



LESSON PLAN:

THE FREEDPEOPLE OF SECTION 27

High School (9-12)

OVERVIEW:

Students learn about the lives of freed African Americans in the years surrounding the Civil War, through a class lecture and exploration of a burial record from Arlington National Cemetery. Students will write a short obituary for one of the African American civilians on the burial record.

Resources include a PowerPoint slide deck and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Estimated time: 1-2 class periods, 70-90 minutes total

STANDARDS:

Social studies standards vary by state. This lesson can be used to teach the following standards and similar wording may be found in your state standards.

Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

National Council for the Social Studies Standards

- NCSS.D2.His.8.9-12: Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.

International Society for Technology in Education Standards

- ISTE.Student.3a: Students curate information from digital resources using a variety of tools and methods to create collections of artifacts that demonstrate meaningful connections or conclusions.
- ISTE.Student.5b: Students collect data or identify relevant data sets, use digital tools to analyze them, and represent data in various ways to facilitate problem-solving and decision-making.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will use spreadsheet data to answer questions about African American civilians buried in Section 27 of Arlington National Cemetery.
- Students will use spreadsheet data to write an obituary for a selected African American civilian buried in Section 27 of Arlington National Cemetery.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

- The Freedpeople of Section 27 PowerPoint presentation
- The Freedpeople of Section 27 Teacher PowerPoint Guide
- The Freedpeople of Section 27 Burial Record spreadsheet
- Student access to a computer

LESSON ACTIVITIES

- Introduction/Anticipatory Set: 5 mins
 - Display PowerPoint Slide 1
 - Lead a discussion about Arlington National Cemetery – what is its purpose? Who is buried there? *Responses will vary, but it is most important to establish that Arlington National Cemetery is a military cemetery and it is a greatly honored place in American society.*
 - Share: Though Arlington National Cemetery is a military cemetery, there is actually a section where thousands of African American civilians were buried between 1864-1867.
 - Ask: Who do you think these people were? Why were they buried at Arlington National Cemetery?
 - After a few responses, share that in today's lesson you will be discussing who those people were and what life would have been like for them at that time.
- Lecture: 30-40 mins
 - Display PowerPoint Slides 2-7, use notes in the Freedpeople of Section 27 Teacher PowerPoint Guide to present a lecture on life for freedpeople in the years surrounding the Civil War
 - Slide 2: African American Rights: A Timeline
 - Slide 3: Freedmen's Bureau
 - Slide 4: Section 27
 - Slide 5: African Americans After War
 - Slide 6: African Americans After War
 - Slide 7: Discrimination and Prejudice



- Spreadsheet Activity: 20 mins
 - Request students open Section 27 Burial Record spreadsheet. During activity, teacher may choose to display PowerPoint slides or display own copy of spreadsheet
 - Orient students to information on spreadsheet and explain limitations of burial record (PowerPoint Slide 8)
 - Practice using Find feature (PowerPoint Slide 9)
 - Practice using Sort feature (PowerPoint Slide 10)
 - Use Sort to explore common causes of death (PowerPoint Slide 11)
 - Discuss what inferences you can make about life at that time based on common causes of death
 - Use Sort to explore addresses (PowerPoint Slide 12)
 - Discuss what historians could learn from addresses
- Conclusion and Obituary Assignment: 10-30 mins
 - Display PowerPoint Slide 13: Think Like a Historian
 - Lead a discussion about what additional resources a historian or biographer would use to learn more information about people of the past
 - Display PowerPoint Slide 14: Write an Obituary
 - Explain requirements for obituary assignment (as time allows, may be completed in class or at home). Students will write a short obituary for an individual on the Section 27 Burial Record spreadsheet that must include:
 - Name
 - Date of burial
 - Grave number
 - Age
 - Address
 - Cause of death
 - Description of two historic events from their lifetime and how those events may have affected the individual

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

- Share your students' Section 27 obituaries with Arlington National Cemetery by posting on Twitter using the hashtag #ANCeduAfAmExp.
- Plot the addresses from the burial records selected by students on a map of Washington, D.C. to see how freedpeople were distributed throughout the city at that time



- Read more about the history of freedpeople in Section 27 in historian Tim Dennee's paper presented to the 38th Annual Conference on D.C. Historical Studies, available online here: <https://38thdcstudiesconference.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/arlington-section27.pdf>
- Explore firsthand accounts and essays about African Americans during the Civil War and Reconstruction on the Freedmen & Southern Society Project website here: <http://www.freedmen.umd.edu/index.html>



Planning a Visit to Arlington National Cemetery?



