

LESSON PLAN IV - CONSERVATIVE COUNTERPOINT

Authors: Erik J. Chaput and Russell J. DeSimone

Grade Levels: 10-12

Time Period: 80 minute block



Fig. 1 John Brown Francis

Subject Areas

- History and Social Studies > U.S. > AP U.S. History
- History and Social Studies > Themes > Politics and Citizenship
- History and Social Studies > Themes > Reform
- History and Social Studies > Themes > Slavery
- History and Social Studies > Themes > U.S. Constitution

Rhode Island GSEs

- HP 1-1; HP 1-2; HP 1-3; HP 2-1; HP 2-2; HP 2-3
- C&G 1-1; C&G 1-2; C&G 3-2

Skills:

- Critical analysis
- Critical thinking
- Discussion
- Evaluating arguments
- Historical analysis
- Interpretation
- Making inferences and drawing conclusions
- Online research
- Representing ideas and information orally, graphically and in writing
- Using primary sources
- Writing skills

Preparation Instructions:

Students should be instructed to read and take notes on the introduction to the digital edition of the Henry A.L. Brown Deposit for homework the night before. Students should also watch the short documentary on the [Dorr Rebellion Project](#) site.

Lesson Activities (80 minute block):

- Activity #1: Critical Reading and Analysis (10 minutes)
Laptops or access to a computer lab is required. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4.

Students should read the following five letters from the ardent anti-Dorrite brothers Moses Brown Ives and Robert Hale Ives to John Brown Francis and Elisha R. Potter, Jr. in the month of April 1842:

[Moses Brown Ives to John Brown Francis, April 6, 1842](#)

[Robert Hale Ives to John Brown Francis, April 8, 1842](#)

[Moses Brown Ives to Elisha Potter Junior, April 8, 1842](#)

[Robert Hale Ives to John Brown Francis, April 11, 1842](#)

[Moses Brown Ives to John Brown Francis, April 11, 1842](#)

Students should read the four letters to and from Thomas Wilson Dorr for the same time period:

[Lydia and Sullivan Dorr to Thomas Wilson Dorr, April 8, 1842](#)

[Thomas Wilson Dorr to Levi Woodbury, April 13, 1842](#)

[Levi Woodbury to Thomas Wilson Dorr, April 15, 1842](#)

[Louis Lapham to Thomas Wilson Dorr, April 16, 1842](#)

- Activity #2: Timeline Creation (25 minutes)

Students should collaboratively create a timeline for the key events in April 1842. When constructing the timeline, students will find the introductions and links within each letter helpful, along with the introductory essay to the Henry A.L. Brown Deposit.

- **Activity #3: Ideological Analysis (45 minutes)**
Once the timeline is constructed, students should begin to examine the clashing ideological perspectives represented in each letter.

Questions for Consideration: How did the Ives brothers, for example, characterize Dorrite ideology? Did the Dorrites reflect on the conservative view? Were they afraid of men like Robert Hale Ives? What did the Ives brothers want President Tyler to do? What was their viewpoint of the so-called Algerine law?

Extending the Lesson:

1-page reflection - Students should examine the letters from Elisha Potter, Jr. to John Brown Francis from January-April 1842. Did Potter and Francis share the same viewpoint as the Ives brothers? Students should offer concrete textual evidence from the letters to back up their points.