

“Slavery in Florida” 1840’s-1850’s

An educational module based on primary sources available at the Florida Historical Society’s
Library of Florida History
Cocoa, FL

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Suggested procedure for use of this module:

1. Discuss the issue of slavery with students, particularly in the context of the slave economy in the South prior to the Civil War. Ask questions like “Why was slavery so important in the South?” and “Why is slavery still an important historical topic?”
2. Review the definition of primary sources and their importance. Included in this module is a primary source guide page answering some questions students may have about the nature of primary sources and their uses.
3. Have students read the short introduction to the module regarding the content that will be addressed in this module to establish historical context.
4. Have students read the primary source transcript and compare it to the original document scan. Encourage students to read along with the original document to see how much they can decipher on their own.
5. Refer students to the key terms section following applicable sources to find definitions of unfamiliar terms.
6. Instruct students to answer the set of questions accompanying each source (either alone or in groups). Encourage them to cite evidence from the primary source whenever possible.
7. Have a copy of the teacher’s discussion guide handy and review the questions in class using the discussion guide to highlight important details from the sources.

Standards This Module Helps Meet:

Florida Standards

Language Arts:

- **LAFS.910.RH.1.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- **LAFS.910.RH.1.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- **LAFS.1112.RH.1.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **LAFS.1112.RH.1.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

Sunshine State Standards

Social Studies Grade 8:

- **SS.8.A.1:** Use research and inquiry skills to analyze American History using primary and secondary sources.
- **SS.8.A.1.5:** Identify, within both primary and secondary sources, the author, audience, format, and purpose of significant historical documents.
- **SS.8.A.1.7:** View historic events through the eyes of those who were there as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.
- **SS.8.A.5:** Examine the causes, course, and consequence of the Civil War and Reconstruction including its effects on American peoples.
- **SS.8.A.5.2:** Analyze the role of slavery in the development of sectional conflict.

Social Studies Grades 9-12:

- **SS.912.A.1:** Use research and inquiry skills to analyze American history using primary and secondary sources.
- **SS.912.A.1.1:** Describe the importance of historiography, which includes how historical knowledge is obtained and transmitted, when interpreting events in history.
- **SS.912.A.1.2:** Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify author, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.
- **SS.912.A.2.1:** Review causes and consequences of the Civil War

Common Core Standards:

English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies » Grade 6-8:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies » Grade 9-10:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies » Grade 11-12:

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

“Slavery in Florida” Module Introduction

Slavery is a sensitive topic that is often difficult to discuss. However, it remains an extremely important part of American history, especially in the South. In that regard, Florida was no exception to the South’s systematic exploitation of individuals of African descent in its quest for economic advancement. In fact, African slaves were of particular importance in Florida from an early point in its history. Historian Larry Eugene Rivers notes that African slaves were of vital significance during Spanish rule in Florida as a result of the native Indian populations being decimated by war, disease, and mistreatment, combined with a shortage of Europeans that resulted in a demand for African laborers that only increased after the mid-sixteenth century.¹ This established an early precedent of slavery in the state. However, Rivers notes that slavery under Spanish rule had a more “relaxed racial climate” and often allowed slaves to have more rights than the slavery system of the Old South, which Florida will come to adopt.²

The slavery system of the “Old South,” as it pertains to Florida, will be the focus of this module. Historian Julia Floyd Smith writes, “Slavery was first of all a labor system, and the primary concern of the owner was getting work out of his slaves.”³ In this system, slavery existed simultaneously as both a cruel and brutal institution as well as a well-oiled economic machine. On large plantations, things were kept running through the efforts of men known as overseers. Many of these men were from the class of poor farmers who felt contempt for slaves, blaming them for their poor economic status.⁴ Slaves typically feared these men since they were the ones responsible for disciplining them, often with whips and other means of physical punishment. Other slaves felt the need to rebel against overseers who were seen as the disposable middleman between the slaves and their owners. The result was often overseers who ruled with an iron fist. Overseers penned most of the documents in this module. They provided some of the best first hand accounts of daily life on plantations in the South.