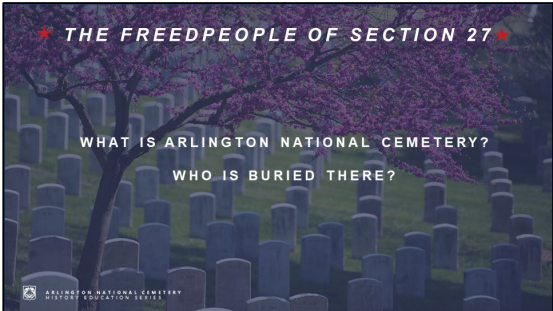
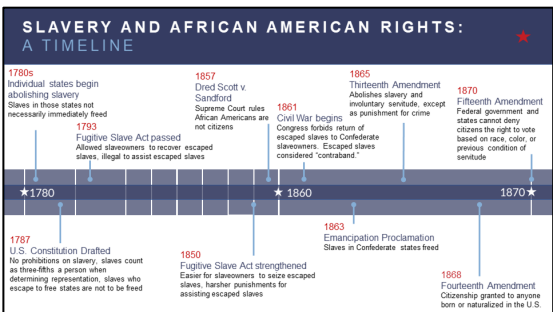
Section 27 is located in the north end of the cemetery, by the Ord & Weitzel Gate. Graves of freedpeople and African American soldiers of the United States Colored Troops can be found in the section between the cemetery wall and Ord & Weitzel Drive. If students are interested in finding the individual they selected from the burial record, there is a grave number on the back of each headstone.



POWERPOINT GUIDE:

The Freedpeople of Section 27

High School (9-12)

Slide:	Notes for Presentation
Slide 1: The Freedpeople of Section 27 	Lead a discussion about Arlington National Cemetery – what is its purpose? Who is buried there? <i>Responses will vary, but it is most important to establish that Arlington National Cemetery is a military cemetery and it is a greatly honored place in American society.</i> <i>Share:</i> Though Arlington National Cemetery is a military cemetery, there is actually a section where thousands of African American civilians were buried between 1864-1867. <i>Ask:</i> Who do you think these people were? Why were they buried at Arlington National Cemetery? After a few responses, share that in today's lesson you will be discussing who those people were and what life would have been like for them at that time.
Slide 2: Slavery and African American Rights: A Timeline 	To get a sense of what it meant to be a “freed person” in the years surrounding the Civil War, let’s look at a timeline of the rights of African Americans in the United States up to that time. 1780s – Northern states began individually banning the slave trade or abolishing slavery, though enslaved people were not always immediately freed from servitude 1787 – U.S. Constitution was drafted, with no prohibitions of slavery, and policy of each enslaved person being counted as three-fifths of a person when determining representation in the House of Representatives and taxes. It also stated that enslaved persons who escaped to free states should not be freed, but instead returned to their enslaver.



- 1793 – Fugitive Slave Act passed, which allowed slaveowners to recover slaves who escaped to free states and made it a crime to assist escaped slaves.
- 1850 – Stricter Fugitive Slave Act passed, with provisions that made it easier for slaveowners to seize escaped slaves and contained harsher punishments for citizens who assisted escaped slaves.
- 1857 – Supreme Court ruling in Dred Scott v. Sandford declared African Americans (free and enslaved) were not American citizens and therefore not due the rights and protections within the U.S. Constitution.
- 1861 – Civil War began, and enslaved people escaped to the protection of the U.S. Army and northern non-slaveholding states. Congress passed laws declaring Army could confiscate Confederate property – such as slaves – and forbidding the return of slaves to Confederate slaveowners. Escaped slaves were known as “contraband,” and many flocked to U.S. Army-held forts and camps.
- 1863 – President Abraham Lincoln issued Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all enslaved people in Confederate states. Any enslaved person that could escape to the Union would be free, though enslaved people in Union slave-owning states (Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri) were not yet free.
- 1865 – 13th Amendment passed, abolishing slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime.
- 1868 – 14th Amendment passed, granting citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States – including formerly enslaved people – and guaranteed all citizens equal protection of the law.
- 1870 – 15th Amendment passed, prohibiting the federal government and each state from denying a



