

Materials that will support children throughout these lessons:

Journal (somewhere to record all of their thinking)

Folder (storing artifacts, articles, photographs, etc.)

Note: All resources for each session can be found in the corresponding resource folders

Session Three:

Intention: Dive into the environment that Letitia arrived in when she got to Oregon. Specifically, what might it have been like for Letitia arriving in a place that sent a strong message that Black people were unwelcome?

1). Watch the next section of the High Desert Museum video (from 4:45-6:15 - stop before David gets sick) URL: <https://highdesertmuseum.org/oregon-trail-reflections/>

Turn and Talk: what did you hear Letitia say about the Exclusion Laws?

2). Pass out the timeline of the Oregon Exclusion Laws and large pieces of drawing paper. If you have the means, you can have children do this electronically as well. Give children a chance to independently read over the timeline

-Highlight any parts that are confusing or that they'd like more information about

-As a whole class, examine these important dates in Letitia's life up until this point:

1814: Letitia is born enslaved in Kentucky.

1844: Letitia is living with David, likely on his farm or house in town, in Missouri

March 1845: Letitia leaves Missouri with David Carson to travel to Oregon

June 1845: Letitia gives birth to their daughter Martha on the Oregon Trail

~December 1845: Letitia, David and Martha arrive in Oregon and claim 640 acres of land in Soap Creek Valley and begin farming and ranching

1849: Letitia gives birth to their son Adam in Oregon

1850: Letitia and David's land is reduced to 320 acres because they were not officially married and therefore not allowed to claim the full 640 acres (one square-mile equivalent) of land as a married couple.

Pause here and go deeper into the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 and the injustice experienced by indigenous people because of this. Despite what the DLC says, this was not “free land.” We want to support children to understand the displacement and trauma caused to Native Americans by the DLC Act and also the opportunity it brought to people like Letitia. This is a rich opportunity to explore the complex layers to history and policy decisions. What supports one community might harm another. How can we support children to think critically about the ripple effect such policy decisions have on a variety of communities?

Depending on the schema your specific children have, you might choose to spend a day on this or a week. Laying a sturdy foundation in the complexity of the DLC is essential. Here is a good resource to learn about the DLC Act with students: [OPB Article The Government Took the Land of Oregon's Native People.](https://www.opb.org/article/2020/09/27/the-us-government-took-the-land-of-oregons-native-people-170-years-ago-this-week/)

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Here are some guiding questions and thinking protocols to support children to explore the complexity of the DLC Act's role in history and Letitia's story.

- Who benefited from the DLC Act? Who was harmed?*
- Circle of Viewpoints thinking protocol (instructions in session folder) can support children to consider different perspectives*
- Who was eligible to claim “free land” under the DLC? Who wasn't eligible?*
- How do you imagine being eligible or ineligible to claim land might impact someone's ability to establish themselves in Oregon?*
- What are the ripple effects throughout family generations?*
- Use the emotions wheel to share out feelings that arise throughout this discussion*

3). Timeline assembly

In partners, have children piece together a large timeline (using drawing paper, electronically, large butcher paper, etc.) that includes dates from Letitia's life and the Oregon Exclusion Laws. Draw this as a visual model rather than a list of dates

4). Written reflection

Looking at your timeline, what inferences can you make about how these Exclusion Laws in Oregon impacted Letitia's experience? If this question is too complex, an initial step might be to ask children first to imagine what it might be like living in a place where there was a law like this directed towards you.

Specifically, noting that only one Black person was expelled from Oregon as a result of the laws, but that the laws communicated strongly that Black people were not welcome in Oregon.

Using the “emotion wheel,” what feelings come up for you? Why do you think that is?