The primary documents that will be discussed in this module will come from the 1840s and 1850s, prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Several of these documents will come from the records of the El Destino Plantation. El Destino Plantation was a Florida cotton plantation about twelve miles east of Tallahassee straddling western Jefferson County and eastern Leon County.⁵ The plantation was first owned by John Nuttall, who purchased it in 1828. When John Nuttall died, his son William Nuttall bought the plantation. The plantation was eventually passed to Mary Savage Nuttall, William Nuttall’s daughter, who was sold an additional nearby plantation named Chemonie. Ultimately, Mary Savage Nuttall’s husband, George Noble Jones of Savannah, would come to own both plantations.⁶ While George Noble Jones may have owned the plantation, he was mostly an absentee owner who relied on overseers to ensure work on his plantation got done.

Not all slaves were bought, sold, or rented by plantation owners exclusively. Slaves were used to accomplish a variety of labor tasks. For example, one of the documents in this module comes from a set of records concerning David L. Palmer and Darius Ferris, two residents of Jacksonville who were partners in providing timber for the U.S. Navy. Unfortunately, they were later accused of cutting Live Oak on public lands and face trial.⁷ However, before this, they used slave labor to undertake their business. The bill of sale for a young slave from these men’s records provides a sobering look at the true status of slaves as property to be bought, sold, and used in the Southern economy until their value diminished.

Slavery was a ruthless institution, yet it still managed to embed itself deeply into the everyday reality of the South. In fact, it is impossible to understand the culture of early Florida without examining the topic of slavery. While slavery was present long before Florida became a part of the United States, it was only more systematic and vicious once Florida gained its statehood. Once Florida was accepted as a state, Floridians

¹ Larry E. Rivers, *Slavery in Florida: Territorial Days to Emancipation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 2.

² *Ibid.*, 4.

³ Julia Floyd Smith, *Slavery and Plantation Growth in Antebellum Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1973), 53.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵ Ulrich Bonnell Phillips and James David Smith, ed., *Florida Plantation Records from the Papers of George Noble Jones* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 43.

⁶ *El Destino Plantation Collection*, Library of Florida History, The Florida Historical Society at Cocoa, FL 32922.

⁷ *Holmes-Palmer-Ferris Papers*, Library of Florida History, The Florida Historical Society at Cocoa, FL 32922.

became more accepting of the Old South ideas and ideals.⁸ This will ultimately set it on the path of secession by the time Civil War broke out in 1861. Examining these documents from collections available through the Florida Historical Society provides a small, yet intriguing glimpse into the daily reality of slavery in 19th century Florida.

⁸ Rivers, *Slavery in Florida*, 14.

Primary Source Guide Page

Q: What is a Primary Source?

A: According to the Library of Congress, “Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study.” The key to remember is that primary sources were created during the time period being studied.

Q: Are primary sources exclusively written documents?

A: No! It’s true that many primary sources take the form of written accounts, like newspapers, letters, and journals. However, primary sources can take many forms. Remember the key to a primary source is that it was created in the time period being studied. Therefore, photographs, film footage, paintings, maps, clothing, architecture, everyday objects, and many other items can also be seen as primary sources.

Q: Is my textbook a primary source?

A: No. Resources like textbooks, biographies, research papers, histories, and encyclopedias are not primary sources. This is because they were created after the time period being studied. Therefore, sources about certain periods in history, but not created during that period of history, are not primary sources.

Q: If textbooks and similar sources created after the period of history being studied are not primary sources, what are they? Are they reliable?

A: These types of sources are known as secondary sources. However, that does not mean they do not contain good information. Textbooks, histories, biographies, and other sources about historical periods are constructed from the information found in primary sources. Therefore, the information contained in primary sources give people in later time periods the necessary information to create summaries and draw conclusions about the past. Furthermore, many secondary sources include primary sources like photographs or excerpts of personal accounts to support their interpretations of the past.

Q: What should I look for when I am studying a primary source?

