



Bitter Sweets: Mapping Pineapples, Hospitality, and Slavery

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Introduction

The objects that represent our material culture—street signs, mascots, symbols etched into stone or printed on stationery—are silent bearers of history: the past tattooed on the present. The meanings given to those objects may change from one social or culture group to another. Consider, for example, the contested nature of the Southern Confederate flag as a symbol of heritage versus hate or the competing uses of the gammadion cross (the swastika). One seemingly innocent and overlooked example in this vein is the pineapple.

The pineapple as a symbol of hospitality can be a doorway for students into vivid explorations of trade in early American history. Such intellectual expeditions introduce students to the fields of human geography and Atlantic history and the roots of contemporary globalization.

The pineapple is a familiar foodstuff, an edible reminder of our interconnected world. Far from its origins in southern Brazil (O'Connor 2013), the fruit has diffused to markets worldwide and is grown in a number of tropical locales, including the Philippines, Hawaii, and Costa Rica (Figure 1). But like many items of material culture, the pineapple is laden with multiple meanings. In the Southeastern United States, the fruit is used as a symbol of hospitality. How was this connection made and what other interpretations exist?

Today, pineapple symbology abounds in Southern home décor and is celebrated in public spaces far from its growing fields. Historically this welcome sign is traced to the Carib,

*“... vivid
explorations of trade
in early American
history.”*



Figure 1. Pineapples growing in central Costa Rica. Photograph by Jerry Mitchell, 2016. (Color figure available online.)

who placed the fruit outside their villages when inviting Spaniards to visit (Coyle 1982), and reportedly, eighteenth-century ship captains placed pineapples on their porches to announce their arrival home after visiting tropical ports. Although this pineapple–hospitality origin story is disputed by some (Theobald 2008), it is now nonetheless enduring. Hidden from view, however, is the fruit’s connection to plantation slavery, which fueled the movement of millions of Africans to the Americas from the mid-1500s to the late 1800s. These people were the intellectual and physical genius behind the cotton industry, which stacked the wealth of Southern enslavers, South Carolina, and the nation.

The lesson described here uses primary and secondary source documents and geovisualization technology (Google Earth) to trace the journey of pineapples from the West Indies to Charleston, South Carolina, and finally, to the table of a South Carolina enslaver. In so doing, students examine hidden circuits fueling nineteenth-century world trade—links between Caribbean fruit farms, Atlantic Ocean voyages, the lavish dinner tables of South Carolina enslavers and the people whose exploited intellectual and physical work made all of it possible. In the process, students learn how the foreign-grown pineapple came to be a Southern symbol and glimpse the lifestyle of the period’s uber-rich. Thus, the pineapple is not solely an innocent symbol; it is also an emblem of a hospitality born out of and inextricably linked to brutality.

Commodities and Chains: Nineteenth-Century Globalization

Slavery remains a largely misrepresented, taboo subject in America. However, with the help of films like 2013’s *12 Years a Slave* and television series such as “Roots,” more complete, honest historical pictures are now emerging. In many classrooms, American slavery is a brief, uncomfortable story about Southern plantations disconnected from national and global forces. Commonly told in a few textbook pages accompanied by period drawings, the narrative centers around a reductive tale of victims (enslaved) and villains (masters/enslavers) or victims with no villains at all (e.g., Southern “planters”). Introducing the pineapple can help students become more aware of the symbols around them in their own cultural landscape. It also provides an opportunity to flesh out otherwise bare-bones classroom content. This lesson shows how various social studies disciplines connect while

Figure 2. Royal Gardener John Rose and King Charles II. Painting by Hendrick Danckerts, 1675. Image in public domain. (Color figure available online.)



illuminating personal experiences rendered invisible when this content is portrayed as a sterile, decontextualized array of historical or geographic facts.

To date, the pineapple has been a silent character in the Southern story. Pineapples became popular items and symbols in European and proto-American lifestyles, art, and architecture due to their rarity and associations with travel and warm weather. They were also antebellum “bling,” status symbols that illuminated one’s place at the top of the social hierarchy.

