

Delaware Recommended Curriculum

This unit has been created as an exemplary model for teachers in (re)design of course curricula. An exemplary model unit has undergone a rigorous peer review and jurying process to ensure alignment to selected Delaware Content Standards. This unit was field tested with students, reviewed by fifth grade teachers, and then revised in February 2014.

Unit Title: **Box Brown**

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Content Area: Social Studies

Grade Level: 5

Summary of Unit

Students will read a "manuscript" for a children's story about Henry "Box" Brown's escape from slavery. Unbeknownst to the students, the story is partially inaccurate. Students are invited to analyze primary sources to corroborate and proofread (for content) the manuscript version of Brown's story using primary sources that include Brown's own account "written by himself." Using the now famous song as a springboard into the investigation, students will ask "what did the Box say?"

[\[adapted from Clarification document\]](#) Students in grades K-3 were introduced to artifacts and documents as historical materials used to piece together stories of the past. In History Standard 2 for the 4–5 cluster, students are introduced to two other categories of sources – primary and secondary. This benchmark targeted in this unit carries an expectation that students will work with artifacts and documents, and differentiate those that are primary from those that are secondary. This skill of distinguishing types of sources equips students with the abilities to identify evidence supporting claims, and evaluate and create credible accounts.

Primary sources can be artifacts or documents that date back to the time of the event, and that are typically created by those who witnessed, experienced, or were close to the event(s) being studied. Primary sources are viewed as particularly valuable because they are less likely to bear the thumbprints (e.g. opinions, biases, interpretations) of subsequent actors in history or historians. They come to us in relatively untainted form from the time and event being studied. As a result, primary sources are considered the purest form evidence by historians.



Secondary sources are constructed after the event being studied or from information reported. Secondary sources may also have considerable value to researchers. Historians will turn to secondary sources as they begin their investigations to find out what previous historians have already uncovered about an individual or event. Knowing what others have already found out allows current researchers to move beyond replication to build on previously established knowledge.

While primary and secondary both hold value, they also have limitations. Some primary sources are more reliable and credible than others. A marriage certificate is usually filled out and signed at the marriage ceremony or right afterwards. Someone later describing a wedding in a letter may mistakenly give an incorrect date for the wedding. If the wedding certificate has a different date, it is more trustworthy. That is, unless further research indicates that many wedding certificates from that church have the wrong wedding date on them. Now a historian might lean toward trusting the letter. In another example, historians have found two letters describing the weather at George Washington's first inauguration. One said it was sunny; the second said it was rainy. Since neither letter is more reliable than the other, we will never know for certain what the weather was. Logic, however, suggests that others would have commented on the weather if it had been miserable. But, history rests upon proof. Either primary sources support a conclusion or it is someone's guess or fiction. There is an old saying among historians, "No primary sources, no proof, no history."

Students often equate primary sources narrowly with documents. But, primary sources may also take the form of other types of artifacts. A brief walk across the site of Pickett's charge at Gettysburg enables a historian to sense the feel of that fateful day. Any student lifting a rifle used in the Revolutionary or Civil War will certainly appreciate how heavy it was to carry and to use. Riding in a covered wagon for a few hundred yards can make you realize how much the hope for a better future must have motivated many pioneers. It certainly was not the comfortable ride in a bouncing covered wagon! Modern researchers literally digging into outhouse pits near slave quarters have discovered that slaves ate much better than previously believed. The prevailing belief was that slaves were poorly fed, an accusation that often appeared in antislavery writings. Obviously, a slave owner's assertions that slaves were well fed was not thought to be reliable, since it seemed self-serving. Maybe neither source is perfectly reliable, the antislavery advocate nor the slave owner. The microscopic evidence from outhouse pits indicates that the typical slave's diet was more varied than previously thought. That is not the same as saying slavery was good or that it was not too bad. We still must weigh *all* of the available evidence about slavery.

A secondary source is one that someone has put together from primary sources to tell a



story.¹ A description of weddings in the colonial period would help a student understand weddings in colonial New Castle or Dover or Georgetown. That assumes weddings in Delaware were typical of those throughout the colonies. In combination with some primary documents, a secondary document will illustrate the larger picture, permitting a clearer understanding of the topic. After studying the life of soldiers in General George Washington's Revolutionary War army, a student would better understand a letter written in 1780 by a Delaware soldier to someone back home.

Unit Overview

Assessment: Students edit a manuscript for a children's book about Henry "Box" Brown's escape.

Instructional Strategies

Warm-Up: The Accident Investigation. *Est. 15 minutes.*

Lesson 1

- Strategy 1: Establishing Context for the Story of Henry Brown (mini-lecture). *Est. 5 minutes.*
- Strategy 2 and 3: Reading – Nailed and Mailed manuscript. Includes pre-reading prediction and identification of details (with jigsaw option). *Est. 30 minutes.*

Lesson 2

- Strategy 1: Introducing Disciplinary Literacy & Academic Vocabulary (mini-lecture). *Est. 5 minutes.*
- Strategy 2: Distinguishing primary v secondary sources. *Est. 20 minutes.*
- Strategy 3: Frayer models for primary and secondary sources. *Est. 15 minutes for two.*

Lesson 3

¹ More on primary sources and secondary sources

Primary sources lack perspective; they are commentary on the immediate event within that time period. One historian defined primary sources as "written or spoken by men and women enmeshed in the events of the past, rather than by later historians." The keyword is "enmeshed." The primary source is itself part of the event, person, times, etc., often by an eyewitness to the event. Secondary sources are derived from primary sources. This means that a secondary source, by definition, is hearsay evidence. A secondary source has digested primary sources to tell a larger story.

Newspapers present an example of defining the difference between primary sources and secondary sources. Almost everything in a newspaper is contemporary. But, sometimes something is published in a newspaper that is itself hearsay commentary, something based on primary sources, which makes it a secondary source. The kinds of essays and articles that we all frequently read in the Sunday newspaper magazines are secondary sources. One recent article told the story of the photographer who took the famous raising-the-flag picture in 1945 on Iwo Jima. It was one of dozens he took that day. It was not the original flag raising, and it was, to a certain extent, staged. The picture is a primary source. The story of the flag raising would have been a primary source in 1945, and newspaper accounts in 1945 would also be a primary source. But, his explanation of the events of that day now is a secondary source because it is an attempt, knowingly or unknowingly, to put the events of that day into perspective. The key difference is perspective, an attempt by the writer to judge where that event fits into the larger scheme of things for our time.



- Strategy 1: Source Sorting. [Est. 10 minutes.](#)
- Strategy 2: Modeling Corroboration. Close read Box Brown’s account of his escape. [Est. 30-35 minutes.](#)
- Strategy 3: Stations – Corroborating Accounts via Primary Sources. [Est. 50 minutes for four stations \(12 minutes per station\).](#)
- Strategy 4: Illustration analysis. [Est. 15 minutes.](#)

Summative Task: publication recommendation.

Stage 1 – Desired Results

What students will know, do, and understand

Delaware Content Standards

History Standard Two 4-5a: Students will identify artifacts and documents as either primary or secondary sources of historical data from which historical accounts are constructed.

Big Ideas

- Sources (primary and secondary)
- Evidence
- Credibility

Unit Enduring Understandings

- Many different types of sources exist to help us gather information about the past, such as artifacts and documents. Sources about the past need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.
- A historian must prove where the information can be found that is the basis for historical conclusions.
- Historians use strategies such as contextualizing, sourcing and corroborating to construct and evaluate accounts of the past.
- Credible historical accounts are constructed from information found in the available evidence and from inferences drawn logically from that evidence.

Unit Essential Questions

- What do the sources tell us? What are the important details in the [manuscript] story of Henry Brown? What do the docs (documents) say?
- What is the difference between a primary and secondary source and why might historians consider primary sources so valuable?
- What strategies do historians use to evaluate or create credible accounts of the past?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

- the difference between a primary and a secondary source.
- that credible accounts of the past are pieced together from historical evidence.
- Academic vocabulary: primary source, secondary source, evidence, corroborate, sourcing.



- Other vocabulary: edit, proofread, manuscript, considered, edited for publication, Underground Railroad.

Students will be able to...

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Use primary sources to evaluate and construct a credible account of the past.
- Provide text-based evidence to support their conclusions.
- Point to sources that support certain conclusions.
- Source and corroborate claims.



Common Core State Standards

Reading

Key Ideas

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1](#) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2](#) Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

Craft

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4](#) Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 5 topic or subject area*.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6](#) Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Integration

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7](#) Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9](#) Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Speaking and Listening

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2](#) Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.



Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not Desired Results are achieved

Assessment Task

The assessment for this unit is embedded in the unit itself and employs an error correction strategy.

Essential Questions Measured by the Assessment Task:

- What do the sources tell us?

Prior Knowledge	Once you understand how historians analyze evidence to evaluate & construct credible accounts of the past, you are qualified to use their strategies to make recommendations to history book publishers.
Problem	An aspiring children’s book author has submitted a manuscript (draft story) that she hopes to have published. The story appears to be good but <i>AccuPubs Publishing Co.</i> wants to make sure that the story is credible and engaging for the targeted audience (5 th graders). Your assignment as a member of an editorial team is to review the story and make a recommendation to AccuPubs. Should she publish the manuscript as drafted, with revisions, or not at all?
Role/ Perspective	You are an invited, guest editor for the children’s book publisher <i>AccuPubs</i> – a publication company that publishes nonfiction stories.
Product/ Performance	A detailed recommendation for the “ <i>Nailed and Mailed: the Story of Henry Brown</i> ” (text and visual) that is well supported by evidence. See AccuPubs Manuscript Recommendation form found on Resource #15 below on pp. 35-36.
Criteria for an Exemplary Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Errors in the manuscript, both text and visuals, are identified and corrected.Errors and corrections are grounded in evidence.Bases for corrections (sources) are identified/cited.Recommendation for publication flows logically from the edits and evidence.Appropriate & skillful use of academic vocabulary.

Differentiating the Product: A differentiated assessment option involves asking students to **rewrite** the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript in a manner that makes it more credible and engaging.