A: There are many things to look for when viewing a primary source. Of course, it depends on the nature of the source you are looking at. For example, if you are reading a letter from someone you should look for things like the type of language used, author biases, dates mentioned, the purpose of the letter, and to whom it was being addressed. Naturally, if you are viewing something like a painting as a primary source you will be looking for different things, such as what the painting depicts, what type of materials were used in its creation, and an artist’s signature.

Q: Why study primary sources?

A: Primary sources are the most important link we have to the past. They reveal the important events, thoughts, opinions, styles, attitudes, and customs of the past. Primary sources are the most dependable way to get information about the past because they were created by those who lived it.

Source #1

1841 Letter from Perry A. Barrington to George Jones. Reports on the El Destino cotton crop and the health of the slaves. Dated El Destino, June 11, 1841. 1 sheet folded; 2 pages of writing.

Eldisteno [El Destino] June the 11- 1841

Mr Jones

Sir I take this opportunity to drop you a few lines to inform you the condishion [condition] of your crop the cotton at Eldisteno [El Destino] is very Good the cotton at vases is good what the is standing the stand is very Bad and in consequence of the dry weather But little of the replanted cotton has stood we are very dry at this time My corn at Eldisteno is engord [engorged] very much the corn—at vases is doing very well as yet as it is Later than my corn at Eldisteno— the hands has Been quite sickly sence [since] you left My sick List will [illegible] five a days sence [since] you Left I now [know] at this time Seventeen hands sick three dies is a disintary [dysentery] from drinking Bad water at vases— I think is the cause I had cotton Blossoms on the 30 of May the wind is from the East an [and] not Much appearance of rain the weather has Bin (been) too dry for Every thing But cotton cotton crops is Generally Good. I have comenced [commenced] hauling leaves for making manure— — I shall soon commene [commence] [illegible] the sick? as soon as My hands Get up the hands you sent out worck[work] very well I have seen abt [about] the people cloathes [clothes] I sent to cheemouonee [Chemonie] 50 yards of woven Burgs and [illegible] and two of Blue homespun— It is very sickly in Tallahassee this is the 3 letter I have rote [wrote] you tow to Savannah- Mr. Gambele(?) told me he had just reeved [received] a letter from you and he had not heard from ~~you~~ Me that indused [induced] me to rite [write] you suner [sooner] than I would of done we have now indian newes [news] I will rite [write] you in about three weeweeks [weeks] and then I will send the measures of the Negres [Negroes] feet I nothing more at Present I remain yours

Respectfully Perry A. Barrington

Key terms:

- **Dysentery**: a disease of the lower intestine caused by infection with bacteria, protozoans or parasites and marked by severe diarrhea, inflammation, and the passage of blood and mucus.
- **Vases**: This is believed to be in reference to “Vass” a field at El Destino. It may also be the name of another field at the Plantation.⁹

⁹ Ulrich Bonnell Phillips and James David Smith, eds., *Florida Plantation Records from the Papers of George Noble Jones* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 590.

Eldestino June the 11-1841

Mr Jones

Sir I take this opportunity to drop you
a few lines to inform you the condition of your crop
The cotton at Eldestino is very good the cotton
at Naves is good what the is standing the stand
is very bad and in consequence of the dry weather
But little of the replanted cotton has stood we are
very dry at this time my corn at Eldestino is
engaged very much the corn at Naves is doing
very well as yet as it is later than the corn
at Eldestino - the hands has been quite sickly
since you left my sick list will arrange
from a day since you left I have
at this time seventeen hands sick the disease is
a dysentery from drinking bad water at Naves -
I think is the cause I had cotton blossoms on
the 30 of May the wind is from the East and not
much appearance of rain the weather has
been too dry for every thing But cotton
cotton crops is generally good I have commenced
hauling leaves for making manure -
I shall soon commence opening the ditches
as soon as my hands get up the hands you sent
out work very well I have given all the
the people cloaths I sent to Cheesman 50 yards
of muslin Dicks and out two pieces of Blue Thompson -

it is very sickly in Tallahassee this is the 3 letter
I have rate you I rate you to Savannah
Mr Gamble told me he had just received a letter
from you and you had not heard from ~~you~~
me that engaged me to rate you sooner
than I would of done we have some
indian news I will rate you in about
three weeks and then I will send the
measures of the Negroes feet & nothing more
at Present I remain yours
Respectfully Perry A Barrington

Letter.

