**African American Migration to California**

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| **Overview:**  In this lesson students will gain an understanding of the motivations and inspirations African Americans had for migrating west to California. They will discover the experiences people had when migrating to California and what experiences they had once they arrived. This lesson further enforces the learnings of the American Migration Experience lesson with an emphasis on the African American experience. |
| **Lesson Summary:**  This lesson plan will allow students to connect to the stories and lives of people who made the choice or were forced to come to California. This lesson is designed as a supplement to foundational lessons about the westward migration during the 19th century. This lesson focuses on linking J.L. Edmonds and his *Los Angeles Liberator* newspaper with the colonization efforts of Colonel Allensworth and residents of Fresno County’s Boles (Fowler) African American community pictured in the Hutchinson Collection in connection to the recent exhibit at the California African American Museum, *California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier*. |
| **Grade Level:**  Secondary |
| **Standards:**  US.8.7.2  Trace the origins and development of slavery; its effects on black Americans and on the region's political, social, religious, economic, and cultural development; and identify the strategies that were tried to both overturn and preserve it (e.g., through the writings and historical documents on Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey).  US.8.9.1  Describe the leaders of the movement (e.g., John Quincy Adams and his proposed constitutional amendment, John Brown and the armed resistance, Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, Benjamin Franklin, Theodore Weld, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass).  US.8.9.2  Discuss the abolition of slavery in early state constitutions.  US.8.9.5  Analyze the significance of the States' Rights Doctrine, the Missouri Compromise (1820), the Wilmot Proviso (1846), the Compromise of 1850, Henry Clay's role in the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854), the Dred Scott v. Sandford decision (1857), and the Lincoln-Douglas debates (1858).  CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3  Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. |
| **Learning Objectives:**  Students will be able to:   * Identify the resources African Americans utilized to migrate west, such as the *Los Angeles Liberator*, ads, family experiences, etc. * Understand the colonization efforts that took place in the San Joaquin Valley. * Gain an understanding of the African American experience during the 19th century pre and post-Civil War. * Comprehend the role of abolitionists during the mid-19th century. |
| **Materials:**  **Primary Sources:**   * [*California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier*](https://caamuseum.org/exhibitions/2018/california-bound-slavery-on-the-new-frontier-18481865) * [The Lesser-Known History of Slavery in California](https://hyperallergic.com/494309/california-bound-california-african-american-museum/) * [California’s Black Pioneers: The Old Timers](http://www.safero.org/family.html) * [The J.L Edmonds Project](https://www.jledmondsproject.com/founder-story) * *The Hutchinson Collection: More Questions than Answers*   **Secondary Sources:**   * Securing Satisfaction: African American Community Building in Fowler, California from 1890-1930 * [The Abolitionist](https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/amex25.socst.ush.garrison/abolitionist-leader-william-lloyd-garrison/) * [Allensworth, California’s First Black Community](https://www.historynet.com/allensworth-californias-black-community.htm) * David Jennings Biography * African American Communities in Central California * Introduction to Settlement of Fresno County - Migration & Immigration * Summary of Securing Satisfaction: African American Community Building in Fowler, California, 1890-1930 |
| **Introductory Activity:**  As a class, introduce students to the California African American Museum’s exhibit [*California Bound: Slavery on the New Frontier*](https://caamuseum.org/exhibitions/2018/california-bound-slavery-on-the-new-frontier-18481865). This exhibit is an excellent introduction for students and teachers to utilize to start the conversation of African American migration to the west. The video by the curators is just over seven minutes and can be contextualized with the following article, [The Lesser-Known History of Slavery in California](https://hyperallergic.com/494309/california-bound-california-african-american-museum/). Discuss with students their thoughts and reactions to the exhibit. Ask students open questions like, were they surprised by any of the information in the exhibit? Was there anything specific that stood out for them? Do they have any questions or misunderstandings about the exhibit?  Next, ask students if they know what being an abolitionist means. Introduce them to the following five minute video about William Lloyd Garrison, [The Abolitionist](https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/amex25.socst.ush.garrison/abolitionist-leader-william-lloyd-garrison/). After the video, discuss with students how religious beliefs played a significant role in shaping the abolitionist opinions of William Lloyd Garrison. Ask students how people who considered themselves religious could reach such differing conclusions on the morality of slavery. Encourage students to discuss whether Garrison’s comment that “there shall be no neutrals” on the subject of slavery can be applied to issues in contemporary society. Help students to understand the connection between the 19th century abolitionists to what is happening today. Read the following article with students in a reading circle, [California’s Black Pioneers: The Old Timers](http://www.safero.org/family.html). Read the following article and watch the video with students about Jefferson Lewis Edmonds, [The J.L Edmonds Project](https://www.jledmondsproject.com/founder-story). Ask students if they have heard of Colonel Allensworth State Park. Assign the following articles to be read for homework- *The Hutchinson Collection: More Questions than Answers*, *Securing Satisfaction: African American Community Building in Fowler, California from 1890-1930*, and [Allensworth, California’s First Black Community](https://www.historynet.com/allensworth-californias-black-community.htm). Tell students the lesson will continue the next class period. |
| **Learning Activity:**  Inform students that the learning activity is going to continue their understanding of African American migration and colonization in California through J.L Edmonds newspaper *The Liberator*. Assign an issue of [*The Liberator*](https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22Edmonds%2C%20Jefferson%20Lewis%22) and an image from the Hutchinson photo collection to each student (depending on number of students, multiples may be necessary). Tell students that they have to use these primary sources for a narrative essay. They may also use any of the other sources from the introductory lesson as well as any research they uncover on their own. The assignment is to write a narrative essay based on primary and secondary sources. Students will use the resources provided as well as outside sources they find on their own to write a narrative about a person migrating to California. Encourage students to write a narrative that is thought provoking. The narrative must include their character's background, what motivations their character has for migrating to the area, something from their assigned *Liberator* article, and how the photo from the Hutchinson collection relates to their narrative. |
| **Key Questions:**   * What were the varied causes for African Americans to migrate west? * How did African Americans perceive their lives improving by migrating west? * How was The Liberator and other publications beneficial to westward migration and colonization for African Americans? * What was the impact of the Allensworth community on African American migration? |
| **Extension Activity:**  Each student will write an article to be featured in an upcoming *Liberator* issue in 2021. The article should be similar in context to what students have read in the newspaper but in contemporary times. What issues are the same or similar? What message does the student want to convey that would be beneficial to readers? |
| **Assessment:**  Students’ essays should reflect on the learning objectives of the lesson provided above based on the narrative rubric provided. |