



Green Flake

Building Communities in Utah

African American Community
Lesson Plan
4th grade

Rebecca Kirkman | Utah Historical Society | March 2024

How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?

An African American Pioneer

Utah Core Standards:

UT Standard 2.1- Students will explain the causes and lasting effects of the Mormon migration to Utah.

Standard 4.3.1- Use primary sources to compare the experiences of at least three groups' migration to Utah between 1847-1896.

Reading:

4.R.7- Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

Writing:

4.W.2 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

4.W.4- Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

7-8. W.4. - Conduct short research projects to craft an argument, answer a question, or provide an analysis.

Teacher Background:

See [Introduction to African American Community](#)

Notes about Lesson Design

This lesson is divided into a series of sessions of approximately 20 minutes.

Depending on the educator's needs, it can be combined into one lesson or several mini-lessons.

Guiding Questions:

Who was Green Flake?

What was Green Flake's pioneer experience?

What did you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life?

How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?

I can statement:

I can use different sources to create an infographic about how Green Flake helped build communities in Utah.

Materials Needed:

- Green Flake Sources Google Slide or [PDF](#)
- [Green Flake Infographic Example](#)
- Copies of the [graphic organizer](#)
- Copies of [Green Flake infographic template](#) (if needed)
- Copies of the rubric (if needed, see below)

Opening:

The teacher can activate student's background knowledge by asking the following questions:

Why do we celebrate Utah as a state on July 24th?

Who are some of the first African Americans to migrate to Utah?

What does it mean to build a community?

Procedure:

This is a series of 20-25 minute lessons. You can combine the lessons as needed.

Lesson 1

20 minutes

1. Explain the overview of the project to the students.
 - a. Students will be creating an infographic about how Green Flake helped build communities in Utah. They will be looking at a variety of sources about Green Flake. They will fill out a graphic organizer to gather information for their infographic.
2. Before reading Source #1, ask the students the guiding question- who was Green Flake? Read Source #1, Introduction to Green Flake as a class. As you read, discuss as a class what they think are important details to write in their graphic organizer.
3. Have the students keep their graphic organizers for the next lesson.

Lesson 2

20 minutes

1. Review who was Green Flake with the class.
2. Before reading Source #2, ask the students the guiding question- What was Green Flake's pioneer experience? Read Source #2, Pioneer story. You can read it as a class or have the students read it as partners. As the students read, have them discuss what they think are important details to write in their graphic organizer.
3. Have the students keep their graphic organizers for the next lesson.

Lesson 3

25 minutes

1. Review the main idea of Green Flake's pioneer story.
2. Before reading Sources #3 and #4, ask the students the guiding question What did you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life? Read Source #3, Born into Slavery, and Source #4 Freedom from Slavery. As a class, discuss

what can you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life. Have the students write down their thoughts on the graphic organizer.

3. Have the students keep their graphic organizers for the next lesson.

Lesson 4

20 minutes

1. Review what the students have learned so far about Green Flake.
2. Before reading Source #5, ask the students the guiding question how did Green Flake help build communities in Utah? Read Source #5, Building a Community. You can read it as a class or have the students read it as partners. As the students read, have them discuss what they think are important details to write in their graphic organizer.

Lesson 5

20 minutes

1. Review what the students have learned so far about Green Flake.
2. Before reading Source #6, ask the students, how did Green Flake help build communities in Utah. Read Source #6, Helping A Neighbor. You can read it as a class or have the students read it as partners. As the students read, have them discuss what they think are important details to write in their graphic organizer.

Lesson 6

20-30 minutes

1. Explain to the students that will take the information from their graphic organizer, and use that to create an infographic. Students can use a program like Google Slides, Canva, etc to create an infographic or you can have the students use the Infographic template. Share the example infographic.
2. Explain to the students that an infographic needs a picture and text for each section. Have students write 3-5 sentences for each section, and draw a picture for each section.
3. Share the grading rubric with students. You can have the students use the rubric as a self-assessment.

Assessment

The Infographic can be used as an assessment.

Closing

Students can share their infographics, by walking around the room and viewing each other infographics.

