

## Day 4: The Effects of Oregon's Exclusion Laws

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Although Oregon laws prevented slavery from being established in the territory, they also made it difficult for free Black pioneers to build a life there. The Oregon Exclusion Laws were a series of laws that required Black pioneers to leave the territory within a certain amount of time. Although Amanda Gardner Johnson was able to remain in Oregon and live her life as a free woman, many other Black pioneers were both discouraged and prevented from settling in Oregon.

### BLACK PIONEERS AND OREGON EXCLUSION LAWS

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Some white settlers brought enslaved people with them on their journey along the Oregon Trail. It is important to understand that Oregon was established as a free territory. This meant that enslaved Black pioneers who reached Oregon could not remain enslaved. The terms of their freedom however, were determined by exclusionary laws which affected the opportunities available to them.

In this lesson students are introduced to 3 different Black pioneer stories. Each of the pioneers in these stories was affected by Oregon's Exclusion Laws. Working together in small groups, students become experts on one of these stories and use what they have learned to teach their classmates. Teachers are encouraged to share Jacob Vanderpool's story last, using it to spark a whole class discussion comparing his story with the story of the Francis brothers.

### JIGSAW: MAKING MEANING WORKSHOP

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- ✓ In small groups, students engage in a Jigsaw workshop. Each student in the group is given time to become an expert on one Black pioneer and their experience, later sharing what they have learned with the rest of their group.
  - ✓ Use Jigsaw Workshop instructions written by Jennifer Gonzalez to help you understand the Jigsaw method.
  - ✓ Encourage students to use the word, *enslaved* instead of *slaves* when referring to Black pioneers. This language emphasizes the humanity of Black individuals and develops the understanding that their circumstance was caused by the actions of other people.
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### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE DISCUSSION

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- ✓ How did Oregon's Exclusion laws affect this Black pioneer's life?
  - ✓ What questions would you ask this person? Use these questions to help you write a letter to this pioneer.
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**PIONEERS STUDIED: Abner Hunt Francis, Robin and Polly Holmes, George Washington Bush, Jacob Vanderpool (presented last)**