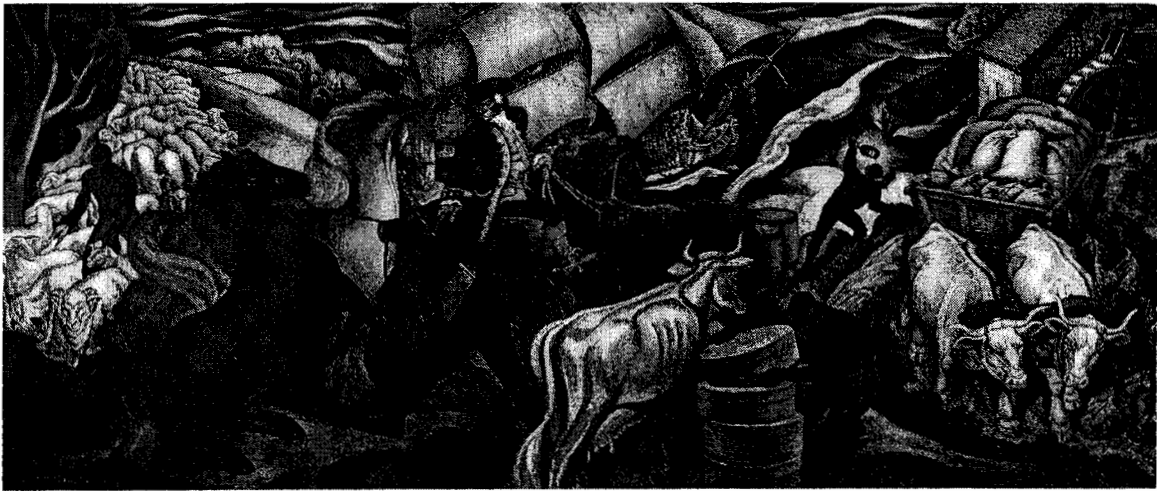


Interpreting Rhode Island Slavery in Public Art

*The Economic Activities of the Narragansett Planters*

A Mural Produced by Ernest Baker



A Curriculum Supplement for Grades 3-5

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## **Mural Supplement Lesson Summary**

Students examine Ernest Hamlin Baker's mural, *The Economic Activities of the Narragansett Planters*, through a series of questions guiding them to an understanding of key aspects of 18<sup>th</sup> century slavery on the Narragansett plantations in southern Rhode Island as communicated through the medium of visual art.

Baker has illustrated both the economic activities and the cruelty and injustice of the system. Strong, competent slaves are depicted performing tasks essential to the 18<sup>th</sup> century South County economic system: herding livestock, loading a cart with sacks of ground flint corn headed to market, stacking of cheese boxes, and shipping. A dominant image in the mural is that of a white, authoritative, well-dressed planter astride his Narragansett Pacer.

### **Time and Format**

Approximately one hour fifteen minutes is required for the whole class interactive analysis of the mural; additional time is required for assessment activities

### **Objectives**

One: To identify and describe key elements of 18th century Rhode Island slavery:

- Rhode Island played a major role in the slave trade in the colonies.
- Southern Rhode Island (West Bay) was home to a number of large slave-holding plantations.
- A Rhode Island plantation was a large land holding where labor included slaves and indentured servants and goods were produced for export. Farm products were for home use and local sale.
- Slaves and indentured servants constituted an unpaid labor force for the the planters, who were the wealthy owners.
- Rhode Island plantation products included cattle, sheep, wool products, Narragansett Pacers, cheese, grains, and hay.

Two: To identify and describe techniques used to communicate through visual art.

### **Curriculum Standards**

This exercise addresses the following National History Standards for Grades K-4 and Grades 5-12.

#### **Part 1: National Standards for History**

##### **Grades K-4**

Standard 1: Chronological Thinking

- Distinguish between past, present, and future time.

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

- Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.
- Appreciate historical perspectives.
- Draw upon visual data presented in photographs, paintings cartoons and architectural drawings.

Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation:

- Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis.
- Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions.
- Analyze illustrations in historical stories.

Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making

- Identify problems and dilemmas in the past.
- Analysis the interests and values of the various people involved.

Topic 1: Living and working together in families and communities, now and long ago

#2: History of students' local community and how communities in North America varied long Ago

Topic 2: The history of the students' own region or state

#3: The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state

Topic 3: The history of the United States: democratic principles and values and the peoples from many cultures who contributed to its cultural, economic and political heritage

#5: The causes and nature of various movements of large groups of people into and within the United States, now and long Ago.

#6: Regional folklore and cultural contributions that helped to form our national heritage

## **Grades 5-12**

Standard 1: Chronological Thinking

- Distinguish between the past, present, and future time.

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

- Evidence historical perspectives.
- Draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources.

Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation

- Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors and institutions.
- Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations.
- Consider multiple perspectives.
- Hypothesize the influence of the past.

Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making

- Identify issues and problems in the past.
- Identify relevant historical antecedents.
- Evaluate alternative courses of action.

Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)

- Standard 1: Why the Americas attracted Europeans, why they brought enslaved. Africans to their colonies, and how Europeans struggled for control on North America and the Caribbean.

- Standard 2: How political, religious, and social institutions emerged in the English colonies.
- Standard 3: How the values and institutions of European economic life took root in the colonies, and how slavery reshaped European and African life in the Americas.

## **Supplement Loan Arrangements**

This supplement may be borrowed free of charge from any member of the Rhode Island Slavery and Its Legacies consortium:

1. Newport Historical Society. Education Department. 82 Touro St., Newport, RI 02840 401-846-0813.
2. Pettaquamscutt Historical Society. Kingstown Rd., Kingston, RI. 02881. 401-783-1328. Open Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
3. Rhode Island Black Heritage Society. 65 Weybosset St., Providence, RI 02903. 401-751-3490.
4. Rhode Island Historical Society. Education Department. 110 Benevolent St., Providence, RI 02906. 331-8575.
5. Smith's Castle. 55 Richard Smith Dr., N. Kingstown, RI 02852. 401-294-3521.

