

# Ibrahima, Fula Prince and African Slave

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## Overview

Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima was born in 1762 in Fouta Djallon, a district in Guinea, Africa. He was the son of a chieftain of the Fula tribe. Ibrahima studied the Koran, the Moslem holy book, and attended school in Timbuktu. He was married with children. He helped an injured American, Dr. Cox. In 1788, in a battle with a rival tribe, the Mandingo, he was captured and traded to white men for guns. Ibrahima sailed to Mississippi to work on a tobacco plantation. He was renamed Prince and his long hair was cut off. He later met Dr. Cox who offered to help. The American Colonization Society bought and purchased land now known as Liberia in Africa. Ibrahima finally earned his freedom in 1829. In studying his life, we can follow his forced migration using geographical themes of movement, human interactions, and location.

## Connection with Curriculum

This activity may be used with Language Arts and Social Studies- World History / Triangular Trade

## Objective

The students will read a biography about Ibrahima and trace his migration from Africa to America and back. The student will learn about the culture of the Fula tribe, and the geography of Fouta Djallon.

## Connection to National Geography Standards

### Essential Element: Spatial Terms

Standard #1 How to use a map to report information from a spatial perspective

### Essential Element: Human Systems

Standard #9 The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

**Suggested Grade levels:** 5-7

### Materials

***Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima from Now is Your Time By Walter Dean Myers (In a 6<sup>th</sup> grade McDougal-Littell textbook Language and literature 2001***

***Audio-cassette recording of the story***

***Maps of Africa and a World map***

***Graphic organizer for recording sequence of events***

***A Venn diagram to compare the African life to life in Mississippi.***

***Websites [Africa -- Media -- Encarta ® Online](#)***

***[www.mcdougallittell.com](http://www.mcdougallittell.com) Key MCDB7CIJVTGHL***

### Suggestions for Teaching the lesson

#### Preview

1. To create and build intense feelings, tell the class that you are willing to buy: A pencil for \$3, Paper for \$10, eraser for \$20, Book for \$50.

(Prearrange ahead of time with a student (and parent) approval to participate in a slave auction)

Now offer to **buy** Suzy for \$500!!!

How do the students feel about that?

What if I were to inspect her muscles? Hair? Teeth?

The students are probably outraged and indignant.

2. Then tell them that this actually happened over 200 years ago to many Africans and one particular real African prince.
3. Preview the Africa website to show them Foute Djallon in West Africa.
4. Discuss the difference in the landscape
5. Locate Foute Djallon on the Africa map.

### **Developing**

1. Read aloud the story or listen to the audio-cassette.
2. Stop often to record the sequence of events on the graphic organizer.
3. Discuss the events and students' reactions.

### **Possible discussion questions**

Where did he attend school?

Why was the Koran so important?

How did he meet Dr. Cox?

Describe the battle with the Mandingo.

Why did the Mandingo trade Ibrahima to the white men? Where was the ship sailing from? (West coast)

Describe the conditions on the ship sailing to America

Describe the sale and treatment on the plantation

Describe the meeting with Dr. Cox

Describe Ibrahima's eventual release and return to Africa in 1829

Reflect upon his short time of freedom Jan. to July 1829

### **Conclusion**

1. Students will complete a Venn diagram comparing Ibrahima's life in Africa and his life in Mississippi
2. Students will trace Ibrahima's travels from Guinea, Africa to Timbuktu, across the Atlantic to Mississippi to Liberia, Africa.

## **Extension**

Students could create a timeline reporting his life.

Students could write a letter from Ibrahima to his family back in Africa.

Students could pretend to be reporters and write interview questions for Ibrahima.

Students could create a diary/journal written by Ibrahima.

Students could act out one scene from the story.

Watch excerpts from the movie Roots.

Further extend the lesson with the study of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

## **Assessment**

**Class discussions**

**Graphic organizer of sequence of events**

**Venn diagram completion**

**Maps showing Ibrahima's movement and travels**