References

- Brown, John, Benjamin Kiser, Albert Carrington, and Amasa M. Lyman. n.d. "Century of Black Mormons · Flake, Green · J. Willard Marriott Library Exhibits." J. Willard Marriott Library Digital Exhibits. Accessed May 2, 2023.
<https://exhibits.lib.utah.edu/s/century-of-black-mormons/page/flake-green#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-508%2C-63%2C2037%2C1247>.
- Nichols, Jeffery D. 2016. "Slavery in Utah | History to Go." Utah History to Go.
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- Reiniche, Angela. 2023. "Green Flake, the Mormon Pioneer Trail." (U.S. National Park Service.
<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/green-flake-the-mormon-pioneer-trail.htm>
- Steed, Heidi. 2023. "Utah's Black History: Green Flake - Utah State Archives and Records Service." Utah State Archives and Records Service.
<https://archivesnews.utah.gov/2023/02/10/utahs-black-history-green-flake/>.
- Tanner Thiriot, Amy. 2023. "Perspective Speaker Series," Historian Amy Tanner discusses Slavery in Utah. Youtube. Youtube Video.
<https://youtu.be/u5awPm5kD9U?si=v7hgtuCTUttCffo7>.
- Utah Division Of State History. n.d. "Utah's African American Communities | I Love History." I Love Utah History. Accessed May 2, 2023.
<https://ilovehistory.utah.gov/african-american/>

Infographic Rubric

4 Above Proficiency	3 Proficient	2 Approaching Proficiency	1 Emerging Proficiency	0 Incomplete/No Evidence
Explain events and concepts in detail, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text	Explain events and concepts including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text	Some events and concepts are explained including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text	Few events and concepts are explained including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text	Little to no events and concepts are explained including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text
All information is detailed, accurate, and relevant, and conveyed clearly.	Information is detailed, accurate, relevant, and conveyed clearly.	Some information is detailed, accurate, and relevant	Little information is detailed, accurate	Incomplete, lacks detail, inaccurate, or irrelevant
Layout and design are clear and appropriate for the topic	Layout and design are generally clear and appropriate for the topic	Layout and design maybe somewhat unclear and/or not appropriate for topic	Layout and design may be confusing, messy and/or irrelevant to the topic	Layout and design is incomplete, confusing, messy and/or irrelevant

Lesson Materials

Introduction to the African American Community For Educators

Objective: Using a variety of sources, students will think about how African American communities were built in Utah.

Let's explore the African American community in Utah using a variety of sources. We will use these sources as tools to dig into the past. We'll be like detectives using primary and other sources to improve our research skills and learn how African Americans built communities in Utah.

While exploring, you will notice that the authors used the words slave and owner to explain the relationship between some African Americans and white people. To better emphasize the humanity of African Americans, and create an understanding that their circumstances were caused by others, scholars use 'enslaved' and 'enslavers'. The goal of these lessons is to foster understanding and critical thinking about historical events and present-day connections.

Core Standards:

UT Standard 2.1- Students will explain the causes and lasting effects of the Mormon migration to Utah.

Standard 4.3.1- Use primary sources to compare the experiences of at least three groups' migration to Utah between 1847-1896.

Reading:

4.R.7- Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

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Overview from I Love Utah History Utah's African American Communities

African Americans have made Utah their home since the early 1800s. James P. Beckwourth and Jacob Dobson were the first known African Americans to arrive in Utah. They came to northern Utah in the 1820s looking for furs to trade.

African Americans continued to explore and settle in Utah throughout the nineteenth century and into the twenty-first. Some arrived enslaved or seeking religious community or to work, and all of them helped to shape Utah's political, social, cultural, and economic landscape.

Push and Pull Factors

There were many push and pull factors that drew African Americans to Utah during the 1800s. Utah's animal population provided fur for traders. Some African Americans arrived in Utah as slaves to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Enslaved African Americans moved to Utah because they did not have a choice. Jobs with mines and railroads pulled some to Utah. Violence and discrimination in other parts of the United States were push factors that contributed to African American settlement in Utah and the West. Since the early 1800s, African Americans have been a part of Utah's cultural, political, and religious life.

Settling

The first African Americans to settle permanently in Utah arrived in 1847. Their names were Green Flake, Oscar Crosby, and Hark Lay, and members of the LDS church enslaved them. Slavery was legal in Utah Territory for almost 20 years, and about 800 enslaved African Americans lived in Utah before the Civil War. Slavery ended in 1865 when Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment. African Americans were no longer slaves, but that did not mean that they were treated as equal citizens. They had to continue to fight for their citizenship rights.

Working

African Americans worked for business owners in factories, mines, and railroads. Some owned farms. The Mill Creek area of the Salt Lake Valley became a gathering place for early African American farmers. African Americans worked for railroads, hotels, and restaurants and as domestic servants in private homes. Others ran newspapers, worked as attorneys, opened hotels, wrote novels and plays, or were policemen. Some served in the military at Fort Douglas and Fort Duchesne. Clearly, African Americans contributed to Utah's economy in several ways.

