

# Fort Mose

## Journey to Freedom



Fort Mose Historic State Park  
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# The History of Fort Mose

*The information in this section is intended as background for the teacher, not intended as a script for the student.*

Fort Mose (pronounced mo-say) is the earliest known, legally sanctioned, free black community in the present day United States. Fort Mose was established by the Spanish government in 1738. It may be the earliest known site associated with slaves seeking freedom by escape and living in communities where they were free. Spanish Florida became a 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century refuge for slaves seeking freedom, whether in fortified towns like Fort Mose or in maroon communities where runaway slaves joined and lived among a Native Indian population. The Fort Mose site is a remnant of early attempts by African Americans to gain their freedom.

In order to understand the circumstances and significance of the establishment of Fort Mose, we can begin by examining the events that led up to the establishment of Fort Mose.

Spain founded its first permanent colony, St. Augustine, in 1565. Spanish La Florida encompassed most of present-day Georgia and South Carolina. Conflict arose as British settlements moved farther south, first with the Charles Town, South Carolina colony in 1670. This challenge to Spanish sovereignty was met with Spanish military campaigns against the new British colony. In 1686, a Spanish raiding party of 53 Indians and blacks attacked the plantation of Governor Joseph Morton in Edisto, South Carolina. The attackers took money and slaves. The new Governor, James Colleton, demanded the return of the stolen slaves, but the Spanish refused.

One year later, 1687, the first fugitives were recorded in St. Augustine. Eight men, two women, and a three year old nursing child arrived by boat. According to the Spanish Governor, the slaves requested baptism into the 'true faith,' and on the basis of that request he refused to return the escaped slaves to the British. Although not automatically freed, word went north that British-owned slaves could earn their freedom in exchange for military service and adoption of the Catholic faith. As fugitives continued to escape from the Carolinas into St. Augustine, the Spanish Governor sought the counsel of the Spanish Crown. In 1693, Charles II issued the first royal edict on runaway slaves, "giving liberty to all...the men as well as the women...so that by their example and by my liberty others will do the same."

The British planters claimed that the Spanish policy of harboring escaped slaves would ruin the British plantation system by not only enticing the slaves southward to Florida, but also by sending the former slaves back to the plantations to raid and plunder. As a

result, the Carolinians set up patrol systems and professional slave catchers (both English and Spanish) who hunted the escaping slaves. The fleeing slaves were helped by the Yamassee Indians and other native Indians, who were also fleeing the British. Battling slave catchers, dangerous swamps, and hunger, the escaping slaves and the native Indians that helped them established the first Underground Railroad to Freedom.

In 1737, Governor Don de Montiano enforced the royal edicts of 1693 and 1733, which granted unconditional freedom to slaves escaping from the British plantations. The Spanish offered emancipation from slavery in exchange for forming a militia for the Spanish and adopting the Catholic faith. For the Spanish, the escaping slaves were a much needed source of skilled laborers, soldiers, and religious converts. Following the Caribbean precedent, the Spanish knew that harboring the escaping slaves would also help populate a territory that was increasingly threatened by British intrusion.

By 1738, a group of about 100 former slaves and free people of color were living in St. Augustine in the legally sanctioned town of El Pueblo de Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, or Fort Mose. Most of the residents of Fort Mose had been born in West Africa, captured and transported across the Atlantic. Enslaved in America, they risked their lives to escape captivity by travelling a rough and dangerous route from Charles town, South Carolina. Many of the residents were skilled blacksmiths, carpenters, cattlemen, sailors, and farmers. They created a colony of free people that ultimately attracted other fugitives.

A small fort was constructed at the village. It was an earth-berm structure surrounded by a moat filled with prickly pear cactus. Inside the fort was at least one large house, a lookout tower and a well. Some of these structures may have been built partially with stone, but the predominant material was wood. Spanish reports confirm that the villagers of Fort Mose planted nearby crops. However, continuous raids by English-allied Indians made farming dangerous. The settlement was surrounded by a salt water river, which was once called Mose Creek. Mose Creek, now Robinson Creek, contained an abundance of shellfish and fish. Archaeological studies have shown that shellfish was a major food source in the villager's diet.

