

Handout 2

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Class Period: _____

The Pearl Incident Source Packet

Document A

Source: Excerpted from Daniel Drayton’s “Personal Memoir of Daniel Drayton: For four years and four months a prisoner (for charity’s sake) in Washington jail” (1855). Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

Headnote: Daniel Drayton was the commander of the schooner *The Pearl*. He was an oyster fisherman who did not own this boat. He paid to borrow it from another man, name unknown, to complete the mission. It is said that Drayton had completed a mission to free enslaved people before, but demanded more and more payment for that mission. He was paid \$100 dollars (a large sum for the time) to complete this mission.

“Passing along the street, I met Captain Sayres, and knowing that he was sailing a small bay-craft, called *The Pearl*, and learning from him that business was dull with him, I proposed the enterprise to him...Captain Sayres engaged in this enterprise merely as a matter of business. I, too, was to be paid for my time and trouble,—an offer which the low state of my pecuniary (**financial**) affairs, and the necessity of supporting my family, did not allow me to decline. But this was not, by any means, my sole or principal motive. I undertook it out of sympathy for the enslaved, and from my desire to do something to further the cause of universal liberty. Such being the different ground upon which Sayres and myself stood, I did not think it necessary or expedient (**efficient**) to communicate to him the names of the persons with whom the expedition had originated.”

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What part of *The Pearl* incident does this excerpt capture?
- 2) What does Drayton give as his motives for participating in *The Pearl* incident?
- 3) What language does he use to describe his motivations?
- 4) What is Drayton’s perspective of *The Pearl* incident?
- 5) Is this a reliable source? Why or why not?

Document B

Source: Excerpted from 1848 edition of *Port Tobacco Times*, a weekly newspaper for Charles County, Maryland, that supported the Democratic Party. Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

“... Daniel Drayton, the supposed master and ringleader of the thieves was ordered to come up. After some time, and very reluctantly... The real captain of *The Pearl*, Edward Sayers, was then called up and put under guard, his answers being evasive and unsatisfactory --. The third white person on board, Chester English, said he had been duped and imposed upon by the other two; he wept bitterly, and protested he had had no part in the criminality...The chief kidnappers themselves had admitted he knew nothing of their plans...” (204 words)

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What part of *The Pearl* incident does this excerpt capture?
- 2) What language does the author use to describe Drayton, English, and Sayres? What might this indicate about the author’s perspective of *The Pearl* incident? Of enslavement?
- 3) According to this document, is Daniel Drayton a reliable source of information about *The Pearl* - why or why not?

Document C

Source: Excerpted from John H. Paynter's "The Fugitives of *The Pearl*," printed in *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 1, No. 3., July 1916. Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

Headnote: John Paynter was an African American historian. Paynter was also a descendant of the Edmondson sisters, who were part of the attempted escape. Paynter's book was expanded from a 1916 article he published in *The Journal of Negro History*, and later serialized in the *Washington Tribune*.

Who was Judson Diggs?

Judson Diggs was a former slave who was accused of betraying *The Pearl*.

"The Edmondson boys actively promoted the scheme [to escape aboard *The Pearl*] and...The news was passed to an aggregate of 77 persons, all of whom faithfully appeared and were safely stowed away between decks before midnight....

Judson Diggs, one of their own people, a man who in all reason might have been expected to sympathize with their effort... Judson was a drayman (***a person who delivers beer from breweries***) and had hauled some packages to the wharf for one of the slaves, who was without funds to pay the charge, and although he was solemnly promised that the money should be sent him, he proceeded at once to wreak vengeance (***revenge***) through a betrayal of the entire party.

...It is difficult to realize the consternation felt by the fugitives when the noise of tramping feet and the voices of angry men broke upon their ears. They seemed to realize at once that they were lost and many gave themselves up to shrieks and tears... Captain Drayton and his mate were immediately the storm center of the infuriated masters, many of whom were loud in the demand that summary vengeance be wreaked upon them and that these two at least should be hung...