P. A. Barrington.

June 11th 1841.



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Mr. Geo. S. Jones. Esq.
Care of

Mrs. Curtis Bolton Free & Livingston
New York

Source #1 Questions:

Directions: Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Use the document to support your answers whenever possible.

1. What audience was this document written for? How do you know? Use quotes from the document to support your answer.
2. The slaves at the El Destino Plantation are mentioned alongside topics such as crop health and the weather. What does this indicate about the role of slaves in a plantation economy?
3. What details does this document provide into the lives of slaves on a Southern plantation?
4. What does the phonetic spellings and imperfect grammar indicate about the person writing this document? What type of focus would the individual writing this document have had? Does this surprise you?

Source #1 Questions: Teacher Discussion Guide

1. What audience was this document written for? How do you know? Furthermore, what type of focus would the individual writing this document have had? Use quotes from the document to support your answer.

- This document was written to Mr. George Noble Jones, the owner of El Destino plantation, from an overseer named Perry A. Barrington.
- Students should note that the letter is addressed to “Mr. Jones,” who is stated as the owner of El Destino Plantation in the module introduction.
- Students should also note that it is a private letter. It is addressed to one person and follows a typical letter format.
- The letter states, “Sir I take this opportunity to drop you a few lines to inform you the condishion [condition] of your crop the cotton at Eldisteno [El Destino] is very Good...” This indicates an update on the plantation’s productivity.
- The letter has several instances of updates on topics like crops (corn and cotton), slave health, and the distribution of goods. This further supports that the letter was intended for the owner of the plantation.
- The author of this document would have been focused on updating the plantation owner, not on creating an eloquent letter.

2. The slaves at the El Destino Plantation are mentioned alongside topics such as crop health and the weather. What does this indicate about the role of slaves in a plantation economy?

- This indicates that slaves are just as valuable as cotton and other crops to the overall productivity of the plantation.
- Slaves who are sick hurt the overall economy of the plantation. Therefore, the health of the slaves would be important to mention when updating the plantation owner.
- However, students should also note that the health and welfare of the slaves is regarded no more highly than that of the crops.
- Slaves are categorized as property of the owner.
- Sick lists and a count of the sick slaves are mentioned in this letter, but individual names are not. This supports a business like interest in the slaves on part of the owner and overseer rather than a personal one.

3. What details does this document provide into the lives of slaves on a Southern plantation?

- The fact that a disease like dysentery is mentioned in the letter alludes to poor sanitary conditions on a plantation, particularly for slaves.
- The letter mentions sending George Noble Jones the measurements of Negroes’ feet. Encourage students to think why this information would have been taken and why it would have been sent to the owner of the plantation.
- Reveal to students that masters were in charge of supplying shoes and other items of clothing to their slaves. It was considered part of ensuring the overall health of their investment. Historian Julia Floyd

Smith writes, “No more clothing than thought to be absolutely necessary was issued the Negro. The cost of maintaining slave labor had to be kept at a minimal level to unsure profits for the owner.”¹⁰

- Smith also writes, “It is doubtful that slaves received more than one pair of shoes a year in Florida unless they were field hands.”¹¹
- Discuss the issue of clothing slaves with students. Are they surprised that masters were the ones responsible for providing clothing? How do they feel about receiving one pair of shoes on average per year?

5. What does the phonetic spellings and imperfect grammar indicate about the person writing this document? Does this surprise you? Would someone like this be in charge of a large institution like a plantation today?

- An overseer wrote this document. As noted in the introduction to this module, overseers were usually of a poor farming class. The poor grammar and spellings contained in this document reflects this.
- Ask students if the education level of the overseer surprised them since the overseer had such a large responsibility. Ask students if someone poorly educated be placed in charge of such an important position today.

¹⁰ Julia Floyd Smith, *Slavery and Plantation Growth in Antebellum Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1973), 87.

¹¹ Ibid., 86.

