The UNSUNG HERO of BIRDSONG, USA

NONFICTION READINGS & ACTIVITIES

OVERVIEW OF CONTENTS

- 13 Informational Texts
  - Variety of Text Features
  - A & B Response Formats
- 6 Extension Activities
  - Pair Texts with Nonfiction Readings
- Topics cover the time period of Colonial South Carolina to the Jim Crow Era
- Google Slides™ Links for Google Drive™
- Standards-aligned Resources
- Answer Keys for Applicable Activities!

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS TOPICS

- Early History of South Carolina
- The Civil War
- The Reconstruction Era
- South Carolina Reconstruction & Beyond
- The Gullah-Geechee People
- The Rise of Sharecropping
- The Rise of Jim Crow Laws
- *The Green Book*
- The Impact of Jim Crow
- The Great Migration
- Overview of World War II
- The 761st Tank Battalion of WWII
- Black Military Veterans of WWII

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

1

Early History of South Carolina

Annotated Map of the British Colonies in North America

The state of South Carolina is located on the United States' eastern seaboard. The area enjoys a mild climate and rich soil, both of which have drawn people to the area for thousands of years. Prior to the arrival of Europeans in the 17th century, dozens of Native American tribes occupied South Carolina although few still do today. Dramatic changes to the area quickly followed the European's arrival. The changes thrust South Carolina into a prominent role on the global and national stage, and it would wield its influence in economics, politics, and conflicts for centuries to come.

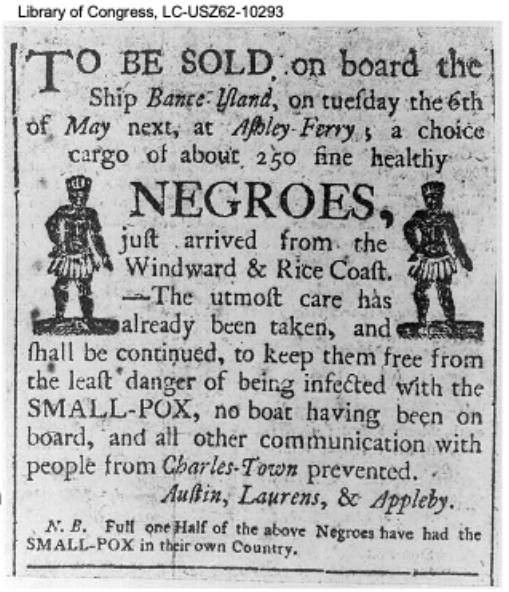
Colony of South Carolina

In 1670, the English settled in the area they soon called the Carolina colony. Settlers quickly developed into a planter class and set about to farm the land and reap benefits from the area's natural resources. Indigenous peoples resisted the settlers, and the Europeans fought against the various tribes to assert their control over the area. As more settlers flocked to the region, a rift emerged between the northern Carolina people and the southern Carolina people. As a result, the colony split into North Carolina and South Carolina in 1712. The split was peaceful, and both colonies continued to thrive in their own right.

Plantation Economy & Slavery

During the Colonial Period – the era of European's colonization of the Americas – South Carolina was one of the few colonies engaged in the slave trade. Traders exported tens of thousands of Native Americans to other colonies and the British West Indies in the Caribbean. At the same time, enslaved Africans were imported to the colony. The slave trade was an early pillar of the colony's economy, and it shaped other economic activity, such as farming. With enslaved people as labor, a **planation economy** could be established.

Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-10293



TO BE SOLD on board the Ship *Bance-Island*, on tueſday the 6th of *May* next, at *Aſhley-Ferry*; a choice cargo of about 250 fine healthy

NEGROES,

juſt arrived from the Windward & Rice Coaſt. —The utmoſt care has already been taken, and ſhall be continued, to keep them free from the leaſt danger of being infected with the SMALL-POX, no boat having been on board, and all other communication with people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Auſtin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the SMALL-POX in their own Country.

Newspaper advertisement from the 1780s for the sale of enslaved people at Ashley Ferry outside of Charleston, South Carolina.

