

Teacher Page: Resource Sheet #4

Source: Slave Advertisement, *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), September 14, 1769

Teaching Tip: It is preferable to read the slave ad together as a class and discuss key language and vocabulary that may be associated. Be sure to point out that the scripted “f” is actually an “s” in the printing of that time.

Mulatto: A person of mixed white and black ancestry, especially a person with one white and one black parent.

Subscriber: Apply for or pay for an offering of shares of stock. Contribute or undertake to contribute a certain sum of money to a particular fund, project, or charitable cause, typically on a regular basis.

Fugitive: A person who has escaped from a place or is in hiding, esp. to avoid arrest or persecution

Document Analysis:

1. What kind of document is this? Is it a primary or secondary source? What evidence provided convinces you of that?
The source reference location and year may be the best evidence that this is a primary source document from Jefferson’s colonial days at Monticello. The language and script also support that theory.
2. What is its purpose? What is the author trying to say in the document?
Jefferson appears to be the author, according to the signature, but that cannot be determined with certainty. He obviously is disturbed by the behavior of the runaway and describes them in less than flattering terms. He is determined to have the fugitive caught and returned.
3. Analyze the reward language near the end of the document. What is Jefferson trying say here, in simple terms?
As was the custom in those days, the speed of the recovery was of utmost importance. The further that a slave would travel as a fugitive seemed to be an indicator of the escape’s success. The reward would increase, as the slave would move further away from his original residence. Jefferson was willing to pay more if necessary.
4. According to the document, how would you describe the subject of the notice?
Sandy appears to be male, middle-aged, short, possibly mulatto, left-handed, fond of alcohol, skilled, and a troublemaker.
5. Does this document help to answer the question, “Where Did Thomas Jefferson Stand on the Issue of Slavery?”
This is a strong indicator that Jefferson supported slavery.