Rubric

Scoring Category	Score Point 1	Score Point 2	Score Point 3
Error correction (text)	Some of the manuscript's content errors are identified & corrected.	Most of the manuscript's content errors are identified & corrected.	All of the manuscript's content errors are identified & corrected.
Error correction (graphic/visual)	Some errors in the manuscript's graphic illustration are identified and corrected.	Most errors in the manuscript's graphic illustration are identified and corrected.	All errors in the manuscript's graphic illustration are identified and corrected.
Text-based evidence provided for corrections.	Student's corrections are based partially on the evidence (printed and graphic) and partially on " <i>fanciful elaboration.</i> "*	Student corrections are supported by the evidence (printed and graphic) but quotes are not or inconsistently provided.	Student consistently uses quotes from credible sources to support corrections to the manuscript.
Citations or use of sources	Some corrections cited.	Most corrections cited.	All corrections cited.
Recommendation and Support	Student's recommendation to the publisher is somewhat logical but insufficiently supported.	Student's recommendation to the publisher is logical and well supported.	Student's recommendation to the publisher is logical and superbly supported.

* a term coined by Bruce VanSledright & Jere Brophy. Fanciful elaboration refers to ideas or claims that students invent and that are not grounded in evidence at hand.

Total Score: _____

Above the Standard	13 - 15
Meets the Standard	11-12
Below the Standard	5-10



Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Design learning activities to align with Stage 1 and Stage 2 expectations

Introduce the Unit

Tell students that they will be spending the next few days engaging a **VERY** unusual story about a slave named Henry Brown (**do not refer to him as "Box" Brown at this point**) who lived over 150 years ago. They will also learn reading and thinking strategies used by historians, and then apply the strategies to figure out what happened to the slave so that they can effectively evaluate the quality of a book about Henry Brown.

The unit's warm-up is designed to get students thinking like historians [and develop disciplinary literacy] in preparation for transfer into the context of the slave story.

Warm-Up [Sourcing]

Project a copy of [Resource 1: Unit Warm-Up...The Accident Investigation](#). Pose the following scenario to the students: pretend that you are a police detective and you are asked to find out what caused a car accident that you did not witness. The accident occurred yesterday and involved "Person A." Ask students, *who would you want to interview if you could only interview one of the following (and why):*

- A. Henry – who was in the accident (other car) with Person A.
- B. William – who witnessed the accident, but was not part of it.
- C. Charles – who was not involved in the accident and did not witness it, but who did hear about it at a party shortly after the accident occurred.
- D. Ellen – who was not involved in the accident and did not witness it, but did read about it in a newspaper.

Give students time to share **and explain/defend** their choices with an elbow partner then share out with the whole group. [This has students thinking about the potential value of eyewitness accounts/primary sources generated by individuals who experience events up close.]

Field Testing Note: students chose Henry overwhelmingly. Their explanation was that Henry "was there." William (chosen by approximately 25% of the students) was also there but "may not have seen the accident."

Follow-up: ask students *if they had the opportunity to interview all four - Henry, William, Charles, and Ellen, would they? Why or why not? (or what might be an important benefit of interviewing all four of the individuals?)* [This has students thinking about the potential value of corroborating through multiple sources.]

Think-Pair-Share [Metacognition]: Ask students to think about the strategies that they used during the warm-up, discuss them with a partner, and then share out.



Debrief: introduce academic vocabulary.

- define sourcing - identifying the author (or source) of a document, object, speech etc. in the hope that information about the author helps you to either understand something about his or her bias, perspective etc. or make judgments about what the author or creator's work.
- define corroboration - comparing and contrasting information found in multiple sources as a way of making judgments about credibility. Ask students which is more likely to be believable - one person who says that something is true or three people who say that something is true.

Note that detectives and historians use the strategies of sourcing and corroboration as they try to figure out what happened in the past. Students should do the same thing once they begin proofreading and editing the story of Henry Brown.

Check for Understanding

- Ryan's teacher tells the class that they have to write a report about slavery. The teacher shows Ryan's class 3 books about slavery and explains that they have to read one of the books to gather information for their reports. Ryan immediately starts looking at who wrote each book.
- What is Ryan doing and why might it be a smart thing to do?

Rubric

2 - The student identifies "sourcing" and explains why it might be considered a good strategy.

1 - The student is either unable to identify "sourcing" or explain why it might be a good strategy.

0 - The student is unable to identify sourcing" or explain why it might be a good strategy.

Introduce the Task

An aspiring author has submitted a manuscript (draft book) tentatively to the *AccuPubs* Publishing Company. The book, if published, is written for 5th grade students. It describes the history of a slave whose name was Henry Brown. Brown escaped from slavery in 1849 after being held in bondage for over 33 years. The publisher is trying to decide whether or not to publish the manuscript and wants good feedback from the targeted audience i.e. 5th graders. Your task as 5th grade editors is to read the story, proofread/check it for any content errors [not concerned with mechanical errors in spelling or grammar at this time], then make a recommendation to *AccuPubs* using [Resource #15](#). Should *AccuPubs* publish it as it was submitted, only if it is revised, or not at all?

Emphasize that the manuscript is written as a non-fiction, history book. Therefore, the story should be rounded in the evidence and as accurate/credible as possible.



Lesson One

Essential Question

- What are the important details in the [manuscript] story of Henry Brown?

Instructional Strategies

Strategy 1: Gathering Information

Establishing Context for the Story of Henry Brown

Map Analysis – project the map on [Resource #2](#) to the students and make the following points:

- Slavery was legal in the southern United States, including Delaware, until 1865 (or in 1849 when Henry Brown escaped). States that permitted slavery are called “slave states.” Point to the slave states.
- Slavery was not legal in northern states after 1820. The states where slavery was illegal are called “free states.” Point to the free states.
- While slaves had some joy and control over some parts of their lives, slaves were largely controlled by others, not free, and typically hated slavery.
- Some (not many relative to the overall population) slaves ran away to free states using a network of escape routes that came to be known as the Underground Railroad. A slave who tried to run away from his or her owner could be punished severely. So, fewer slaves than many think took that risk.
- Slave owners hired people to keep a close eye on their slaves. They also hired people to capture slaves who ran away.
- Slaves who tried to run away had to be very secretive about it.

Teacher Note

Students sometimes hold misconceptions about the Underground Railroad, thinking it was entirely underground and always a railroad. Discuss the term “underground” as suggesting something that is done secretly or out of public view. And while railroads were sometimes used as vehicles for escape, there were quite a few alternatives such as boats, horses, carriages, wagons, and on foot.

Check for Understanding

- Place a check (✓) next the statements that are true (there may be more than one correct answer).

For the most part, slaves enjoyed their lives as slaves.

Slaves who tried to run away usually went from south to north.

Most slaves in the United States tried to run away.

Slavery did not end in the United States until 1865



Strategy 2: Extending and Refining

Pre-reading Prediction

Remind students of the task for the unit i.e. review a manuscript about Henry Brown that a new author is hoping to get published.

Project a copy of [Resource #14c](#) and ask students to use the visual to predict what the manuscript story *Nailed and Mailed* will be about.

Field Testing Note: many students predicted the story accurately. Two inaccurate but sensible predictions were that (a) Henry Brown escaped then was mailed back, and (b) one owner sold Brown and mailed him to his new owner.

Strategy 3: Application

Identifying Details

Distribute copies of [Resource #3: Manuscript - Nailed and Mailed](#) and have students read the manuscript.

Field Testing Note: some students read page 1 going across the top half of the page rather than reading entirely down the left hand column of text before moving to the right hand column of text. You may need to spend a few minutes explaining how to read the manuscript, i.e. down the left hand column before moving to the right hand column.

Distribute copies of [Resource #4: Identifying & Corroborating Details Tool](#) (no need to review the term “corroborate” at this point as it will be done in Lesson 2). Ask students to work with a “reading buddy” to complete Column 3 **basing their responses on what is in the text**, i.e. the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript. Break-up the task according to the following questions:

- Who & Where?
- When and Why?
- What?
- How?

Have students **underline** the sections of the text (manuscript) where the answers to the questions on [Resource #4](#) are found.

Later, when students compare the details in the manuscript with primary sources provided in Lesson 3 Activity III, they can highlight details in the primary sources that are at odds with details in the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript.

Field Testing Note (see question #2 on Resource 4). Some students identified “box” alone as the method of transportation used by Henry Brown. A text-based answer from the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript would be *Mr. Brown’s box was carried by wagon and railroad*.



Check for Understanding

- Bring students together to review the questions and answers on Resource #4. Ensure that there is a relatively high degree of agreement as to the responses before moving on to Lesson 2.
- Remind students of the summative task. They are to role play as editors for the manuscript Nailed and Mailed.



Lesson 2

Essential Questions

- What is the difference between a primary and secondary source and why might historians consider primary sources so valuable?
- What strategies do historians use to evaluate or create credible accounts of the past?

Instructional Strategies

Strategy 1: Gathering Information Developing Disciplinary Literacy

Tell students that you are now going to review/highlight strategies that historians use to evaluate stories about the past so that they can use the strategies to proofread the slave story manuscript. The strategies are (display and explain each individually to students):

1. **Evidence checking:** Historians look to evidence from the past to determine whether an account (or story) of the past is accurate or credible. They consider certain kinds of sources particularly valuable because, as we will see in the next lesson, they are produced by people who witnessed, experienced, or were very close to events being studied.
2. **Sourcing:** in this instance, the word *source* is used to describe the person who wrote or created the historical material being studied. *Sourcing* is the strategy of asking questions about the author/creator (“sources”) and date of historical materials. For example, who wrote this? What are the author’s biases? Was the author an eyewitness? From what perspective was the document written? When was it written (and why might this matter)? Was it written shortly after an event, long after the event...? Information about a source helps historians determine the value of the evidence.

Ask students to recall what they did during the warm-up activity: “sourcing” a list of people or things who might supply credible information.

3. **Corroborating:** checking to see if different historical materials provide the same or conflicting information. If multiple sources report the same details they are *usually* considered reliable (although multiple sources might report the same details but be inaccurate, untruthful, highly biased, or not in position to observe/know, etc.).



Strategy 2: Extending and Refining Distinguishing Primary and Secondary Sources²

Students will participate in an exercise in which they will be asked to describe an event from the standpoint of either observers or non-observers of events in order to develop an understanding of the difference between a primary and a secondary source. This lesson also draws students' attention to the strategy of corroborating.

