

Day 2: Wed., April 6

Theme: *What qualities of character does it take to strive for freedom? What does freedom mean to you?*

Songs: “If I Had a Hammer” by Pete Seeger & Lee Hayes; “Yes We Can” by Thomasina Levy

Materials: “Abolitionist Dwight P. Janes: A Real New London Hero of the Amistad” (handout, New London Maritime Society); biography of Cinque from Amistad Trials website; West African symbols and visual patterns (handouts).

Activities: Making a bucket drum with symbols of freedom; learning techniques of drumming; writing and composing an original Freedom Chant; continue with the Amistad story, focusing on Cinque and abolitionists like Dwight Janes (how and why did they act for freedom?).



Overview: We began with a discussion of Cinque and abolitionist Dwight Janes: What qualities of character did it take for these two different men to take action in the struggle for freedom? We looked at West African visual symbols and discussed what symbols related to these historical figures, finding evidence in the texts to support our opinions. Students were

then thrilled to make their own bucket drums and decorate them with freedom symbols (using West African symbols or ones of their own). We shared our choices, which led to a brainstorming session to create our own Freedom Chant. All students then wrote stanzas and phrases, which we combined and edited for a collaborative class creation.

Reflection: This session exceeded our expectations. We expected the students to enjoy making and playing their drums, but we were beyond impressed at how much thought and artistry the students put into designing their drums with meaning and connections to both the Amistad story and their own concepts of freedom. They also had impressive insights about Cinque and the abolitionists, in particular about the risks that these men took to strive for the freedom of themselves and others.

Wish School Freedom Chant

Rise up against unfairness
Take a risk and speak your mind
Unite all together
You're gonna hear what's on our minds

Bravery, justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind
Bravery, justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind

You have a right to express yourself
You have a right to make a choice
Share your knowledge with others
Everyone has a voice

Bravery, justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind
Bravery justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind

When you're faced with something difficult
Take your time and you'll go far
Your strength will be your guidepost
Your truth is who you are

Bravery, justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind
Bravery justice and hope
Freedom for all mankind