The first Fort Mose existed for less than two years. In 1740, the English Governor of Georgia, General Oglethorpe, attacked St. Augustine and took possession of Fort Mose. The people of Fort Mose retreated to the Castillo de San Marcos. The British held the Fort for a little less than a month. The residents of Fort Mose, Indian allies and Spanish soldiers retook Fort Mose and the British retreated back to Georgia. However, the fort was destroyed during the battle.

After the destruction of Fort Mose, the residents of Mose lived in St. Augustine for twelve years. Slaves from the British plantations continued to escape to St. Augustine

during this time. In 1752, a new Fort Mose was built approximately 1/4 of a mile north of the original Fort Mose. The second Fort Mose was larger and probably had seven structures within its walls. The walls were made of earth and a shallow moat filled with prickly pear cactus encircled the fort. No maps show the precise location of the village, but it is quite possible that the village was either near or inside the actual fort.

Most of what we know of the second Fort Mose settlement comes from the 1759 records of Father Solana, a parish priest. According to Father Solana, approximately 22 houses or 'huts' in the village were made of thatch. Although no details of the buildings survive, it is quite possible that the villagers used African, Indian and Spanish building traditions. There was a large church in the village, made of boards and thatch. The residents lived at the second Fort Mose until 1763.

In 1763, after the French and Indian War, Florida was given to the British and the British ceded Cuba to the Spanish. Many of the residents of St. Augustine, including the residents of Fort Mose left Florida and sailed to Cuba.

The British used the second Fort Mose as an outpost until they partially destroyed it in 1775. In 1783, at the end of the American Revolution, Florida was given back to Spain. During the second Spanish period (1784 – 1821) Minorcan farmers settled the site until around 1812. In 1812, the 'Florida Patriots' occupied Fort Mose in hopes of capturing Florida for the Americans. They failed, and the Spanish, African and Indian troops destroyed the fort for the last time. The fort gradually fell into ruin.

In 1976 the owner of the property, Mr. Jack Williams suspected that the site was located on his property. He invited archaeologists to study the site. In 1987, team scientists led by archaeologist Kathleen Deagan of the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida studied the site. Their field and laboratory research yielded military and household artifacts, shell stone remnants, pottery shards, and a hand-made St. Christopher's medal. Dr. Jane Landers, historian at Vanderbilt University, provided extensive documentary research.

The approximate location of the first fort was discovered in the 1980's through aerial photography and from 'thermal' images taken by a branch of NASA. Today, the State of Florida holds the property as a wetland.

The second fort is a small island in the marsh and can be viewed from the boardwalk at Fort Mose Historic State Park. In 1994 Fort Mose became a National Historic Landmark and a Florida State Park. In 2006, the Florida Park Service broke ground for a 4,000 square foot visitor center and museum to interpret the history of Fort Mose.

## **Spanish Attitudes Towards Slavery**

To further understand the establishment of Fort Mose, we can examine the Spanish attitude toward slaves that evolved after Columbus claimed the New World for Spain.

In Spain, slavery was governed by the “Siete Partidas del Rey Don Alfonso El Sabio.” The “Siete Partidas” held that slavery was against natural law, for God had created all people free. Slavery originated as an accident of war, when victors enslaved rather than killed their enemies. Slavery was, therefore, not a natural condition for anyone regardless of race, and because of this, Spanish slaves had specific legal rights and protections: the right to hold property, sue in a court of law, buy their freedom, take legal action against cruel masters, and be protected from the separation of family members. – *Kathleen Deagan, Fort Mose: America’s First Free Black Community, 1991.*

This in no way should suggest that slavery in Spanish Florida was easy, but the Spanish view was different than the English view of slavery. The English viewed slaves as ‘property’ and under the English, slaves were not offered the same opportunities as with the Spanish.

### **Captain Francisco Menendez**

Captain of the Fort Mose militia, Francisco Menendez was one of the most interesting of Fort Mose’s residents. Originally a Mandingo from West Africa, Menendez was captured and brought to the Carolinas on a slave ship.

After escaping slavery, he fought with the Yamassee Indians against the British for about three years. In return for his services the Yamassee chief agreed to help Menendez get to St. Augustine. On his journey, he was betrayed by another Indian named ‘Mad Dog’ and sold back into slavery, this time to the Spanish.

Although still a slave, he was made an officer in the militia. In 1738, Menendez was freed after a Yamassee Chief petitioned on his behalf. Menendez took command of the Fort Mose militia that same year. He was the only Captain of the Fort Mose militia and is thought to have evacuated to Cuba with the Spanish in 1763.