In Renaissance Europe, only certain types of fruit were available and for limited periods of time. The pineapple was among the array of exotic foods colonizers such as Christopher Columbus regaled royal patrons with upon returns from early New World expeditions. Thus, the fruit first entered European lives in the 1500s as luxury items enjoyed by monarchs (O’Connor 2013). Royals like King Charles II became so smitten with the fruit that he featured it in an official portrait (Figure 2). As America matured, so too did the demand for Caribbean pineapple among the New World’s upper class. Displaying and serving pineapples were two of the ways households enacted a sort of self-coronation. For the New World colonist, serving pineapple said as much about a host’s purse as it did about their sense of hospitality, just as serving a rare vintage wine does today.

The riches at the end of antebellum American commodity chains cannot be separated from their origins in West African slave castles; ship holds; or sugar, rice, and cotton plantations. Slavery forged the paths of American wealth, and the pineapple was one way nineteenth-century elites displayed theirs. Thus, the pineapple offers a glimpse into the lives of America’s rich through a symbol that remains stamped upon the American landscape today.

The pineapple also offers a lesson in cultural transformation and plurality; what began as a rare luxury good connoting power and privilege as much as hospitality has become a commodity within reach of grocery shoppers worldwide. Furthermore, acknowledging the pineapple’s significance to American enslavers does not change the fact that for many today it is a hallmark of warmth and welcome. By observing the pineapple alongside slavery, we are able to see the fruit’s full panorama of meanings and geo-histories, instead of focusing exclusively on one narrative versus another.

“The pineapple also offers a lesson in cultural transformation and plurality ...”

One Pineapple's Story

Robert Barnwell was a South Carolina plantation owner. His property contained land in St. Helena Parish in the Beaufort District near the Atlantic coast and, as of November 7, 1850, a total of forty-three enslaved people. An 1853 journey of a single pineapple is the focus here.

We first meet the pineapple through a letter Robert sent from his Beaufort home to his mother in Charleston, South Carolina (Appendix A). Upon reading the letter, students must then organize information from an advertisement (Figure 3) to determine the pineapple's origin. Students then map the fruit's journey, identifying key locations and the activities taking place there, carefully plotting the course using Google Earth. Students use the "placemark" and "path" tools to mark the journey, uploading text and images (Figure 4).

While the primary goal of the lesson is to integrate the historic, geographic, and economic aspects of this story as it unfolds in a nineteenth-century globalized world, a second goal is student use of geospatial technology. This technology offers problem-solving applications and data display appropriate across many disciplines, including the social studies. In addition, using geospatial technology has been shown to improve student achievement (Goldstein and Alibrandi 2013). A final goal is to have students look critically at the taken-for-granted symbols that populate their daily lives, demonstrating how something as simple as a Brazilian-born fruit tells a far grimmer tale than initially realized.

Summary

The social studies highlight the complex interaction between people and places—culturally, economically, and historically. The mapping lesson outlined here allows students to investigate the role of one contemporary material object—the pineapple—and how this plant not grown in the United States came to be a major emblem and symbol of hospitality largely divorced from the processes that brought it to colonial and postcolonial America. Students also use geospatial technology to re-create creatively an early example of globalization and commodity chains, demonstrating the interconnected nature among people, places, and their (contested) symbols.

Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces students to historic primary and secondary source documents and geospatial technology to explore nineteenth-century slavery and trade between the Caribbean and United States. Students trace the journey of a pineapple from Cuba to South Carolina, exposing new ways to think about the geographic, historic, and economic aspects of enslavement and how contemporary symbols have had considerably different meanings in the past.

Time Required

Two seventy-minute class periods (one to present foundational ideas such as finding the past in the present, gather clues from the readings, and begin mapping the journey using Google Earth; the second to finish mapping and participate in historical inquiry and comparison).

Figure 3. January 12, 1853 advertisement from *Charleston Courier* newspaper. Images in public domain. (A) Pineapples arrive on Brig Somers; (B) Cuba as origin of Brig Somers.

BUICKMYER & MOFFETT.
Ja 12 3

LIVERPOOL COAL.—100 tons LIVERPOOL COAL, landing this day, per Corea, at Central wharf, (foot of Cumberland-street.) \$8.50 per ton. Apply to
Ja 12 **HOLMES & STONEY,** Central wharf.

