

# WHITNEY PLANTATION

Module Two:

## Daily Life

Videos Included:

- What was daily life like for the enslaved?
- What were domestic and skilled trades?
- Did the enslaved have time off?

Primary Resources Included:

### Part 1

- Plantation Scene and Slave Houses, Barbados 1807-1808
- View of a Sugar Plantation, French West Indies, 1762

### Part 2

- Emancipation records of two enslaved women of John Jacque Haydel; Claire and Marie Joseph
- H.E. Hayward and Slave Nurse Louisa Ca. 1858

### Part 3

- Excerpt from Lands of the Slave and the Free; or Cuba, the United States and Canada
- Sunday Marketing, Trinidad, 1836

## PART ONE

### Video – What was daily life like for the enslaved?

1. Where is this video filmed? \_\_\_\_\_ Why is this an important spot?
2. What is being described?
3. What stands out to you the most about what is being said?

### Primary Sources:

1. What are these documents?
2. What type of “picture” do these two documents paint of daily life on a plantation? How do you know?
3. Does this picture align with the reality that is told in the videos? Why or why not?

## PART TWO

### Video - What were the ‘domestic’ and ‘skilled’ trades?

1. Where is this video filmed? \_\_\_\_\_ Why is that an important place?

2. What stands out to you in this video? Why?

3. What does 'emancipation' mean?

Primary Sources:

1. What is the document written in French document?

2. Who is the woman in the picture?

## PART THREE

Video – Did the Enslaved Have Time Off?

1. What were some of the benefits of 'time off'?

2. What were some of the challenges?

3. What stands out to you the most in this video?

Primary Sources:

1. What does the writer say about Sundays in this small excerpt?

2. Does he have a particular attitude or interpretation of what he's seeing?

3. Describe what you see in the drawing. Does this look like what was described in the video?  
What are the similarities/differences?

Narratives: For each of following excerpts, connect the story which is being told to either the videos from the Whitney Plantation, or to one of the primary sources. These are the voices of enslaved workers who were interviewed in the 1930's, a part of the Works Project Administration's project to preserve the experiences of formerly enslaved Americans.

What was daily life for the enslaved?

"Slaves had to go to the fiel' befo' daybre'k and didn't come home till after dark. Then they cooked dinner and lunch to take with 'em the nex' day."

– Rebecca Fletcher

"In de old country (South Carolina) dey had spinning wheels made dere own cloth- made gloves, caps for de head... In dis country, dey give yo' de ole clothes, one pair shoes a year, no stockin's an' in de winter, sometimes yo' so cold- Lawd (Lord) have mercy! But dey make every chile on de plantation, tote sugar cane jes de same.

– Ceceil George

What were domestic and skilled trades?

"All de beds was made by carpenters on de plantation. Dere was fo (four) rows of houses for de quarters. Dere was no paint on dem, also had a house fo children and hospital."

-Elizabeth Ross Hite

"I worked in the house nursin'."

-Henrietta Butler

What are the connections between these two narratives and the videos/primary sources?

Video Connections:

Primary Source Connections:

What jobs on a plantation can be inferred from these testimonies? Can you find 6?

Did the enslaved have time off?

"My ma worked in the spinning and weaving, and making dyes. ... We had meat, bread, vegetables, sometimes on Sunday or a holiday we would have biscuit."

- Hannah Kelly

"We allus had plenty of vegetables, salt meat, corn bread, hominy grits. Us didn' know whut biscuit was. All de slaves on de plantation got vegetables from de Bosse's garden."

- Henrietta Butler

What connections to the videos and primary sources can you find? See if you can list three.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# PRIMARY RESOURCES

## PART ONE

Title: Plantation Scene and Slave Houses, Barbados, 1807-1808

Description: Source: John A. Waller, *A voyage in the West Indies* (London, 1820) Facing p. 20 Image of a scene depicting life on a sugar plantation. Enslaved scene depicts daily life and activities. From left to right: Life at the slave quarters; work done by domestic workers; field slaves cutting cane. In background on the left is scene a mill and the far back the mater's house or the big house.