## **History of Fort Mose Lesson Plan**

**Grade Level:** 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

**Sunshine State Standards:** SS.A.1.2, SS.A.4.2, SS.A.6.2

### **Objective**

The students will choose and study a character of the Fort Mose history and share with the class.

### **Materials**

Maps (included in the kit)

In-depth student scripts of characters for students to read and answer questions (included in the kit)

Teacher scripts with answers

### **Lesson**

Show the students the map of transatlantic slave route. Point out the region of Western Africa, where many of the residents of Fort Mose were born. Point to the Southeastern U.S. from Florida to South Carolina. Point out areas that were claimed by the Spanish (Florida to South Carolina) and where the English established Charles Town in 1670. Explain that the colony of Charles Town was on the border of Spanish claimed lands. Point on the map where St. Augustine and Fort Mose are located. This will give the students an idea of how far the people of Fort Mose travelled.

Explain to the students a brief history of Fort Mose. This information can be supplemented with additional information found in the teacher background, the timeline included in this kit, and additional resources listed in the back of this packet.

Fort Mose is the earliest known, free black community in the present day United States. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, enslaved Africans escaped the British colonies and obtained their freedom in Spanish St. Augustine. In order to be free, the runaway slaves had to join the Spanish militia and adopt the Spanish religion, Catholicism.

By 1738, a group of about 100 former slaves and free people were living in Fort Mose. Many of the residents were skilled blacksmiths, carpenters, cattlemen, sailors, and farmers.

In 1740, the English attacked St. Augustine and took possession of Fort Mose. The people of Fort Mose retreated to the Castillo de San Marcos. The British held Fort Mose for a little less than a month. The residents of Fort Mose, Indian allies and Spanish soldiers retook Fort Mose and the British retreated back to Georgia. However, the fort was destroyed

during the battle. Fort Mose was rebuilt in 1752 and was home to men and women until 1763. In 1763, the French and Indian War was over; Spain gave Florida to the British and the British gave Cuba to the Spanish. The people of St. Augustine, including the residents of Fort Mose sailed to Cuba.

Read the brief descriptions of the main characters to the class and let the students choose which character they would like to learn about.

- Escaping Slave from Charles Town, South Carolina.
- Yamassee Native American, helped many escaping slaves find their way to St. Augustine, Florida.
- Slave Catcher, hired to capture escaping slaves and bring them back to the British land owner.
- Priest, lived at Fort Mose to teach Catholicism and to keep records.
- Francisco Menendez, Captain of the Fort Mose militia who escaped slavery and gained his freedom.
- Governor Don de Montiano, Spanish Governor who established Fort Mose in 1738.

Divide the class into groups according to which character they chose. For example, the students that chose Francisco Menendez will work together in a small group. Give each group a script of the character. The groups should read the script, discuss and answer the questions at the end of each script. The groups should read the script to the rest of the class and share their answers.

## Escaping Slave from Charles Town, South Carolina - Student Script

I came from an area outside of Charles Town, South Carolina. I worked the plantations for the English. It was hard. I picked cotton from sunup to sundown. The shells of the cotton balls are as sharp as a knife. My hands are sore, cut and bleeding. I did not think I could survive one more season of picking. Word had traveled to the plantation of a safe-town...Mose...in a place called Spanish Florida... a place where I could be free.

It took me a long time to make the decision to run away, for I knew that if I were caught, I could be killed. I ran away in the middle of the night with just the clothes on my back and headed south towards this free land. I ate berries or whatever I could find along the way. I did have some help from the Yamassee Indians, but they fear for their lives as well.

I traveled through the forests...the trees were so thick that I could hardly see...but that helped me to hide...then to the swamps...the bugs almost ate me alive. I ran through the mud and weeds as fast as I could. I became so tired, but I knew that I had to continue on. I tried to sleep in the shade of the trees during the day so that I could travel at night.

I grow very tired.

1. With no roads or maps, how did he/she find the way to St. Augustine?
2. Besides berries, what do you think that he/she would eat?
3. Why did he/she runaway at night? Why did he/she sleep during the day and travel at night?
4. If you were forced to work sunup to sundown would you escape? You know that you could be captured and you don't know for sure that where you are going is better.
5. What if you had to go alone?
6. What are some reasons why a slave would not runaway?

