

## Freedom Colonies And Beyond - Life After Slavery

**Grade level:** 7<sup>th</sup> (can be adapted for grades 4-8)

**Subjects:** History and Geography

**Time Required:** 2 sessions of 45-60 minutes or one block period (depending on class's writing ability and familiarity with necessary technology and applications)

**Rationale or Purpose:** Students will learn what Freedom Colonies were and identify Texas Freedom Colonies on a map. Students will work in cooperative groups to research positive and negatives aspects of African-American life after slavery within the Freedom Colonies.

**Materials:** Access to Internet; Texas Beyond History exhibit, *Life After Slavery: An African American-Owned Farmstead In Central Texas 1871–1905* ([www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html)); student computers (iPods, iPads, etc.); Interactive Whiteboard or overhead projector; teacher blog; background information on Reconstruction in Texas (textbook, trade paperback, or online)

The following materials are included in the lesson:

- *Freedom Colonies in Texas Map*
- *List of Freedom Colonies in Texas*
- *Freedom Colonies in Texas Map Directions*
- *colored map pencils*
- *Antioch Colony School Photo*
- *Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond Research Notes* (student copy)
- *Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond Research Notes* (teacher copy)
- *Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond Research Notes* (teacher answer key)
- *Positive-Negative Chart*

### **Objectives:**

- To learn about Freedom Colonies in Texas
- To understand the positive and negative aspects of African-American life in Texas after slavery
- To use technology
- To write for a specific purpose and audience
- To work cooperatively in groups

### **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS):**

#### **Social Studies**

##### History

1A) Identify the major eras in Texas history, including Texas in the Civil War and Reconstruction.

5B) Analyze the political, economic, and social effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas.

#### Geography

8A) Create and interpret thematic maps, representing various aspects of Texas during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

8B) Analyze and interpret geographic distributions and patterns in Texas during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### Citizenship

17) Understand the importance of the expression of different points of view in a democratic society.

#### Culture

19B) Describe how people from various racial groups attempt to maintain their cultural heritage while adapting to the larger Texas culture.

#### Social Studies Skills

21B) Analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions.

21C) Organize and interpret information from timelines and maps.

22) Communicate in written, oral, and visual forms

23) Use problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

#### **Technology Applications**

1) Use creative thinking and innovative processes to construct knowledge, generate new ideas, and create products.

2) Communicate both locally and globally to reinforce and promote learning.

3) Acquire, analyze, and manage content from digital resources.

4) Make informed decisions by applying critical-thinking and problem-solving skill

5) Practice safe, responsible, legal, and ethical behavior while using technology tools and resources.

**NOTE:** Prior to beginning activity, teacher will:

- Familiarize students with all necessary technology tools and applications.
- Create a teacher blog.
- Synchronize all student computers with Interactive Whiteboard and teacher blog.
- Print out copies of map activities and research activities.
- Review prior study of slavery in Texas with students.

#### **Directions for the teacher:**

##### **Day 1**

**Step 1:** Display TBH exhibit, *Life After Slavery: An African American-Owned Farmstead In Central Texas 1871–1905* [www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/ransom/index.html).

Discuss content in the *Historical Context* section of the website, explaining that at the close of the Civil War in 1865, there were an estimated 250,000 freed slaves in Texas, most facing an unsure future. What would be the role of the newly freed ex-slave population of Texas? Would former masters allow African-Americans to live side by side with them in society?

While many ex-slaves stayed as paid workers or sharecroppers on the farms where they had served in bondage, nearly a quarter of Texas freedmen found ways to legally acquire land of their own. Between 1870 and 1890, several hundred freedmen's settlements, or Freedom Colonies were founded as African-American families joined together in communities to plant roots. Land ownership gave ex-slaves the ability to support themselves and be independent, while Freedom Colonies provided a support community with shared social traditions, schools, and churches.

**Step 2:** Explain that to learn where Freedom Colonies were in Texas, students will locate them on a map of Texas counties and create a map key to explain which counties contained the greatest number of Freedom Colonies. Have students choose a partner to work with.

**Step 3:** Distribute the *List of Texas Counties Containing Freedom Colonies* and the *Texas Counties Map* (one per two students). Display the *Freedom Colonies in Texas Map Directions* on the Interactive Whiteboard and go over it with students. Leave the map directions displayed during the lesson. Have students choose 5 different colored map pencils and work with their partners to complete their maps.