Loan procedure:

1. The supplement may be borrowed for a two week period of time.
2. Borrower contacts institution to confirm availability for desired dates of use and loan arrangements. The borrower is responsible for pick up and return of materials.
3. When the supplement is picked up and returned, the two parties will confirm that all packet materials are accounted for. These materials are:
  - a. Teacher guide
  - b. Laminated mural
  - c. Mural transparency

The borrower is financially responsible for missing materials.
4. The borrower is requested to submit a user feedback form upon return of the supplement. A form will be provided at the time the borrower picks up the packet. The form is also included in the appendix. The feedback is required for grant reporting.
5. The consortium welcomes sharing of this material. If the materials are copied and used by another teacher, that teacher agrees to send a completed feedback form to the lending organization. The feedback is required for grant reporting.

### **Historical Background of the Mural: *The Economic Activities of the Narragansett Planters***

December, 1939: Mural installed as public exhibition in the Robinson Street Branch of the Wakefield, Rhode Island Post Office; office closed in 1999.

June, 2003: Installed as public exhibition in the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, 2636 Kingstown Road, Kingston, RI 02881

The mural entitled *The Economic Activities of the Narragansett Planters* by commercial artist Ernest Hamlin Baker is one of the most important examples of public art in the State of Rhode Island. Begun in 1936 and completed in 1939, this powerful painting depicts the largely agricultural economy of the Narragansett Planters of colonial southern Rhode Island, which relied heavily on the labor of black slaves. The painting combines a series of human activities: raising stock, grinding corn, making cheese, herding sheep, and smuggling along the South County coast. The great skill of the artist is demonstrated in the way he brought these individual stories together in one large, dynamic composition.

To look at the mural is to see two periods of time—the 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The mural was completed nearly 200 years after the period it depicts, and it shows the influence of the time in which it was created—the Great Depression, a time of widespread unemployment and fear of economic collapse.

The mural was commissioned through a United States Treasury Department program, the Section of Painting and Sculpture, funded with tax dollars. This program was developed to “secure art of the best quality for the embellishment of public buildings”. The Department provided general guidance to the commissioned artists, asking them to choose local subjects which would reach the average citizen. Artists were encouraged to visit communities, talk with people, and gather tales of local history.

Born in Essex, New York, Ernest Hamlin Baker was a proven artist who had completed a number of magazine covers for *Fortune* and would later execute 400 covers for *Time* magazine. In preparation, Baker visited Wakefield four times, read works of history and interviewed local historians. His completed mural clearly captures the unique South County regional and local character through his depiction of the Pettaquamscutt Rock, Narragansett Pacer horses, and the grinding of flint corn. The Wakefield Post Office painting was his only mural. He completed the work in three years and received \$850 in compensation.

The Post Office branch closed in 1999, and the painting was removed and sent to a conservation studio to be restored. In 2003 the United States Postal Service agreed to lend it on a long-term basis to the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, where it is displayed on the second floor. The Society encourages everyone to visit and enjoy the painting.

## **Historical Background for Rhode Island Slavery**

Starting in the 1900’s some white Rhode Islanders have focused on the evils of Southern slavery and neglected the history of New England’s slavery. Other 19<sup>th</sup> century writers claimed that slaves were treated better in Rhode Island than in the South. More recent historical research has indicated that these earlier writers were not always accurate.

Slavery existed throughout the colony and State of Rhode Island from the late 1600s to 1842, when the Rhode Island legislature passed a final abolition bill. Many Rhode Islanders engaged in the slave trade. Indeed, during this period, slavery and the slave trade undergirded the economy and society of the entire Atlantic world. Enslaved people in Rhode Island included Africans, African Americans (people of African descent born in the colonies), African West Indians from

the Caribbean, and Native Americans. Newport, Bristol, and Providence were the main ports used by the slaving ships, and many citizens of the colony invested in these voyages.

Plantation slavery is documented in the southern region of Rhode Island known as the “Narragansett Country” or Kings’ County and now informally called South County. This comprised Wickford south through Charlestown along the coast and eight to ten miles inland from the bay and ocean.

Slavery in this region was both similar to and different from that in the southern colonies, such as Virginia and the Carolinas. A number of large livestock and dairy farms were developed in the Narragansett Country; on the southern plantations, the cash crops were mainly rice, sugar, and eventually, cotton. These northern livestock farms required a smaller labor force than did their southern counterparts, with up to 20 slaves on the largest plantations as compared to 200 plus slaves required to farm rice, sugar or cotton on southern plantations of comparable size. Treatment of the slaves, once they reached Rhode Island was probably no better than that on the southern colonial plantations. Also, the Rhode Island slaves were usually housed in the same buildings as their masters and were consequently under greater surveillance than were their southern counterparts, who usually slept and ate in separate buildings.

The physical properties of the region were the most suitable for agriculture in all of New England, with the mildest climate, gentle winters due to the tempering effects of large bodies of water, very fertile soil on the coastal plain, and abundant local sources of water. These conditions contributed to excellent pasturage near the coast for horses and cows and good grazing in hilly upland areas for large flocks of sheep. Horses were the most valuable livestock, especially the locally developed Narragansett Pacers, which were ideal riding horses for large plantations. Cattle were grown mostly for dairy farming, with production of a hard Cheshire—type cheese that took well to being shipped over long distances. Sheep were grown both for their wool and flesh, and some cattle and pigs produced exportable meat. Flint corn that had been developed by the native population was grown for home use (jonny cakes, etc.) and export, as were oats and smaller quantities of hemp, flax, and tobacco. Proximity to the coast meant that excess agricultural products could be easily transported on ferries to Newport and then shipped to the southern colonies or the Caribbean.

Two land purchases from the Narragansett Indians in the 1650s gave to each of the purchasers several thousand acres of land to cultivate. Although plots of 300 to 500 acres were soon sold to others, a large labor force was required to work the huge farms. This was accomplished with the help of tenant farmers, hired hands, and indentured servants, but most of all by the purchase of black male slaves starting in the 1690s. The 1692 inventory of Richard Smith of Smith’s Castle, in what is now North Kingstown, lists eight slaves. There were also some Native American slaves who were captured after King Philip’s War, the Indian war of 1675-76, but many of the captives were shipped out to the Caribbean and Bermuda when it was realized that they would be less likely to rebel and escape there. Through the early 1700s most black New England slaves came from the West Indies, where for several years they had become somewhat familiar with the English language and culture and proven themselves resistant to English diseases in a process the slaveowners called “seasoning”. But starting in the mid 1700s, the demand became greater, and New England began importing slaves directly from West Africa.