## Escaping Slave from Charles Town, South Carolina - Teacher Script

I came from an area outside of Charles Town, South Carolina. I worked the plantations for the English. It was hard. I picked cotton from sunup to sundown. The shells of the cotton balls are as sharp as a knife. My hands are sore, cut and bleeding. I did not think I could survive one more season of picking. Word had traveled to the plantation of a safe-town...Mose...in a place called Spanish Florida... a place where I could be free.

It took me a long time to make the decision to run away, for I knew that if I were caught, I could be killed. I ran away in the middle of the night with just the clothes on my back and headed south towards this free land. I ate berries or whatever I could find along the way. I did have some help from the Yamassee Indians, but they fear for their lives as well.

I traveled through the forests...the trees were so thick that I could hardly see...but that helped me to hide...then to the swamps...the bugs almost ate me alive. I ran through the mud and weeds as fast as I could. I became so tired, but I knew that I had to continue on. I tried to sleep in the shade of the trees during the day so that I could travel at night.

I grow very tired.

*Some possible answers...*

1. With no roads or maps, how did he/she find the way to St. Augustine?  
**The Yamassee Indians helped guide the escaping slaves south to St. Augustine, and they might have used the position of the sun and the stars in the night sky.**
5. Besides berries, what do you think that he/she would eat? **Deer, raccoon, rabbit, fish, shellfish, native plants, insects, and etc...**
3. Why did he/she runaway at night? **Easier to hide at night.** Why did he/she sleep during the day and travel at night? **Cooler to travel at night and less likely to be seen by slave catchers.**
4. If you were forced to work sunup to sundown would you escape? You know that you could be captured and you don't know for sure that where you are going is better.  
What if you had to go alone?
5. What are some reasons why a slave would not runaway? **Family can't travel that long of a distance, afraid of the punishment if caught, maybe the person is sick.**

## **Yamasee Native American - Student Script**

I fear that I'll be taken north and forced into slavery. It has been 9 days since I fled from the British. I am part of the Yamasee Tribe and many of my people were once friends with the British in Carolina, but we have rebelled. They have shown my people all the money to be made from the slave trade and some of my people are now slave traders. Others of my tribe have been sold into slavery when they do not support the British ways. Some of us are fleeing south to St. Augustine where we have heard that the Spanish will welcome us.

Some of my people have travelled with me, but decided to remain in Georgia with part of my tribe. My people are scattered throughout this land, I fear we will never see each other again.

I hope to trade my animal skins for food, medicine and supplies. Hopefully, this land is full of game and fruits and enough to survive the upcoming summer.

I am heading for a town called Fort Mose. Along my journey to Fort Mose, I have met many people fleeing the Carolinas, many with darker skin than I. They are called Africans. They have talked of being taken from their homes far across the ocean and forced to work on the British Plantations in the Carolinas. We have much in common and I help those I meet.

1. Why do you think that some of the Yamasee Indians helped the fleeing slaves?
2. Why do you think that some of the Yamasee became involved in the slave trade?
3. Why would people in the 1700's sell animal skins? What would people use them for?
4. Many of the Yamasee Indians were scattered throughout the Southeast. What are some reasons why it would be difficult for them to see each other?
5. Would you help someone who really needed your help, even though you might be in danger?

## Yamassee Native American - Teacher Script

I fear that I'll be taken north and forced into slavery. It has been 9 days since I fled from the British. I am part of the Yamassee Tribe and many of my people were once friends with the British in Carolina, but we have rebelled. They have shown my people all the money to be made from the slave trade and some of my people are now slave traders. Others of my tribe have been sold into slavery when they do not support the British ways. Some of us are fleeing south to St. Augustine where we have heard that the Spanish will welcome us.

Some of my people have travelled with me, but decided to remain in Georgia with part of my tribe. My people are scattered throughout this land, I fear we will never see each other again.

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1. Why do you think that some of the Yamassee Indians helped the fleeing slaves? **The Yamassee and the fleeing slaves were both escaping from the British south ward; they had a lot in common.**
2. Why do you think that some of the Yamassee became involved in the slave trade? **Money, status**
3. Why would people in the 1700's sell animal skins? **For money or trade.** What would people use them for? **People might use them for clothing, shoes, blankets, tents, used as a status symbol, used to build canoes.**
4. Many of the Yamassee Indians were scattered throughout the Southeast. What are some reasons why it would be difficult for them to see each other? **The wide-spread use of horses did not occur until the mid 1700's, so they travelled on foot or used canoes. The British and other tribes were hostile to the Yamassee; this made travelling dangerous.**
5. Would you help someone who really needed your help, even though you might be in danger?