Prior to class use a marker to place the numbers 1 or 2 on a class set of index cards. Label 3/4ths of the index cards with the number 1. The remaining quarter should be labeled with a 2.

Place students in groups of four. Give three students in each group index cards labeled number 1. One student in the group gets a card labeled number 2. Ask each student with the card labeled 2 to put their heads down, leave the room, or face the back of the room. The students with the number 1 cards should face the front of the room.

Spend approximately 15 seconds or so doing some routine activities such as walking over to your desk, picking up a pen, picking up then throwing out some trash, write then erase something on the board). Include at least one thing that is highly memorable and 1-2 actions that are not. For purposes of this particular unit (and understanding), you will want students to remember *most* (not all) of what you do so limit both the time and actions.³

Let approximately 15 seconds elapse. Ask the "Number 1" students to reproduce on their index cards everything that they "witnessed" from the moment the "Number 2" students put their heads down. Tell them to be as detailed as possible (e.g. what did you do, in what order, what did you pick up, where did you put them, what color was the pencil, what specific trash did you throw out). Their task is to reproduce in precise detail what they saw...and as fully and accurately as possible.

Give the "Number 1" students a few minutes to complete their accounts. Once they have finished, have them pass their index cards to the "Number 2" student in their groups and ask the #2s to construct an account of what you did while their heads were down. The Number 2 students' accounts should be based on what the Number 1s observed and wrote on their index cards. Give the "Number 2s" a few minutes to write down their version of what happened.

Invite some of the "Number 2s" to share their accounts. Draw attention to the similarities and differences among the "Number 2" accounts.

² The Library of Congress offers an [online Teaching with Primary Sources professional development module](#) that examines differences between primary and secondary sources and offers an activity you might use with students. The module also offers a downloadable "Mindwalk" activity that has students keep records on their daily encounters with primary and secondary sources and a check for understanding that presents examples of primary and secondary sources and asks viewers to distinguish them. Click the link above and go to Chapter 2.

³ An alternative to "doing some routine activities" would be to project [Resource #16](#) then ask the students assigned to "Number 1" to reproduce it as accurately as possible. The "Number 1s" would then pass their reproductions onto the "Number 2s." Directions provided on Resource #16.



Strategy 3: Application

Frayer Models

Guide students through the Frayer Models for primary and secondary sources found in [Resources #5 and 6](#).

Discussion

- What made the "Number 1" accounts different from the "Number 2" accounts or at least "close" to the event? [Number 1s were eyewitnesses to what happened.]
- Which index cards should be considered primary sources? [#1s]
- Which index cards should be considered secondary sources? [#2s]
- Which accounts are likely to be considered the most valuable sources of information by those who are given the task of describing the events of the past – the #1 or #2 accounts? Why? [#1s because they either witnessed what happened, were very close in time to it, or had the opportunity to do so.]
- Were all of the "Number 1" accounts exactly the same? [probably not] If not, why not? [Eyewitnesses sometimes disagree on what they saw for a variety of reasons e.g. they were only attentive part of the time, were biased, viewed the event from different angles or perspectives, were not fully in a position to observe everything etc.]
- If a person [detective, historian] is trying to figure out what happened in the past, what strategy does this exercise suggest he or she should use? [Discuss "corroboration" with students, i.e. searching for what multiple documents agree upon as corroboration is a key strategy used by historians and an element of historical literacy.]

At the 5th grade level, students are expected to understand that primary sources are historical materials created by those who witnessed or experienced the event or conditions that a person is investigating.

Primary sources usually date back to the time of the event (but can include materials such as autobiographies, memoirs, or oral histories recorded after an event). Ultimately (but not necessarily in 5th grade), students should learn that it is the question driving an investigation that determines whether any historical material is a primary source.

Secondary Sources are historical materials created after an event by those who did not experience the events or conditions being investigated.

Misconception alert: many people think that primary sources are **always** better than secondary sources, but this exercise can show that there are issues with most sources (there may have even been differences in some of the #1 accounts). Most sources have issues and value to historians in different ways.

Field Testing Notes: Activities such as those found above are quite effective but may lead



to narrow definitions of primary sources. Primary sources are not limited to documents. They include a whole range of items, including dress, furniture, devices, watches, appliances, trash, bones, pottery etc.

This lesson also brings to light one of several challenges associated with distinguishing primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are usually thought of as sources that date back to the time in which an event being studied occurred. However, what if a source dates back to a time when an event occurred, but the individual who produced the document was not there to witness the event being studied? Students and others can construct compelling arguments for either type of source and teachers should accept defenses that are compelling.

Check for Understanding

- What is the difference between a primary and secondary source? Use an example to support your answer.
- Why might historians consider primary sources so valuable?

Rubric for #1

2 – This response gives a valid difference with an accurate and relevant example.

1 – This response gives a valid difference with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no example.

0 – Invalid difference.



Lesson Three

Essential Question

- What do the docs (documents) say?

Instructional Strategies

Introduction

Tell students that they will now have an opportunity to further demonstrate their understanding of the differences between primary and secondary sources by sorting a list of sources into the appropriate categories, i.e. primary or secondary.

Strategy 1: Gathering Information Source Sorting

Distribute copies of [Resource #7a: Source Sorting](#).⁴ Read the directions as students follow along. Anticipate that there may be reasonable disagreement over the classification of some sources on the list. Even historians might disagree. You will have to consider placements (primary or secondary) that are well-defended.

Few would challenge the conclusion that sources A, D, G, and I are primary sources. Sources E, F, & J on the other hand, are clearly secondary sources. The rest are open to some interesting debate, but again the key determinant is what question is the researcher asking. There may be very interesting and fruitful discussions as the students categorize and “source” the documents (e.g., ask *when was each created*, if the author was an eyewitness, why the author *might* misrepresent what happened etc.). This skill will lead to a middle-school level ability to evaluate the credibility of sources.

Strategy 2: Extending and Refining Modeling Corroboration

Remind students of the overarching task for this unit - to review the manuscript *Nailed and Mailed* for content errors. In this strategy, students will circulate through stations to corroborate the information in the manuscript using sources that they just sorted into the primary source column. Recall how historians consider primary sources to be the purest form of evidence when they are constructing or reviewing stories about the past.

Note to Teacher

The question that a historian is asking plays a significant role in determining whether a historical material is a primary source. For example, a student might be asked if a children’s book is a primary or secondary source.

If a historian is asking *what children’s books were communicating about Box Brown in the middle of the 19th Century*, the children’s book would definitely be a primary source.

On the other hand, if the historian is asking how Henry Brown escaped from slavery, a children’s book written by someone who did not experience the escape and who relied on others’ accounts would not be viewed as a primary source.

⁴ [Resource 7b](#) offers the same activity but in format that allows for manipulation.



Play the adapted song "[What Does the Box Say?](#)"⁵ Students will begin corroborating the story *Nailed and Mailed* using primary source evidence in Strategy 3. The process of corroborating begins with an analysis of Henry Brown's description of his escape written by himself. Hence, the adapted song asks "What Does the Box Say (happened)?"

Distribute copies of [Resource #9 – Henry Brown's Escape written by Himself](#). Guide students through a close reading of the excerpts from Henry Brown's account. Be sure to model sourcing before reading Brown's account (who wrote it, when was it written or published, is this a valuable source ... why or why not, are there any potential issues to consider based on the facts that Henry Brown himself wrote it and that it was published in 1851?).

Suggested Close Read Steps:

1. Teacher reads text aloud.
2. Read text a second time using the think-aloud strategy, modeling what good readers do (e.g. pause at challenging vocabulary to look up words or figure definitions out through context, re-read difficult passages).
3. Ask text based questions. For example,
 - a. What are the major similarities and differences between Brown's account of his escape and Francis Abagnail's *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript? Have students **highlight** details that conflict with what they read in the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript.
 - b. Do the details in Brown's account support the drawing found in the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript?
4. Complete a brief writing assignment. For example, have students respond in writing to prompts such as:
 - a. Does the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript appear (at this point) to provide readers with a credible account of Henry Brown's escape? Explain why or why not.
 - b. Why might it be important to question what you read in history books?
 - c. What is corroboration and why might it be an important strategy for those who read history?

Have students record text based responses to questions in Column 4 of [Resource #4](#) as they read and listen to Henry Brown's own account of his escape which may be found on [Resource #9](#). And, they should use the numbers associated with each source on the bottom of [Resource #4](#) to cite or document the information they place in Column 4.

Field Testing Note: Differentiation – [Resource #4](#)

Some grade 5 teachers attending a workshop on this unit recommended a differentiated alternative to Resource #4 that would allow students to enter responses based on the different sources in different columns rather than placing all of the

⁵ See [Resource #8](#) for the adapted lyrics. Click [here](#) for a video recording of the actual song, *What does the Fox Say?*



responses in Column 4. [Resource #4b](#) offers a chart that honors this recommendation. The downside will be the amount of copying required as the differentiated chart expands from 2 pages to 6 pages.

Debrief

- Does Henry Brown’s account of his own escape corroborate details that you read in the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript?

Check for Understanding

- Explain what corroborating is and why it is an important thing to do when trying to figure out what happened in the past.

Rubric

2 = corroborating is defined accurately with a sound rationale for its use.

1 = either the definition is inaccurate or the rationale is unsound.

0 = the definition is inaccurate and the rationale is unsound.

Strategy 3: Extending and Refining Corroborating Accounts at Archive Stations

Launch this strategy by asking –

- Are there any reasons why Henry Brown’s own account of his escape might be questioned? ([He may want to embellish it to sell more books](#)).
- What strategy do historians use to check whether a claim is credible or accurate ([corroborating](#))?
- Would a good investigator check Brown’s story? Why or why not?

Set up “Archive Stations” around the room and place one of the documents listed below at each of the stations. Place students in small, mixed ability groups. Tell students that they will circulate through centers analyzing primary source evidence. Briefly describe the four primary sources that they will analyze.