Thus in the early and mid 18<sup>th</sup> century there developed, in southern Rhode Island, a plantation system, characterized by 1) ownership of large tracts of land worked mostly by slave labor and 2) the production of large surpluses of agricultural products for export. The period of peak profit for the planters was from 1740 to the 1760s, a period so lucrative that it supported a landed gentry for which there was no parallel in the rest of New England. The planters were well educated, had extensive libraries, and, unlike the Puritans, they enjoyed pastimes such as horse racing, fox hunting, and dances. They were served by a few house slaves, much as in many affluent households elsewhere in Rhode Island. But the Narragansett Planters held so many field slaves that by 1730 there was approximately one black for every three whites in South Kingstown, the township with the most plantations. By 1755, Rhode Island had the highest percentage (13%) of Africans in all of New England.

Not all of the planters continued to support slavery, for in the 1740s a movement began among the Quakers of southern Rhode Island to free their slaves. Abolitionist sentiments spread at the same time the plantations' profitability declined, in part due to trade impediments during the Revolutionary War. Eventually the Rhode Island legislature passed the Emancipation Act of 1784. But it was a gradual emancipation, for only slaves born after March 1, 1784 were to be freed after these slave children had served the owners of their mothers for 18 years (for girls) or 21 years (for boys). Not until 1842 did the Rhode Island legislature approve final abolition legislation. In fact, the process of emancipation was so gradual that the last slave in Rhode Island died in 1859.

### **Timeline of Rhode Island Slavery and Emancipation**

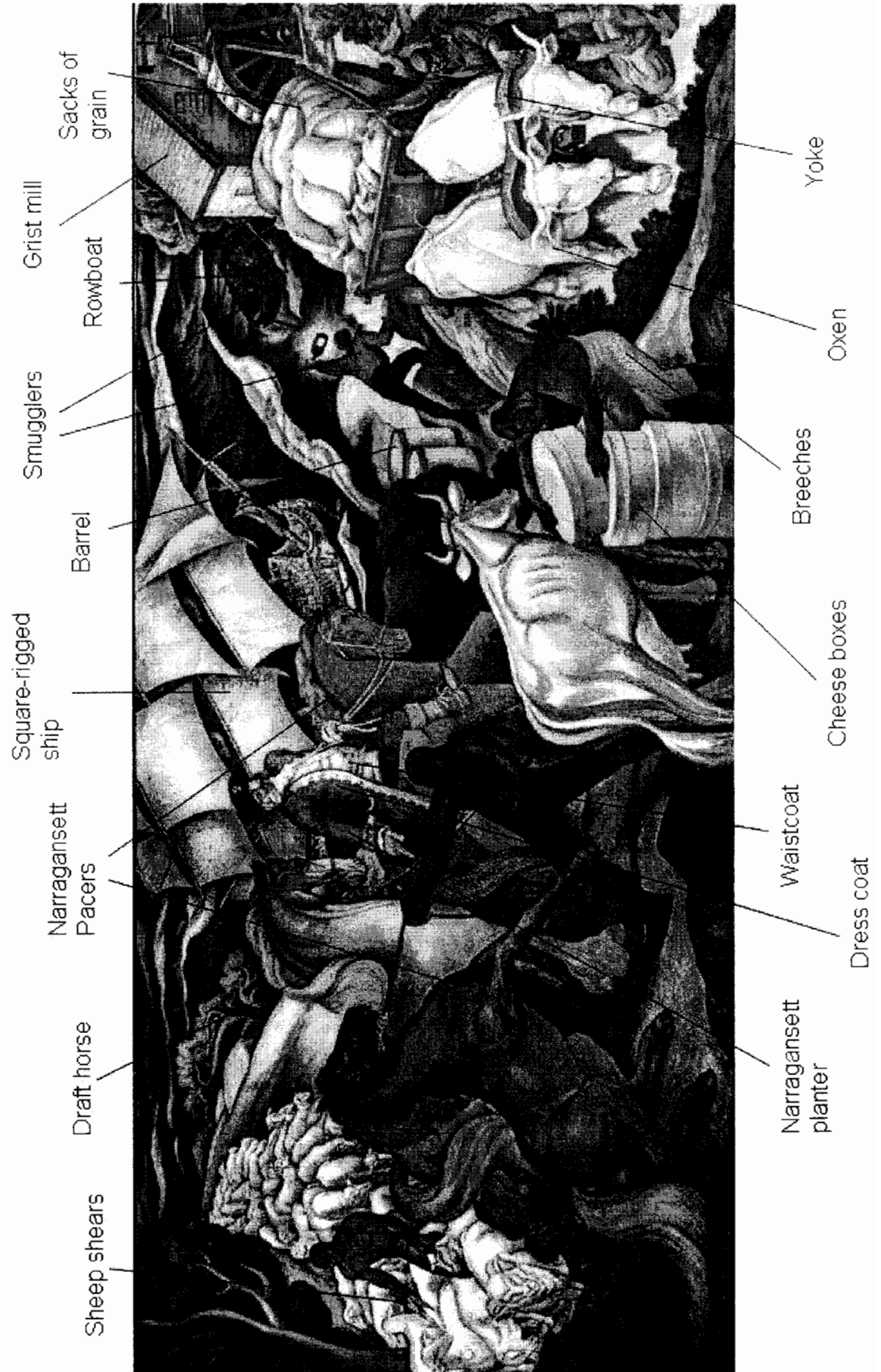
- 1636 Roger Williams leaves Massachusetts Bay and arrives in what will be Rhode Island.
- 1638 First African slaves are brought to New England (Boston) from the West Indies in exchange for Pequot Indians, captured in the Pequot War.
- 1708 From the first available RI census: There are 426 African slaves in Rhode Island (among 6,755 whites), constituting 6% of the population. (There is also an unknown number of Indians, primarily Narragansett but also Wampanoag and Nipmuc.) Of the African slaves, 220 are in **Newport (New England's largest slave trading port)**. Slaves in Newport do skilled and unskilled labor in the city, load and unload boats, and do household labor (which in this period includes not simply "housework" but could also include caring for livestock, tending small gardens or doing farm labor).
- 1748 There are 2,082 slaves and 28,439 whites in Rhode Island; the number of slaves has grown to represent 7.3% of the RI population. **Most African slaves continue to come from the West Indies, not directly from Africa. Every city and town in the state now has slaves.** About 33% of slaves, or 681, live in "the Narragansett Country"—the area of **large agricultural plantations** in South Kingstown, North Kingstown, Charlestown, and Westerly. There they work in groups of 40-50, performing skilled and unskilled labor, raising sheep, cattle, and horses (the now extinct Narragansett Pacer), producing dairy products, and growing grain, all for the so-called "coasting trade"—the trade to the slave colonies of the West Indies. Some plantation slaves also do housework or farm work necessary to sustain the Narragansett planter families and slave families themselves. At