South Carolina plantations prospered due to the cultivation of cash crops, specifically rice and indigo. Plantations, or large farms or estates, used slave labor to maximize profits. As South Carolina's plantation economy grew, so did the need for slave labor. By the early 18th century, South Carolinians relied on the trans-Atlantic slave trade to acquire the labor necessary to support and expand the agricultural activity underpinning the state's plantation economy. **Charles Town**, now known as Charleston, became a major port for the slave trade. Ships arrived directly from West Africa. Charles Town quickly became a major port of entry for enslaved Africans, receiving almost half of all enslaved people that entered the U.S. Slavery was omnipresent in

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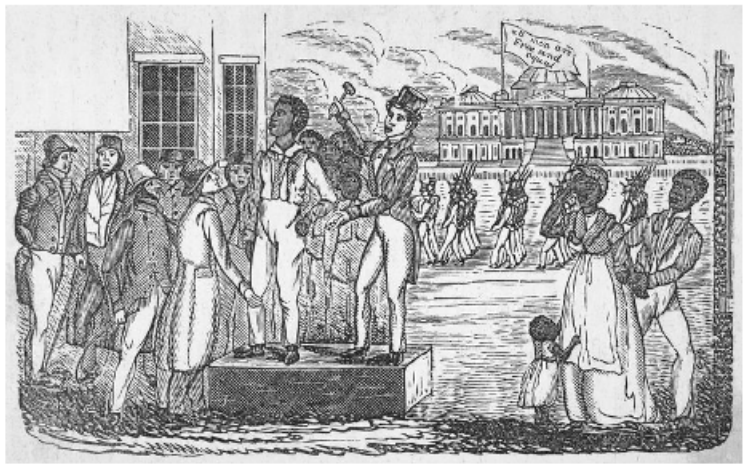
- 13 Nonfiction Readings
- Educational Text Features
- Glossary of Key Vocabulary
- 2 Pages Per Reading

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS



Title: "Slavery in South Carolina and the ex-slaves." (1862)

South Carolina commerce, but due to South Carolina's reliance on rice, the practice was most common on plantations. Rice production required up to ten times more labor than other cash crops, such as cotton. By the mid 18th century, enslaved Africans comprised up to two-thirds of South Carolina's population.

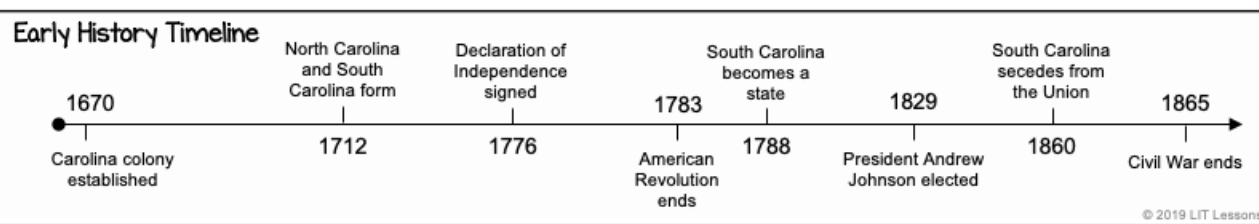
Due to the large population of enslaved people and their importance to the economy, South Carolina took steps to preserve their subordinate role in society. The state gradually adopted some of the most restrictive laws to limit or prohibit the enslaved from enjoying many liberties.

White enslavers constantly feared slave rebellions. Although very few uprisings occurred, many laws restricted enslaved people's movements, made it illegal to congregate in groups, earn money, or even learn to read and write. Slavery continued to be the cornerstone of South Carolina's economy until the Civil War's conclusion when the Union victory over the Confederacy affirmed the **abolition** of slavery.

Revolutionary War to Civil War

During the 18th century, conflicts between the American colonies and the British escalated until war broke out in 1775, the **American Revolution**. As with all the other colonies, South Carolina was home to both American Patriots and British Loyalists. The colony experienced more armed conflicts than any other. South Carolina was a critical battleground that would eventually see American Patriots achieve decisive victories critical to the American cause. The Revolutionary War finally ended in 1783 with the American colonies formally establishing their independence as the United States of America.

In the newly formed country, politicians haggled about the government's direction and the laws that would bind the states together. Slavery was a flashpoint. In order to unify the country and establish rule of law, politicians initially decided not to directly address the issue, though. As a result, slavery was not addressed in the Constitution or its amendments. The practice remained untouched and was allowed to continue for decades to come. However, the cruelty of slavery and the potential for its spread to new states joining the Union sparked abolitionist sentiments across the nation that forced the issue into the forefront of the country's politics. Tensions reached a breaking point in December of 1860 when South Carolina seceded, or withdrew, from the Union. Within a few months, other southern states joined South Carolina to form the Confederate States of America, commonly known as the Confederacy, and elected their own president. Meanwhile, predominantly northern states chose to pledge their allegiance to the recently elected President Abraham Lincoln and the new Congress. Those states took up the Union label. After four years of intense fighting, hundreds of thousands of casualties, and the emancipation of all enslaved people, the Union prevailed over the Confederacy, and the country moved forward as the United States of America once more.