Their arrival at Washington was signaled by a demonstration...Numerous arrests were made and in due course the march to the jail was begun with the accompanying crowd hurling taunts and jeers at every step. While they were proceeding thus, an onlooker said to Emily, "Aren't you ashamed to run away and make all this trouble for everybody?" To this she replied, "No sir, we are not and if we had to go through it again, we'd do the same thing."

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What part of *The Pearl* incident does this excerpt capture?
- 2) According to this excerpt, who is Judson Diggs and what did he do?
- 3) After *The Pearl* returns to Washington, what happens? What might this say about attitudes towards enslavement in the D.C. area during this time?
- 4) What language does the author use to describe the atmosphere aboard *The Pearl*?



Document D

Source: Excerpted from Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society's (founded in 1838, the society's work led to the escape and freedom of many enslaved people). "Captains Drayton and Sayres: Or the way in which Americans are treated, for aiding the cause of Liberty at Home", (April 22, 1848). Retrieved from *Library of Congress*.

"On the night of Saturday the 15th of April, seventy-seven human beings, who had all their lives worn the yoke of slavery, made a bold attempt to regain their Freedom. They were slaves in and near the city of Washington... had toiled and striven and fought through long years for freedom...

Drayton, the chief actor in the late noble and daring attempt to free four-score human beings from Slavery and degradation... seems made for a soldier in such a cause: a bold, stern, determined man, ready to do battle unto the death in the cause of right.....He is aware of his position and his danger; indeed he was well aware of the risk he run, and counted the cost before he set out upon his enterprise, and provided for his family in case of his capture. He is now in the iron grip of the law, made by slave-holders themselves to protect what they call their *property* in the bodies and souls of human beings, and made as sharp and as strong as the wit of wicked men could make it. The law, too, is administered with a cruelty that is revolting...

The excitement among the slave-holders is still intense, -- their wrath is still hot, and they mean to make Drayton drag out a life of misery, and be a living beacon to deter others attempting to knock off the shackles of their slaves...

He is aware of his position and his danger; but he quails not, and he said to me, in hearing of his turnkey, and in a firm but quiet tone -- 'I know I have broken the laws which men have enacted for this particular spot of earth, but I have transgressed none of the laws which God made for all places and all times...'"

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What part of *The Pearl* incident does this excerpt capture?
- 2) What language does the author use to describe Drayton? How is this different from the language used to describe him in Document B?
- 3) What is the author's perspective of *The Pearl* incident?
- 4) What is the author's perspective of Drayton?
- 5) Is this a reliable source? Why or why not?

Document E

Source: Excerpted from Mary Kay Ricks' "Escape on *The Pearl*: The Heroic Bid for Freedom on the Underground Railroad" (2007)

Headnote: Mary Kay Ricks is a former attorney at the Department of Labor and has written about Washington history for the Washington Post. She is the founder of Tour DC, walking tours of Washington DC.

"[Drayton] put in a stint as a shoemaker, while struggling both with his faith and the temptations of drink and gambling, before finally turning to the sea. Drayton had often sailed ships between Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., transporting wood, oysters, and anything else he could carry and later sell...

This wasn't Daniel Drayton's first foray in assisting slaves to escape from Washington...Dr. Charles Cleveland...the president of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society, said that a black man named Stevenson arrived at his door looking for help in the summer of 1847. Stevenson explained that he had hired an 'oysterman'...to transport his enslaved family from Washington, D.C., to Philadelphia by boat. But now his wife and children were stuck in Frenchtown, because the oysterman refused to transport them any farther until he was paid the twenty dollars still owed to him...

The two captains and the young mate were retained on the *Salem* while the fugitives were kept aboard the *Pearl*. A second Georgetown constable, twenty-five-year-old William Craig, later said that he was left alone with the three men before they were separated from one another for questioning. He reported that both Sayres and English broke down crying but Drayton remained composed and quiet. Drayton admitted that he and Sayres knew exactly what they were involved in but adamantly maintained that English had known nothings of the plan in advance....