Source #2

El Destino Collection: Operating Papers 1856, List of Negroes at El Destino Plantation with Ages and Quality Rankings

July 1856

A list of Negroes on G. -Jones' El Destino Plantation. –

	Age	Quality		Age	Quality
Ann	46	$\frac{3}{4}$	Martha	29	1
John Sail	25	1	Aberdeen	27	1
Lucy Sail	19	1	Whatley	5	
Anthony	1 $\frac{1}{2}$		Mary	2	
Jane Sail	18	1	Mini	3	
Betsey	1 $\frac{1}{2}$				
Sam	17	1	Nancy Flora	40	$\frac{1}{2}$
Lymas	14	$\frac{3}{4}$	Christiana	8	
Jerry	11	$\frac{1}{4}$	Kate	60	0
William +			Netta	34	1
			Caroline +	18	
Prince	53	1	Mary	13	
Nancy Isham	34	1	Seopia	11	
Phoebe	17	1	Alethea	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Louisa	15	1	Easter	$\frac{1}{2}$	
Jerry	4 $\frac{1}{2}$				
Johnny	$\frac{1}{2}$		Maria	30	1
Melia	$\frac{1}{2}$		Edward	14	
			John Henry	10	

Stephen	30	1	Charles	7	
Albert	21	1	Alie	5 ½	
Tamar	35	½	Sarah	3 ½	
Sampson	11 ½		Patsey	1 ½	

Jan 7 1856

A list of Negroes on G. Ross' Et Sister's
Plantations -

	Age	Quality		Age	Quality
N Ann	46	3/4	Montha	29	1
John Seal	25	1	Abraham	27	1
Lucy Seal	19	1	Whalley	5	
Anthony	1 1/2		Mary	2	
Jane Seal	18	1	Mimi	3	
Betsy	1 1/2				
Sam	17	1	Nancy Fourn	40	1/2
Hyman	14	3/4	Christiana	8	
Jerry	11	1/4	Kate	60	0
William +			Netta	34	1
			Caroline +	18	
Primer	53	1	Mary	13	
N Nancy Isham	34	1	Susie	11	
Phoebe	17	1	Abitha	1 1/2	
Louisa	15	1	Easter	1/2	
Jerry	4 1/2				
Johnny	1/2	N.S.	Marion	30	1
Abelia	1/2		Edward	14	
			John Henry	10	
N Stephen	30	1	Charles	7	
Albert	21	1	Alie	5 1/2	
H. S. - Famar	35	1/2	Sarah	3 1/2	
N. Sampson	11 1/2		Patsy	1 1/2	

27 Sunday 5.6.2
11 " 6.1.1. 1856
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Source #2 Questions:

Directions: Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Use the document to support your answers whenever possible.

1. Based on this document, what conclusions can you draw regarding the “quality” ranking of slaves? Based on your knowledge of plantation life for slaves, what do you think the “quality” of the slave refers to?
2. Why would this type of document be created? What aspects of this document stand out (Age, names, ranking system, etc.)?
3. What is your reaction to this document? Are you surprised by the quality ranking system?

Source #2 Questions: Teacher Discussion Guide

1. Based on this document, what conclusions can you draw regarding the “quality” ranking of slaves? Based on your knowledge of plantation life for slaves, what do you think the “quality” of the slave refers to?

- Students should notice that slaves appear to have their quality ranked according to age. Slaves middle aged or older appear to get lower rankings.
- Highest quality rankings go to young adults and teenagers. Young children are given no quality ranking at all.
- The quality is based on the slave’s ability to produce. The children are likely not ranked because they are too young yet to have produced a quality ranking.
- The young adults are the most capable of work, while the older adults, such as Kate at age 60, are now too old to be of much value to the plantation.

2. Why would this type of document be created? What aspects of this document stand out (Age, names, ranking system, etc.)?

- This document was created to keep a record of the plantation’s assets. Slaves were considered property, so these records would have been an important part of running the business of a plantation.
- Students should note that most slaves only have a first name listed. Some appear to be in family groups, however most are not categorized in this manner.
- Ask students why last names would not have been important for the overseer or plantation owner. Discuss the legal status of slaves.
- Students should also notice that most of the slaves are relatively young. 60 years old is the oldest age in this excerpt of the original document.
- Students can use this data to support the fact that working hard on a plantation would not have been an environment conducive to living a long life.