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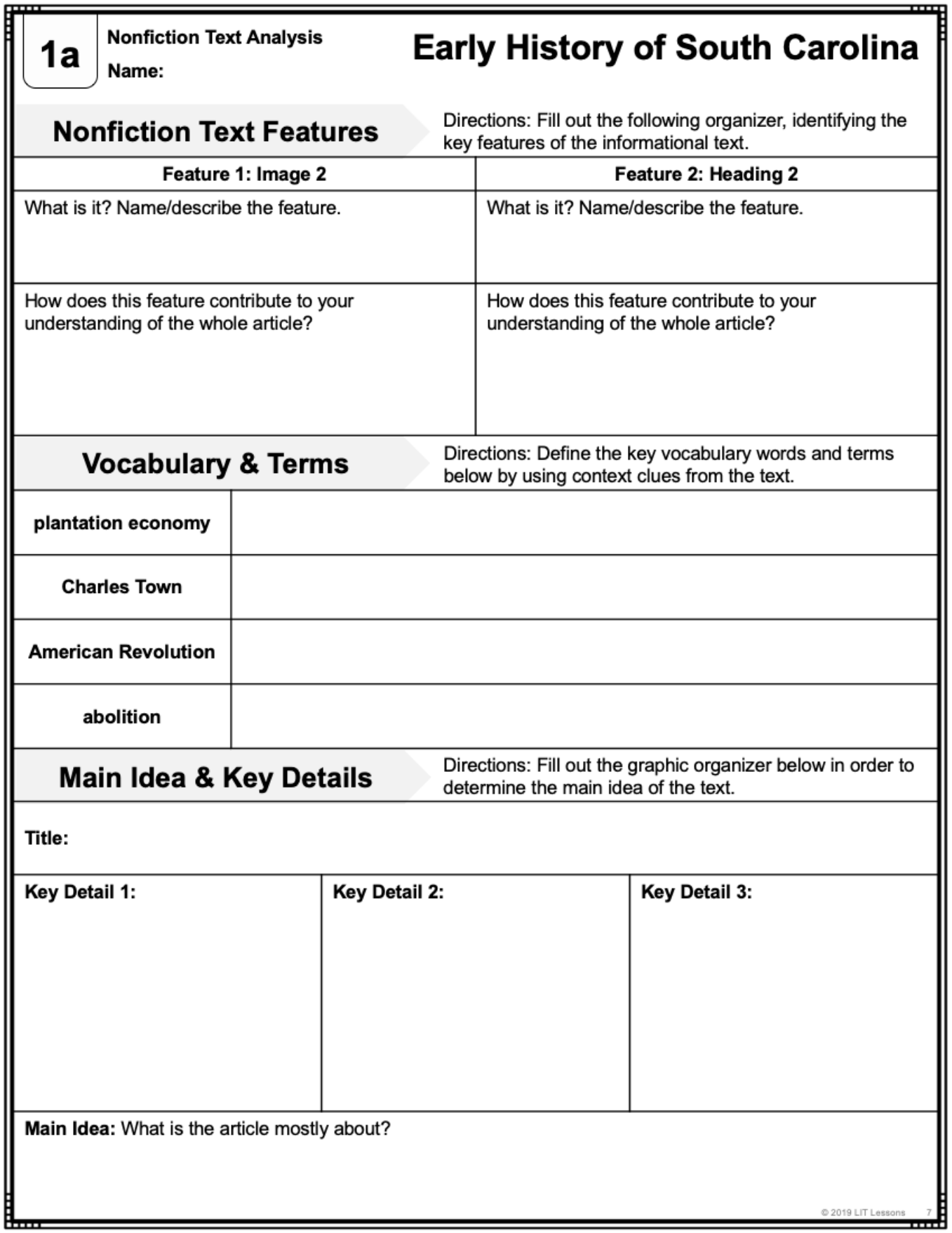
- Historical Timeline for Reference
- Common Core-Aligned
- Informational Texts and History Standards
- Critical Thinking Opportunities

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS



1a Nonfiction Text Analysis
Name:

Early History of South Carolina

Nonfiction Text Features

Directions: Fill out the following organizer, identifying the key features of the informational text.

Feature 1: Image 2	Feature 2: Heading 2
What is it? Name/describe the feature.	What is it? Name/describe the feature.
How does this feature contribute to your understanding of the whole article?	How does this feature contribute to your understanding of the whole article?

Vocabulary & Terms

Directions: Define the key vocabulary words and terms below by using context clues from the text.

plantation economy	
Charles Town	
American Revolution	
abolition	

Main Idea & Key Details

Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer below in order to determine the main idea of the text.

Title:

Key Detail 1:	**Key Detail 2:**	**Key Detail 3:**

Main Idea: What is the article mostly about?