1. [Resource #10](#): Letter from J.M. McKim to Sydney Howard Gay, March 26, 1849. McKim was one of the men who was there in Philadelphia when Henry Brown’s box arrived on March 24, 1849. Available as a podcast/slide show [here](#) (approximately 3:00).
2. [Resource # 11](#): *New England Evangelist*. Publication of the New England Anti Slavery Society. June 7, 1849 Henry Brown’s escape (written in 1849). **Reading.**
3. [Resource #12](#): Diary of Charles Morgan, April 4, 1849. Morgan heard about Henry Brown’s escape while at a dinner then went home that same night and wrote what he heard in his diary (written in 1849). **Reading.**



4. **Resource #13:** William Still (1872). *The Underground Rail Road; A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letter, &c, Narrating the Hardships Hair-breadth Escapes and Deathe Struggles of the Slaves in their efforts for Freedom as related by Themselves and Others, or Witnessed by the Author...* " Still was also there when Brown arrived in his box on March 24, 1849. Still wrote down the details of stories about slaves who came through the Philadelphia Abolitionist Society after escaping on the Underground Railroad. Note that his accounts were not published until 1872, probably because he did not want people to find out how slaves were escaping. We do not know when Still actually wrote his description of Brown's escape and arrival in Philadelphia. Available as a podcast/slide show [here](#) (approximately 4:00).

Generally, the question that students should be considering as they move through the centers trying to corroborate the details in *Nailed and Mailed* is...

Is Nailed and Mailed a credible and accurate history of Henry Brown's escape based on the available evidence?

What evidence do they have for their conclusions?

Students should proofread [for content errors] the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript as they circulate through the centers using details found in the primary sources.

Have them record and cite their text based responses on **Resource #4**, Column 4 or Columns 5-8 on differentiated **Resource #4b**. They should also continue **highlighting** details that conflict with the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript.

Check for Understanding

- What did you learn from the documents?
- What strategies do historians use to construct or review accounts of the past (e.g. sourcing, corroborating)? Which did you use?
- What conclusions did you draw about the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript?

Strategy 4: Application

Illustration Analyses

Distribute copies of **Resource Packet #14** - Images of Henry Brown's arrival in Philadelphia. Have students work in groups of 2-4 to analyze the visuals.

The publisher of *Nailed and Mailed* is allowing its author to include one visual on page 2 of the manuscript. The visual that the author selected appears on the manuscript. It illustrates Henry Brown's arrival in Philadelphia. The documents that students read and heard at the four stations in Activity IV offered opportunities to corroborate the credibility of the visual selected by the author.

Ask students, Do the documents suggest that the visual on the *Nailed and Mailed* manuscript is the best visual to use? Or, is a different one provided in Packet #14 better?

Emphasize that one of the students' tasks will be to recommend one (and one only) visual



to include in the *Nailed and Mailed* book if they decide to recommend it for publication.

Field Test Note: some students are prone to make judgments about the visuals using ideas not grounded in the text evidence. In other words, their minds drift toward what researcher Bruce VanSledright labeled “fanciful elaborations.”

Remind students that they just examined primary sources accounts of Brown’s arrival and that judgments about the quality of images should be tethered the documentary (text) evidence.

During field testing, a number of students raised questions about the clothes that Henry Brown would have been wearing as some images showing him in a suit. We could find no documents describing what Brown may have been wearing. There are reasonable arguments for why he would (e.g., disguise and retain most valued property) and would not be wearing “nice” clothes (e.g., he was a slave and may not have owned a suit and the journey would certainly recommend comfortable clothing).

Debrief

Bring the students back to a whole group setting and have them share their conclusions about the images. Questions might include:

- Which image did you decide best illustrated Henry Brown’s arrival in Philadelphia?
- What strategies did you use to draw your conclusions?
- Which documentary (primary source texts analyzed in Strategy 3) led you to your conclusions?

Check for Understanding

- Most students read history books and just accept what the words or images suggest is true. What are two things that good readers should do as they read history?

Rubric

- 2 - Student recommends two practices that good readers of history should employ.
- 1 - Student recommends one practice that good readers of history should employ.
- 0 - Student fails to make sound recommendations.

Summative Assessment

- Review the performance task and rubric for this unit.



- Distribute copies of [Resource #15](#) and have students complete their recommendations.

Extensions

- Read “*Henry’s Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad*” by Ellen Levine and have students evaluate this secondary source for credibility.
- Show the video entitled “*The Journey of Henry Box Brown*” starring Alfre Woodard (Sweet Blackberry 2005 production) and have students evaluate this secondary source for credibility.

Bibliography

Ernest, John ed. (2008) *Narrative of the Life of Henry Box Brown – Written by Himself*. The University of North Carolina Press. Chapel Hill.

Ruggles, Jeffrey (2003). *The Unboxing of Henry Brown*. The Library of Virginia. Richmond.

Stearns, Charles and Box Brown (reprint 2011, original 1849). *Narrative Of Henry Box Brown: Who Escaped From Slavery Enclosed In A Box Three Feet Long And Two Wide And Two And A Half High (reprint)*. Nabu Press.

Additional Resources to Consider

Dickinson College’s Henry Box Brown Exhibit Gallery at <http://housedivided.dickinson.edu/exhibits/>

Coming Soon: Box Brown movie described at <http://robunderhill.wix.com/blackbox#!>



Resource 1: Unit Warm-Up

Pretend that you are a police detective and you are asked to find out what caused a car accident that you did not witness. The accident occurred yesterday and involved "Person A." **Who** would you want to interview if you could only interview one of the following and **why**?



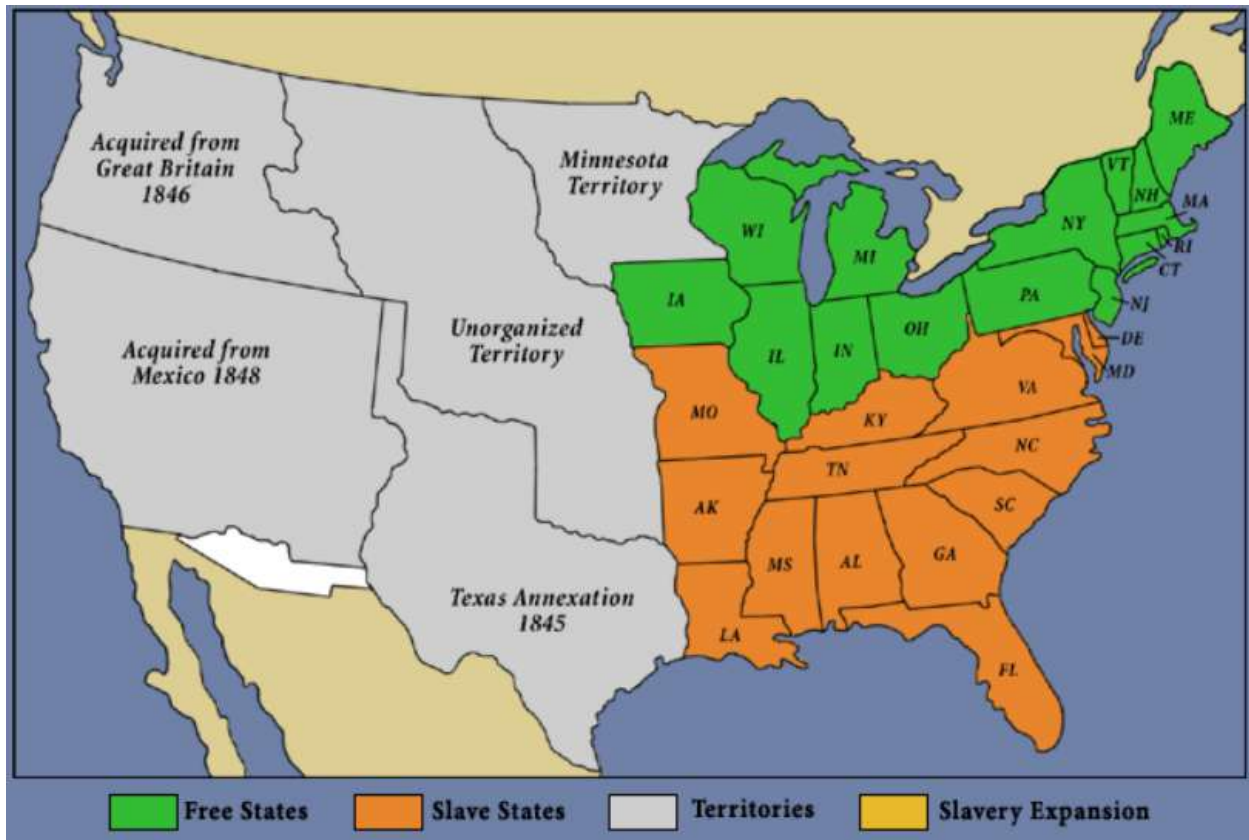
Henry – who was in the accident with Person A.

William – who witnessed the accident but was not part of it.

Charles – who was not involved in the accident and did not witness it but who did hear about it at a party shortly after the accident occurred.

Ellen - was not involved in the accident and did not witness it but did read about it in a newspaper.

Resource # 2: Map of Slavery in the United States c. 1849.



Accessed at <http://www.mrlincolnanfreedom.org/map/1848.html>

Nailed and Mailed:

The Incredible Story of Henry Brown

Manuscript by Francis Abagnail

Sometimes a story is so remarkable that readers wonder if it is actually true. The story you are about to read may turn out to be one of them. It is about a slave who escaped in the year 1849.

Background

Slavery was legal in the United States up until 1865. Although there were private moments when slaves found joy in their lives, life as a slave was overwhelmingly difficult. Imagine if you had to live a life in which someone (your “owner”) could always tell you what you had to do. And, he could take away anything you had, including your family! That’s right, a slaveowner could buy and sell you to one person and the rest of your family to someone else. I suspect that you would probably spend every second of your life wishing that you were free.

A Turning Point

Henry Brown was a slave in a small town just outside of Richmond, Virginia. He hated slavery and thought constantly about running away. But, he had a family that he did not want to leave. Then something terrible

happened. One day, Henry’s wife Nancy and their three children (she was pregnant with a fourth) were sold to another slaveowner who took them to North Carolina.

Henry was devastated. This terrible event marked a turning point for Brown. He decided that he would runaway from Virginia to a place where slavery was not legal.