- the same time, another 463 slaves (22%) live in Newport, Bristol and Providence, all **port cities**, where they still do skilled and unskilled labor in the cities, load and unload boats, and do household labor. It is also becoming increasingly common for families in smaller towns to have **one or two slaves living and working with white families in small towns and on isolated farms**. By now a very small number of slaves have been freed. Most continue to live in white households and work for their former owners, but some form independent households. Other freed slaves form households with native people and live in white households, independently, or on Narragansett tribal land in Charlestown.
- 1755 There are 4,697 Africans (13%) and 35,839 whites in Rhode Island. About one quarter, or 1,223 Africans, live and work on the **large agricultural plantations** of “the Narragansett Country”; another third, or 1,496, live in **port cities**—Newport, Bristol and Providence. The rest live in ones and twos on **small farms and in small towns**, doing household labor and farm work with white families. **Only 5 out of 25 cities and towns include fewer than 50 slaves.**
- 1760s Slaves **are being imported directly from Africa; this re-Africanizes a population** that was becoming steadily more acculturated to English customs. As one consequence, **“Negro elections,” West African-based festivals at which the slaves (and free blacks) elect a “Governor,”** begin to be held in RI and continue until about 1850. The vast majority of Africans remain enslaved, but the free black population continues to grow slowly.
- 1778 A critical shortage of troops causes the RI legislature to permit **slaves to enlist** in the Continental Army in exchange for freedom and soldiers’ benefits; slaves’ owners are compensated 121 pounds. These slaves make up the Rhode Island First Regiment, which fights bravely in the Battle of Rhode Island and later battles.
- 1783 The census lists only 2,806 “blacks and mulattoes” (two-thirds of whom are probably still enslaved) amidst 48,556 whites in RI. Why have the numbers of blacks suddenly diminished by almost half? A bill to end slavery (gradually) is being debated, and **whites apparently are selling their slaves to other states to avoid impending loss of value.**
- 1784 RI implements a ***post nati* (after birth) emancipation bill**, making all children born to slaves free—**after** serving the owners of their mothers for 18 years (for girls) or 21 years (for boys). Effectively, nothing changes for Rhode Island slaves—but political leaders now call Rhode Island “a free state.”
- 1831 One black-only school is established in Providence in response to a petition arguing that exclusion of free blacks from public education is unfair since blacks are required to pay taxes
- 1842 The Rhode Island legislature passes a **final abolition bill**—now, **58 years after the inception of gradual emancipation, all slaves are free.**
- 1842 Black men (who meet a stiff property requirement) are allowed to vote.

**Vocabulary:** Additions may be necessary depending upon class needs. See the next page for the illustrated *Vocabulary Key to the Narragansett Planters Mural* for assistance in identification of individual elements in the painting.

- **Africans:** people from the continent of Africa
- **barrels:** wooden storage containers
- **breeches:** 18<sup>th</sup> century style mens' knee-length pants, with buttons
- **breeding:** the business of producing animals
- **cheese box:** round wooden box used in production and storage of cheese
- **draft horse:** a powerful horse especially suited for heavy work, such as pulling plows and wagons
- **export vs. import:** export: to send goods out of one's country for sale or trade; import: to bring goods in to one's country for sale or trade
- **flint corn:** a desirable strain of corn, with very hard small seeds
- **grist mill:** a mill that grinds grains such as flint corn
- **indentured servant:** one who has agreed to bind him or herself to a period of service (usually 7 years) to a colonist "owner"; in return the indentured received free passage to the colonies
- **livestock:** cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, etc. raised for home use or sale
- **Narragansett Pacer:** a breed of small, reddish riding horse, much in demand during the plantation era, providing a very comfortable ride at a fast pace
- **Narragansett planters:** the wealthy gentlemen who owned the plantations
- **oxen:** adult male bovines that cannot reproduce
- **plantation:** during the period of colonization, the term referred to any new settlement, such as Plimoth Plantation or Providence Plantations; later the term referred to large landholdings which produced goods for export and used slave labor
- **sheep shears:** large scissor-like implements used for removing the fleece from sheep
- **slave:** person who was owned as property by another and required to work without wages; a slave was provided with basic necessities; any children born to a slave mother would also be enslaved
- **slave owner:** one who owns a slave
- **smuggler, smuggling:** one who imports or exports illegally, without paying required taxes; the act of importing or exporting in this manner
- **tariff, duty:** a government tax on imported or exported goods
- **waistcoat and dress coat:** 18<sup>th</sup> century style men's garments made of linen, silk or wool
- **yoke:** a wooden structure that sits on the shoulders of an animal or animals, connecting them and enabling them to work together as a team to pull a plow or haul a load

## Vocabulary Key to Narragansett Planters Mural



## **Procedure:**

The class should be allowed sufficient time to examine the mural closely (either through the projected transparency or smaller reproduction mural) before proceeding with the guided questions and activities. It is important to view the mural both for its artistic and emotional qualities and for its presentation of a period of Rhode Island history. It is suggested that the poster be exhibited in the classroom for casual observation for 2-3 days before the exercise. PLEASE USE TAPE, NOT TACKS, TO AFFIX THE MURAL.