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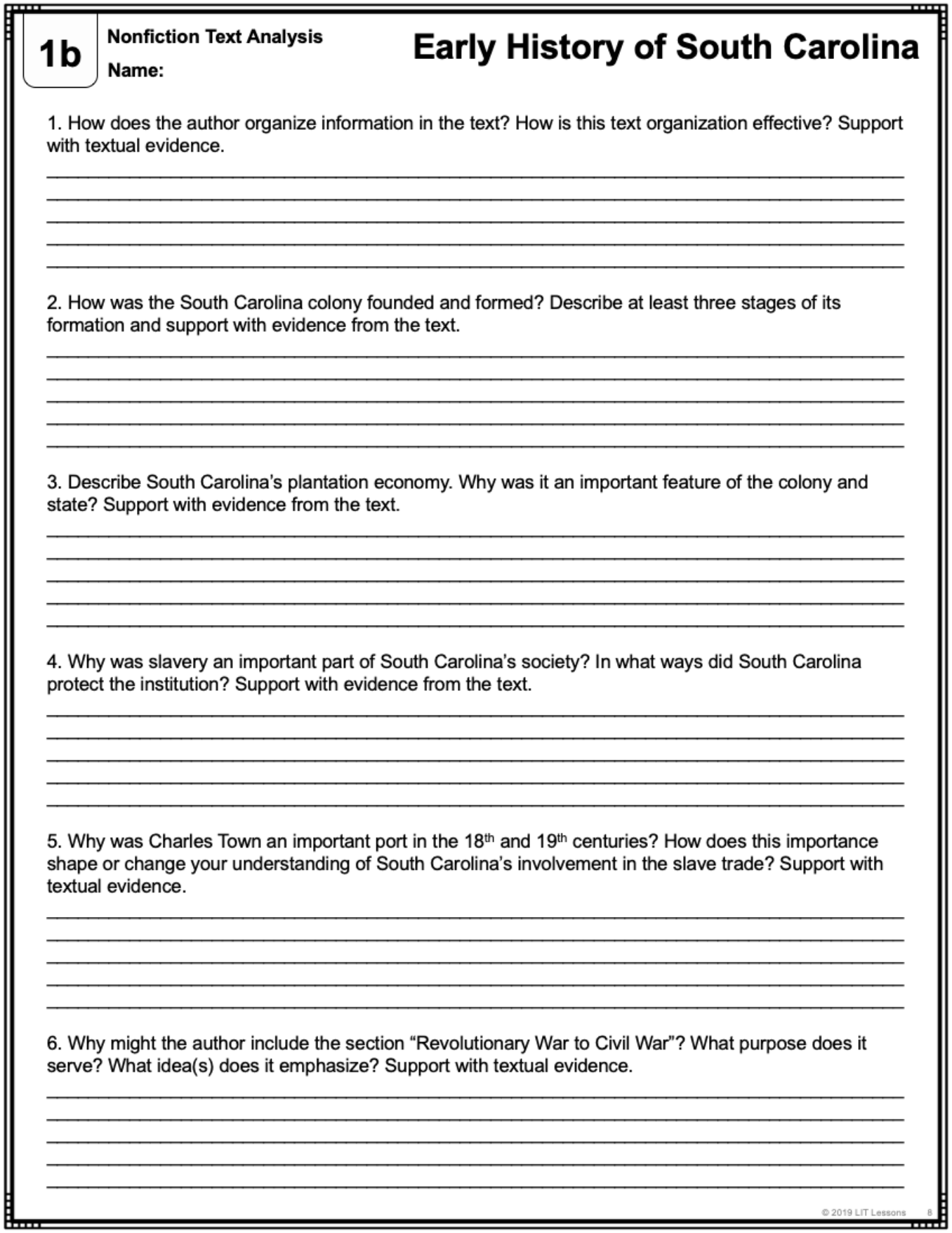
- Comprehension & Analysis Questions
- Format A – Text Features, Main Idea
- Format B – Analysis Questions
- Depth of Knowledge Prompts

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS



1b **Nonfiction Text Analysis**

Name:

Early History of South Carolina

1. How does the author organize information in the text? How is this text organization effective? Support with textual evidence.

2. How was the South Carolina colony founded and formed? Describe at least three stages of its formation and support with evidence from the text.

3. Describe South Carolina's plantation economy. Why was it an important feature of the colony and state? Support with evidence from the text.

4. Why was slavery an important part of South Carolina's society? In what ways did South Carolina protect the institution? Support with evidence from the text.

5. Why was Charles Town an important port in the 18th and 19th centuries? How does this importance shape or change your understanding of South Carolina's involvement in the slave trade? Support with textual evidence.

6. Why might the author include the section "Revolutionary War to Civil War"? What purpose does it serve? What idea(s) does it emphasize? Support with textual evidence.