	citizen the right to vote based on that person's "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Despite the provisions of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, many states passed laws known as "Black Codes" that heavily restricted the rights and liberties of African Americans. Even in states that had strongly opposed slavery, many public spaces, institutions, and neighborhoods were segregated and African Americans faced intense discrimination and prejudice. As you can see, the status of freedpeople was very uncertain in the years surrounding the Civil War, and freedom for African Americans did not mean getting to enjoy the same rights and protections as white people.
Slide 3: The Freedmen's Bureau THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU  • United States Army and federal government felt responsible for freedpeople • Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) created to assist former slaves • Efforts included building hospitals, supporting education efforts, helping families reunite after the war, and providing legal assistance • Bureau efforts opposed by President Andrew Johnson and others in Congress 1866 illustration of people gathered outside the Freedmen's Bureau in Richmond, Virginia. (Library of Congress/James E. Taylor)	Beginning with the sheltering and employment of so-called "contrabands," the United States Army and federal government felt a degree of responsibility for supporting freedpeople. In March 1865, a few months before the end of the Civil War, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau) was created within the War Department to assist former slaves as they established their new lives as freedpeople. The Freedmen's Bureau took on a number of tasks, including building hospitals, supporting education efforts, helping families reunite after the war, and providing legal assistance. However, President Andrew Johnson and other white southerners in Congress opposed many of the Bureau's goals and limited its funding, so it was not as effective as its organizers hoped.
Slide 4: Section 27	One of the ways the federal government took responsibility for supporting freedpeople was to provide burial assistance. Depending on a family's financial needs, this could include just providing a coffin and headstone, assisting with transporting remains to a private burial ground, or burial in a national cemetery.



SECTION 27



- Government provided burial assistance for poor freedpeople
- National cemeteries created to accommodate military burials during Civil War
- Burials at Arlington National Cemetery began along northern edge, in today's Section 27
- Contrabands and freedpeople fell under government responsibility and if too poor to afford private burial could be buried in a national cemetery
- Civilian burials occurred at ANC from 1864-1867

Photo taken June 29, 1864 of the first graves in Arlington National Cemetery. (Chrysler Museum of Art/Andrew Joseph Russell)

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY HISTORY EDUCATION SERIES

National cemeteries, including Arlington National Cemetery, were created during the Civil War to accommodate the thousands of U.S. Army soldiers who died in battle or in military hospitals. At that time, most families preferred to bury their loved ones in a private cemetery close to home, and national cemeteries were mostly used when the family of a soldier was too poor to afford a proper burial.

Burials at Arlington National Cemetery began along the cemetery's northern edge, in an area known today as Section 27. The first burials were of white soldiers, but soon white government employees and dependents were included, and then Black soldiers.

Since contrabands and freedpeople fell under the care of the federal government through the Army and Freedmen's Bureau, those who lived and died around Washington, D.C. and were too poor to afford burial in a private cemetery could be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. This only occurred from 1864-1867; after 1867 the cemetery was reserved for military burials.

Slide 5: African Americans After War

AFRICAN AMERICANS AFTER WAR



- Freedpeople had to decide – stay in the South or seek opportunities in the North?
- Population of African Americans in Washington, D.C. tripled between 1860-1870
- Freedmen's Bureau built housing to accommodate rise in population

1863 illustration of freedpeople following the Union army in Newbern, North Carolina. (Library of Congress)

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY HISTORY EDUCATION SERIES

We know very little about the specific lives of the freedpeople buried in Section 27, but let's discuss what conditions were like for African Americans in general in the years surrounding the Civil War.

As the U.S. Army marched south, freed slaves had to decide – should they remain where they were, since that was their home and they were more sure of being able to provide food and shelter for their families? Or should they move to the North or West, where they knew they would no longer be enslaved, but may not have a place to live or work? Many chose to move, and in Washington, D.C., the African American population tripled between 1860-1870 as thousands of freedpeople sought protection from the Army and federal government and the opportunity to start a new life.



Slide 6: African Americans After War

AFRICAN AMERICANS AFTER WAR

- Churches became center of African American communities – place to organize for civil rights activism, education efforts, and job training
- Highly valued literacy and education
- African Americans influential in establishing public school systems and established a number of universities

1866 illustration of an African American school in Charleston, South Carolina. (Library of Congress/Photo by Waud)

To accommodate the sudden rise in population, the Freedmen's Bureau converted Army barracks in Washington, D.C. into tenements and operated government farms in Maryland and Virginia where families could live and work. In 1864, a Freedman's Village and farm were built on land that was later incorporated into Arlington National Cemetery – ironically, the residents of the Freedman's Village were buried at other cemeteries and are not the freedpeople in Section 27.

Like many white Americans, African Americans throughout the United States built communities centered around churches. Attending church was both a religious and a social activity. Families gathered at church to worship, but also to organize for civil rights activism, education efforts, and job training.

African Americans also highly valued literacy and education. Many African American communities worked with the Freedmen's Bureau and Northern aid societies to build schools and recruit teachers, and African American voters and legislators advocated for some of the first public school systems in the United States. A number of universities for African Americans were also established, including Washington, D.C.'s Howard University in 1867, named after General Oliver Otis Howard, the Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau.