3. What is your reaction to this document? Are you surprised by the quality ranking system?

- Have students share their personal feelings about this document.
- How do they feel about slaves being ranked and listed like inventory?
- Ask students how a document like this would have been useful.

Source #3

El Destino Collection: Operating Papers 1855; Record of activities and sickness of Negroes on El Destino Plantation

Oct 9 Day fare[fair] & Cool Sick Bellah Jim & Lil Giney Jack minding
Stock 3 hands making a rack to hall [haul] cotton [?] Come from
the Depot Davey & Isaac gining balance picking cotton

“10 Day fare & warm Sick Bellah Jim Lil Giney & Big Hannah
Jack minding Stock one wagon halling [hauling] Cotton from Oak—[Oakland]
Davey & Isaac gining 2 hands tareing [tearing] down the old stalls
Balance hands picking cotton

“11 Day fare & warm Sick Bellah Jim Patty & Lil Giney Jack
minding Stock Forteen [fourteen] Painting at Oakland 6 packing
Cotton Davey & Isaac gining balance hands picking cotton

“12 Day fare & frost Sick Bellah Jim Hannah & Lil Giney Jack
minding Stock 3 hands working on chimneys Sam Sent
to the Depot with No 79 Bales Davey & Isaac gining balance picking cotton

“13 Day fare & frost Sick Bellah Sarah Giney & one child Jack
minding Stock 3 hands working on chimneys one wagon
Sent to mill Davey & Isaac gining Sam Come from the
Depot one hand cuting [cutting] Rice [?] halling [hauling] rice
Balance hands picking cotton

“14 Day fare & cool Sick Sarah Bellah & one child Jack
minding Stock Give the Hand Allowance

“15 Day fare & warm Sick Sarah Bellah & Patty Jack
minding Stock Sam Sent off to Depot with No 87
Bales one wagon halling [hauling] corn 5 pulling Corn Davey
& Isaac gining 3 working on Chimneys Balance hands
picking Cotton

[Backside:]

F. Nasworthy.
Oct. 15/55

Key terms:

Gining: The process in which cotton has the lint or fiber cut from the seed

Allowance: Food distributed to slaves. Common rate was a peck of corn meal and 3 ½
Pounds of salt pork per week for each adult and proportionately for children.¹²

¹² Ulrich Bonnell Phillips and James David Smith, ed., *Florida Plantation Records from the Papers of George Noble Jones* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 588.

F. Nasworthy, Oct. 15, 1855.

- Oct 9 Day fare & Cool Sick Bellah Jim & Lit' Giney Jack minding
Stock 3 hands making a rack to Hall Cotton Sam come
from the Depot Davey & Isaac gining balance picking Cotton
- " 10 Day fare & warm Sick Bellah Jim Lit' Giney & Big Hannah
Jack minding Stock one wagon halting Cotton from Oak Hills
Davey & Isaac gining 2 hands ~~tanning~~ down the old Stalls
balance hands picking Cotton
- " 11 Day fare & warm Sick Bellah Jim Patty & Lit' Giney Jack
minding Stock Forten painting at Oakland & packing
Cotton Davey & Isaac gining balance hands picking Cotton
- " 12 Day fare & frost Sick Bellah Jim Hannah & Lit' Giney Jack
minding Stock 3 hands working on chimneys Sam sent
to the Depot with No 79 Bales Davey & Isaac gining balance ^{Cotton} picking
- " 13 Day fare & frost Sick Bellah Sarah Giney & one child Jack
minding Stock 3 hands working on chimneys one wagon
sent to Mill Davey & Isaac gining Sam come from the
Depot one hand cutting Rice Cart halting rice
balance hands picking Cotton
- " 14 Day fare & Cool Sick Sarah Bellah & one child Jack
minding Stock Give the Bands Allowance
- " 15 Day fare & warm Sick Sarah Bellah & Patty Jack
minding Stock Sam sent off to Depot with No. 83
Bales one wagon halting Corn 5 pulling Corn Davey
& Isaac gining 3 working on chimneys Balance hands
picking Cotton)



Source #3 Questions:

Directions: Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Use the document to support your answers whenever possible.

