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Lesson Plan  
African Americans in the Making of Early New England

**Objectives:**

- Students will analyze primary and secondary sources.
- Students will create biographical timelines.
- Students will answer and generate high-complexity questions.

**Materials:**

- Lucy Terry (1730-1821)
  - Picture book (or substitute biographical article) [https://www.amazon.com/Ladies-Liberty-Women-Shaped-Nation/dp/0060780053/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1501100611&sr=1-2&keywords=cokie+roberts+ladies+of+liberty](https://www.amazon.com/Ladies-Liberty-Women-Shaped-Nation/dp/0060780053/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1501100611&sr=1-2&keywords=cokie+roberts+ladies+of+liberty)
  - Copy of the poem The Bars Fight
- Elizabeth Freeman (1744?-1829)
  - Picture book (or substitute biographical article) <https://www.amazon.com/Mumbets-Declaration-Independence-Carolrhoda-Picture/dp/0761365893>
  - Photograph of tombstone
- Chart paper set up with historical vs. biographical timeline venn diagram
- Teacher and student copies of US historical timeline (create and study with students prior to lesson)

**Connect:**

Review basic 1700-1900 USA timeline created in previous lesson.

Think-pair-share: How do historians decide what to put on a timeline?

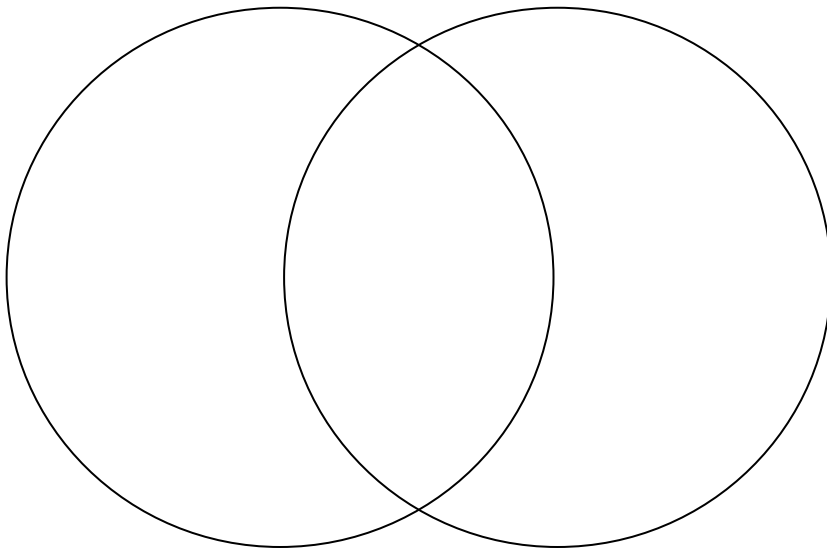
**Instruct:**

Tell students that today, we will create timelines of someone's life, rather than a historical timeline. A timeline of someone's life is called a biographical timeline.

Quickly fill in chart together based on student predictions of similarities and differences between historical and biographical timelines. This chart can be revisited at the conclusion of the lesson.

Historical  
timeline

Biographical  
timeline



Together, read the story about Lucy Terry in *Ladies of Liberty*. Pause to take notes when a significant event is mentioned, taking care to include any dates.

Briefly discuss the story after reading. Solicit student feedback: questions, emotional responses, surprises, etc.

Now read and analyze the poem. What does this tell us about Lucy Terry's life?

Create timeline skeleton, reviewing the key components of a timeline at the same time. Use notes to record events from Lucy Terry's life on timeline.

Display both timelines: historical and biographical. Think-pair-share: What connections might there be between what's happening in the US and what's happening in Lucy's life?

**Partner work:**

With a partner, students will read the primary and secondary sources about Elizabeth Freeman. They will take notes as they read and create a timeline of her life.

**Reflect:**

When all groups have finished, students should take a silent gallery walk to look at each other's work.

As a whole group, discuss:

- What was easy or difficult about the process of creating the timelines?
- What did you notice about your person of study?
- What did you notice about the other timelines? Similarities? Differences?

