

Paul Cuffe: Activities & Assignments

Activities:

Ask students to engage with the following questions, either in class or independently:

Can you find Sierra Leone and Liberia on a map? What oceans or countries border these nations?

Can you find Massachusetts on map? Why do you think Nantucket was a good place for whaling?

(K-2)

Find Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard on a map. Why would smugglers have been so important to these communities during the Revolutionary War? What might make navigating to these islands at night difficult?

Have you ever heard of Sierra Leone? What about Liberia? Find these countries and their capitals on a map. Research the founding of these countries and write a short summary of one or both. **(3-5)**

How were Sierra Leone and Liberia viewed in the 19th century? What other views did people hold on the "colonization" movement? Do you think it is clear-cut that one side is right or wrong, or is it possible that there is a mix of right and wrong on both sides? **(6-8)**

Assignments for Grades 6-8:

Ask students to write a 1-2 page essay discussing two sides of a complicated issue today and how this issue might appear to people fifty years from now.

Ask students to read one or both of the two supplementary readings attached to this lesson: "Petition by Paul Cuffe, et. al. to the Massachusetts legislature, 1780" and "From Paul Cuffe to James Madison." Have them summarize the readings and/or use them as part of a longer essay on Cuffe's life and times.

Ask students to read a speech or statement by Jamaican activist Marcus Garvey, President-General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL), such as his 1921 "If You Believe the Negro Has a Soul" (<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5124>)

Have them research and write an essay analyzing how Garvey's Pan-Africanism and the "Back to Africa" movement for which he was a major advocate differs from, and is similar to, Paul Cuffe's colonization efforts in their goals and motivating beliefs. (See the Woodson Center's lesson on Marcus Garvey for more information.)