1. Using this document, list some of the activities typically done on a plantation. What activities seem to have the most importance?
2. According to the information contained in this document, who is the most likely person to have written this document? Why?
3. Compare this document to the letter written to Mr. Jones by Perry A. Barrington. What elements are similar? How do you know that similar individuals wrote these documents for similar purposes?
4. What stands out about this document in terms of how it was written?

Source #3 Questions: Teacher Discussion Guide

1. Using this document, list some of the activities typically done on a plantation. What activities seem to have the most importance?
 - Some activities students may note include hauling crops like cotton, corn, and rice, minding the stock, picking and gining cotton, construction projects (building a chimney in this instance), and traveling to and from the depot (likely for supplies).
 - Students should note that most activities described in this document center around crops. The “balance” of slaves not working on specific tasks are described as picking cotton.
 - This demonstrates a strong agricultural focus, particularly in regards to the importance of cotton.
2. According to the information contained in this document, who is the most likely person to have written this document? Why?
 - This document was written by an overseer. Students should note the combination of imperfect grammar and spellings along with the content of the document as evidence that this was written by an individual who was in charge of daily activities, but who would not have been a member of the wealthier, better educated planter class.
 - This document reads like a daily log, which was a typical duty of an overseer set forth by the owner of the plantation.
 - Share with students the fact that George Noble Jones, the owner of El Destino and Chemonie plantations, required his overseers to send him regular updates.
 - These updates are described as, “fortnightly during his absence a transcript or abstract of the journal for the preceding two weeks, together with a letter describing the condition of the crops and giving all news of significance in the plantation’s affairs.”¹³
3. Compare this document to the letter written to Mr. Jones by Perry A. Barrington. What elements are similar? How do you know that similar individuals wrote these documents for similar purposes?
 - Students should note the same poor use of grammar and spelling found commonly among letters from overseers. These men did not need to be highly educated since their primary job was to be out in the fields ensuring that the plantation ran smoothly.
 - The mentions of slave health and crops are in common between both documents.
 - These documents were written as updates to the owner of the plantation. These topics would have been business concerns.
 - The information is very factual and business like. There is no time wasted with niceties that are common in personal letters. These documents are both clearly written for the purpose of a business relationship.
4. What stands out about this document in terms of how it was written?
 - Students may note that the author is very detailed in their description of work and the number of people completing these tasks.
 - The information is recorded in a daily update style.
 - The author is not very good at spelling or grammar. There is no use of punctuation making the document somewhat difficult to read.
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¹³ Ulrich Bonnell Phillips and James David Smith, eds., *Florida Plantation Records from the Papers of George Noble Jones* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 7.

Source #4

Holmes – Palmer – Ferris Papers: 7 Dec 1842 Bill of sale by Francis D. Scarlett for a Negro slave, "Jacob". \$500

Know all Men by these Presents,

THAT I Francis C. Scarlett of Duval County Territory of Fl^a [Florida]

of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of Five hundred Dollars—

lawful money of the United States of America to me in hand paid,
at and before the ensealing and delivery of these Presents, by David Palmer
and Darius Ferris- through Mesers. Ross & Molnes of said County & Territory—

of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted,
bargained and sold, and by these Presents do grant, bargain and sell unto
the said parties of the second part, their executors, administrators
and assigns, a certain Negro Slave- to wit:
"Jacob" aged about Eighteen Years,

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Slave named Jacob
without incumbrance—

unto the said parties of the second part, their executors administrators,
and assigns [assigns], for their own use. benefit _abrhoof__ forever
And I the said party of the first part, for myself and my
heirs, executors and administrators, do hereby covenant and agree, to and with
the said parties of the second part, their executors administrators
and assigns, to warrant and defend the sale of the said negro slave
unto the said parties of the second against myself
my heirs, Executors, administrators & assigns and
against all and every person and persons whomsoever lawfully claiming
or to claim the same.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this
seventeenth day of December in the year of our Lord, one thousand
eight hundred and Forty Two