Slide 7: Discrimination and Prejudice

DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE

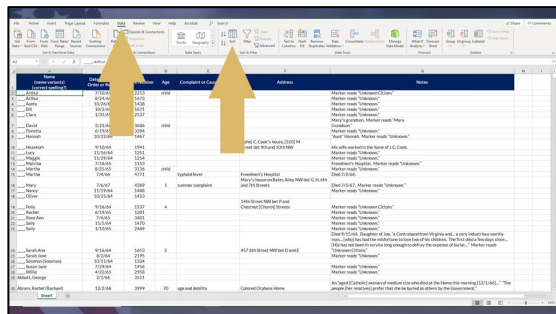
- Schools, hospitals, churches, public transportation, and neighborhoods segregated
- Black Codes restricted African American rights and targeted them for arrest
- Convicted African Americans forced back into unpaid hard labor
- Forcible apprenticeship laws allowed children to be taken from parents and apprenticed to former slaveowners
- Freedmen's Bureau attempted to legally assist

1877 illustration of convicts cleaning the streets of Richmond, Virginia. (Library of Congress)

Though slavery had been abolished, African Americans still faced intense discrimination and prejudice. Institutions such as schools, hospitals, and churches were segregated, as well as public transportation systems and neighborhoods. Individual states passed laws known as Black Codes that restricted the rights of African Americans and made them easy targets for arrest. Since the 13th Amendment still allowed for slavery and involuntary servitude as punishment for a crime, many African Americans were forced back into unpaid hard labor for "crimes" as minor as not having a job or being outside at



Slide 10: Sort



- Use Find to look up Casey Muddy's cause of death.
"taken sick 4th July from drinking ice water"

The next skill is Sorting, which allows you to arrange data in ways that are easier to analyze. You can Sort by clicking on Data in the Ribbon, then Sort. Select which column you would like to sort by, then the order you would like it sorted by (for instance, sort the cell values alphabetically, A to Z).

Suggested Sort exercises:

- Sort the spreadsheet by Grave Number. What is the smallest grave number? *1098*
- Sort the spreadsheet by Name, alphabetically. How many Unknown burials are there? *385 (376 singular Unknowns, plus five Unknown men, two Unknown children, and two Unknown infants)*

Slide 11: Data Insights



Now let's use the spreadsheet to explore a bit more about what life was like for freedpeople at this time. Sort the spreadsheet by Complaint or Cause of Death.

Ask: What are some of the most common causes of death? *Allow students time to read through list – Consumption and Diarrhea are the most common, but many others have a number of entries.*

- Cholera, dysentery, diarrhea, and typhoid fever are all spread by contaminated food and water and can be prevented by proper sanitation.
- Consumption, phthisis, and scrofula are all now known as tuberculosis, and along with pneumonia and whooping cough are spread through the air.

Ask: What inferences can you make about what people's lives were like at this time, based on the most common causes of death?



Slide 12: Data Insights

★ DATA INSIGHTS

- What were some of the most common addresses/locations?
- What could a historian learn from the location of someone's death?

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Responses will vary, but may include: sanitation was poor, people lived in close quarters, there was very little prenatal care, antibiotics and vaccines did not exist yet.

Now sort the spreadsheet by Address.

Ask: What are some common locations?

Allow students time to read through list - the four most common locations are Claremont Cemetery, East Capitol Street Barracks, Freedmen's Hospital, and Giesboro Cemetery.

- Those from Claremont Cemetery and Giesboro Cemetery are reinterments, moved to Arlington National Cemetery to deal with overcrowding.
- The East Capitol Street Barracks was one of the tenements operated by the Freedmen's Bureau to provide more affordable housing for freedpeople.
- The Freedmen's Hospital was operated by the Freedmen's Bureau, and in 1868 it became a teaching hospital for the Howard University medical school.

Ask: What could a historian learn from the location of someone's death?

Responses will vary, but may include: an individual's race, wealth/social status, social connections

Slide 13: Think Like a Historian

★ THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN ★

What are the strengths and limitations of a source like this?
What additional information would you like to know about these people?
What resources could give you this information?

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Historians and biographers must use many different resources to piece together information about people of the past. For most of the African American civilians buried in Section 27 of Arlington National Cemetery, this burial record is the only information available about them.

Ask: Based on your exploration of these burial records, what are some strengths of a source like this?