## **Priest of the Mission at Gracia Real Santa Teresa de Mose - Student Script**

I'm the priest at Mose.

The people at Mose have just finished the work on the Mission Church and on my residence. I am their teacher in the Catholic Religion. I also record all the births, marriages, and deaths. I keep track of the supplies we get from St. Augustine.

I think the people of Fort Mose are becoming good Catholics. Yet, they still celebrate the Catholic holidays with traditional African music, food and wear traditional African clothing. Ah well, there are more important things to worry about, like protecting our village.

These are hard-working people who are enjoying their freedom. They were not always free. Most of them came from the English colonies to the north where they were slaves. But our Governor has made freedom possible for those that make the journey to St. Augustine. He has said that if they escape to Florida and convert to the Catholic religion, then they will be free.

To encourage them more, they will be given their own land and a town of their own to live in, Fort Mose. Fort Mose will also help to protect St. Augustine from the British. This has been a good thing for St Augustine, because they have brought with them skills that our poor town desperately needs – carpenters, masons, farmers, cowboys and sailors.

Ah, but it has not been so good for the English, they have no one to plant the crops, till the soil and tend the crops. We have hurt their economy, and when they come here and demand their slaves back – well, the Governor tells them NO. The people are now free and live in Spanish Florida!

1. Why was a priest at Fort Mose?
2. What were some of the priest's jobs?
3. Why would St. Augustine need farmers, cowboys, sailors, and carpenters?
4. During Catholic holidays, what did the people of Fort Mose do differently than the Spanish? Do you think this was important; why or why not?
5. The people of Fort Mose had to become Catholic in order to be free. Do you think that was fair?

## **Priest of the mission at Gracia Real Santa Teresa de Mose - Teacher Script**

I'm the priest at Mose.

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1. Why was a priest at Fort Mose? **To convert the residents of Fort Mose to Catholicism and to be their teacher in the Catholic religion.**
2. What were some of the priest's jobs? **Record marriages, births, deaths. Keep track of supplies coming from St. Augustine.**
3. Why would St. Augustine need farmers, cowboys, sailors, and carpenters? **To help establish the town of St. Augustine; farm the land, herd cattle, build structures, sail the rivers/oceans.**
4. During Catholic holidays, what did the people of Fort Mose do differently than the Spanish? **They still celebrate the Catholic holidays with traditional African music, food and wear traditional African clothing.** Do you think this was important; why or why not? **Keeping their African traditions.**
5. The people of Fort Mose had to become Catholic in order to be free. Do you think that was fair?

## **Trapper Trader/Slave Catcher - Student Script**

I'm sure you have found this land of Spanish Florida quite harsh. The biting bugs, hot baking sun, terrible storms and alligators can cut any trip short.

I come from the foothills of Georgia where I left my family. I truly miss my family and hope to return for the winter deer season. I made a good living trapping animals and selling the meat and skins; everyone called me the best trapper trader in the south. Now the British pay more to catch runaway slaves, but it's a very dangerous job. Hopefully I'll make enough money to buy much needed supplies to send home, like flour and sugar.

The British plantation owners don't want the slaves to leave the plantation, but no matter what they do, the slaves keep running away to freedom!

I have been travelling for 3 months in search of runaway slaves. The Spanish have been offering freedom to any British-owned slave from South Carolina and Georgia. Many have already made it to a town near St. Augustine called Fort Mose.

I often pay for information on where to find the runaway slaves. I've even bribed the Captain at the Castillo de San Marcos. I have a good relationship with many of the Spanish leaders of St. Augustine. I give them information about the British and they give me information on runaway slaves. I've even traded my animal skins to the Spanish for information on the runaway slaves.

Just last week, I was almost caught by a Yamassee warrior, but I managed to get away. Seems like the Yamassee have been aiding many of the runaways by giving them shelter and directions.