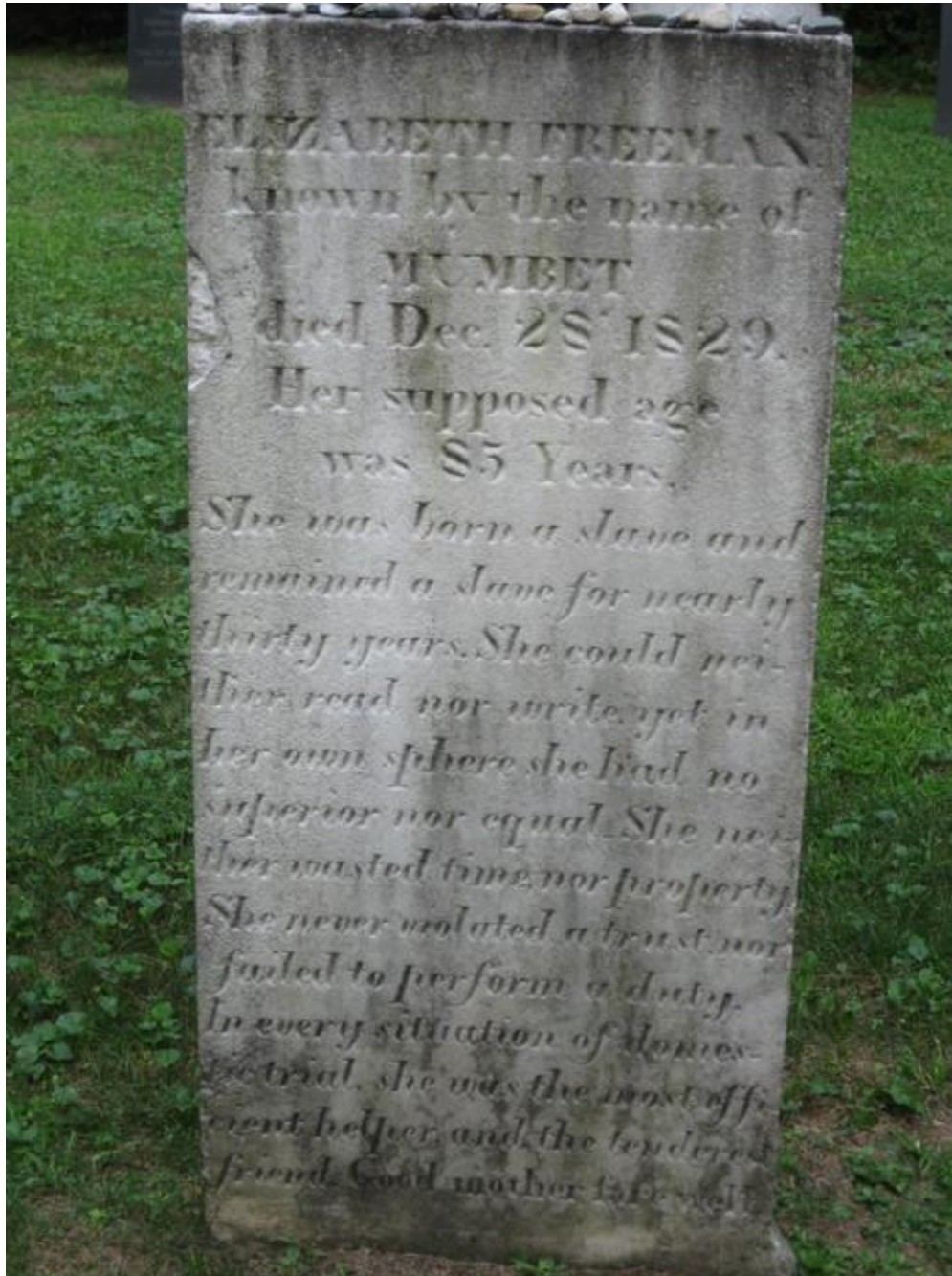
- What are the similarities and differences between these two enslaved women?
- In what ways do you think important events in history affected these individuals' lives?
- What surprised you? What didn't surprise you?
- What more do you wish you knew about Lucy Terry or Elizabeth Freeman? Why don't we know more?

Revisit the venn diagram from the beginning of the lesson. Use a different color to add/eliminate based on discoveries.

**Assess:**

Individually, each student will generate 2-3 high-complexity questions (refer students to class Bloom's Taxonomy chart) that another student could answer based on their timeline. They will choose one of their questions to answer themselves.

## Elizabeth Freeman's Tombstone in Stockbridge, MA



Elizabeth Freeman known by the name MUMBET died Dec. 28 1829.

Her supposed age was 85 years.

She was born a slave and remained a slave for nearly thirty years. She could neither read nor write yet in her own sphere she had no superior or equal. She neither wasted time nor property. She never violated a trust nor failed to perform a duty. In every situation of domestic trial, she was the most efficient helper, and the tenderest friend. Good mother, farewell.

### **The Bars Fight**

By Lucy Terry

"August 'twas the twenty-fifth,  
Seventeen hundred forty-six;  
The Indians did in ambush lay,  
Some very valient men to slay,  
The names of whom I'll not leave out.  
Samuel Allen like a hero fout.  
And though he was so brave and bold,  
His face no more shall we behold.  
Eleazer Hawks was killed outright,  
Before he had time to fight,---  
Before he did the Indians see,  
Was shout and killed immediately.  
Oliver Amsden he was slain,  
Which caused his friends much grief and pain.  
Simeon Amsden they found dead,  
Not many rods distant from his head.  
Adonijah Gillet we do hear  
Did lose his life which was so dear.  
John Sadler fled across the water,  
And thus escaped the dreadful slaughter.  
Eunice Allen see the Indians coming,  
And hopes to save herself by running,  
And had not her petticoats stopped her,  
The awful creatures had not catched her,  
Nor tommy hawked her on the head,  
And left her on the ground for dead.  
Young Samuel Allen, Oh lack-a-day!  
Was taken and carried to Canada."