LIME.—1500 casks fresh burnt STONE LIME, just landing from schr. E. J. Talbot, from Camden, and offered for sale low for cash, if immediately taken from the vessel, at Union wharf.
Ja 12 **THOS. B. TROUT, 112 East Bay.**

FOR SALE, POTATOS AND LUMBER.—150 bbls. of Oregon POTATOS
16,000 feet of White Pine Lumber.
Just received, and now landing from schr. State of Maine, from Frankfort, by
Ja 12 **JAMES C. NICHOLS, Agent,** Boyce and Co's wharf.

NEW-ORLEANS MOLASSES LANDING.—240 bbls. N. O. MOLASSES, of superior quality and in fine order, landing this day. For sale by
Ja 11 2 **HAYNE & YATES, 151 East-Bay.**

NEW CROP WEST INDIA MOLASSES.—50 bbls. W. I. MOLASSES, of superior quality
25 tierces W. I. Molasses, of superior quality

NEW CROP N. O. SUGAR AND MOLASSES.—40 bbls. N. O. SUGAR, of prime and choice quality
25 bbls. N. O. Sugar, low priced
100 bbls. N. O. Molasses, superior quality.
For sale by
Ja 10 4 **HAYNE & YATES, 151 East Bay.**

SUGAR, MOLASSES, WHISKY AND CANDLES.—300 bbls. fair to choice SUGARS, Clarified, and of favorite brands
600 bbls. choice new crop MOLASSES
300 bbls. Rectified Whisky, extra
200 boxes Adamantine Candles.
Landing per brig Tartar, and in store. For sale by
Ja 11 4 **HENRY COHA & CO.**

CRYSTALLIZED STONE DRIED WHITE SUGAR.—200 bbls. of the above SUGAR.
Landing per brig Tartar, and for sale by
Ja 11 4 **HENRY COHA & CO.**

FLOUR, FLOUR.—600 bbls. Baltimore FLOUR, select brands. Landing and in store, and for sale by
WILLIAMS & BUTLER, 165 East Bay.

BUILDING MATERIALS, AT 112 EAST BAY.
STONE LIME, CEMENT,
N. Y. LIME, P. PARIS,
PHILA. LIME, MARBLE DUST,
Laths, Lathing Nails and Hair,
Assorted Nails, Fire Bricks,
White Pine Lumber,
WALNUT BALUSTERS,
CHERRY MAHOGANY PLANK,
NUELS,
All of which will be sold at the very lowest prices and on the most accommodating terms our market will afford, by
T. B. TROUT, late Trout & DeLange.
ALSO,
GYPSON OR FARMERS' PLASTER, and Horner's Compound Manure. †
Ja 5

JUST RECEIVED BY BRIG Somers, a superior lot of WEST INDIA FRUIT, consisting of
10,000 ORANGES
50 bunches Bananas
25 dozen Pine Apples
2,000 Plantains.
ALSO, IN STORE,
3000 GRAPE FRUIT
2000 Shaddockes
50 boxes Lemons
50 whole boxes Bunch Raisins
50 half boxes Bunch Raisins
50 quarter boxes Bunch Raisins
25 whole boxes Layer Raisins
25 half boxes Layer Raisins
50 small Drums Smyrna Figs
50 small boxes Malaga Figs
10 bags Soft Shelled Almonds
5 bags English Walnuts
5 bags Brazil Nuts
5 bags Filberts
5 bbls. fresh Pecan Nuts
5 trails fresh Arabian Dates
10 bbls. Dry Cranberries
1000 Cocoa Nuts
300 bbls. superior Seed Potatoes
100 bbls. superior Eating Potatoes
100 bbls. superior Apples, assorted
50 bbls. assorted Onions
500 bunches Onions
The above for sale, in quantities to suit purchasers, by
ISAAC HARRIS.
At his Old Stand, 41 Market-street.
Ja 11 3

RICHMOND FLOUR AND NAIL S.
300 bbls. richmond Extra FLOUR
50 do. Richmond Extra Family Flour
1000 kegs 1st quality Cut Nails, assorted sizes.
Landing and for sale by
RHETT & ROBSON,
1 Atlantic wharf.
IN STORE:
250 bbls. Baltimore H. S. FLOUR
200 bags choice Green Rio Coffee
1000 kegs Nails, assorted sizes
100 boxes Family Soap.
Ja 11

WHITE BEANS.—100 bushels Prime White No Ca. BEANS. For sale by
Ja 11 2 **WILLIAMS & BUTLER.**

FLOUR, FLOUR.—100 barrels Baltimore Super-fine FLOUR, now landing. For sale by
Ja 8 **WM. ALLSTON GOURDIN,** 73 East Bay.