**Step 4:** Ask for a volunteer to share a completed map with the class and display the map. Ask the class the following questions:

- In what part of Texas did most Freedom Colonies exist? (answer - eastern half of the state)
- Using their knowledge of Texas history and geography, why would the eastern half of the state be more likely to contain Freedom Colonies? (answer - that is where slaves had worked on farms and plantations)

## Day 2

**Step 1:** Point out that yesterday students learned what and where Texas Freedom Colonies were. Explain that today students will work in cooperative groups to learn more about why freed African-Americans might have wanted to live in Freedom Colonies.

**Step 2:** Display the Antioch School photograph. Explain that during slavery it was against the law to teach slaves to read. Ask students why that might have been. Explain that after emancipation, freedmen were allowed to form their own schools, like this one in Antioch Colony. Ask students why they think all the students and teachers in Antioch School were African-American.

**Step 3:** Point out that while African-Americans were no longer enslaved after the Civil War and many lived in the relative security of Freedom Colonies, they still had serious problems trying to live peacefully and prosperously in Texas and other southern states. Put students into groups of 3-4. Assign each group a research topic from the following list:

- Black Codes: 1866 - 1965
- Freedmen's Bureau: 1865-1872
- Ku Klux Klan: 1865-present
- 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment: 1865

- 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment: 1868
- 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment: 1870
- Jim Crow: 1876-1965

**Step 4:** Distribute *Freedom Colonies and Beyond - Life After Slavery Research Notes*, one copy per group. Teacher displays blank copy of *Research Notes* and fills it in, using **Freedom Colonies** as the topic and using *Freedom Colonies and Beyond - Life After Slavery Research Notes - Teacher Copy* as a guide. Explain that each topic's five research questions (who? what? where? how?) must be answered by each group. Groups begin researching their topics, using their computers and the Internet to gather information and filling in their *Research Notes*.

**Step 5:** When research notes are complete, display *Positive-Negative Chart*. Explain that in the process of integrating African-Americans into white society after the Civil War, both positive and negative factors came into play. Call on a representative from each group to read aloud the research notes from their topic. Then ask whether that topic should be included as a positive or negative for Freedom Colony residents. Write the name of each topic in the appropriate section of the *Positive-Negative chart*.

**Step 6:** When all topics are represented on the *Positive-Negative Chart* ask students if they have a better understanding of why African-Americans would have wanted to live in Freedom Colonies.

**Extension Activities:**

Have students write a one-page essay about a day in the life of someone living in a Freedom Colony.

Have students view *Reconstruction: A Statistical Look At Southern Recovery 1860-1880* (interactive map) <http://civclients.com/nehint/recon/>

**Student Products for Assessment** *Freedom Colonies in Texas Map* and *Research Notes*

**Modifications:** For students with specific learning needs or IEPs, have step-by-step instructions for the computer available and allow more time for project completion, if necessary.

**Related Websites:**

The Freedmen's Bureau Online  
<http://www.freedmensbureau.com/texas/index.htm>

PBS - *Reconstruction: The Second Civil War*  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/reconstruction/>