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- 2 Formats to Allow for Differentiation
- Use for Centers or Rotation Model
- Pair with Novel – Cross-text Connections
- Answer Key & Google Slides™ Links

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Extension Activity 2 **Name:** **FWP Slave Narratives Overview**

The Federal Writers' Project Slave Narratives: Born in Slavery

Oral histories are important historical records. They provide insight, context, and perspective for events of the past. No matter the narrative, every voice matters. For this activity, will listen to and analyze a variety of oral histories to deepen your understanding of South Carolina's history, make connections between them, and draw conclusions based on the perspectives you analyze.

1. **Oral History Reading and Analysis**: First, you will read oral histories from the Federal Writers' Project (FWP) Slave Narratives collection. As you read, you will analyze the content of the narrative.

2. **Oral Histories Comparison**: Next, you will compare the experiences of these individuals. Although the interviews may be from different perspectives, you may be surprised by the commonalities between the experiences.

3. **Time Period Research**: The initial oral history listening and analysis work serves as an introduction to a variety of historical topics and events. Now, you will have an opportunity to explore one topic or event *you* are most interested in learning about and researching. Once you have selected a historical topic or event, you will conduct research about it to deepen your understanding of the time period.

4. **Compile Work**: After you have conducted research, you will compile your findings and prepare them for a mini-presentation. The presentation will include a visual component.

5. **Publish Work**: Finally, you will present your new knowledge and learn from others' as well!

	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Incomplete (1)
Oral History Analysis	All histories are complete and thoughtfully analyzed.	All histories are mostly complete with adequate analysis.	Some oral histories are complete with some evidence of analysis.	Oral histories are generally incomplete.
Oral History Comparison	Comparison demonstrates synthesis between histories.	Comparison demonstrates comprehension of histories.	Comparison somewhat identifies similarities and differences.	Comparison is generally incomplete.
Time Period Research	Research is thorough, informative, and accurate.	Research is generally complete with basic information.	Research is somewhat complete but may lack detail.	Research is generally incomplete.
Presentation Completion	Presentation is complete with evidence of thoughtful planning.	Presentation is complete with some evidence of planning.	Presentation is somewhat complete. Lack of advanced planning evident.	Presentation is incomplete or clearly rushed.
Presentation Composition	Presentation clearly portrays subject in a way that communicates importance.	Presentation clearly portrays subject.	Presentation somewhat resembles the subject.	Presentation is incomplete or does not clearly portray the subject.
Artistic Process	Student was fully engaged with the work and did not require any encouragement.	Student was generally engaged with the work and required minimal encouragement.	Student was somewhat engaged with the work and required encouragement.	Student lacked engagement in the work resulting in an incomplete product.
Effort	Work exhibits above and beyond effort.	Work exhibits acceptable effort.	Work somewhat lacks effort.	Work is incomplete and lacks effort.