It was not common for slaves to runaway but, over the decades, those who did created a large network of escape routes that is now known as the Underground Railroad. Some people think that the Underground Railroad was actually a railroad and actually underground. Although some slaves did escape on trains, the Underground Railroad was not really a railroad nor was it underground. Rather, the word “underground” is often used to describe something that is done in a secret way so that people cannot see what is going on. The term Underground Railroad actually refers to *any* method of escape used by a slave. Some abolitionists helped slaves escape - sometimes on foot, sometimes on railroad cars or boats to the free states. Others escaped using horses or wagons.



A “Man of Invention”

But Henry Brown was not an ordinary thinker. He was what one writer described as a “man of invention.”

Henry was a relatively small man standing no more than 5 feet tall and weighing only 115

Henry was a relatively small man standing no more than 5 feet tall and weighing only 115

pounds. As difficult as it is to believe, Brown came up with an idea that people then and now believe is the most amazing story in the history of the Underground Railroad. He actually had himself *nailed and mailed* in a box to freedom. How did he do this?

Brown got help from two men in Richmond who arranged for abolitionists in Philadelphia (a free city) to receive the box. They also helped Henry nail up the box once he got inside. Additionally, Henry paid one of the men to escort the box and make sure that it was handled with care once he was shipped. Can you imagine what it would be like to be inside a box for a long time bouncing around – sometimes head up, sometimes head down?

Brown knew people in his community that he trusted. He worked with a carpenter to create a box into which he could fit. It was 3 ft, 11 inches wide; 2 feet, 10 inches high, and 3 feet; and 2 inches deep. Together with his friends, Brown made arrangements with abolitionists in Philadelphia to expect delivery of Brown in his box. They wrote the following on the top of the box.

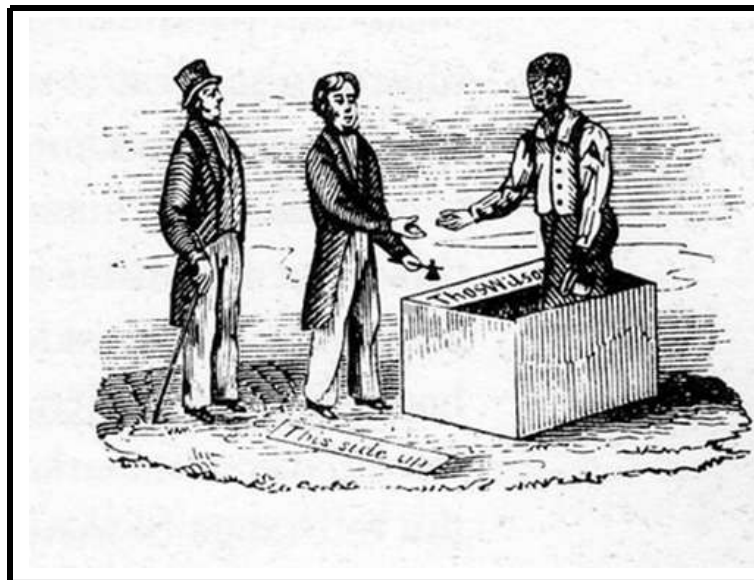
*“Mr. William Still
3rd & Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

*Handle with Care
This side up”*

The Escape

On March 22, 1849, Brown entered his box with no food or water and only one small hole drilled into the box for air to begin his 150 mile journey to freedom. To make his journey more comfortable, Brown put a soft material called “baize” around the inside of the box to cushion himself against bumps.

The man who was supposed to escort Henry in his box chickened out at the last minute. The result - Brown traveled upside down the entire 150 miles from Richmond to Philadelphia by wagon and railroad! His grueling journey took over two days! There were times when he thought he was going to die but the only physical pain he suffered was a headache.



The headache got worse after Brown was delivered in the box to the wrong address.

Freedom

When Henry finally arrived in the city of Philadelphia’s Abolitionist office on March 25, 1849, two men were there to greet him. One looked down at the box before opening it, tapped on it several times, and asked, “all right?” Brown responded, “Not really but I am OK.” They helped Henry Brown out of the Box and the first thing he did was sing a song that began with the following words:

*I waited patiently, I waited patiently
for the Lord, for the Lord;
And he inclined unto me, and heard
my calling...*

Henry Brown is now known as Henry “Box” Brown – the slave who was *nailed and mailed* to freedom. Pretty incredible story, huh?

Resource #4

Identifying & Corroborating Details Tool

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3 According to the <i>Nailed and Mailed Manuscript</i>	Column 4 According to Other Sources -use quotes from the documents and write the source number(s) next to each quote
Who?	1 - Who greeted Henry Brown they opened up his box?		
What?	2 - What methods of transportation did Henry Brown use to escape?		
	3 - What did Henry Brown say (not sing) when they opened up his box?		
	4 - What was written on Henry Brown's box?		
When?	5 - When (on what date) did Henry Brown leave on his famous trip?		
	6 - On what date did Henry Brown arrive in the free state?		

Where?	7 - Where did Henry Brown leave from?		
	8 - Where did Henry Brown end his famous journey?		
Why?	9 - Why did Henry Brown run away?		
How?	10 - How did Henry Brown escape?		
	11 - How large was Henry Brown (height & weight)?		
	12 - How large was the famous box in which Henry Brown traveled?		
	13 - How many miles did Henry Brown travel?		
	14 - How many days or hours did Brown's trip take?		

Sources: use the numbers below to cite your sources in column 4 above.

5. Henry Brown (1851). *Narrative of the Life of Henry Brown written by Himself*. Printed by Lee and Glynn, 8, Cannon Street. Manchester.
6. Letter from J.M. McKim to Sydney Howard Gay, March 26, 1849.
7. *New England Evangelist*. Publication of the New England Anti Slavery Society. June 7, 1849 Henry Brown's escape (written in 1849).
8. Diary of Charles Waln Morgan, April 4, 1849. . a man who heard about Henry Brown's escape while at a dinner (written in 1849).
9. William Still (1872). *The Underground Rail Road; A Record of Facts, Authentic Narratives, Letter, &c, Narrating the Hardships Hair-breadth Escapes and Death Struggles of the Slaves in their efforts for Freedom as related by Themselves and Others, or Witnessed by the Author...*"

Resource # 4b (Differentiated Version)

Identifying & Corroborating Details Tool

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3 According to the <i>Nailed and Mailed Manuscript</i>	Column 4 According to Henry Brown <i>“Narrative of the Life of Henry Brown written by Himself.” (1851)</i>
Who?	1 - Who greeted Henry Brown they opened up his box?		
What?	2 - What methods of transportation did Henry Brown use to escape?		
	3 - What did Henry Brown say (not sing) when they opened up his box?		
	4 - What was written on Henry Brown’s box?		
When?	5 - When (on what date) did Henry Brown leave on his famous trip?		

	6 - On what date did Henry Brown arrive in the free state?		
Where?	7 - Where did Henry Brown leave from?		
	8 - Where did Henry Brown end his famous journey?		
Why?	9 - Why did Henry Brown run away?		
How?	10 - How did Henry Brown escape?		
	11 - How large was Henry Brown (height & weight)?		
	12 - How large was the famous box in which Henry Brown traveled?		
	13 - How many miles did Henry Brown travel?		
	14 - How many days or hours did Brown's trip take?		

Resource # 4b (Differentiated Version)

Identifying & Corroborating Details Tool

<p>Column 2</p>	<p>Column 5 According to <i>J.M. McKim</i> Letter to Sydney Howard Gay (March 26, 1849).</p>	<p>Column 6 According to <i>New England Evangelist</i> “<i>New England Evangelist</i> (June 7, 1849).</p>
<p>1 - Who greeted Henry Brown they opened up his box?</p>		
<p>2 - What methods of transportation did Henry Brown use to escape?</p>		
<p>3 - What did Henry Brown say (not sing) when they opened up his box?</p>		
<p>4 - What was written on Henry Brown’s box?</p>		
<p>5 - When (on what date) did Henry Brown leave on his famous trip?</p>		
<p>6 - On what date did Henry Brown arrive in</p>		

the free state?		
7 - Where did Henry Brown leave from?		
8 - Where did Henry Brown end his famous journey?		
9 - Why did Henry Brown run away?		
10 - How did Henry Brown escape?		
11 - How large was Henry Brown (height & weight)?		
12 - How large was the famous box in which Henry Brown traveled?		
13 - How many miles did Henry Brown travel?		
14 - How many days or hours did Brown's trip take?		

Resource # 4b (Differentiated Version)