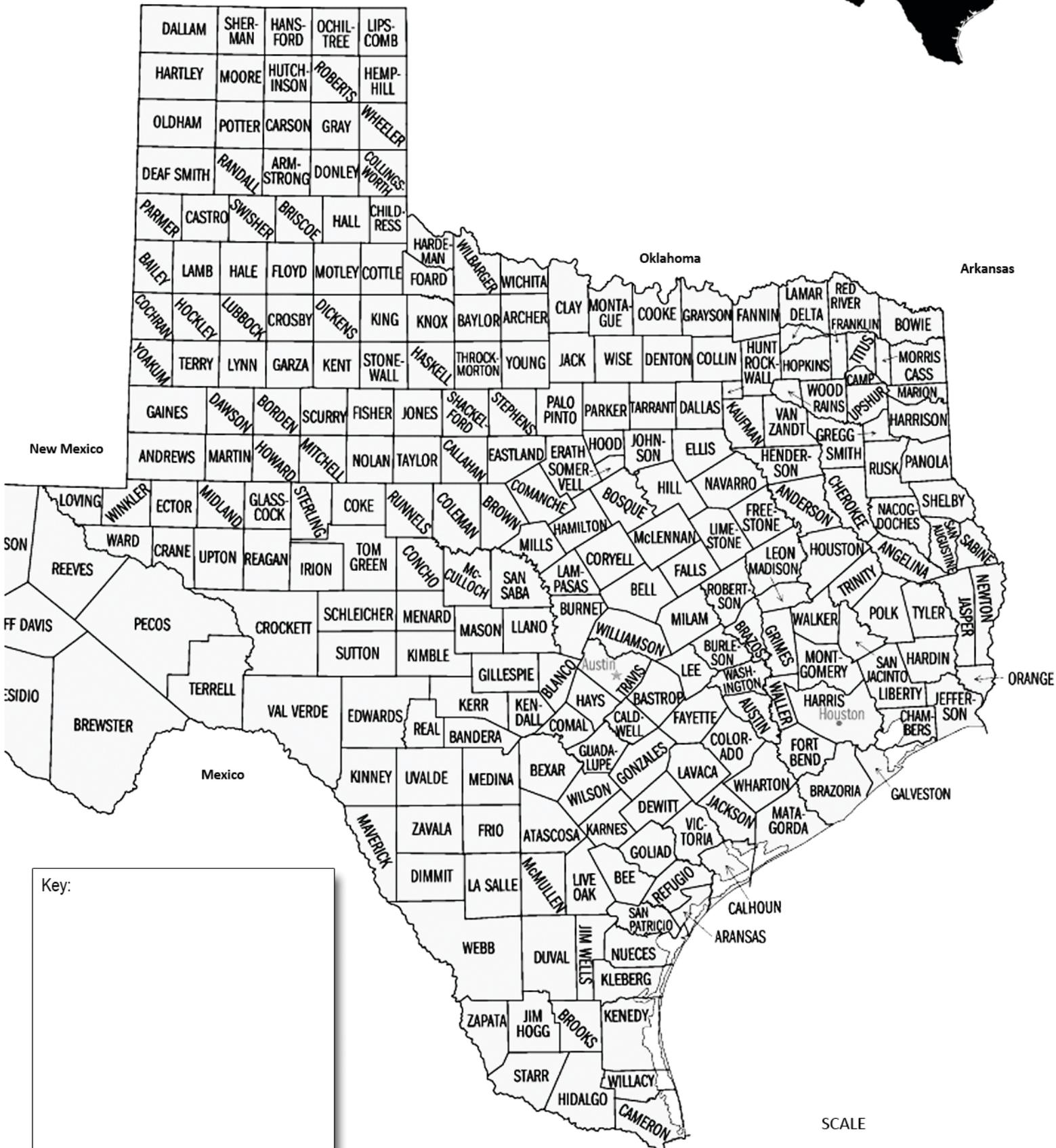
Library of Congress - *African American Odyssey*  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart5.html>

Texas Highways Magazine - *Roads to Freedom*

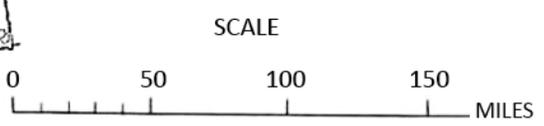
<http://www.texashighways.com/component/content/article/98-roadtrip-articles/roadtrip-archive/6265-roads-to-freedom>

PBS - *Slavery By Another Name*

<http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/>



Key:



## Texas Counties Containing Freedom Colonies

Anderson - 8	Gregg - 13	Nacogdoches - 11
Angelina - 1	Guadalupe - 6	Navarro - 11
Bastrop - 13	Hardin - 1	Newton - 10
Bell - 1	Harris - 7	Panola - 20
Blanco - 2	Harrison - 5	Polk - 4
Bosque - 3	Hays - 1	Red River - 1
Bowie - 3	Hill - 1	Refugio - 4
Brazoria - 10	Hood - 1	Robertson - 1
Brazos - 2	Hopkins - 11	Rusk - 6
Burleson - 3	Houston - 19	Sabine - 1
Caldwell - 1	Hunt - 1	San Augustine - 9
Camp - 7	Jasper - 4	San Jacinto - 13
Cass - 3	Jefferson - 1	Shelby - 12
Chambers - 2	Karnes - 1	Smith - 31
Cherokee - 24	Kaufman - 4	Tarrant - 1
Coryell - 1	Kinney - 1	Titus - 3
Delta - 2	Lavaca - 1	Travis - 5
Dewitt - 4	Lee - 12	Upshur - 8
Falls - 3	Leon - 1	Van Zandt - 3
Fayette - 3	Liberty - 2	Victoria - 1
Fisher - 1	Limestone - 11	Walker - 3
Fort Bend - 4	Madison - 2	Waller - 5
Freestone - 44	Marion - 18	Wharton - 7
Galveston - 1	Matagorda - 11	Williamson - 6
Goliad - 3	McClennan - 2	Wilson - 6
Gonzales - 11	Medina - 1	Wood - 3
Grayson - 2	Milam - 2	