Thomas Orme later said that Drayton claimed to be 'only a mite, or one of the smaller fry' in the affair and that he had just been hired to take the fugitives to the top of the bay. Drayton told him that he had done it for the money. He added that he had once been a religious man but that he had 'backslidden.' The captain later admitted to having shared his life's story with the men, but claimed that Orme had given a confused and incorrect recounting of their conversation.

Another member of the posse, John Dewdney, said that Drayton had told them he had no sympathy for the slaves and was doing it only for the money."

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What is Daniel Drayton's background? According to Dewdney and Orme, who was Drayton?
- 2) What prior escape attempt was Drayton involved with? How did he respond? What might this say about his reliability?
- 3) Why might Sayres and English have broken down crying? What might have been their role in the escape? In the betrayal of *The Pearl*?
- 4) What language does the author use to describe Drayton? How is this different from the language used to describe him in other documents?
- 5) Is this a reliable source? Why or why not?

Document F

Source: Excerpted from Winifred Conkling’s “Passenger on *The Pearl*: The True Story of Emily Edmonson’s Flight from Slavery”, (2015)

Headnote: Winifred Conkling calls herself a children’s story teller, and obtained a master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children and Young Adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts.

“In the days that followed the capture of *The Pearl*, the families of the runaways tried to figure out how the plot had been discovered. No one knows how Judson Diggs’s betrayal was revealed, but members of the black community blamed him for the failed plan. Diggs was one of them - he knew the sting of slavery and the satisfaction of finding freedom - so many considered his act of denying liberty to others to be unforgivable.

Taking the law into their own hands, a group of young black men sought revenge by pulling Diggs from his carriage, beating him up, and throwing him into a stream that ran along the north side of the old John Wesley Church in Washington, D.C. Diggs survived and fully recovered from his physical injuries. He was considered an outcast - ‘despised and avoided’ - until he died in his late sixties.”

Questions to Consider:

- 1) What part of *The Pearl* incident does this excerpt capture?
- 2) What happened to Judson Diggs? Why?
- 3) Why might it be that we have no account from Judson Diggs himself?
- 4) Is this source reliable? Why or Why not?

The Pearl Sourcing Organizer

Directions: As you carefully and closely read the documents, please record the key information paying special attention to the guiding questions at the bottom of each document.