Identifying & Corroborating Details Tool

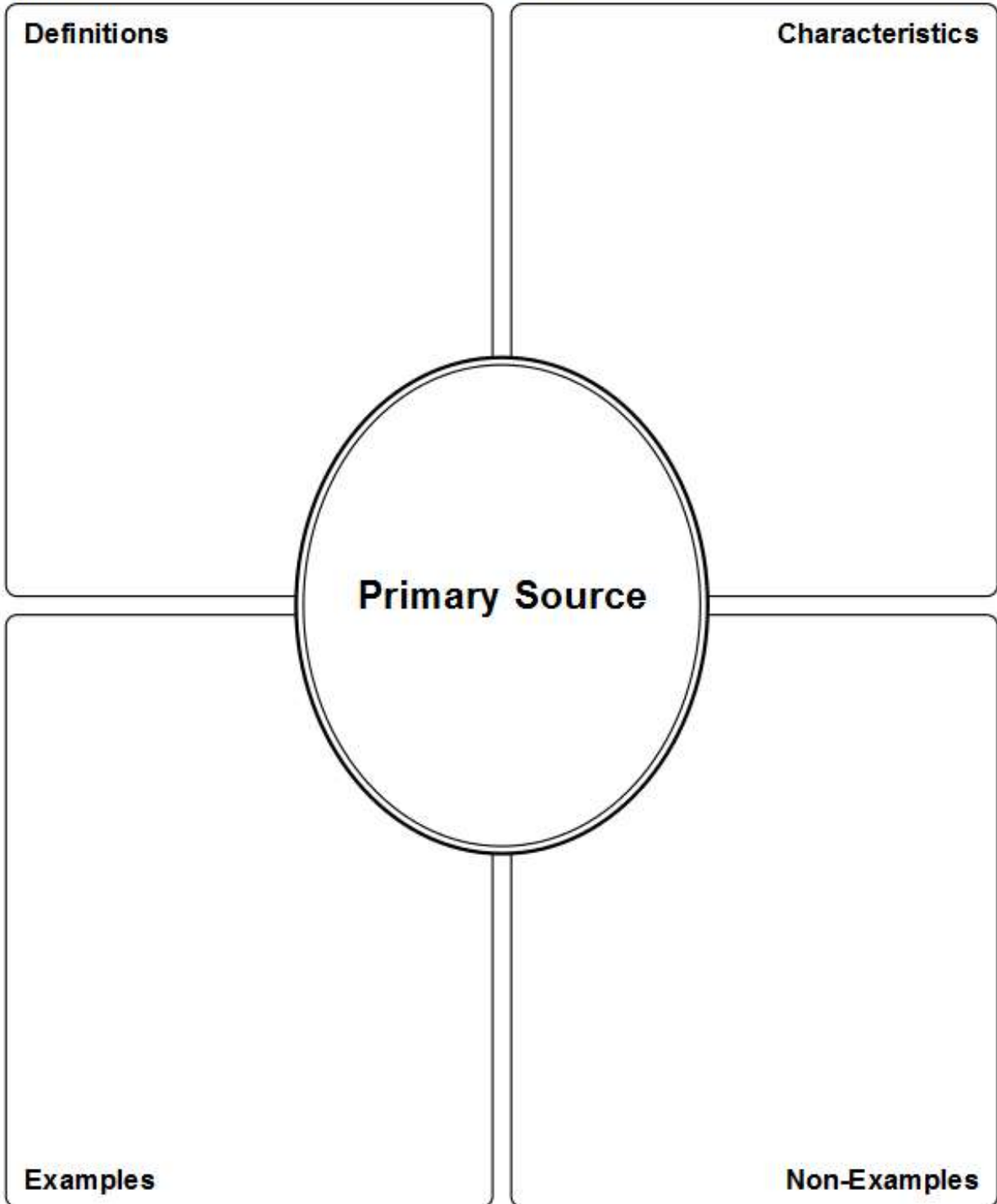
<p>Column 2</p>	<p>Column 7 According to <i>Charles Morgan</i> Diary of Charles Waln Morgan (April 4, 1849).</p>	<p>Column 8 According to William Still "The Underground Rail Road" (published 1872).</p>
<p>1 - Who greeted Henry Brown they opened up his box?</p>		
<p>2 - What methods of transportation did Henry Brown use to escape?</p>		
<p>3 - What did Henry Brown say (not sing) when they opened up his box?</p>		
<p>4 - What was written on Henry Brown's box?</p>		
<p>5 - When (on what date) did Henry Brown leave on his famous trip?</p>		

6 - On what date did Henry Brown arrive in the free state?		
7 - Where did Henry Brown leave from?		
8 - Where did Henry Brown end his famous journey?		
9 - Why did Henry Brown run away?		
10 - How did Henry Brown escape?		
11 - How large was Henry Brown (height & weight)?		
12 - How large was the famous box in which Henry Brown traveled?		
13 - How many miles did Henry Brown travel?		
14 - How many days or hours did Brown's trip take?		

Resource #5

Distinguishing Primary from Secondary Sources

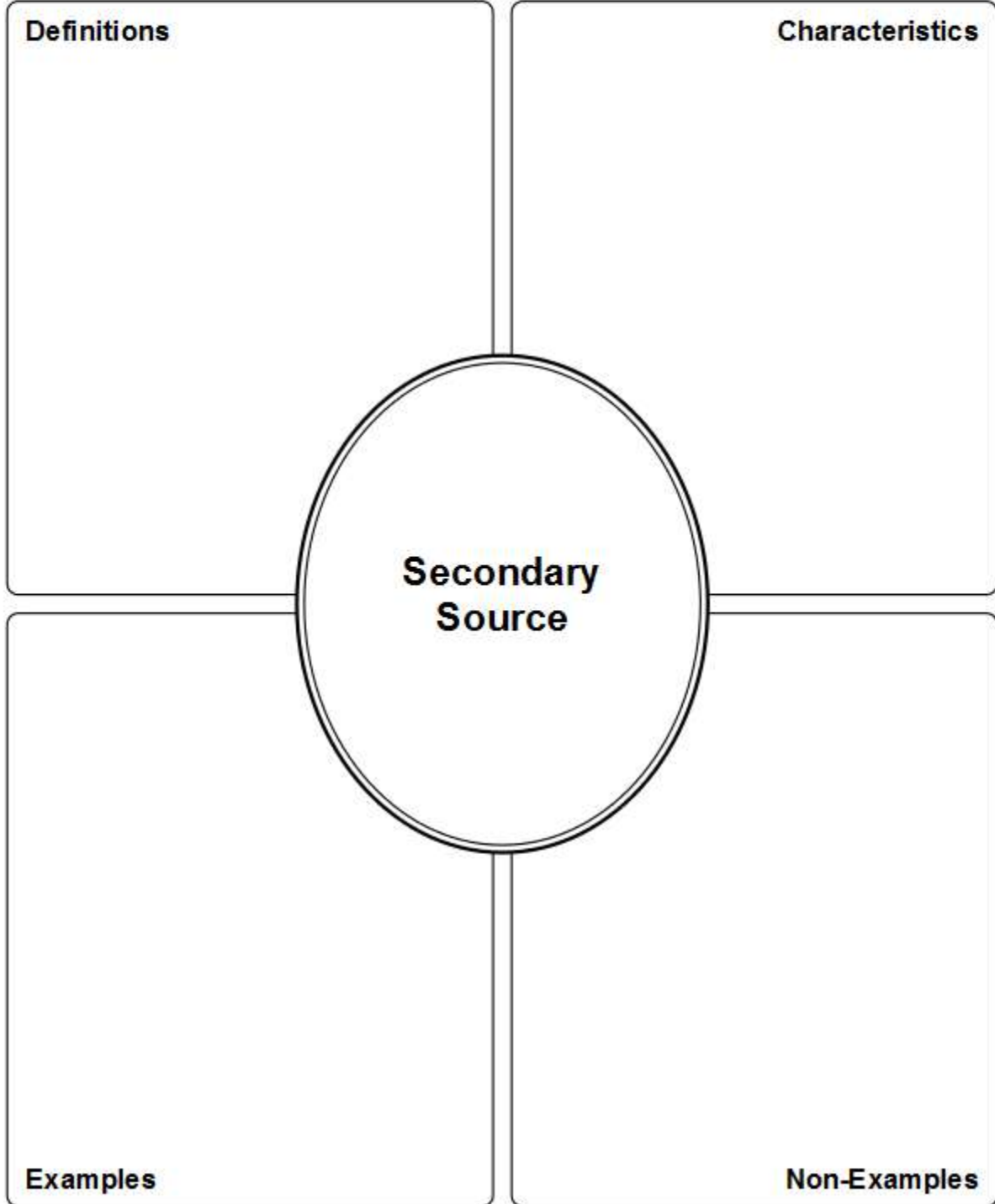
Name: _____ Date: _____



Resource #6

Distinguishing Primary from Secondary Sources

Name: _____ Date: _____



Resource # 7: Source Sorter

Directions:

1. Read the description of each source (of information) in the middle column, decide which are primary sources and which are secondary. Draw a line from the source into the column in which it belongs.
2. Rank each primary and secondary source on a scale of 1-5 depending on how valuable you think it will be in helping you know about Henry Brown's escape (e.g. 1 = not very useful; 5 = very useful). Put the rank number in column 1 or 3 next to each arrow. See "A" for an example.

Primary Source – historical materials that date back to the time when an event occurred. Often created by someone who witnessed, experienced, or was around at the time of the event.

Secondary Source - historical materials created *after* an event by those who did not experience the events or conditions being investigated.

Is it a Primary Source?	Source	Is it a Secondary Source?
	<p>A. Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who interviewed Henry Brown (written in 1849).</p> <p>B. Children's Story about Henry Brown (written in 1849).</p> <p>C. Diary of a man who heard about Henry Brown's escape while at a dinner (written in 1849).</p> <p>D. Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who was there when Henry Brown arrived in the land of freedom (published in 1872).</p> <p>E. A children's story of Henry Brown's escape (written in 2007).</p> <p>F. A children's cartoon video of Henry Brown's escape (released in 2005).</p> <p>G. Description of Henry Brown's escape by Henry Brown himself (written in 1851).</p> <p>H. Newspaper article about Henry Brown's escape (written in 1849).</p> <p>I. Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who was there when Henry Brown arrived in the land of freedom (written March 26, 1849).</p> <p>J. Francis Ababnail's <i>Nailed and Mailed</i> manuscript.</p>	

Resource #7b: Source Sorting (Manipulative Option)

Directions:

- A. Cut the information in the cells below into 10 individual cards.
- B. Sort the cards into two columns of Primary Source and Secondary Source.

<p><u>A</u> Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who interviewed Henry Brown (written in 1849).</p>	<p><u>F</u> A children's cartoon video of Henry Brown's escape (released in 2005).</p>
<p><u>B</u> A children's story of Henry Brown's escape (written in 2007).</p>	<p><u>G</u> Description of Henry Brown's escape by Henry Brown himself (written in 1851).</p>
<p><u>C</u> Diary of a man who heard about Henry Brown's escape while at a dinner (written in 1849).</p>	<p><u>H</u> Newspaper article about Henry Brown's escape (written in 1849).</p>
<p><u>D</u> Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who was there when Henry Brown arrived in the land of freedom (published in 1872).</p>	<p><u>I</u> Description of Henry Brown's escape written by a man who was there when Henry Brown arrived in the land of freedom (written March 26, 1849).</p>
<p><u>E</u> A children's story of Henry Brown's escape (written in 2007).</p>	<p><u>J</u> Francis Abagnail's <i>Nailed and Mailed</i> manuscript.</p>

Resource #8: Adapted Lyrics (by Fran O'Malley) -What does the Box say?

History

As you will see.

Is not what you

Thought it would be.

What you read's,

Not always true.

