

**Abolitionism Prior to the Civil War**

**John Brown Argument Exchange Project Implementation Plan**

**Debatable Issue: John Brown’s moral purpose and moral character mitigate**

**his crimes.**

This is a recommended (but adaptable) implementation plan for a U.S. History or social science unit on the 19th century prior to the Civil War, or a unit devoted entirely to abolitionism.

**Day 1**

Introduce the project, including the summative Argument Exchange

Present an overview of 19th century abolitionism and the growing conflict in the U.S.

over slavery, 1820s – 1850s. Consider presenting a PowerPoint and other media in the overview.

Review [the “John Brown Timeline”](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/brown/timeline/index.html) on the PBS American Experience site.

Show the video “Harper’s Ferry and John Brown,” by the West Virginia Public

Broadcasting Station.

**Day 2**

Introduce the debatable issue: **John Brown’s moral purpose and moral character**

**mitigate his crimes.**

Re-show the video “Harper’s Ferry and John Brown,” and conduct a teacher-led

discussion of the film and its relationship to the debatable issue.

**Day 3**

Conduct a choral reading of the History Now article on John Brown and the Harper’s

Ferry incident, checking for student understanding through questioning, quick

writes, idea-backs.

Pair all of the students.

Distribute the John Brown primary source excerpts.

Have students answer questions in pairs and turn them in for quick review, formative

assessment.

**Day 4**

Pass back the primary source document excerpts with some overall feedback.

Conduct a share-out, argument-based discussion.

Assign each pair a side: affirmative or negative.

**Day 5**

Distribute Argument Builders.

Review Argument Builder Model.

Begin argument building.

**Day 6**

Continue and conclude argument building.

Collect Argument Builders for formative assessment and feedback.

**Day 7**

Pass back Argument Builders with analytics and individual feedback.

Distribute Counter-Argument Builders.

Review Counter-Argument Model.

Post pair matches.

Students should identify arguments of their matches and build counter-arguments.

**Day 8**

Distribute Argument Exchange Flowsheets to each pair.

Review the Argument Exchange Flowsheet Model.

Review the Argument Exchange Format.

**Day 9**

Conduct two Argument Exchanges, where each pair is matched against two opposing

pairs.

Collect Argument Exchange flow sheets and conduct a formative assessment of them.

**Day 10**

Present analytics on the Argument Exchanges.

Showcase one Argument Exchange for the full class.

Conduct a final de-brief on the project.