



Using the information you gather on the web site, answer the following questions about the unit.

1. Editorials can often be used by historians to learn what people in a community were thinking about an important topic of the day. What do the articles shown in the Abolition section tell us about the personal opinions involved in this issue?

There were a number of different opinions on the issue - not everyone agreed about what should be done with slaves who visited Minnesota.

Based on the number and content of the articles in this section, how important do you think the issue of slavery was to the community at the time?

There are a number of articles about this particular event, and the editors of one of the papers have suggested that they do not have room to print every article or letter they receive on the topic. This would lead us to believe that the issue was very important to the community at the time.

What other sources might also have told us what people were thinking about Eliza Winston's situation?

Other newspapers in the area could have printed other opinions, transcripts of speeches given at the time may have addressed the topic, and its possible that some people would have mentioned this event in their personal journals or letters.

2. Artifacts like the handcuffs on this site can tell us much about an event or a person we are studying. Although the handcuffs in this photograph are actually from Williamsburg, Virginia, and were never used on Eliza Winston, they can still tell us many things about slavery during the 1800s. What can an artifact like this tell us about a topic we are studying?

Artifacts like this one can provide us some concrete images of what the situation we are studying was like or how people lived.

What artifacts might historians find in 100 years that would tell them about our lives today?

Historians could find cameras, computers, household appliances, televisions, cars, and other things that would tell them about our lives and how we spent our time.

What are the shortcomings of using only artifacts in your research?

Without any other sources to tell us how an artifact was used or even what it was, we might come to some incorrect conclusions about the artifact, its use, and how common it was at the time.

3. The media played a large role in the Eliza Winston case. People wrote letters and articles on both sides of the issue. Do newspaper accounts impact how we view a story or an issue in our current

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events today? **Answers will vary.**

What is helpful to know about a newspaper while we are reading an article about an issue?

It is helpful to know if the newspaper has a political bias, how often the newspaper is printed, and what kind of article we are reading (is it an editorial, a reporting piece, or a transcription of another document?).

Do you think newspapers sometimes offer opinions in articles that are labeled "news"?

Answers will vary.

How can you tell fact from opinion in a newspaper article?

Sometimes this is difficult. You can look for words that might suggest to you that the author has an opinion about the issue. But the best way to determine this is to read other articles about the same topic from different newspapers or sources and compare them.

4. As you learned in the Eliza Winston case, the interpretation of what a law says and how it is applied is not always the same in all cases. Name some other examples in history or in your community in which a law was not followed "to the letter." What reactions do you think people at the time had to that event and to how the law was or was not applied?

Answers will vary, but students might suggest that some people were angry about how Eliza was removed from slavery and some people were probably happy about it. Some may have felt that it was unfair to free one slave and not all of them, and some may have felt that it was unfair to take "property" from Col. Christmas.

What events happening now are similar?

Answers will vary, but there are always issues in the news about which students will be able to find differences of opinion.

What sources might you use to determine if a law is or is not being applied properly?

You may use legal documents describing the laws of your state or community, or study court cases to see how the law has been applied in similar situations.