## **Guided Questions and Activities:**

This approach is based on the SmART Schools© integrated arts model being implemented in North Kingstown schools. Examples of responses are given; the students will likely produce many others; keep in mind that this is a work of art, and each viewer may interpret it differently. Charting class responses may be helpful. Recommended guided questions are italicized. Possible student responses are bulleted.

1. Opening exercise: initial reaction to the mural as a work of art.  
*Do you like this work of art: Why or why not? Write your reaction; do not share with the class.*
2. *Look carefully at the work of art in front of you. What colors do you see? Take turns listing specific colors.*
3. *What do you see in this work of art? Take turns. Mention whatever you see happening, no matter how small.*
4. *Does anything you have noticed in this work of art so far remind you of something in your own life?*
  - colors
  - objects
  - events
5. *How real has the artist made things look? Does it seem true to life? Remember there are no right or wrong answers.*
6. *What ideas and/or emotions do you think this work of art expresses? How does it make you feel?*
7. *What images in the mural provide a clue to the location of this scene?*
  - waves at shoreline, rocky shore, large ship.
8. *What in the mural provides clues to the time period represented here?*
  - wagons and ships, not cars

- old fashioned clothing
  - oxen, not tractors
  - water-powered mill
  - storage containers made out of wood, not plastic or cardboard
  - This all represents Rhode Island before it became heavily industrialized in the 1700s.
9. *Look at the people in the mural. Describe their characteristics.* Lead the students to look at bodies, especially faces, to imagine characteristics of these people. This emphasis is not about the work the people are doing.
- black men are strong because I see big muscles; the slave is so strong he can control a rearing horse; they are proud and serious because of the looks on their faces.
  - white man's face is stern and controlling; body attributes are concealed by clothing; his arm and coat move toward the slave, demanding action or obedience.
10. *Describe the clothing the people are wearing. What does the clothing tell you about the person?*
- white man: fashionable attractive 18<sup>th</sup> century clothing, a waistcoat, tricorn hat, powdered wig, riding jacket, breeches, tall boots; appears prosperous and in charge.
  - black men wear little: breeches, one has no shoes, three have no shirts; they are laborers.
  - man with lantern: shirt, breeches, stockings, and pony tail.
  - men in boat: tricorn hat, waistcoat, shirts, sailor hat; some have bandannas and pony tails.
11. *What kinds of work does the mural show us? Who is doing each kind of work? How can you tell who is in charge?*
- white man (master, slave owner, planter) on horse giving direction/giving orders.
  - black men handling livestock, stacking cheese boxes, hauling load of sacks (corn), hold shears, controlling rearing horse, whipping oxen. (Note to teachers: Although some free blacks did this kind of work in the 1700s in southern Rhode Island, most black men doing this work were slaves.)
  - men rowing a boat.
  - man with lantern signaling men in boat (smuggling)
12. *Describe the animals.*
13. *Why do you think the ship and rowboat are in the painting?*
14. *What kind of business do you think these people are involved in?*
- After allowing student speculation, introduce the following concepts:

- a. A plantation is a large agricultural operation that produces goods for export, using resident workers and/or slave labor. Common Rhode Island plantation goods were grain, cattle, cheese, Narragansett Pacers, and wool. (A farm, as opposed to a plantation, produced goods for the residents' own needs and for sale locally, not primarily for export.)
- b. Smuggling is illegal shipping of goods that are not allowed or the transport of goods without paying the required tariff/tax/duty. Example: rum had a high tariff placed on its import by the 18<sup>th</sup> century British government; therefore, it was often smuggled.

15. *Think back over your previous observations. What have you discovered from looking at this work of art? What do you think the artist was trying to say about life at this time in South County?*

16. *Do people today do the same kind of work that is shown in the painting? If yes, give some examples. Could this be a painting of life today? Why or why not? Could aspects of this painting be true today in Rhode Island? Which ones?*

17. *Concluding exercise: Do you like this work of art? This is the same question that you were asked when we began. Look at what you wrote for your first impression. Has your reaction changed? Do you like it more or less than you did at the beginning? Why?*

18. *This work of art used to hang in the Wakefield, Rhode Island post office. Do you think it was a good idea to hang it in the post office?*

### **Suggested Assessment Activities**

1. Imagine you are living on a South County plantation in the 1700s. Write to a friend or family member about your daily activities from the viewpoint of a slave or master. Or, write a journal entry as if you were a slaveowner or slave.
2. Work in small groups to research, write and present information on some aspect of the mural.
3. Create a work of art (visual or multi-media) illustrating 21<sup>st</sup> century economic activities to compare and contrast with the activities depicted in the mural.
4. Create a black and white drawing that illustrates the kinds of activities that might take place on an 18<sup>th</sup> century plantation. Include the products and animals and what you imagine to be the plantation' shelter for animals and humans.

### **Suggested Activities for Further Study**

1. Discuss a parallel mural such as the "The Enslavement of the Indian" section of a 1929 mural by Diego Rivera, which is part of an historical series lining the walls of the circa 1531 Cortez Palace in Cuernavaca. This section of the mural depicts nearly thirty Indian slaves on a sugar plantation, cutting sugar cane, bundling it, and even pulling a heavily loaded cart while four armed overseers watch and the plantation owner lies in a hammock. The rhythmic arrangements of the workers' bodies, their downcast heads, and the cool

blue/green/gold/brown color scheme produce a stunning portrayal of the subjugation of the local population. A copy of this mural is available from each of the mural supplement lending institutions. It can also be found in *Mexican Muralists* by Desmond Rochfort, Chapter 4, "Rivera and Orozco in the 1930's", page 96. Universe Publishing, N.Y., 1994 edition available from the URI library and the Johnson and Wales main library, Providence. (One copy of the 1993 edition with different page numbers is available from the Cross' Mills Public Library or through the CLAN interlibrary loan system.)