Signed, Sealed and Delivered
In the Presence of

Wm W Douglas
HH Philips

Francis D Scarlett

[Back side]
Francis D. Scarlett
To
Palmer & Ferris
Dec 17, 1842

Know all Men by these Presents,

THAT I *Francis O. Scarlett* of *Ward County*
Territory of Ho^o:

of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of *Five Hundred*
Dollars —

lawful money of the United States of America, to *me* in hand paid,
at and before the enseatng and delivery of these Presents, by *David Palmer*
and *Carus Ferris* — *through Mrs. Ross & Holmes,*
of *Said County & Territory* —

of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have granted,
bargained and sold, and by these Presents do grant, bargain and sell unto
the said parties of the second part, *their* executors, administrators
and assigns, a certain *Negro Slave* — *to wit!*

"Jacob" aged about Eighteen Years,

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said *Slave* named *Jacob*
without incumbrance —

unto the said parties of the second part, *their* executors administrators,
and assigns, *for their own use, benefit & behoof forever*
And I the said party of the first part, for myself and my
heirs, executors and administrators, do hereby covenant and agree, to and with
the said parties of the second part, *their* executors, administrators
and assigns, to warrant and defend the sale of the said *Negro Slave*
unto the said parties of the second part against myself
my heirs, executors, administrators & assigns and
against all and every person and persons whomsoever. lawfully claiming
or to claim the same —

In Witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this
fourteenth day of *December* in the year of our Lord, one thousand
eight hundred and *forty two*

Signed, Sealed and Delivered, }
In the Presence of

Wm Douglas
H. H. Phillips

Francis O. Scarlett

Francis D. Scarlett
to
Palmer & Service
Dec 17. 1842
Recd

Source #4 Questions:

Directions: Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Use the document to support your answers whenever possible.

1. What do you notice about the language used in this document? What does this say about its intended purpose?
2. What is different about this document than others in this module?
3. Why was this document created? Furthermore, whose benefit was this document created for? How do you know?
4. What about this document surprised you?
5. Part of this document is printed. What does that say about the nature of the document and its purpose?
6. How is this document similar to documents we use today? How is it different?
7. What details from this document reveal the status of African Americans at this time?

Source #4 Questions: Teacher Discussion Guide

1. What do you notice about the language used in this document? What does this say about its intended purpose?

- Students should notice that very formal, legal language is used. This indicates that this document was some sort of official document.
- The legal language used in this document indicates that it was written by, and intended for, educated individuals.

2. What is different about this document than others in this module?

- Students should note that...
- It is a mix of printed and handwritten text.
- It is a financial document.
- It is a legal document, rather than a letter or journal.

3. Why was this document created? Furthermore, whose benefit was this document created for? How do you know?

- It is a bill of sale for a Negro man named Jacob.
- This document was created for the benefit of the two parties engaged in the sale. Not for the benefit of the slave, who is considered property in this arrangement.
- The use of witnesses and legal language is meant to ensure that the transaction is binding and lawful.

4. What about this document surprised you?

- Ask students if this document surprised them at all. If so, ask what about the document was interesting to them. For example...
- The price of the slave? (\$500)
- The fact that legal documents existed to be used for the selling of slaves?
- The language used?

5. Part of this document is printed. What does that say about the nature of the document and its purpose?

- The fact that part of this document was printed may indicate several things such as...
- It was a common form that was used frequently.
- It was created for ease of use in executing sales.
- Individuals in Florida at this time had access to legal forms.

6. How is this document similar to documents we use today? How is it different?

- Students may note that a bill of sale is still a common form used in personal and professional business transactions.
- Of course, the nature of selling another human being would be highly illegal today.

7. What details from this document reveal the status of African Americans at this time?

- Slaves were property to be sold at agreed upon prices.
- The slave is said to be: "aged about eighteen years." Thus, exact age was not important; slaves were not seen as individuals.

References Used in this Module

El Destino Plantation Collection. Library of Florida History. The Florida Historical Society, Cocoa, FL.

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