

Manual for teachers

Educational Project: The Slave Voyage aboard the Ship The Unity

Between 1761 and 1763 the snow ship The Unity undertook its second trade voyage, departing from Middelburg, sailing to the Caribbean via Western Africa and returning back to the Netherlands. A veritable treasure of documents is available on this specific voyage.

A selection of these scans forms the basis of the educational project. This web-based, multifunctional project, is aimed at upper primary and lower secondary education. It will initially focus on schools in the Netherlands, but will also incorporate schools in other regions (such as Africa and America) affiliated with the topic. The project website will therefore become a platform for information exchange and partnership for schools in a variety of countries.

The daily reports by the first mate are being published via an online blog, which started on the initial departure date exactly 252 years later: October 1, 2013. These posts are accompanied by scans and the necessary background information and provide ample opportunity for interaction with the public. In addition, a panel of experts is available to answer (online) questions. The logbook posts by the first mate are supplemented with posts from the ship's surgeon's journal and with letters written by the captain to the MCC board in Middelburg. The blog will be completed on March 26th, 2015, the same date on which The Unity returned to Middelburg in 1763.

(For the blog, click the following link: [http:// www.atlanticslavetrade.org](http://www.atlanticslavetrade.org)).

Structure

The educational project consists of a number of elements which can be implemented each in their own way, depending on the specific wishes and circumstances of a class or course. The project is interdisciplinary, connecting to as many aspects of course outlines and teaching levels as possible while keeping in mind the main goals and differing teaching methods.

Students are stimulated to work independently in teams and with other schools, while educators can freely use and adapt the materials according to their own lesson plans. A school can choose, for example, to follow a more extensive plan within the project, or to make a specific selection from the available material ('cherry picking').

For students, learning how to interpret and use archival documents (including texts and visual sources) is paired with (new) media usage, giving media usage a historical component. The central questions of the project are the following: How do we use information sources (i.e. how are they processed and interpreted), what can we learn from them and what kind of insights can they provide us with?

The project therefore contains many so-called '21st century skills and competences': communication, independent learning, teamwork, ICT-literacy, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving thinking, and social and cultural skills.

The Journey

The trade voyage of the snow ship The Unity can be divided into separate themes or chapters. These include the following: the preparations made at the homeport, the purchasing of Africans along the West-African coast, the middle passage, the sale of goods and enslaved Africans in the Caribbean and the return voyage.

Each chapter is connected to documents related to that specific part of the voyage. These documents (textual and visual archival pieces) are selected from all of the scanned documents from The Unity.

The chapters are grouped into three digital 'archive vaults': Departure - Crossing - Return Journey.

Target audience: upper primary schools in Dutch areas

Aims:

- Students are acquainted with primary sources on slave trade and acquire knowledge and insight into the how and why of the triangle trade based on authentic historic sources as well as additional information and visuals.
- Students learn to find specific information in informative and educational texts, including digital sources
- Students practice their research skills through answering questions and doing relevant exercises
- Students learn about important historical events in Dutch history and can extend these to world history.
- Students learn to critically analyze information and learn to participate in informative and opinion-focused discussions by providing relevant arguments
- Students can think about and have an opinion on slave trade, past and present.

Context: The project addresses a number of curriculum aims, specifically relating to Self- and World-Orientation, and the time period of Dutch History that relates to trade in humans and forced labor in the New World (1637-1863). Two other historic modules are addressed as well: the Time of the Regents and Kings – Golden Age and 17th century, 1600-1700, and the Time of Wigs and Revolutions – Age of Enlightenment and the 18th century, 1700-1800.

Format: Interactive educational website with a variety of learning formats, including the chance to work together with other schools in the Netherlands (for example schools in the neighborhood of the WIC offices).

Point of departure: the basis of this project is the blog of the snow ship The Unity of the Middelburg Commercial Company. Both ship and blog departed on the 1st of October, 1761 and 2013 respectively, and will travel till the 26th of March, 1763, 2015 respectively. The triangle voyage will take them from Zeeland to Africa and America and back to Zeeland. Contributions from the ship's logbook and surgeon's journal are published daily, both in Dutch and in English.

Target audience: secondary education worldwide

Aims: Students are acquainted with primary sources on the early modern slave trade, and acquire knowledge of the triangle trade via authentic historical sources and supplementary visual material and information. Students acquire research skills through the use of authentic historical sources

- Students learn to sift for, order and critically examine information gathered from digital and non-digital sources
- Students learn to ask meaningful questions on societal issues and are able to take up and defend a well-argued point of view, as well as handle any criticism respectfully
- Students learn to use historical sources to form an idea of the time period and apply those ideas to their own cultural-historic background
- Students learn to place events, developments and people in their own time period and learn to connect those with events and developments of the 20th and 21st centuries
- Students learn about current human trafficking and its effect on individuals and society as a whole (nationally, European and internationally), learn about the interdependence within the world and to place the importance of human rights within international cooperation

Context: Since the blog of The Unity (including all of the historical sources) is offered in both Dutch and English the project can be used both in Dutch bilingual education and English-language schools worldwide. The central themes of the project include slave trade, human trafficking, history and historical research, the Dutch Golden Age, the age of Enlightenment, the abolition of slave trade and slavery, the Age of Discovery and the rise of Europe, history of American colonies, plantations etc.

Format: Interactive educational website with a variety of learning formats, including the chance to work together with other schools throughout the world

Point of departure: the basis of this project is the blog of the snow ship The Unity of the Middelburg Commercial Company (MCC). Both ship and blog departed on the 1st of October, 1761 and 2013 respectively, and will travel till the 26th of March, 1763, 2015 respectively. The triangle voyage will take them from Zeeland to Africa and America and back to Zeeland. Contributions from the ship's logbook and surgeon's journal are published daily, both in Dutch and in English.

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