1. Why do you think he left his family behind in Georgia?
2. Why did the trapper trader become a slave catcher?
3. The slave catcher said his job was dangerous. What are some dangers that he might encounter?
4. What did the slave catcher do to get information from Spanish leaders about runaway slaves?
5. The Spanish were offering the runaway slaves freedom. Why did some Spanish leaders give information to the slave catchers on where to find the runaway slaves?

## Trapper Trader/Slave Catcher - Teacher Script

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Just last week, I was almost caught by a Yamassee Warrior, but I managed to get away. Seems like the Yamassee have been aiding many of the runaways by giving them shelter and directions.

1. Why do you think he left his family behind in Georgia? **The family might have stayed behind to take care of the animals, small farm, young children. He left Georgia in order to make money.**
2. Why did the trapper trader become a slave catcher? **He could make more money than he made as a trapper trader.**
3. The slave catcher said his job was dangerous. What are some dangers that he might encounter? **Hostile Native Indians, disease, dangerous animals, hunger, storms, floods, snow, etc..**
4. What did the slave catcher do to get information from Spanish leaders about runaway slaves? **Traded information about the British.**

5. The Spanish were offering the runaway slaves freedom. Why did some Spanish leaders give information to the slave catchers on where to find the runaway slaves? **Maybe it was more important to the Spanish to have secret information about their enemies, the British. Maybe some of the Spanish leaders were corrupt .**

## **Captain Francisco Menendez - Student Script**

I am Captain of the Fort Mose militia. My name is Francisco Menendez and I'm a Mandingo from West Africa. Several years ago, I was captured and brought to the Carolinas on a slave ship. Once I got to the Carolinas, I made my escape.

After I escaped slavery, I fought with the Yamassee Indians against the British for three years. In return for my services the Yamassee chief agreed to help me get to St. Augustine.

On my journey, I was betrayed by another Indian named 'Mad Dog' and sold back into slavery, this time to the Spanish. Although I was still a slave, the Spanish made me an officer of their military. Unlike the British who saw me as their property, the Spanish saw slaves as people not property. With the Spanish, families were not separated, and slaves could buy their freedom, and sue their owners if they were treated unfairly.

In 1738, a Yamassee Chief helped me gain my freedom. He sent a letter to the King of Spain requesting that I be freed. The King of Spain granted me my freedom.

Later that year, I took command of the militia at Fort Mose. I am the only Captain of the Fort Mose militia. The people of Fort Mose and the Spanish in St. Augustine respect me because I am a good leader and fierce fighter.

1. What qualities does Francisco Menendez have that make other people respect him?
2. How do you think Francisco Menendez felt when he was betrayed and sold back into slavery?
3. Why do you think that the Spanish made Francisco Menendez an officer in their military even though he was a slave?
4. What are some differences between the English and Spanish views on slavery?
5. How did the Yamassee Chief help Francisco Menendez?

## Captain Francisco Menendez - Teacher Script

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1. What qualities does Francisco Menendez have that make other people respect him? **He is a good leader and fierce fighter.**
2. How do you think Francisco Menendez felt when he was betrayed and sold back into slavery?
3. Why do you think that the Spanish made Francisco Menendez an officer in their military even though he was a slave? **Because he had proved that he was a good leader and a good fighter.**
4. What are some differences between the English and Spanish views on slavery? **A Spanish slave could sue their owners, buy their freedom, buy another person's freedom, and families were not separated. A British slave was the property of the owner and had very few rights.**
5. How did the Yamassee Chief help Francisco Menendez? **He wrote a letter to the King of Spain requesting Francisco Menendez's freedom.**

## **Governor Don de Montiano - Student Script**

I am the Governor of St. Augustine. My name is Don de Montiano. I have many jobs, but the most important is protecting St. Augustine from our many enemies. I am especially worried about the British; they keep moving closer and closer to St. Augustine. They want our land.

These are dangerous times. War, disease, and hunger have plagued us in La Florida. Pirates raid our ships and take all of our supplies. Spanish troops don't want to come to La Florida; they know how dangerous it is.

We are in need. We don't have enough soldiers to defend the city. We don't have enough carpenters and masons to build the stone fort. We don't have enough cowboys to herd the cattle. We don't have enough sailors to defend our waters. We don't even have enough food or supplies. We are a city in great need.

We need people. People that can farm, build, boat and defend our city. My scouts have reported that the English treat the African slaves very badly. I was thinking that maybe we can lure the African men and women to come to St. Augustine. If they come here and farm, build and defend St. Augustine then I will give them back their freedom. This will anger the British, but we need people.