_____ / 28 x 2 = _____ / 56 = _____ %

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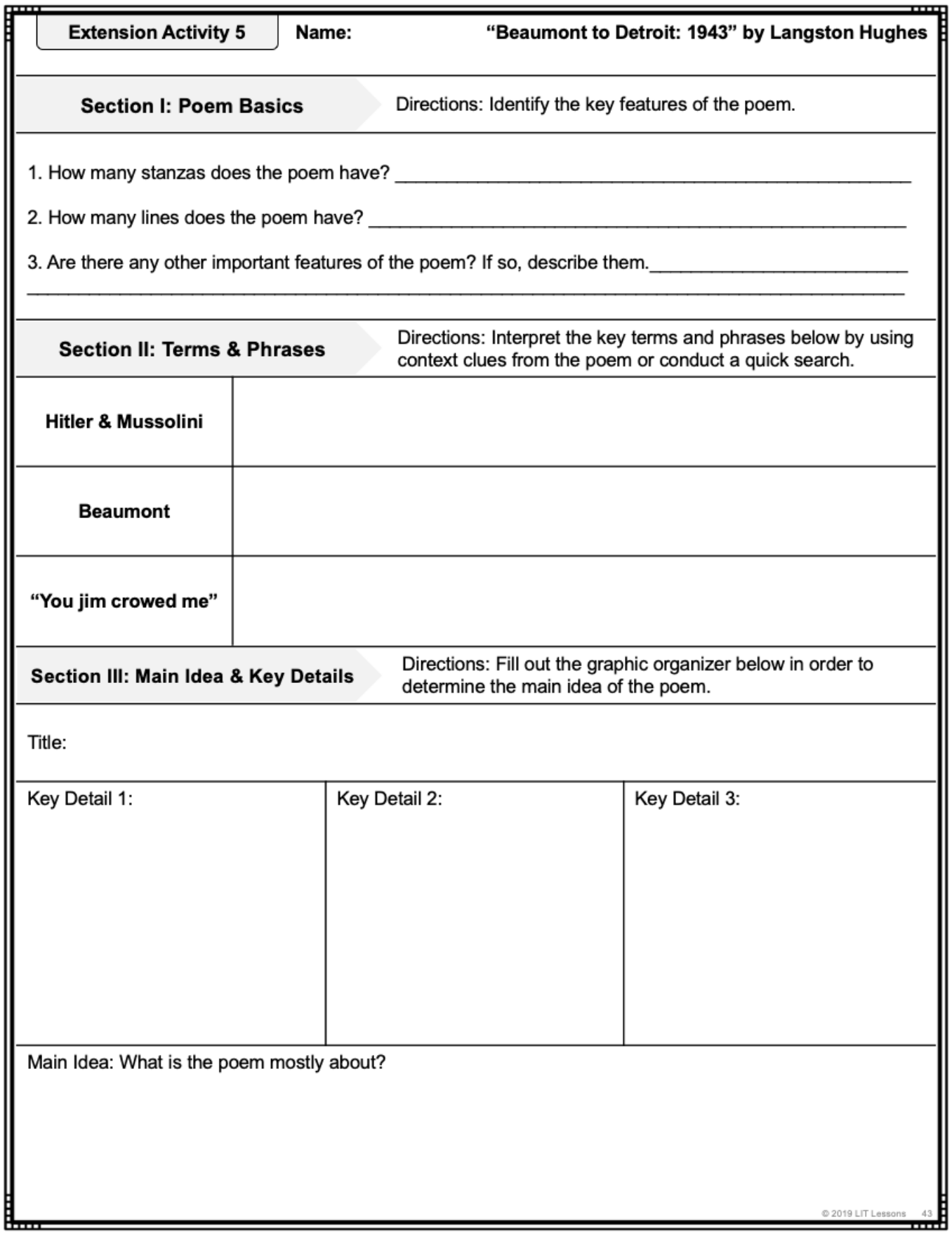
- 6 Extension Activities
- Variety of Materials – Primary Source, Documentary
- Engage with Different Activities
- Comprehension & Analysis Questions

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



Extension Activity 5 **Name:** **"Beaumont to Detroit: 1943" by Langston Hughes**

Section I: Poem Basics Directions: Identify the key features of the poem.

1. How many stanzas does the poem have? _____

2. How many lines does the poem have? _____

3. Are there any other important features of the poem? If so, describe them._____
_____

Section II: Terms & Phrases Directions: Interpret the key terms and phrases below by using context clues from the poem or conduct a quick search.

Hitler & Mussolini	
Beaumont	
"You jim crowed me"	

Section III: Main Idea & Key Details Directions: Fill out the graphic organizer below in order to determine the main idea of the poem.

Title:

Key Detail 1:	Key Detail 2:	Key Detail 3:

Main Idea: What is the poem mostly about?