Photo Courtesy: Slaveryimages.org

Title: View of a Sugar Plantation, French West Indies, 1762

Description: The image illustrates a general view of a typical sugar plantation. (1) houses of the owner and overseers, (2) just below, the houses for the enslaved. (5) sugar cane fields (6) the boiling house for processing sugar cane during grinding season (7) the curing house where sugar is dried (12) fields for substance farming.



Photo Courtesy: Slaveryimages.org

## PART TWO

Title: Emancipation records of two enslaved women of John Jacque Haydel; Claire and Marie Joseph

Description: Written in French, the image is a photo copy of the emancipation records of two enslaved women of John Jacque Haydel; Claire and Marie Joseph.

- Claire, négresse , Créole, 32 years old, cook, estimated 400 piastres, sold to Jean Jacques Haydel fils for 400 piastres. Emancipated April 30, 1827
- Marie Joseph, Negresse Creole, 60 years old, cook, estimated 200 piastres, sold to Jean Jacques Haydel fils for 200 piastres. Emancipated April 30, 1827

30 Avril 1827

Clergé de la paroisse  
Paroisse de Saint-Jacques  
Comité de l'émancipation  
A-2302  
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Liberte  
M. Haydel  
la Negresse  
Claire

Monsieur le Curé  
Après avoir lu et entendu  
le rapport de M. Haydel sur  
l'émancipation de la  
Nègre Claire

Le Curé de la paroisse de Saint-Jacques  
Après avoir lu et entendu  
le rapport de M. Haydel sur  
l'émancipation de la  
Nègre Claire

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Le Curé de la paroisse de Saint-Jacques  
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le rapport de M. Haydel sur  
l'émancipation de la  
Nègre Claire

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Le Honorable Curé  
de la Paroisse de Saint-Jacques  
de la Ville de Québec

The Bishop of Saint-Jacques  
of the Parish

Honorable Curé

That according to an order of your honor  
of the 10th inst. you have been pleased  
to give your honor the power to  
emancipate the Nègre Claire

And whereas no objection has been  
made to the said emancipation  
by the Curé of the Parish

In the presence of the Curé  
of the Parish of Saint-Jacques  
and of the Nègre Claire

Attest  
M. Haydel

J. J. Haydel

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Le Honorable Curé  
de la Paroisse de Saint-Jacques  
de la Ville de Québec

The Bishop of Saint-Jacques  
of the Parish

Honorable Curé

That he is in the intention to emancipate  
the Nègre Claire  
and whereas no objection has been  
made to the said emancipation  
by the Curé of the Parish

And whereas no objection has been  
made to the said emancipation  
by the Curé of the Parish

In the presence of the Curé  
of the Parish of Saint-Jacques  
and of the Nègre Claire

Attest  
M. Haydel

J. J. Haydel

Photo Courtesy: Ref SJB-71- 1827: Liberte par J.J. Haydel a la Negresse Claire – emancipation April 30, 1827-  
Ref. SJB-72-1827: Liberté par J.J. Haydel la Nègre Marie Joseph.

Title: H.E. Hayward and slave nurse Louisa ca. 1858



Photo Courtesy: Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, digital file [www.mohistory.org](http://www.mohistory.org)

### PART THREE

Title: Excerpt from *Lands of the Slave and the Free; or Cuba, the United States and Canada*

Description: Author Henry Murry Published: London, New York G. Routledge & Co., 1857. During Murry's voyage through Louisiana he describes scenes he witnessed of enslaved individual daily life. In this text he discusses Sundays, a day given off from work for the master.

## HOTELS.

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at the different stations on the river. Every day is a working day ; and as, by the law, the slave has his Sunday to himself to earn what he can, the master who hires him out on the river is supposed to give him one-seventh of the wages earned ; but I believe they only receive one-seventh of the ordinary wages—*i.e.*, 1*l.* per month.

Photo Courtesy: Library of Congress

Title: Sunday Marketing, Trinidad, 1836

Description: A man and woman are going to Sunday market, the day enslaved laborers were released from plantation work; the woman has a full tray of goods, including poultry.



Photo Courtesy: Slaveryimages.org