PORTO RICO SUGARS.—50 bbls. Superior Dry Porto Rico SUGARS, for sale by
Ja 5 **CHAS. EDMONDSTON.**

CHOICE NEW CROP CUBA MOLASSES.—140 bbls. new crop Cuba MOLASSES, of choice quality and fine packages. Landing per brig Somers, and for sale by
Ja 10 3 **JAMES CHAPMAN,** Exchange street.

ALL THE LATEST PUBLICATIONS are constantly received by the earliest opportunities, at the Book store of
W. R. BAIRCOCK, King-street.

EDWARD OSCAR JONES, rs. Elizabeth Stroub, George Stroub, John R. Moore, Charlotte M., his wife, and Emma Ogden. In Equity, Bill for Partition and Account.
It appearing to my satisfaction, that John R. Moore and Charlotte M., his wife, and Emma Ogden, Defendants in this case, reside beyond the limits of this State, to wit: in the State of Georgia; so that the ordinary process of the Court cannot reach them, on motion of Thomas Y. Simons, Jr., Complainant's Solicitor, ordered that the said John R. Moore, and Charlotte M., his wife, and the said Emma Ogden, do appear and plead, answer or demur to this Bill of Complaint, within three months from the publication of this order, or an order pro confesso will be taken against them.
D 15 w12 **THOMAS J. GANTT, R. E. C. D.**

NEW BOOKS.—The Bivouac, or the Rival Suitors, by Col. W. H. Maxwell, author of Hector O'Halloran, Stories of Waterloo, My Life, or the Adventures of Capt. Blake, &c., beautifully illustrated; price 50 cts. Reuben Medlicott, or The Coming Man, by M. W. Savage, Esq., author of Bachelor of the Albany, My Uncle the Curate, &c.; price 50 cts. Contentment is better than Wealth, by Alice B. Neal, author of No such word as Fail; price 50 cts. Lives of Wellington and Peel, from the London Times, price 50 cts. Just received and for sale by
GEO. OATES, 234 and 236

REASONS FOR ABJURING ALLEGIANCE to the See of Rome.
A Letter to the Earl of Shrewsbury, by Pierce Connolly, M. A., formerly Rector of Trinity, Natchez, late Domestic Chaplain to the Earl of Shrewsbury, first American edition. Just published and for sale by
JNO. RUSSELL, 256 King-street.

