| **Slavery OPVL Primary Source Analysis** | |
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| Maryland Addresses the Satus of Slaves | |
| Origin | It is created by the general assembly of Maryland in 1664. It was published in Maryland by the government to define slavery in the state. Since it is from the colonial general assembly in Maryland, we can easily conclude that the author is a group of white English men who use slaves to make profits. |
| Purpose | This document’s purpose is to define the status of slavery clearly in the state of Maryland. This way, slaves’ role in the society can be defined. This document is intended for the slave owners/masters and tells them that slaves are people who commit their whole life to serve or work for the master. All children of slaves are master, and the women who marry the slaves will be slaves themselves too. This shows how malignant and unfair the white people treated the slaves. |
| Value | This document tells us that these white people treated slaves as their tools and inferior to them. We can learn that back in the colonial times in 1600s in America, slaves were treated harshly and used as source of profit. The author’s is of the white Englishmen, representing the people who enslaved the African Americans |
| Limitation | This piece does not tell us about how the slaves were treated back then and how they were used. For examples, slaves were treated horrifically and used as sources of profit. It also lacks the victims’ (slaves’) point in telling how cruel the white people were and how evil and cruel the practice was. |
| **A Slave tells of His Capture in Africa** | |
| Origin | This piece is created by Venture Smith, a slave who was captured in Africa and shipped to America. It was created in 1798 when Smith was an old man in Connecticut. This recount was published by Smith himself in his book. We know that the author is a slave from Africa who suffered through hardships. He is a typical examples of slaves captured from Africa and shipped to America. |
| Purpose | This document existed to tell us about how cruel the Africans were towards themselves. In other words, although the white people bought slaves, whipped them, and forced them to work, some Africans were guilty of slavery themselves, too. The audience intended was to the posterity and tell them about how slaves were captured, and serve as a source of truth. This document also tells us about how the black people themselves were cruel to men of their own kind. It expresses disappointment and sadness on those African people who were selfish, cruel, and merciless towards people of their own kind. |
| Value | We can tell that the author is a man who has been through a lot as a young men, suffering from the unjust and misfortune. This piece was created as a memoir for an old slave. It is created under the circumstance of a time of unjust and cruelty by the slave traders, both black and white people. The author represents the side of a victim, and expresses sorrow and anger for what have happened to the slaves. It was during his time when slavery was prevalent and black people were captured daily to be shipped to America for labour. |
| Limitation | This piece clearly tells about the cruelty of slavery and the process of the capture of slaves. But it does not tell about what slavery was actually like, such as how the slaves were treated by the masters and such. It also tells very little about the men who captured them, such as their backgrounds, their motives (other than money), and their situation such as their political power, political stance, their heritage (there are a lot of different races in Africa), and many other details about the men. |
| **An African captive tells the story of crossing the Atlantic in a slave ship** | |
| Origin | This memoir is written by Olaudah Equino in 1789. He is a slave captured in Nigeria, and this piece tells us about the trip across the Atlantic as a slave. It was published in 1789 in the United States by Equino as a freemen after his purchase of freedom. We can tell that the author is a slave who was treated cruelly against by the white people, and that his journey across the Atlantic was fearful. We would know that this is written in the perspective of the victim of the system of slavery. |
| Purpose | This document existed to tell the truth about what it was like to be on a slave ship. The intended audience is to the posterity, and also serve as a source of truth about slavery and the maltreatment by the white people against the slaves. This document tells us how slaves are scared on the slave ships, often confused about what their fate would be. It also tells us how being on the slave ship was so horrible that death was preferred. This tells us under the surface how cruel the slave traders were. |
| Value | We can tell that the author has been through a lot as a slave, and was maltreated during his period as a slave. The time period in which the author’s enslavement took place was during the rise of slave trade, and therefore, a lot of slaves were captured and sold to the slave traders who brought them to America. And this piece takes place during one of the uncountable amount journeys across the Atlantic aboard one of the slave ships. This piece is represented by the slave’s side, and is in the POV of a slave. During this piece, tens of thousands of slaves were transported to America, and the sufferings of the slave (Equino) was just one of the hundred of thousands of suffering. |
| Limitation | This piece tells us a lot about the journey the slaves take to America. There is not much the author didn’t tell, because he was observant and wrote about almost all the details he can possibly observe. The things that the author did not tell was what he had no idea and impossible to have any idea of, such as how the slave traders negotiated with the slave hunters, how the crew worked, operated, what it was like to work on a slave ship as a white man, and how the ships worked when docking, resupplying, and manage the vessel. |