But some will never ever know.

Did Henry Brown,

Get in a box?

Upside down; cry ow, ow, ow?

There's one source,

That just may show.

What did the "Box" say?

Read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read.

Close, close, close, close, close, close, close, close.

Ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask.

What the Box say?

Read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read, read.

Check, check, check, check, check, check, check, check.

Ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask, ask.

What the Box say?

Just how far,

did Brown go?

Was the trip

fast or slow?

How can we

ever know?

What the "Box" say?

This, this, this, this, this, this, this, this.

Or, that, that, that, that, that, that, that, that.

Which, which, which, which, which, which, which...?

What did the Box say?

Resource # 9: [excerpts] Henry Brown's Account of His Escape written by Himself.

One day, while I was at work, and my thoughts were eagerly feasting upon the idea of freedom...the idea suddenly flashed across my mind of shutting myself up in a box, and getting myself **conveyed** as dry goods to a free state.

I went to my friend Dr. Smith and...we agreed to have it [the plan] put at once into execution...**buoyed** up by the **prospect** of freedom and increased hatred to slavery I was willing to dare even death...

It being still necessary to have the assistance of the store-keeper, to see that the box was kept in its right position on its passage, I then went to let him know my intention, but he said although he was willing to serve me in any way he could, he did not think I could live in a box for so long a time as would be necessary to convey me to Philadelphia, but as I had already made up my mind, he **consented** to accompany me and keep the box right all the way.

My next object was to **procure** a box, and with the assistance of a carpenter that was very soon accomplished, and taken to the place where the packing was to be performed. There being no time to be lost, the store-keeper, Dr. Smith, and myself, agreed to meet next morning at four o'clock, in order to get the box ready for the express train.

The box which I had procured was three feet one inch wide, two feet six inches high, and two feet wide: and on the morning of the 29th day of March, 1849, I went into the box--having previously bored three **gimlet** holes opposite my face, for air, and provided myself with a **bladder** of water, both for the purpose of quenching my thirst and for wetting my face, should I feel getting faint. I took the gimlet also with me, in order that I might bore more holes if I found I had not sufficient air.

...my friends nailed down the lid and had me **conveyed** to the Express Office, which was about a mile distant from the place where I was packed. I had no sooner arrived at the office than I was turned heels up, while some person nailed something on the end of the box. I was then put upon a waggon and driven off to the depôt with my head down, and I had no sooner arrived at the depôt, than the man who drove the waggon tumbled me roughly into the baggage car, where, however, I happened to fall on my right side.

The next place we arrived at was Potomac Creek, where the baggage had to be removed from the cars, to be put on board the **steamer**; where I was again placed with my head down, and in this dreadful position had to remain nearly an hour and a half, which, from the sufferings I had thus to endure, seemed like an age to me, but I was forgetting the battle of liberty, and I was resolved to conquer or die. I felt my eyes swelling as if they would burst from their sockets; and the veins on my temples were dreadfully **distended** with pressure of blood upon my head. ...but, I resolved to submit to the will of God, who alone, was able to deliver me.

The next place at which we arrived was the city of Washington, where I was taken from the steam-boat, and again placed upon a waggon and carried to the depôt right side up with care; but when the driver arrived at the depôt I heard him call for some person to help to take the box off the waggon, and some one answered him to the effect that he might throw it off; but, says the driver, it is marked "this side up with care;" so if I throw it off I might

break something, the other answered him that it did not matter if he broke all that was in it, the railway company were able enough to pay for it. No sooner were these words spoken than I began to tumble from the waggon, and falling on the end where my head was, I could bear my neck give a crack, as if it had been snapped **asunder** and I was knocked completely insensible.

...I was then tumbled into the car with my head downwards again, but the car had not proceeded far before, more luggage having to be taken in, my box got shifted about and so happened to turn upon its right side; and in this position I remained till I got to Philadelphia, of our arrival in which place I was informed by hearing some person say, "We are in port and at Philadelphia." My heart then leaped for joy, and I wondered if any person knew that such a box was there.

I was only twenty seven hours in the box, though travelling a distance of three hundred and fifty miles.

I was now placed in the depot amongst the other luggage, where I lay till seven o'clock, P.M., at which time a wagon drove up, and I heard a person **inquire** for such a box as that in which I was. I was then placed on a wagon and conveyed to the house where my friend in Richmond had arranged I should be received. A number of persons soon collected round the box after it was taken in to the house, but as I did not know what was going on I kept myself quiet. I heard a man say, "let us rap upon the box and see if he is alive;" and immediately **a rap ensued** and a voice said, tremblingly, "Is all right within?" to which I replied--"all right." The joy of the friends was very great; when they heard that I was alive they soon managed to break open the box, and then came my **resurrection** from the grave of slavery. I rose a freeman, but I was too weak, by reason of long **confinement** in that box, to be able to stand, so I immediately **swooned away**. After my recovery from the swoon the first thing, which **arrested** my attention, was the presence of a number of friends, every one seeming more anxious than another, to have an opportunity of **rendering** me their assistance, and of bidding me a hearty welcome to the possession of my natural rights, I had risen as it were from the dead; I felt much more than I could readily express; but as the kindness of Almighty God had been so **conspicuously** shown in my **deliverance**, I burst forth into the following hymn of thanksgiving,

*I waited patiently, I waited patiently for the Lord, for the Lord;
And he inclined unto me, and heard my calling:*

Word Box

- **conveyed** – moved by someone or something.
- **buoyed** – lifted or raised up.
- **prospect** – possibility that something might happen.
- **consented** – agreed to
- **procure** – to get something
- **gimlet** – a metal tool used to drill holes.
- **bladder** – an animal's organ that was used to hold water like a canteen.
- **steamer** – a boat moved by a steam engine.
- **distended** – made large, swollen, bloated.
- **asunder** – underneath or below.
- **inquire** – ask or investigate.
- **a rap ensued** – someone knocked on the box.
- **resurrection** – to rise out of something.
- **confinement** – to be shut in, bound in, or locked in something.
- **swooned away** – to pass out, faint, or black out.
- **arrested** – to catch or capture.
- **rendering** – to provide or give.
- **conspicuously** – clearly or obviously.
- **deliverance** – to be set free.

Retrieved (then adapted) at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/brownbox/brownbox.html> on 11/6/2013 at 1:12 p.m.

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Resource #10: Letter from J.M. McKim

Anti-Slavery Office
Phila March 26 /49

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 any thing 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] of 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 over heard 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

Source: <http://documents.nytimes.com/when-special-delivery-meant-deliverance-for-a-fugitive-slave>

Resource #11

At one of these meetings, Brown, the **fugitive** slave, whose extraordinary escape from **servitude** in Richmond, and almost **miraculous** arrival at Philadelphia, created such a sensation about two weeks since, was introduced to the audience. He was actually transported three hundred miles through a slaveholding country... in a box, by measurement, exactly *three feet and one inch long, two feet wide, and two feet six inches deep*. Brown, for that is his name now, told his story in an artless manner...The following is an abstract of his story:

While at Richmond, though the box was **legibly** and distinctly marked, "this side up with care," it was placed on end, with his head downwards. He felt strange pains, and was preparing himself to die, preferring liberty or death to slavery...He was however relieved from this painful position, and encountered no other damage than the rough handling of the box, until it arrived at Washington. When the porters who had charge of it reached the depot there, they threw or dropped with violence to the ground, and it rolled down a small hill, turning over two or three times.

[Brown said that] the box "...was taken into the depot, and I was placed head downwards again for the space of half an hour. My eyes were swollen almost out of my head, and I was fast becoming insensible, when the position was changed."

He arrived at Philadelphia after many hair-breadth escapes, and the box was taken to the house to which it was directed. The **panting inmate** heard voices whispering: afterwards more men came in. They were doubtful or fearful about opening the box. He lay still, not knowing who the people were. Finally, one of them knocked on the box, and asked, "Is all right here?" "All right," echoed from the box. The finale of this simple tale was received with deafening shouts.

The fugitive was released, after stretching his limbs, did not appear **fatigued**. The glorious sense of freedom was upon him in his heart, **pervading** his whole being, and burst out into song. This was the appropriate **anthem of deliverance**:

I waited patiently, and the Lord hath delivered me."

[excerpts] New England Evangelist

June 7, 1849

The New England Anti-Slavery Society

Resource 11 – continued (Word Box)

Word Box

- **fugitive** – someone who has escaped.
- **servitude** – another word for slavery.
- **miraculous** – something that appears to happen because of a miracle.
- **legibly** – easy to read, clearly written.
- **panting inmate** – someone trapped inside something who is having trouble breathing.
- **fatigued** – very tired.
- **pervading** – entering and spreading throughout.
- **anthem** – a song.
- **deliverance** – being freed.

Resource # 12: Diary excerpt

Sarah & I went to Wm J Rotchs to tea but came home early – I there heard a singular **account** of the escape of a slave who has just arrived her which I must record – He had himself packed up in a box about 3 ft 2 in long 2 ft 6 in wide & 1 ft 11 in deep and send on by **express** from Richmond to Philadelphia – marked “this side up” – He is about 5 ft 6 in high and weighs about 200 lb – in this way he came by cars & steam boat to Philada near 25 hours in the box which was quite close & tight had only a **bladder** of water with him and kept himself alive by bathing his face and fanning himself with his hat. He was twice turned head downwards & one remained so on board the steam boat while she went 18 miles – which almost killed him and he said the veins on his temples were almost as thick as his finger. Yet he endured it all and was delivered to his antislavery friends safe and well – who trembled when he knocked on the box and asked the question “all right” – and the answer came promptly “all right sir” – I think I never heard of an instance of greater **fortitude** & daring and he has well earned the freedom which he will now enjoy –

Diary of Charles Wain Morgan, April 4, 1849,
New Bedford, Massachusetts
quoted in Grover, Fugitive’s Gibraltar, 203.
Source: John Ernest, pp. 123-124

Word Box

- **account** – a description of something.
- **express** – a train.
- **bladder** – an animal’s organ that can be used to carry water like a canteen.
- **fortitude** – ability to endure something with courage or strength.