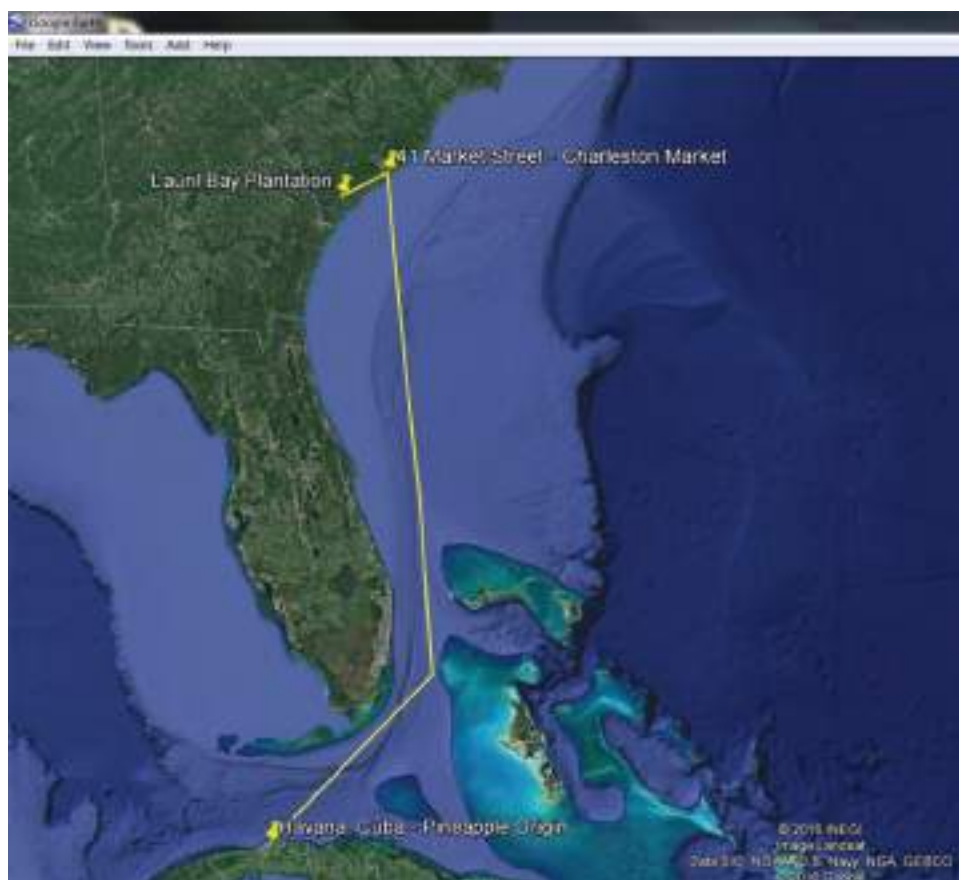


Figure 4. Sample map of pineapple journey created in Google Earth. Image created by authors. (Color figure available online.)

Preparation

Materials/Resources

- Computer access for students with Internet and Google Earth software
- Digital projection in classroom
- Robert Barnwell letter excerpts (Appendix A)
- Newspaper clipping of pineapple advertisement (Figure 3)
- Barnwell family description (excerpts) from *The Story of Sea Island Cotton* (Appendix B)

Lesson Resources

Teachers may find useful the following background reading on trade among the United States, West Africa, and the Caribbean:

- Corporation of Public Broadcasting: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/home.html>
- Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition: <http://glc.yale.edu/>
- Smithsonian's History Explorer: <http://historyexplorer.si.edu/resource/?key=1922>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/dialogue/the-slave-route/transatlantic-slave-trade/>

On pineapples:

- O'Connor, Kaori. 2013. *Pineapple: A global history*. London: Reaktion Books.

On enslaved people's resistance:

- Franklin, John H., and Loren Schweninger. 1999. *Runaway slaves: Rebels on the plantation*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Objectives

1. Distinguish between primary and secondary source documents.
2. Gain procedural knowledge of geospatial technology using visualization software (Google Earth).
3. Reflect on the nineteenth-century experiences of people who were enslaved and those who enslaved them.
4. Explain how symbols, in this case the pineapple, originate and change across human groups (i.e., free versus enslaved people), space (i.e., Caribbean versus United States), and time (i.e., nineteenth century versus contemporary era).

Assignment Implementation

1. Build background for exploring the pineapple as a symbol related to the slave trade. Ask students to explain the meaning of William Faulkner's line "The past is never dead. It's not even past" or another similar prompt that encourages them to consider how contemporary names, symbols, and places have histories and meanings that may escape ordinary notice. Students may offer examples that include sports team mascots (e.g., Washington Redskins football team name controversy), family names, or flags. After sharing ideas, introduce the pineapple and ask students to discuss its origin and any meanings associated with the fruit. Explain that the students will piece together the journey of a nineteenth-century ship to learn how the pineapple is related to the slave trade and is an early example of globalization, a phenomenon sometimes misrepresented as being wholly new or modern. Show students images of current luxury goods they are familiar with such as Cristal champagne or Gucci suits. Explain that the pineapple was a luxury good in 1853, only affordable to the rich and famous.
2. Explain the Barnwell family history (as noted in this article), outline the basic history and geography of the slave trade (see suggested reading under "Lesson Resources"), and inform the students that they will be looking for clues in primary and secondary source documents to trace the journey of a pineapple to the Barnwell family. Primary sources are documents (such as letters) or objects created during the time under study and differ from a secondary source, such as a textbook, that interprets a primary source. The teacher should discuss these differences and include student awareness of them in their assessment (see Objective 1). This can be accomplished by providing the student with a list of various sources (e.g., maps, diaries, and encyclopedias) and having the student identify the characteristics that make them either primary or secondary sources.
3. Provide students with excerpts from a letter written by Robert Barnwell to his mother in 1853 (Appendix A). Students should identify places mentioned within the text for later mapping. Questions to ask the students:
 - Which places are mentioned in the text? [Lauril Bay, now Laurel Bay, in Beaufort County, South Carolina; Marsh Island, located southeast of Barataria Island, Calibogue Sound, Beaufort County, South Carolina.]