Building Community

African American Utahns built community by forming clubs and organizations. Black Utahns joined literary clubs, and fraternal organizations, and had a community center. Black women's groups included the Ladies Civic and Study Club, the Camelia Arts and Crafts Club, and the Nimble Thimble Club. The members of

these clubs gathered to sew and work on other artistic projects. African American Utahns celebrated Emancipation Day, also known as Juneteenth, each year to honor the end of slavery.

Fighting Discrimination

African Americans also experienced discrimination in Utah. After the Civil War, some Euro-Americans did not allow African Americans to the same public places as white members of society. For example, swimming pools were segregated, which meant that Black people could not swim in the same pool as white people. African Americans could go to movies, but they had to sit on the balconies rather than the seats in front of the theater, which was where white people sat. African American members of the LDS church could not go to the temple or hold the priesthood until 1978.

African Americans found ways to avoid mistreatment from other citizens by working together. They founded branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Salt Lake City and Ogden. Many Black women joined Utah's NAACP chapters. Some African Americans found places to stay by reading the *Green Book*.

Today

Today, African Americans continue to call Utah home. The Utah African American Chamber of Commerce serves Black Utahns by creating networks and providing resources for Black-owned businesses. African Americans continue to shape Utah's political, social, religious, and cultural life just like they did in the past.

Slavery in Utah

Slavery was legal in Utah until June 1862, when Congress eliminated slavery in all U.S. territories.

Resources for Teaching African American History

These links are being provided for informational purposes only; they may not represent the views or opinions of the Utah Historical Society.

Do's and Don'ts of Teaching Black History

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/dos-and-donts-of-teaching-black-history>

Learning for Justice Framework:

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery/k-5-framework>

References

“Educators.” n.d. Oregon Black Pioneers. Accessed January 30, 2024.

<https://oregonblackpioneers.org/educators/>.

“Utah's African American Communities | I Love History.” n.d. I Love Utah History.

Accessed January 30, 2024. <https://ilovehistory.utah.gov/african-american/>.

Green Flake Sources



Source #1: Introduction to Green Flake

Green Flake was a member of the first group of Mormon pioneers to enter the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. He was one of three enslaved African American pioneers in the first group of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) immigrants, and was one of Utah's first settlers. Green Flake experienced both slavery and freedom during his lifetime. He brought many talents, including hard work, farming, mining, and construction, to the table.

Green was born into slavery around 1828 on Jordan Flake's plantation in North Carolina. Jordan Flake gave Green to his son James as a wedding present. This was a common practice among slave owners at the time. Green chose to get baptized when the Flake family joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1844. The Flakes moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, and then on to Utah to join other church members. Green was about 20 years old when he arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. He gained his freedom about 15 years later.

Green Flake stayed in Utah, got married, owned a farm, raised his children, and helped his community. He was buried in the Union Cemetery in Cottonwood Heights in 1903. No matter his circumstances, he worked alongside his wife and fellow community members to build a new life in Utah.

Source: "Green Flake | I Love History." n.d. I Love Utah History. Accessed January 28, 2024. <https://ilovehistory.utah.gov/green-flake/>.

Source #2: Pioneer Story

In 1847, Brigham Young led the first Mormon wagon companies out of Nauvoo, Illinois. A few LDS families who owned slaves sent three enslaved men—Green Flake, Oscar Crosby, and Hark Lay—with Brigham Young's group. Their task was big—to help the wagon train make it to the Salt Lake Valley, and then to prepare homes for the slave-owning families. The journals kept by the members of the party mentioned Flake, Crosby, and Lay frequently, acknowledging the crucial role these African American men played in the pioneers' trek.

Green Flake earned the respect of the leaders and became Brigham Young's personal wagon driver. As they advanced, Green's importance became even more clear. As they neared the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young fell ill, and he had to stop. Green Flake was chosen with a select group to move ahead and break the trail through Emigration Canyon. This is why Green Flake drove the first pioneer wagon through Emigration Canyon, and was one of the first Mormon migrants to enter the Salt Lake Valley. Brigham Young arrived a few days later. Green Flake quickly began planting crops and diverting the waters of City Creek to the fields to grow food for the settlers to come.

Source: Steed, Heidi. 2023. "Utah's Black History: Green Flake - Utah State Archives and Records Service." Utah State Archives and Records Service. <https://archivesnews.utah.gov/2023/02/10/utahs-black-history-green-flake/>.