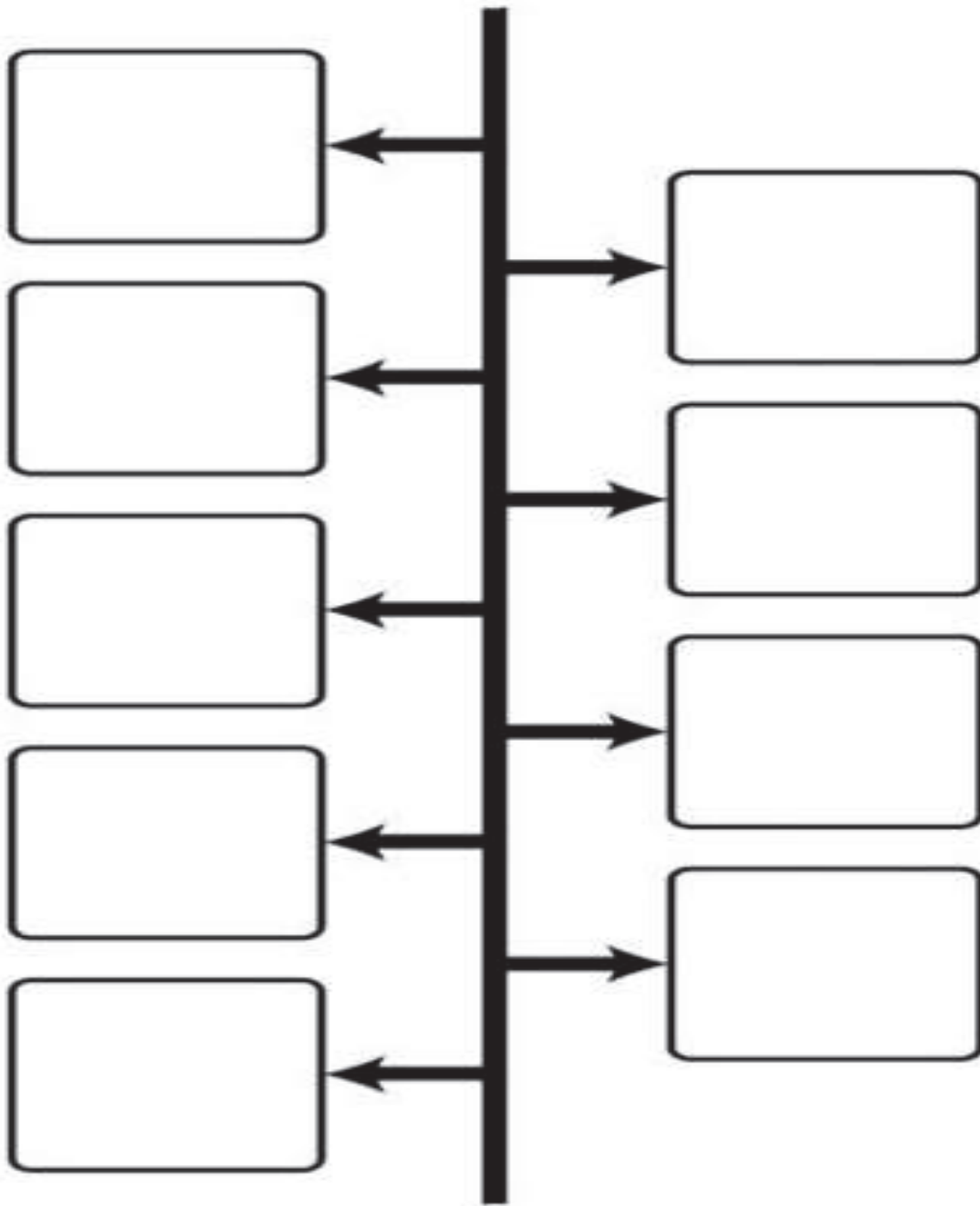
Document	Who wrote it?	When and where was it written?	Why might it have been written?	Notes in Response to the Questions at the Bottom of the Documents. Please number your answers.
A.				
B.				
C.				

The Pearl Sourcing Organizer (Page 2)

Document	Who wrote it?	When and where was it written?	Why might it have been written?	Notes in Response to the Questions at the Bottom of the Documents. Please number your answers.
D.				
E.				
F.				

The Pearl Timeline

Directions: Using the documents, fill in the timeline below to chart the events of *The Pearl* incident.



The Pearl Ranking Credibility Worksheet

Directions: Rank the 6 documents in terms of credibility (*1 = least credible, 5 = most credible*). Give an explanation for your ranking in the boxes provided. When explaining your credibility ranking, please include any corroborating documents in the set you also consulted in order to evaluate credibility.

Document A: 1855, Personal Memoir of Daniel Drayton

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	

Document B: *Port Tobacco Times* Article, 1848

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	

Document C: “The Fugitives of the Pearl” by John Paynter, 1916

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	

Document D: Eastern Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society's "Captain Drayton and Sayres: Or the way in which Americans are treated, for aiding the cause of Liberty at Home" April 22, 1848

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	

Document E: *Escape on the Pearl: The Heroic Bid for Freedom on the Underground Railroad* (2007) by Mary Kay Ricks

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	

Document F: Winifred Conkling's *Passenger on the Pearl: The True Story of Emily Edmonson's Flight from Slavery* (2015)

<u>Rank:</u>	<u>Other Documents Consulted:</u>
<u>Explanation:</u>	