"Students should identify places mentioned within the text for later mapping."

- Did the writer make a special request? [After remarking on negligent slaves, he asks for a pineapple for an upcoming dinner.]
4. Provide students with a newspaper advertisement¹ (Charleston Courier, January 12, 1853; Figure 3) to search for items that match the request in the Barnwell letter. [Near the middle-right column is an image of a pineapple indicating tropical fruits that have arrived aboard the Brig *Somers*.² The items may be purchased at a stand located at 41 Market Street in Charleston, South Carolina. In the left column at the bottom is another advertisement “Choice New Crop Cuba Molasses.” This product also arrived on Brig *Somers* and gives students the origin of the cargo (Cuba).] Questions to ask the students:
 - Find an advertisement mentioning pineapples for sale.
 - Once found, write down the name of the ship the pineapples were transported in and the street address for where the pineapples are being sold.
 - Is this ship mentioned in any other advertisements on this page? Where did the ship’s journey begin?
 5. After having read each document and recorded location data and other details, students will use Google Earth to map the pineapple’s journey (an alternative option is to use a paper map). Students will need to locate Cuba and two South Carolina locations: 41 Market Street in Charleston and the Lauril Bay plantation. At each location, students may add placemarks and detail the activities that occurred there. The general journey may be created using the “Add Polygon” or “Add Path” tools. All three of these tools are in the Google Earth general tool bar; a short amount of time may be needed to assist students in using these tools.
 - For the Cuba placemark, a likely starting point is Havana. We have no other detail about the actual pineapple growing area on the island or the actual port, but Havana is a likely choice.
 - For the Charleston placemark, the student may enter the 41 Market Street address in the search bar. The student should notice how close the fruit stand location is to the port along the Cooper River.
 - For the Lauril Bay Plantation placemark, the student can use Beaufort, the nearest town, as the plantation proper no longer exists.
 - Once all placemarks are located and populated with details, the student may use the path tool to draw the route (Figure 4). Photographs or text may be added to each placemark if desired. The resulting image may be shown to the teacher or exported as a KML file for later viewing to assess student success with Objective 2.
 6. Upon map completion, engage the students in a discussion of enslavement, the trade system, the different locations, and the roles of the various people involved in this particular case (see Objective 3). For example, have the students read Appendix B to consider how the Barnwell family became wealthy enough to bring this faraway fruit to their table. Questions to ask the students:
 - How much land did Robert Woodward Barnwell own? [By 1850, 2,275 acres.]
 - How was the Barnwell land used? [The improved land was used for sea island cotton, a very desirable cash crop.]
 - Robert Woodward Barnwell is often called a “planter” and in his letter home (Appendix A), he speaks of “negligent ... negroes.” Ask students: Who do you think did most of the planting and other physical work that made the plantation successful? Is it fair to call enslaved people “negligent,” or could it be that they were engaged in a form of resistance to enslavement? For a teacher wishing to investigate these points further, see the work of Franklin and Schweninger (1999) referenced in Lesson Resources.
 - In addition to Appendix A, students also may investigate Figure 5, a list of Beaufort Parish “slave inhabitants,” to enumerate the number of enslaved people that Barnwell used to grow his crops and accumulate wealth—wealth that would ultimately be used for luxury items like pineapple.

“At each location, students may add placemarks and detail the activities that occurred there.”

SCHEDULE 2. Slave Inhabitants in St. Helena Parish in the County of Beaufort State
of South Carolina, enumerated by me, on the 7 day of Nov, 1850. Dr. M. Baker Ass't Marshal.

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.								NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.							

- How was the pineapple the Barnwell family used as a dinner party centerpiece linked to enslavement?
- What is the common meaning of the pineapple symbol in the Southeastern United States today? How has the meaning of the pineapple changed over time? [To ensure retention of this concept (see Objective 4), the teacher may assign a writing prompt whereby the student identifies another contemporary symbol (see examples in paper introduction), charts its origin and development, and makes comparisons to the pineapple example.]