2. Make cheese; recipe included in Appendix A.
3. Visit South County sites:
  - a. See the original mural at the Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, 2636 Kingstown Rd., Kingstown, RI. Open Tues., Thurs., and Sat. afternoons from 1-4 p.m. Large groups should call 783-1328 to make an appointment.
  - b. Smith's Castle, 55 Richard Smith Dr., N. Kingstown, RI. One of the largest of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Rhode Island slave holding plantations. Call 294-3521 for a school program appointment and for hours of operation for walk-in visitors.
  - c. Carpenter's Grist Mill, 364 Moonstone Beach Rd., Perryville, RI. Built by Samuel Perry in 1703, this is a working water-powered grist mill, grinding RI white cap flint corn. Call Bob or Diane Smith at 783-5483 for tours and grinding dates.
  - d. Casey Farm, Rt. 1A, North Kingstown, RI. Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century homestead overlooking Narragansett Bay. It was the center of a plantation that produced food for local and foreign markets. Call 295-1030 for a school program appointment and for hours of operation for walk-in visitors.
  - e. Watson Farm, 455 North Road, Jamestown, RI. In 1789, Job Watson purchased a piece of this rich farmland, and for the next two centuries, five successive generations of the Watson family cultivated the land. Call 423-0005 for a school program appointment or for hours of operation for walk-in visitors.

### **Supplemental Resources for Students**

Brennan, Linda Crotta Brennan. *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution*. Moonstone Publishing, North Kingstown, Rhode Island, July 2004. Appropriate for ages 7-11.

Equiano, Olaudah. *The Kidnapped Prince: The Life of Olaudah Equiano*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1995. Appropriate for ages 8-12.

Lester, Julius. *From Slave Ship to Freedom Road*. Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, New York, 2000. Appropriate for ages 10-through adult.

Winter, Jeanette. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*. Alfred A Knopf, Inc, New York, 1992. Appropriate for ages 6-9.

## Supplemental Resources for Teachers

### 1. Resource materials are included in Appendix A.

Note: A probate inventory listed one's possessions with associated relative value immediately after death. Inventories give us an idea of the perceived value of slaves relative to other property.

1. Primary document: *1692 Inventory of the Estate of Richard Smith, Jr.* (of Smith's Castle). The Richard Smith probate inventory preserves original, unstandardized spelling and punctuation, such as "tow" for "two" and "=" for "-".
2. Primary document (edited): *1751 Inventory of the Estate of Deputy Governor William Robinson of South Kingstown*. The inventory is taken from *The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island; Comprising Three Generations Who Came Before 1690* by John Osborne Austin, The Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc., with additions from *The Robinsons & Their Kinfolk*, 1906, Pub. by The Robinson Family Genealogical and Historical Society. The Robinson probate inventory has been slightly edited.
3. Charts of Maximum Sizes of Land-holdings and Slave-holdings on Narragansett Plantations
4. Key to Narragansett Planters Mural: vocabulary study
5. Cheese recipe

### 2. Resources available upon request

- "From Slavery to Freedom in Rhode Island," a classroom story path activity for grades three-five, produced in conjunction with "Interpreting Rhode Island Slavery in Public Art" as another part of the Rhode Island Slavery and Its Legacies Project. The game uses a series of role cards (white male and female colonists, male and female African slaves, white male and female servants, free blacks). Students role play as the teacher guides them through a story path beginning in the colonial period and moving into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Slave Notes: a compilation of biographical information on South County slaves
- Primary document: 1757 Inventory of Daniel Updike
- Quotations from *A Letterbook and Abstract of Out Services 1743-1751*, by James MacSparran, relating his experiences with his own and other owners' slaves.

### 3. Bibliography for further reading:

Bickford, Christopher. *Picturing History: Wakefield's Post Office Mural of 1939*. Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, Kingston, R.I., 2003.

Coughtry, Jay. *The Notorious Triangle, Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700-1807*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia, Penn., 1981.

Fitts, Robert K. *Inventing New England's Slave Paradise: Master/Slave Relations in Eighteenth-Century Narragansett, Rhode Island*. Garland Publication, Inc, N.Y., 1998.

- McBurney, Christian. "The South County Planters: Country Gentlemen in Colonial Rhode Island." *Rhode Island History*, Rhode Island Historical Society, Aug., 1986.
- Melish, Joanne Pope. *Disowning Slavery, Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y., 1998.
- Pierson, William D. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 1988.
- Smith's Castle at Cocumscussoc: Four Centuries of Rhode Island History*. Produced by Neil G. Dunay, Norma LaSalle, and R. Darrell McIntire. Cocumscussoc Association, Wickford, R.I., 2003.
- Sweet, John W. *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2003.
- Wright, Marion I. and Robert J. Sullivan. *Rhode Island Atlas*. Rhode Island Publications Society, Providence, 1982. See Chapter 4, The Economy, pp. 147-156.

## **Appendix A**

An Inventory of y<sup>e</sup> Estate of Maj<sup>r</sup>  
Richard Smith dece<sup>d</sup> as presented to the Under Written &  
apprised by us y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>d</sup> Day of May 1692 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

	£	s
In the Warehouse Chamber		
Six Iorn pots and Kettles a Coile Cordage below In the warehouse	2	10
A parcell of cask and other Lumber	1	10
50 bushells of Salt and a Copper	10	00
In y <sup>e</sup> Shop a parcel of Goods	90	00
In y <sup>e</sup> Stone house Chamber a Brass Kettle and other Lumber	03	00
In the Kitchen Pewter Brass Iorn Potts and other things	04	00
In the Kitchen in the Greate house one Brass Kettle Chaires Candlesticks & other Small Things	05	00
12 Guns & other Small arms	15	00
In the Dairy Room Some few old Things	00	10
In y <sup>e</sup> hall a Small Sea Bed & Som furniture a map of y <sup>e</sup> world a Platt of Boston a pair of Colours and other Things	10	00
In the Closett Sundry Books & other Things	05	00
In the Porch Chamber a Bed and Bedstead a rug and Some Blanketts a Read Leather Trunk and other Things	10	00
In Plate	25	00
Wearing apparel Linen and Woollen	20	00
In the Greate house Kitchen Chamber 2 old Beds & homemade furniture & other things	14	00
In a Littele Closett Shoes and Some Lumber	02	00
In a Chest Pewter Brass & Tin Ware	06	00
In The Hall Chamber Three Beds Bolsters Covering 4 Setts of Curtains 4 Cover =lids with other Small things with wareing apparel of M <sup>r</sup> Smiths	65	00
Linen New & old with an old watch	31	00
Gold & Rings	40	00
English money	15	00
New England mony and Spanish	65	00
Broken Pieces of Plate	01	10
In a Closett one pair of Brass and Iorns one Jack and other Things	03	00
In y <sup>e</sup> Leanto Chamber about 40 of Sheeps Woole and Lumber	02	10
In y <sup>e</sup> Kitchen Garrett Servents Beds & Covering	03	00
In the Hall Garrett a Scane[?] home Spun Cloath and other things	04	00
In y <sup>e</sup> Porch Garrett Several old things	02	10
tow negro men Cost	40	00
five negro Children & an old negro Woman	40	00
Tow Geldings & a Stone Horse	20	00
about 30 Sheep at Thomas Havens	09	00