## Freedom Colonies in Texas Map Directions

1. Write your names on the map.
2. Title your map *Freedom Colonies in Texas*.
3. Draw a compass rose on your map. Label the four cardinal directions.
4. Using your *Texas Counties Containing Freedom Colonies* list, create a color-coded map key (5 colors) that will illustrate which counties contained the following:
  - 1-5 Freedom Colonies
  - 6-10 Freedom Colonies
  - 11-15 Freedom Colonies
  - 16-20 Freedom Colonies
  - 21 or more Freedom Colonies
5. Locate each listed county on your map and use map pencils to neatly color each county according to your map key.



ANTIOCH SCHOOL - 1921-22  
RUBEN, TEXAS.

WACO  
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# Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond

## Research Notes

Names of your group members:

**1. What?** What is your research topic?

**2. Who?** Describe who was involved.

**3. Where?** Explain where it took place.

**4. When?** Give the time period for your topic.

**5. How?** Describe how your topic affected African-Americans living in Texas after emancipation.

# Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond

## Research Notes - Teacher Copy

**1. What?** What is your topic.

Freedom Colonies

**2. Who?** Describe who was involved.

Ex-slaves who became landowners

**3. Where?** Explain where it took place.

Areas where ex-slaves could afford to buy land in Texas and all over the south

**4. When?** Give the time period for your topic.

1870-1890

Some are still around today

**5. How?** Describe how your topic affected African-Americans living in Texas after emancipation.

Freedom Colonies allowed them to live near other African-American landowners, sharing churches, schools, and customs.

# Life After Slavery - Freedom Colonies and Beyond

## Research Notes - Answer Key

1865 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment - abolished slavery in the U.S.

1865-1872 Freedmen's Bureau - Organization established by U.S Congress to provide assistance to freed slaves. Operated in Texas 1865-1870, offering food, clothing, medicine, and education to freedmen and their families.

1868 Fourteenth Amendment - Gave state and U.S. citizenship to ex-slaves and protected their rights by law.

1866-1965 Black Codes - Laws passed by Southern states to keep African-Americans in an inferior position after the Civil War. First Texas Black Codes passed in 1866 discriminated by forbidding African-Americans to vote, hold office, sit on juries, marry white people, share railroad cars with white people, and share school funding with white people. Many of these Black Codes segregated African-Americans from white society until 1965.

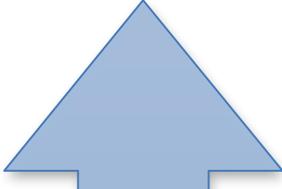
1868-present Ku Klux Klan - originally formed in Tennessee in 1866, spread to Texas by 1868. Intimidated freedmen (and other minority groups) by keeping them from voting, by burning their houses and crops, by beating and murdering them. There are still active KKK chapters in the United States.

1870 15<sup>th</sup> amendment - Granted African-American men the right to vote.

1876-1965 Jim Crow - Movement named after a character in a song and dance show was a series of 27 laws passed in Texas to undermine the rights given to freedmen by the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments and promote segregation. Originally called Black Codes, Jim Crow existed in Texas until ended by the Civil Rights legislation of the 1960s.

## Positive-Negative Chart

On the arrows below, write in the research topics that either made life better for Freedom Colony residents (positive) or made it more difficult (negative).



Positive Factors:

A large blue rectangular box with a white outline, intended for writing positive factors. It is positioned below the text 'Positive Factors:' and above a large blue upward-pointing arrow.

Negative Factors:



A large blue rectangular box with a white outline, intended for writing negative factors. It is positioned below the text 'Negative Factors:' and above a large blue downward-pointing arrow.