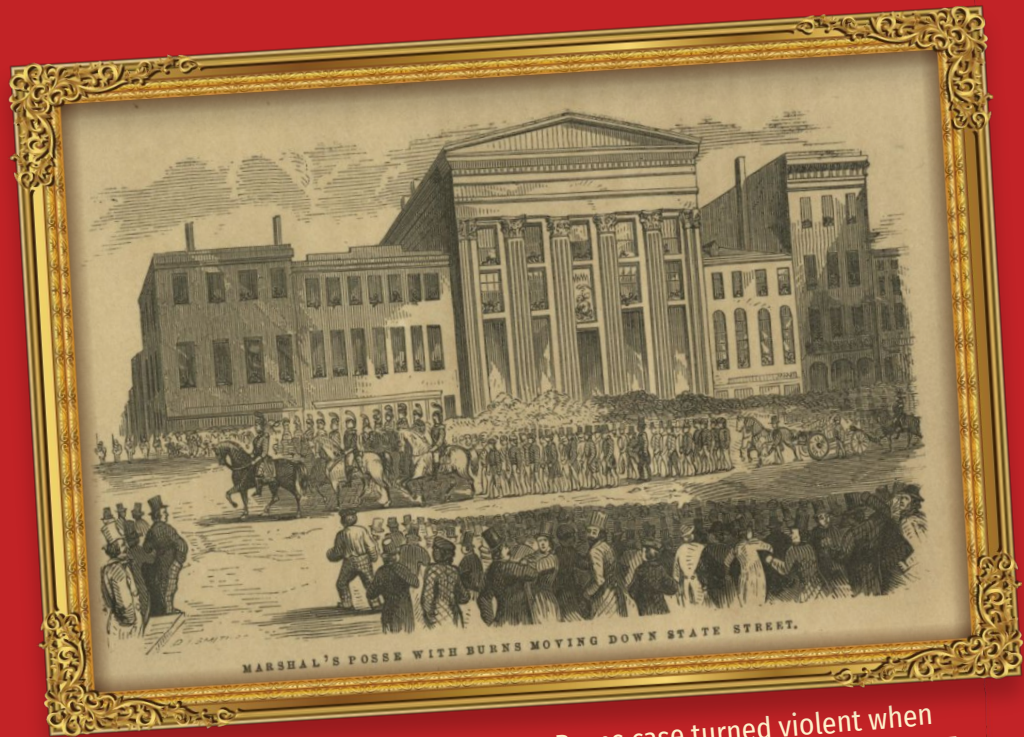


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USING WHAT YOU SEE IN YOUR CIRCLES, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS HAPPENING? BE SPECIFIC!

AFTER INVESTIGATING THIS IMAGE, WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU NOW HAVE?



Tensions over the Anthony Burns case turned violent when abolitionists tried to break him out of custody during his trial. To avoid another escape attempt, the government used a military escort of over 1,500 troops to move Burns from the Boston courthouse, past a crowd of an estimated 50,000 spectators to the ship that would transport him back to bondage in Virginia

WHAT DOES THIS IMAGE + DESCRIPTION SHOW US ABOUT THE TENSIONS OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA AT THIS TIME?

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS CASE WAS SO POPULAR DURING THIS TIME?

LEVEL UP

GameCenter

LEVEL three CHALLENGE

DESCRIBE THE ACTIONS ANTHONY BURNS AND ABOLITIONISTS USED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY.

CLICK + DRAG THE TERM ABOVE THAT BEST DESCRIBES THE TYPE OF RESISTANCE IN THIS LEVEL + PLACE IN THIS BOX

WHY IS ANTHONY BURNS'S STORY SIGNIFICANT?



Before the 13th amendment was issued, determined Black Virginians, enslaved and free, fought for their liberty, society's recognition of their humanity, and the promise of equality.

-Determined signage

USING AT LEAST 4 SENTENCES, SUPPORT THE STATEMENT ABOVE BY INCLUDING INFORMATION FROM THE THREE ACTS OF RESISTANCE YOU LEARNED ABOUT IN TODAY'S LESSON.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT TO LEARN ABOUT THESE EVENTS IN U.S. HISTORY?