(ucite)

	£	s
In the Warehouse Chamber		
young and old swine about 20	5	10
Carts Ploughs & other Husbandry Tools	7	00
Cattle young & old about 135	250	00
A Debt of Henry Bulls dece,d on obligation	42	00
A debt of Coll Smiths of Seaccannit [?]	40	00
Severall other debt wich If Paid about	200	00
Half of y <sup>e</sup> Sloop Primrose	100	00
a Clock at Boston	20	00
	111	1?

Francis Brinley    John Fones  
Andrew Willett

Before the Hon.<sup>ble</sup> William Stoughton Esqr

Lodowick Updike Exec<sup>r</sup> psonally appearing made oath that this cont  
=ains a just and true Inventory of ye Personal Estate of his Late Uncle  
Major Richard Smith Deced. so far as hath Come to his Knowledg and that  
If more hereafter appears he will Cause It to be added.

Boston Octo<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>  
1692

Jurat Cor. W<sup>m</sup> Stoughton

Examd per Is<sup>a</sup> Addington Reg<sup>r</sup>  
A True Copy Exam

Paul Dudley Reg<sup>r</sup>

(Edited) Inventory of the Estate of Deputy Governor William Robinson (1693-1751)  
of South Kingstown, son of Rowland I (who came to America in 1675),  
from his will written Jan. 15, 1747 and proved Oct. 14, 1751.

Total Value of estate:	£21, 573, 5s, 5d.
Includes:	
Wearing apparel	£ 130
Cash	£ 176, 2s.
Bonds and notes	£ 5, 255, 11s, 3d.
Pair of gold buttons, pair of shin buckles, & a band buckle	
Cows: 17 oxen, 8 heifers, 18 two years, 26 yearlings, 28 calves	
30 horsekind (including 11 Narr. Pacer brood mares & 1 stallion)	
17 store pigs, 18 fat shoats, 16 shoats, 4 sows	
195 lambs	£ 12, 029
Cider mill and press	£ 30
Negroes:	
Old Sue	nothing
Old Mingo	nothing
Jeffrey	£ 350
Lucy	£ 280
Phillis	£ 200
Peter Knowles	£ 100
Girls Sue & Cynthia, boy Simon	£ 300
Old Pete	£ 175
Lydia	£ 300
Roco	£ 320
Young Pete	£ 500
Jo	£ 400
Jack	£ 450
Jemmy	£ 250
Samuel	£ 450
Isabel	£ 300
Nana	£ 250
Corn in crib	£ 650
2 old wheels, parts of 2 old linen wheels, table linen	£ 22
Pocket book and cash	£ 113, 6s, 6d.
Clock	£ 145
Pair of worsted combs, silver in buffet in great room	£ 374, 8s.
Books and desk	£ 5
English and marsh hay	£ 850
Barley stack	£ 20
Cheese fats, cheeses (4060 pounds), & c.	£ 558

## Maximum Size of Land-holdings and Slave-holdings on Narragansett Plantations

Taken from R.K. Fitts, *Inventing New England's Slave Paradise: Master Slave Relations in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Narragansett, R.*, 1998. Garland Publishing Company.

**Table 1: Narragansett's Largest Land-holdings**

Planter	Dates	Town	Size (in acres)
Joseph Stanton	1739 – 1807	Charlestown	5760
Daniel Updike	1694 – 1757	North Kingstown	3000+
Thomas Hazard	1660 – 1746	South Kingstown	2870+
Christopher Champlin	1731 – 1809	Charlestown	2000+
Robert Hazard	1689 – 1762	South Kingstown	1600+
William Gardner	1671 – 1732	South Kingstown	1600
James Perry	Unknown – 1774	South Kingstown	1440
William Robinson	1693 – 1751	South Kingstown	1317
Samuel Sewall	Unknown – 1744	South Kingstown	1200
Rowland Robinson	1719 – 1806	South Kingstown	1000+

Sources: Charlestown n.d.; North Kingstown 1798; South Kingstown Probates n.d.; D. Updike 1737; W. Updike 1847.

**Table 2: Narragansett's Largest Documented Slave-holdings**

Planter	Town	Date	Number of Slaves
William Robinson	South Kingstown	1751	19
Daniel Updike	North Kingstown	1757	19
William Gardner	South Kingstown	1732	19
Christopher Champlin	Charlestown	1769	14
Christopher Champlin Jr.	Charlestown	1774	14
John Hazard	South Kingstown	1774	14
Jeremiah Niles	South Kingstown	1774	13
Col. George Hazard	South Kingstown	1743	13
Jonathan Hazard	South Kingstown	1746/7	12
Jeffery Hazard	South Kingstown	1759	12
James Perry	South Kingstown	1774	12
Jonathan Perry	South Kingstown	1774	12
William Potter	South Kingstown	1774	11
Mathew Robinson	South Kingstown	1774	11
Lodowick Updike	North Kingstown	1774	11
George Hazard	South Kingstown	1746	10
James Congdon	Charlestown	1757	10
Thomas Brown	South Kingstown	1774	10
William Dyre	South Kingstown	1774	10
Henry Gardner	South Kingstown	1774	10
William Havens	North Kingstown	1774	10
John Potter	South Kingstown	1774	10

Sources: Bartlett 1858; Charlestown n.d.; South Kingstown Probates n.d.; D. Updike 1757.