Responses will vary, but may include: contains information about a lot of different people, data is raw and uninterpreted



Ask: What are some limitations of a source like this?
Responses will vary, but may include: information may be missing or wrong, data represents a limited sample, record has limited information about daily lives of individuals

What additional information would you like to know about these people? What sources would be able to give you this information? *Responses will vary, but encourage students to think creatively.*

Examples:

- *Additional Info: Appearance*
Sources: Photographs, diary entries, medical records
- *Additional Info: Residence*
Sources: Census records, tax records, diary entries
- *Additional Info: Family members*
Sources: Census records, church records, diary entries
- *Additional info: Opinions and attitudes*
Sources: Diary entries, newspaper articles
- *Additional info: Job*
Sources: Census records, labor records, diary entries

Slide 14: Write an Obituary

WRITE AN OBITUARY	EXAMPLE
• Name • Date of burial • Grave number • Age • Address • Cause of death • Paragraph describing two historic events from their lifetime and how those events may have affected them	Henry Jones, 60, was buried December 20, 1866. He died of dropsy at William Ford's house, on 3rd Street NW between L and New York Avenue. The Panic of 1837 happened when he was about 31, and if Mr. Jones worked on a plantation in the South he may have been sold multiple times as many plantation owners went bankrupt during this time. In 1845, Texas was admitted to the United States as a slave state, which greatly expanded the amount of territory a slave like Mr. Jones may have lived in. Mr. Jones is buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Section 27, grave number 3997.

While we know little about those buried in Section 27, their lives should not be forgotten. To honor their memory, select an individual on the burial record spreadsheet and write a short obituary that includes the following information:

- Name
- Date of Burial
- Grave number
- Age
- Address
- Cause of Death



	Most obituaries include some information about the person's life, but since we do not have that information, write a paragraph that describes two historic events that happened during the person's lifetime, and how these events may have affected this person's life.
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OBITUARY RUBRIC

Use this rubric to assess student achievement of expectations.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Feedback
Student wrote an obituary that includes a selected individual's name, date of burial, grave number, age, address, and cause of death.					
Student wrote an obituary that includes two historic events from the individual's lifetime.					
Student made a clear connection between the two historic events and how they may have affected the selected individual.					
	Total:				

1 = criteria not met; 2 = criteria partially met; 3 = criteria met; 4 = exceeds expectations



SOURCES

Baltimore's Civil Rights Heritage. "1831-1884: Abolition and Emancipation." Accessed October 23, 2019. <https://baltimoreheritage.github.io/civil-rights-heritage/1831-1884/>

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[https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Freedmen s Education in Virginia 1861-1870](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Freedmen_s_Education_in_Virginia_1861-1870)

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[https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/African American Churches in Virginia 1865-1900](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/African_American_Churches_in_Virginia_1865-1900)

IMAGES

Slide 1: Larue, Rachel. Spring in Arlington National Cemetery. Photograph. Arlington, Virginia: Arlington National Cemetery, April 15, 2016. <https://flic.kr/p/Gi8q1K>

Slide 3: Taylor, James E. Glimpses at the Freedmen's Bureau. Issuing rations to the old and sick / from a sketch by our special artist, Jas. E. Taylor. Illustration. Richmond, Virginia, 1866. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2009633700/>

Slide 4: Photo: Russell, Andrew Joseph. Cemetery at Arlington, Virginia. Photograph. June 29, 1864. Norfolk, Virginia: Chrysler Museum of Art. <https://chrysler.emuseum.com/objects/10128/cemetery-at-arlington-virginia>

Slide 5: The effects of the proclamation - freed Negroes coming into our lines at Newbern, North Carolina. Illustration. New Bern, North Carolina, 1863. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/95501775/>

Slide 6: Waud, Alfred R. "Zion" school for colored children, Charleston, South Carolina / from a sketch by A.R. Waud. Illustration. Charleston, South Carolina, 1866. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/97501517/>



Slide 7: Preparing for the reception of the president. The chain gang convicts cleaning the streets of Richmond. Illustration. Richmond, Virginia, 1877. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/94502949/>

Slide 11: Full-length portrait of an elderly African American man seated with a cane, facing front. Photograph. Between 1860-1870. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2010647828/>

Slide 12: Gibson, James F. Cumberland Landing, Va. Group of "contrabands" at Foller's house. Photograph. Cumberland Landing, Virginia, 1862. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2018666163/>

Slide 13: McPherson & Oliver. Two unidentified escaped slaves wearing ragged clothes / Photographed by McPherson & Oliver, Baton Rouge, La. Photograph. Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Between 1861-1865. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017659658/>

Slide 13: Hubbard, Erastus. Group school children / photographed by E. Hubbard, Beaufort, S.C. Photograph. Beaufort, South Carolina, 1862. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2015646736/>

Slide 13: Unidentified African American woman. Photograph. Between 1860-1870. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2010648882/>