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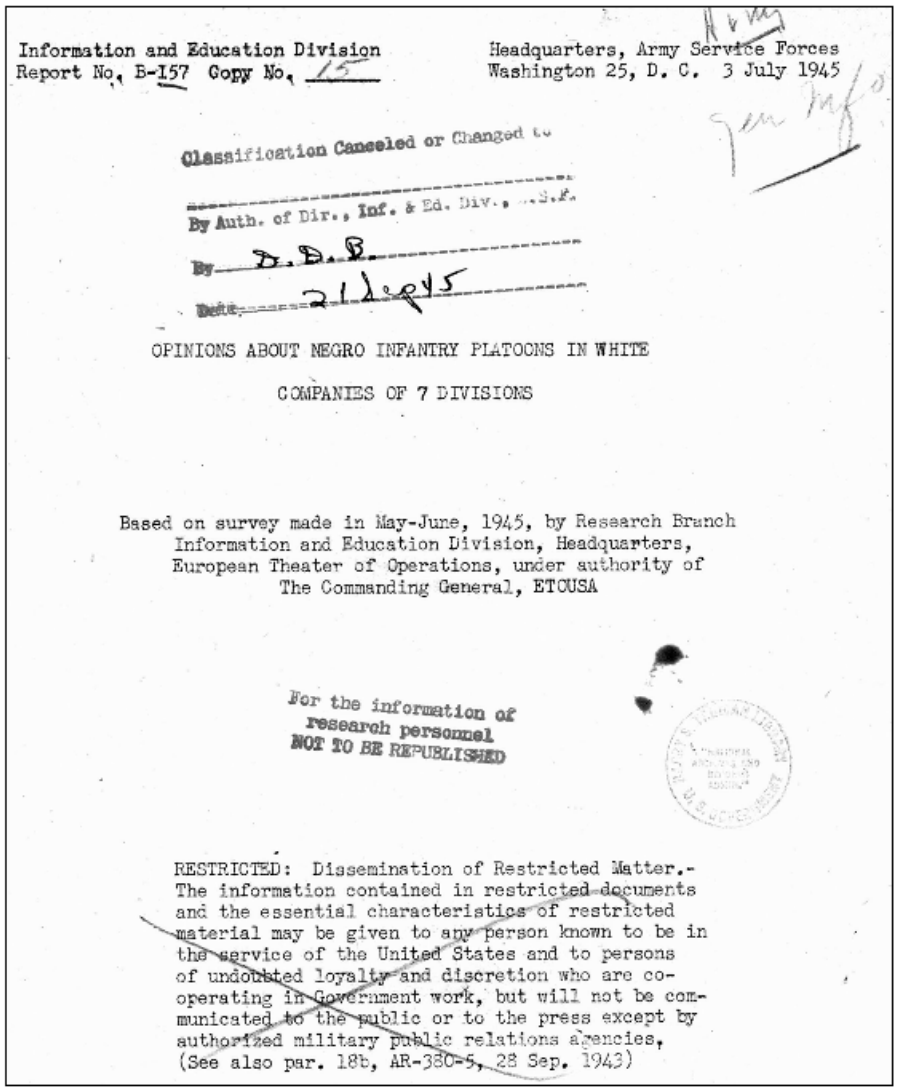
- Allows for Differentiation
- Standards-aligned – Informational & History Texts
- Pair with Nonfiction Readings
- Make Connections Between Texts

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Extension Activity 6 **Name:** **WWII Military Survey & Data Analysis**

Directions: When President Truman signed Executive Order 9981, he established the Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. The committee's job was to recommend changes in the military in order to desegregate the armed services. The following survey comes from the records of this committee. Read each page of the survey. Then, analyze the information the survey reveals by answering the questions. Finally, complete the final analysis.



Information and Education Division
Report No. B-157 Copy No. 15

Headquarters, Army Service Forces
Washington 25, D. C. 3 July 1945

Classification Canceled or Changed to

By Auth. of Dir., Inf. & Ed. Div., S.F.

By D.D.B.

Date 21 Sept 45

OPINIONS ABOUT NEGRO INFANTRY PLATOONS IN WHITE COMPANIES OF 7 DIVISIONS

Based on survey made in May-June, 1945, by Research Branch Information and Education Division, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, under authority of The Commanding General, ETOUSA

For the information of research personnel
NOT TO BE REPUBLISHED

RESTRICTED: Dissemination of Restricted Matter.- The information contained in restricted documents and the essential characteristics of restricted material may be given to any person known to be in the service of the United States and to persons of undoubted loyalty and discretion who are co-operating in Government work, but will not be communicated to the public or to the press except by authorized military public relations agencies. (See also par. 18b, AR-380-5, 28 Sep. 1943)

1. Circle the title of the survey. In your own words, explain what you think the survey will be about.

2. When was the survey conducted?

3. What important historical events occurred during this time period?

4. Based on the information provided, who took part of the survey? Include as many details as you can glean from the page.