Assessment

- Students are able to differentiate between primary and secondary sources by identifying their unique characteristics from a set of teacher-identified examples (Objective 1).
- For the Google Earth mapping assignment, students should complete a map showing a journey that begins in Cuba and ends near Beaufort, South Carolina. The student should use clues from the readings (“Assignment Implementation” point 3) and add text to the placemarks where appropriate (Objective 2).
- Students should provide correct answers for the questions provided in “Assignment Implementation” point 6 to reflect on differing human experiences (Objective 3).
- In writing, students will explain how symbols change across different groups of people, space, and time by referring to this specific case (the pineapple) and other historic or contemporary comparative symbols (Objective 4).
- Informal assessment of student participation in discussion (identifying clues, actors, and motivations) is also appropriate.

“... explain how symbols change across different groups of people, space, and time ...”

Notes

¹The newspaper advertisement and the Barnwell letter were written within days of each other, indicating a very plausible connection. For space purposes, the advertisement has been cut down slightly into two figures to remove information not needed for this activity.

²This ship, *Brig Somers*, should not be confused with *USS Somers*. The latter ship was the site of an 1842 mutiny, an event that led to the creation of the United States Naval Academy. That ship sank in 1846 while *Brig Somers* was still servicing Charleston in 1853.

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APPENDIX A. Excerpts of Letter From Robert Barnwell to his mother, Catherine.

Lauril Bay
Jan 22 1853
My Dear Mamma

I have written to Papa but would be treating you badly if I left your long letter unanswered. We are all doing well and as yet no sickness or accident—which we should be very grateful for especially when we think of Allard's sickness after his apparent good health. If he were to need any change or you could send him we would be very glad to have him here though I suspect that your mother's heart would prefer him near you. The girls seem enjoying themselves and add much to our happiness. Cally is an excellent housekeeper (though I can't say she could keep up a whole houseful supplied in all the things as you do) and Deb a good scholar. I really ought to be proud of my sisters, or more thank God that he had seen for to give me such and pray that I may be blessed through him to them ...

... I think my health at least not delicate as the boat upset with me out ... the other night and I was kept on Marsh Island ... (very cold) over an hour in wet clothes ... Moses' wife

brought in a dozen eggs just now which we declined being much beyond our means or wants. The big hog this week gave us food enough for this and next too. We will do very well ...

... I have taken up the old ox and will see about the calf. You have no idea how negligent the negroes are about stock. I have the hardest work to get them penned. Until last week not more than 16 cows were ever penned. Now about 25 head. ... If you would send a pine apple it will arrive in time for dessert next Saturday when we expect dinner company.

Much love to all ...

Your son
R W Barnwell

APPENDIX B. Excerpts From *The Story of Sea Island Cotton* (2005).

Excerpt 1:

"Laurel Bay Plantation was part of the Barnwell family's holdings well before the American Revolution. Robert Gibbes Barnwell* inherited Laurel Bay, and by 1800 he was planting sea island cotton. Barnwell replaced a fine brick residence burned by the British or their Tory allies, using [the] thick-walled ground floor of the mid-eighteenth-century dwelling as the foundation of a new building."

[*Robert Gibbes Barnwell (1761–1814) is the grandfather of the letter writer, Robert Woodward Barnwell (1831–1863). This is the origin of the family's wealth. See Appendix A for the letter.]

Excerpt 2:

"Politics and college administration were not lucrative professions, and it was Robert Barnwell's* sea island cotton plantations that supported the family. In 1825, he paid taxes on 300 acres in St. Helena Parish. By 1850, he owned 1,075 acres (500 improved), which produced twenty bags of cotton, and another 1,200 acres in Prince William Parish, where another forty bags had been made in 1849."

[*Robert Barnwell (1801–1882) is the uncle of Robert Woodward Barnwell (1831–1863), the letter writer. This man had been a college instructor and a U.S. senator among other political offices held. Here the family's wealth and their political connections are highlighted. Overseeing the multiple plantations was a family affair: Robert Barnwell's account books were maintained by his brother, William Hazzard Wigg Barnwell (1806–1863). William Hazzard is the father of the letter writer, Robert Woodward Barnwell (1831–1863). See Appendix A for the letter.]