

Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits

3rd-6th Grade Lesson - Take a Stand

30 Minutes

Curriculum Connections

U. S. history
African American history
Civil Rights
Analyzing historic documents

Learning Objectives

After this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- analyze and interpret photographic images
- identify individuals from six photographs
- explain what it means to take a stand
- define the terms (slavery, abolitionist and resistance)

Materials

Printouts of six photographs

Advance Organizer (10 minutes)

Pass around copies of the photographs of:

Sojourner Truth - abolitionist and women's rights leader

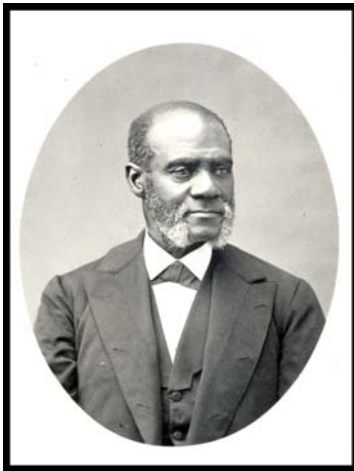
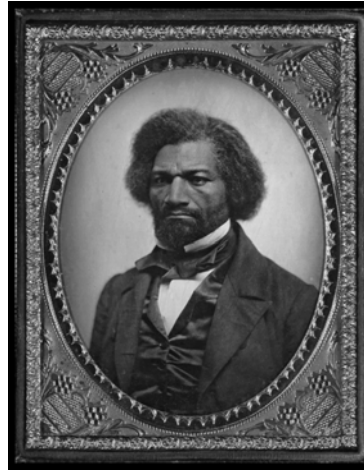
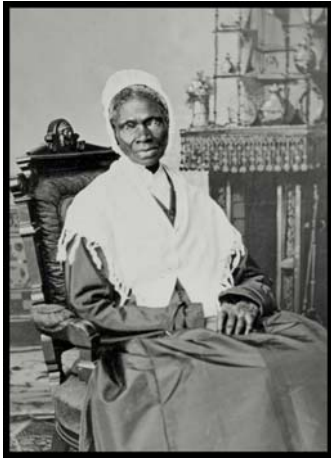
Frederick Douglass - abolitionist and writer

Henry Highland Garnet - abolitionist

W.E.B. Du Bois - scholar and writer

Lorraine Hansberry - playwright and civil rights activist

Muhammad Ali - Boxing Olympian and Heavyweight Crown winner.



On the computer, use the magnifying lens to study these photographs.

These six photos are in the National Museum of African American History and Culture's exhibition called, *Let Your Motto Be Resistance: African American Portraits*.

Do you know the names of any of these people? How is each person best remembered?

Use describing words to tell about each person's life from looking at the photographic image.

Throughout our nation's history, African Americans have faced enormous struggles. Whether it was fighting against slavery as an abolitionist or pursuing a career in an area where no African American had worked before, it required that they take a stand.

Class Discussion (5 minutes)

What does it mean to take a stand?

Prompt Questions

How do you think the people in the photograph, might have taken a stand to end slavery?

How do you think the people, might have taken a stand to do a job that no African American had done before?

What do you think was difficult for them?

How would you feel if you wanted to show your talent, but were not allowed?

On the board, list student responses.

Activity (15 minutes)

Divide the students into groups of 3 or 4. Have the students read the story about Henry Highland Garnet (1915-1882).

Clergyman Henry Highland Garnet was well acquainted with the evils of America's "peculiar institution." Born in slavery in Maryland, he escaped from bondage in 1824 and later served as a conductor

on the Underground Railroad in Troy, New York. Like many abolitionists, Garnet first hoped that moral persuasion could turn public opinion against slavery, but in 1840 he abandoned this approach in favor of political action. His stance became still more militant in 1843, when he delivered an impassioned speech at the National Convention of Colored Citizens in Buffalo, New York. In his "Address to the Slaves of the United States of America," Garnet exhorted those in bondage to rise in insurrection against their enslavers. "Strike for your lives and liberties," he proclaimed. "Rather die freemen than live to be slaves. . . . Let your motto be resistance! Resistance! RESISTANCE!"

What did Henry Highland Garnet mean by the word resistance?

Ask the students to discuss the following scenario. Suppose the society we live in decided it was alright to treat one group of people unfairly and you were in that group. What three ways would you take a stand against this decisions?

Have one student from each group report out and write all of the responses on the board.