

Lesson Plan #2: What Can Printed Material Teach Us?

Grade Level: 4th Grade

Standards Addressed: **Standard 4-4:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the beginnings of America as a nation and the establishment of the new government.

Purpose of Lesson: To allow students the opportunity to analyze a document, make assessment and obtain historical content through primary source documents.

Activities:

Review primary source documents, ensuring students understand that even if it is a copy of the original it is still considered primary.

Together, compile a list of “what we think we can learn from documents”. And, discuss the challenges of reading historical texts (language usage, damage to the document, etc.).

Pass out copies of the following documents (all related around the same time frame) to the students and have them spend time perusing. (this can be done individually or in small groups)

[Circular Letter, April 1836, Bazile Lanneau, Jr., Charleston, S.C. to Rev. William Moultrie Read, Sumter District, S.C. Circular. To the members of the Board of Trustees of the Furman Institution, S.C. 29th June, 1838. To \[name supplied in ms.: circular letter regarding card playing by students, signed in ms. "W.E. Bailey"\]](#)
[Circular letter, 1837 Sept. 23, Charleston, S.C., to Hon. J.L. Tillinghast, House of Rep\[resentatives\], Washington, D.C.](#)
[Circular letter to the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1839](#)

After students have read and studied the document, they will summarize for the whole group. In addition, the student will use the information obtained in the document and the summary to deliver a **SHORT** lesson on some new bit of information they learned from this activity. The lesson format can be presented as a drama, lecture, etc.

In whole group ---- provide the following for a journal reflection on this activity:

- a. What did we learn content wise about the US in the 1830s?
- b. How can today's documents be used in 100 years to learn about right now?
- c. Is using primary source documents a valid way to learn about history? Why or why not?