Source #3: Born into slavery

Green Flake was born into slavery in 1828 in North Carolina. From the time he was born, he belonged to the Flake family, who were slave owners. Slavery was a system of unfree labor that was widespread in the United States from colonial times until the Civil War. It was extremely difficult for African Americans to escape enslavement.

Enslaved people did not have the right to choose their jobs, their homes, or where they lived. Enslavers controlled the labor (work) and families of enslaved people. Fathers, mothers, and children were forced to work for their enslavers. Families were not always allowed to stay together.

Some members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were slave owners, and they brought enslaved people with them to Utah. Slavery was legal in Utah until 1862, when the U.S. Congress abolished slavery in all U.S. territories.

Source: Steed, Heidi. 2023. "Utah's Black History: Green Flake - Utah State Archives and Records Service." Utah State Archives and Records Service. <https://archivesnews.utah.gov/2023/02/10/utahs-black-history-green-flake/>.

Source #4: From Slavery to Freedom

The Flake family decided to move to California to help set up a Mormon colony in Rancho San Bernadino. Brigham Young arranged for Green Flake to work for him in Salt Lake City for one year instead of going to California.

Sometime during the 1850s, Green Flake was freed from slavery. He stayed in Utah with his wife and children, and helped to build the town of Union. Today, this part of the Salt Lake Valley is called Fort Union.

SOURCE: AMY TANNER THIRIOT, "SLAVERY IN ZION," PERSPECTIVES SPEAKER SERIES, UTAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY (2023), [HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/U5AWPM5KD9U?SI=WO1JOSAQGTO4FLTI](https://youtu.be/u5awPm5kD9U?si=wo1JOSaQgTO4fLTI)

Link to [Green Flake Sources Google Slides](#)

Name: _____ Date: _____

How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?

You will use this graphic organizer to help you create your infographic about Green Flake.

Source	Notes from the Source
	Guiding Question: Who was Green Flake?
#1 Introduction to Green Flake	
	Guiding Question: What was Green Flake's pioneer experience?
#2 Pioneer Story	
	Guiding Question: What did you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life?
#3 and # 4 Born Into Slavery Freedom from Slavery	
	Guiding Question: How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?
#5 Building a Community	
	Guiding Question: How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?
#6 Helping a Neighbor	

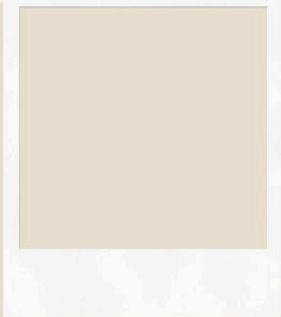
Name: _____

How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?

Directions: Using your graphic organizer, create an infographic about Green Flake.

	Who was Green Flake?
What was Green Flake's pioneer experience?	
	What did you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life?
Building a Community	
	Helping a Neighbor

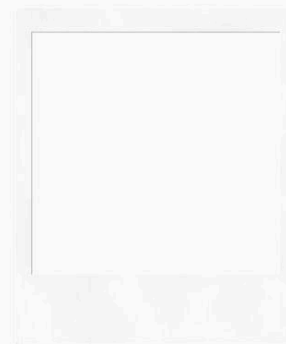
How did Green Flake help build communities in Utah?



Who was Green Flake?

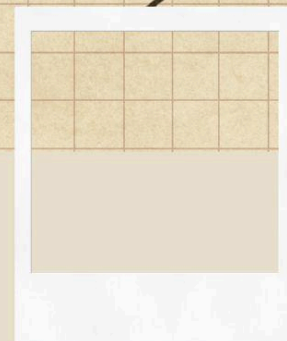
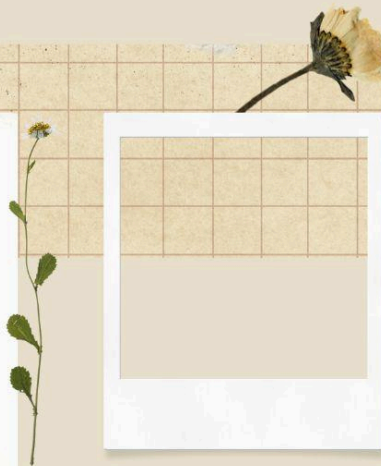


What was Green Flake's pioneer experience?



What did you learn about slavery in Utah from Green Flake's life?

Building a Community



Helping a Neighbor