Resource #13: Henry Brown

Briefly, the facts are these, which doubtless have never before been fully published – Brown was a man of invention as well as a hero. In point of interest, however, his case is no more remarkable than many others, Indeed, neither before nor after escaping did he suffer one-half what many others have experienced.

He was decidedly an unhappy piece of property in the city of Richmond, Va. In the condition of a slave he felt it would be impossible for him to remain. Full well did he know, however, that it was no holiday task to escape the...slave-hunters, or the wrath of an enraged master...So Brown counted well the cost before venturing upon this hazardous undertaking.

Ordinary modes of travel he concluded might prove disastrous to his hopes; he, therefore, hit upon a new invention altogether, which was to have himself boxed up and forwarded to Philadelphia direct by express. The size of the box and how it was to be made to fit him most comfortably, was of his own ordering. Two feet eight inches deep, two feet wide, and three feet long were the exact dimensions of the box, lined with baize. His resources with regard to food and water consisted of the following: One bladder of water and a few small biscuits. His mechanical implement to meet the death-struggle for fresh air, all told, was one large gimlet.

Satisfied that it would be far better to peril his life for freedom in this way than to remain under the galling yoke of Slavery, he entered his box, which was safely nailed up and hooped with five hickory hoops, and was then addressed by his next friend, James A. Smith, a shoe dealer, to Wm. H. Johnson, Arch street, Philadelphia, marked, "this side up with care." In this condition he was sent to Adams' Express office in a dray, and thence by overland express to Philadelphia. It was twenty-six hours from the time he left Richmond until his arrival in the City of Brotherly Love. The notice, "this side up, &c.," did not avail with the different expressmen, who hesitated not to handle the box in the usual rough manner common to this class of men. For a while they actually had the box upside down, and had him on his head for miles.

A few days before he was expected, certain intimation was conveyed to a member of the Vigilance Committee that a box might be expected by the three o'clock morning train from the South, which might contain a man...from Richmond which would be directed to Arch street, and yet not intended for that street, but for the Anti-Slavery office at 107 North Fifth street,

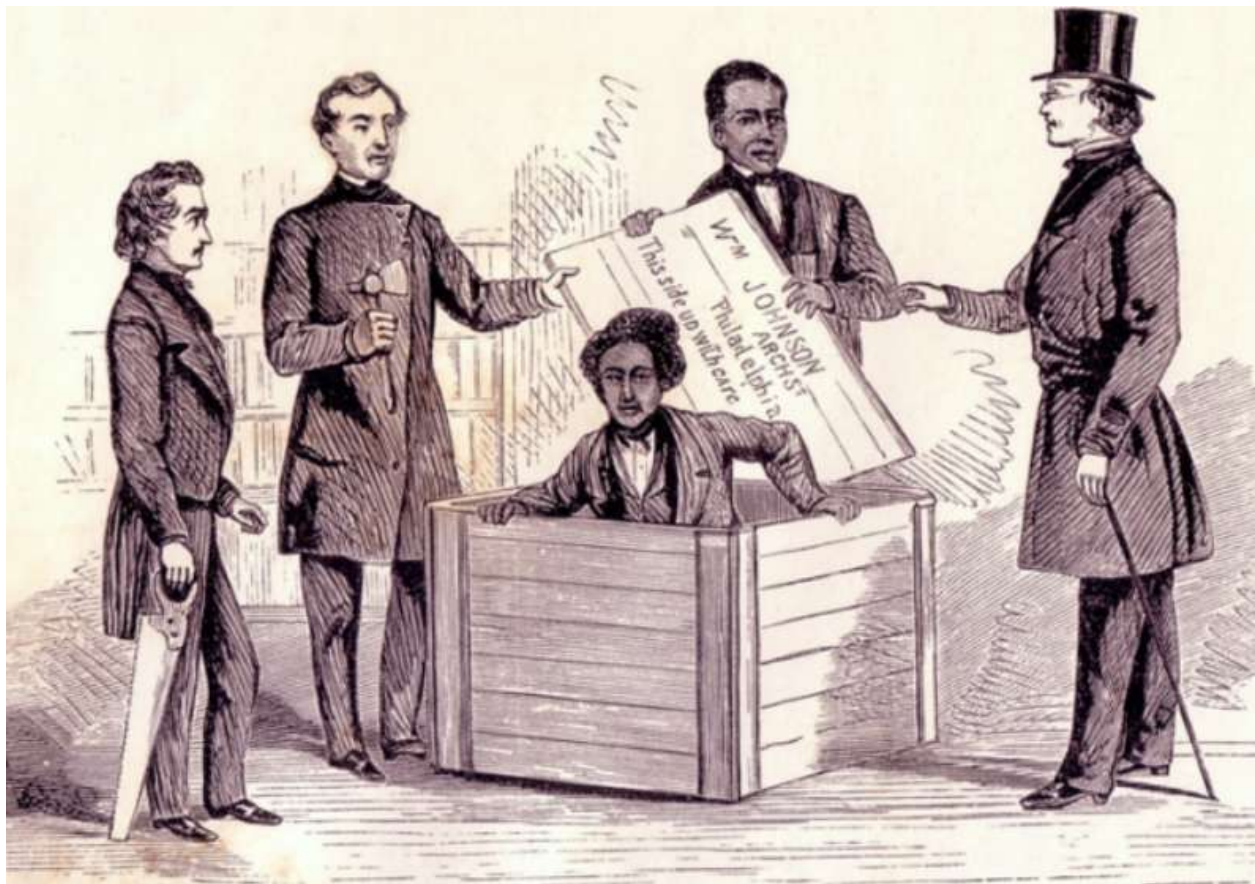
Next morning, according to arrangement, the box was at the Anti-Slavery office in due time. The witness present to behold the resurrection was J.M. McKim, Professor C. D. Cleveland, Lewis Thompson, and the writer.

William Still,

[excerpts] *Underground Rail Road*

Published 1871

Resource Packet Item #14a



*The Resurrection of Henry Box Brown at Philadelphia,
Who escaped from Richmond Va. In a Box 3 feet long 2 1/2/ ft. deep and 2 ft. wide.
Lithograph by Peter Kramer, Philadelphia, ca. 1851.
Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.*

Resource Item #14b



*The Resurrection of Henry Box Brown at Philadelphia,
Who escaped from Richmond Va. In a Box 3 feet long 2 1/2 ft. deep and 2 ft. wide.
Lithograph. Deposited of copyright in Boston on January 10, 1850.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Prints and Photographs Division. LC-USZ62-1283.*

Resource Item #14c



Henry Brown Arrives. Engraving from *Cousin Ann's Stories for Children*. Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, 1849. Courtesy of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Suggested Answer Key – Resource #15 for Summative Task

A deep understanding of history involves the realizations that (a) historians have to piece together interpretations of the past based on the residue that survives the passage of time, and that (b) they may have to form reasonable conclusions based on conflicting evidence. This is certainly true in the case of Henry Brown’s escape. The “answer key” provided below reveals some conflicts but reasonable conclusions can be formed from middle grounds in the evidence.

What <u>is</u> on the manuscript	What <u>should</u> be on the manuscript:
Two men greeted Henry Brown when he arrived in Philadelphia.	<p>4 men greeted Brown when he arrived in Philadelphia...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Still - black, • J.M. McKim - white, • Lewis Thompson - white, • C.D. Cleveland - white. (Still) <p>“a number of people” (Brown).</p> <p>Reasonable conclusion: there were 4 individuals present when Henry Brown’s box was opened in Philadelphia.</p>
Method of Transportation Wagon & railroad	Wagon or dray (Brown, Still), baggage car, express, or railroad (Brown, Still), and steamer or boat (Brown)
Upon arrival, Henry Brown said “not really but I am OK.”	<p>“all right” (Brown & NE Evangelist)</p> <p>“all right sir” (McKim)</p> <p>Reasonable conclusion: either “all right” or “all right sir.”</p>
<p>Written on the Box</p> <p>“Mr. William Still 3rd & Arch Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Handle with Care This side up”</p>	<p>“this side up with care” (Brown)</p> <p>“this side up” (McKim & Morgan)</p> <p>Reasonable conclusion: “This side up with care Wm. H. Johnson, Arch street, Philadelphia” (Still)</p>

Date Henry Brown Left	March 29, 1849 (Brown)
Date Henry Brown arrived in Pennsylvania	March 30, 1849 (Brown)
Brown left from Richmond	Same as on manuscript (Brown, Still)
Brown ended up in Philadelphia	Same as on manuscript (all agree)
Brown ran away because his family was sold.	This is in Brown's own narrative but is not in the documents provided in this unit.
Brown escaped by mailing himself in a box.	Same as on manuscript (Brown)
Brown was no more than 5 feet tall and 115 lbs.	<p>5' 8" tall almost 200 lbs (McKim)</p> <p>5' 6" tall About 200 lbs. (Morgan)</p> <p>Reasonable conclusion: somewhere around 5' 7" and 200 lbs.</p>
<p>Size of box</p> <p>3 ft, 11 inches wide; 2 feet, 10 inches high, and 3 feet; and 2 inches deep.</p>	<p><u>According to Brown</u></p> <p>3' 1" wide 2'6" high 2' wide.</p> <p><u>McKim</u></p> <p>3 ft 2 inches long; 2 ft 8 in deep; 1 ft 11 in wide.</p> <p><u>NE Evangelist</u></p> <p>"exactly" 3' 1" long, 2' wide 2' 6" deep.</p> <p><u>Morgan</u></p> <p>3' 2" long 2' 6" wide 1' 11" deep.</p> <p><u>Still</u></p> <p>2' 8" deep, 2' wide 3' long.</p>

	<p>Reasonable conclusion: approximately 3' 1" long 2' 8 " deep 2' wide.</p>
Brown travelled 150 miles	Approximately 350 miles (Brown)
Brown's trip took "over 2 days"	<p>27 hours (Brown)</p> <p>"near" 25 hours (Morgan)</p> <p>26 hours (Still)</p> <p>Reasonable conclusion: approximately 26 hours.</p>

Resource #16: Distinguishing Primary v Secondary Sources

Directions: Without discussing, record on an index card or piece of paper what appeared on the previous slide as accurately as possible. Be as detailed as you can (e.g. shapes, colors, letters, their locations and order etc.).

Eyrmom