5. Who had access to this information? Why might the information in the survey not be available to everyone?

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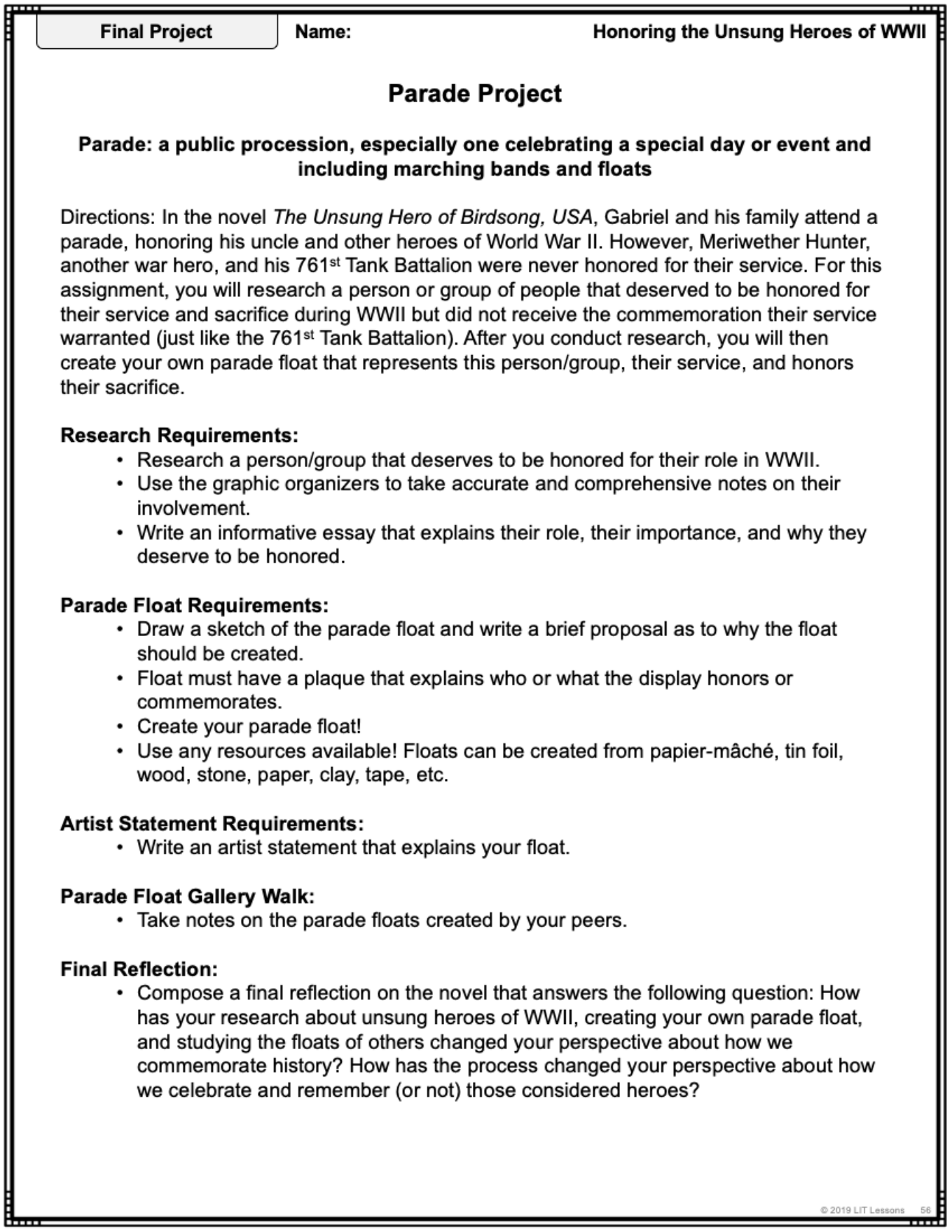
- Foster Rich Discussion
- Comprehensive Examination of History
- Prompts Require Evidence-based Responses
- Cross-curricular Learning

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES



Final Project **Name:** **Honoring the Unsung Heroes of WWII**

Parade Project

Parade: a public procession, especially one celebrating a special day or event and including marching bands and floats

Directions: In the novel *The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA*, Gabriel and his family attend a parade, honoring his uncle and other heroes of World War II. However, Meriwether Hunter, another war hero, and his 761st Tank Battalion were never honored for their service. For this assignment, you will research a person or group of people that deserved to be honored for their service and sacrifice during WWII but did not receive the commemoration their service warranted (just like the 761st Tank Battalion). After you conduct research, you will then create your own parade float that represents this person/group, their service, and honors their sacrifice.

Research Requirements:

- Research a person/group that deserves to be honored for their role in WWII.
- Use the graphic organizers to take accurate and comprehensive notes on their involvement.
- Write an informative essay that explains their role, their importance, and why they deserve to be honored.

Parade Float Requirements:

- Draw a sketch of the parade float and write a brief proposal as to why the float should be created.
- Float must have a plaque that explains who or what the display honors or commemorates.
- Create your parade float!
- Use any resources available! Floats can be created from papier-mâché, tin foil, wood, stone, paper, clay, tape, etc.

Artist Statement Requirements:

- Write an artist statement that explains your float.

Parade Float Gallery Walk:

- Take notes on the parade floats created by your peers.

Final Reflection:

- Compose a final reflection on the novel that answers the following question: How has your research about unsung heroes of WWII, creating your own parade float, and studying the floats of others changed your perspective about how we commemorate history? How has the process changed your perspective about how we celebrate and remember (or not) those considered heroes?

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- Foster Critical Thinking
- Scaffold Learning with Graphic Organizers
- Google Slides™ Links for Google Drive™
- Answer Keys for Applicable Resources

BUNDLE & SAVE!

This resource is part of a comprehensive unit on *The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA*! Click the cover below to preview all the resources available.

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- **Credits:** Thank you to the following graphic artists; their fonts and graphics were purchased and used for this product.

- Finally, thank *you* for your hard work and service to children. I know this product will help you in your efforts. Enjoy!