## Cheese Making

What follows is not a colonial period recipe, but a simple adaptation of a contemporary soft cheese recipe. It will provide the students with some basic understanding of the cheese making process, but it should be made clear that in colonial times the process was much more time consuming and required many additional steps.

An article from *Old Time New England: The Bulletin of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, October, 1936, describes the cheese making process in detail:

The milk was set in pans and a little rennet was added to it—‘just enough to make the curd come,’ to quote an old recipe. It was kept at blood heat until the curd was well formed—usually about half an hour. The curd was stirred with the hand until it was well set. It was then removed from the whey with a strainer and placed on a draining board. It was worked with the hands to remove as much of the whey as possible. Sometimes this operation was performed in a cheesecloth laid over a cheese basket, which rested in turn on a cheese ladder, placed over a pan or tub to catch the whey. More rarely a cheese rack combined the functions of basket and ladder. After as much liquid as possible was removed from the curds by hand, they were salted and placed in a cheese ring or hoop and placed in the press. A wooden disk, called the foller, fitted snugly on top of the curds to ensure even pressing. The hoop or ring had no bottom, but a similar device, called a vat, had a perforated wooden bottom. Issac Peace Hazard recalled that his great-grandfather, Robert Hazard, had ‘cheese-vats of the second size’ that ‘held nearly one bushel.’

...Pressure was applied, in most cases, through a combination of pulleys and levers. A weight was attached to the end of the lever to give a constant pressure. One press, a small table press, is operated with wooden screws.

The cheese was pressed over night with moderate pressure. Then it was turned over and pressed on the other side. It was removed from the hoop and thoroughly coated with butter and salt and placed on a cheese ladder on the cheese-house shelf to ripen. This took several months and during this period the cheese had to be turned over and buttered daily. Most of the cheese was made during July and August, but the turning and buttering continued until late in the fall.

Note: Pettaquamscutt Historical Society, Smith’s Castle and South County Museum have cheese making equipment in their collections.

## Recipe for Soft Cheese

Equipment: 2-6 quart heavy pan, stirring spatula, slotted metal spoon, colander, cheesecloth.

Note: In this recipe we replace rennet with lemon juice as the curdling agent. Rennet is an enzyme derived from the stomach lining of a calf.

Ingredients and Yield:

Whole Milk	Strained Fresh Lemon Juice	Approximate Yield
4 cups	1 ½ tablespoons	4 oz.
6 cups	3 tablespoons	6 oz.
8 cups	4 tablespoons	10 oz.
10 cups	5 ½ tablespoons	12-12 oz.

Step 1: Bring milk to full foaming boil over high heat. Stir continuously. Then reduce heat to low, and before the foam subsides, slowly add the lemon juice. Move the spoon slowly through the mixture in one direction only. After 10-13 seconds, remove from heat. Continue to stir gently until large lumps of soft curd develop. If curds have not formed after one minute, place back over heat momentarily to hasten the development of curds. May add a small amount more of lemon juice.

Step 2: Set aside for 10 minutes.

Step 3: Place 2-3 layers of cheese cloth in colander. Edges should hang over the sides of the colander. Place the colander inside a bigger bowl to catch the whey, which can be tasted. Using slotted spoon, first remove large pieces of cheese and place in the colander. Pour remainder of whey and small curds gently into colander.

Step 4: Bring corners of cloth together and twist the corners together at the top to form a bundle of curds. Hold under running water for a few seconds to rinse off the acidity. Twist the top to remove additional water and whey.

Step 5: Drain the whey. Place bundle of cheese back in the colander. Cover with a heavy plate which is weighted down. Press for approximately 2 hours. The cheese will be ready to eat. Refrigerate remainder for up to 4 days.

Recipe adapted from *The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking* by Yamuna Devi, Dutton: The Penguin Group, N.Y., 1987.

## Rhode Island Slavery and Its Legacies Curriculum Supplement Feedback Form

**Note to teachers:** Our project funders, the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities and the Rhode Island Foundation, have asked that we provide feedback on the effectiveness of the supplements. Each of the partnering organizations is independently interested in your feedback as well. Completion and return of this questionnaire when the supplement is returned will be sincerely appreciated.

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

Email contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Use: \_\_\_\_\_

My class used: \_\_\_\_ Interpreting Rhode Island Slavery in Public Art  
\_\_\_\_ From Slavery to Freedom in Rhode Island

I borrowed the supplement from: \_\_\_\_\_

### **For the teacher:**

1. I learned about the supplement through:

School principal or superintendent     Another teacher     Newspaper

Rhode Island Department of Education flyer

Rhode Island Slavery and Its Legacies Partner

Newport Historical Society

Pettaquamscutt Historical Society

Rhode Island Black Heritage Society

Rhode Island Historical Society

Smiths' Castle

2. Before using this supplement, how much did you know Rhode Island slavery?

nothing     very little     some     a lot     I'm an expert

3. How much has this supplement improved your familiarity with Rhode Island slavery?

nothing     very little     some     a lot     I'm an expert

4. What was the most positive outcome of using this supplement in your classroom?

**Rhode Island Slavery and Its Legacies Curriculum Supplement Feedback Form (cont.)**

5. Did you experience any disappointments? If so, how can the supplement be improved to alleviate these disappointments?
  
6. What do you still want to know about the history of slavery and its legacies in Rhode Island?
  
7. Would you like to use this supplement again?     Yes     No
  
8. Other comments?

**For the student:**

Note to teachers: A 5-10 minute wrap up discussion should be adequate to yield responses to the following questions. If you choose to solicit written student responses, please summarize those responses. It would be very useful if any particularly meaningful student responses could be photocopied and returned with the questionnaire.

1. What did you know about Rhode Island slavery before a) studying this mural or b) doing the story path activity?
  
2. What is something important that you know now after this activity?
  
3. What else would you like to learn about Rhode Island slavery?