I need to talk to Charles II, King of Spain. The King of Spain made a law that gives freedom to slaves escaping from the British colonies. I think I will follow the law and give the runaway slaves their freedom.

1. What is the Governor's most important job? What do you think are some of his other jobs?
2. Why are the British moving closer and closer to St. Augustine?
3. Why doesn't St. Augustine have enough soldiers, sailors, carpenters, masons, cowboys, etc?
4. Do you think that the Governor's plan to lure the British-owned slaves to St. Augustine is a good plan? Why or why not?
5. Who made the law that granted freedom to slaves that escaped from the British colonies?

## Governor Don de Montiano - Teacher Script

I am the Governor of St. Augustine. My name is Don de Montiano. I have many jobs, but the most important is protecting St. Augustine from our many enemies. I am especially worried about the British; they keep moving closer and closer to St. Augustine. They want our land.

These are dangerous times. War, disease, and hunger have plagued us in La Florida. Pirates raid our ships and take all of our supplies. Spanish troops don't want to come to La Florida; they know how dangerous it is.

We are in need. We don't have enough soldiers to defend the city. We don't have enough carpenters and masons to build the stone fort. We don't have enough cowboys to herd the cattle. We don't have enough sailors to defend our waters. We don't even have enough food or supplies. We are a city in great need.

We need people. People that can farm, build, boat and defend our city. My scouts have reported that the English treat the African slaves very badly. I was thinking that maybe we can lure the African men and women to come to St. Augustine. If they come here and farm, build and defend St. Augustine then I will give them back their freedom. This will anger the British, but we need people.

I need to talk to Charles II, King of Spain. The King of Spain made a law that gives freedom to slaves escaping from the British colonies. I think I will follow the law and give the runaway slaves their freedom.

1. What is the Governor's most important job? **Protecting St. Augustine from its enemies.** What do you think are some of his other jobs? **Request supplies and soldiers from Spain, train the soldiers, build the fort to protect the city, build homes and shops, trade goods and services with native people and other Europeans, farm the land, etc.**
2. Why are the British moving closer and closer to St. Augustine? **They want more land.**
3. Why doesn't St. Augustine have enough soldiers, sailors, carpenters, masons, cowboys, etc? **Because St. Augustine is dangerous and many people do not want to leave Spain to come to the New World.**
4. Do you think that the Governor's plan to lure the British-owned slaves to St. Augustine is a good plan? Why or why not?

5. Who made the law that granted freedom to slaves that escaped from the British colonies? **Charles II, King of Spain.**

## Symbolism Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

Sunshine State Standards: SS.A.1.2, SS.A.4.2, SS.A.6.2

### Objective

The student will identify symbols used to depict shared values and beliefs and explain their meanings. Students will list specific symbols and create a symbol to communicate an idea.

### Background for the Teacher

The students should have some background with the story of Fort Mose. The previous lesson plan is a good way to introduce students to the history of Fort Mose.

From the late 1600's to the mid-1800's, African Americans, many of whom were run-away slaves came to St. Augustine seeking freedom within Spanish Florida. The African tribes residing at Fort Mose included Mandingo, Fara, Arara, Congo, Carabali Carabari, and Mina. These symbols are throughout African lore and heritage. 8 ½ x 11 enlargements of the symbols are included in the kit.



These two symbols represent the four moments of the sun – dawn, noon, sunset and midnight. Dawn is life's beginnings, Noon is flourishing, Sunset is change and Midnight is death.



Concentric circles symbolize growth and change as well as the Congo belief that time is circular.



Symbolic of separate worlds, each inhabited by a person, symbolized by the centered dot.

## **Materials**

Colored pencils or markers

Poster paper

Visual aids of the African symbols at Fort Mose (included in the kit)

Other examples of symbols

## **Lesson 1**

Ask the students the meaning of a symbol.

*What is a symbol?*

*What are some examples of American symbols?*

*What are some common symbols that many people and recognize?*

*Can symbols have more than one meaning?*

*Do symbols mean different things to different people?*

*Are colors symbolic?*

Explain to students that symbols can be an idea. For example, chains could symbolize enslavement and broken chains could represent escape from enslavement, or freedom. A picture of a piece of trash could symbolize littering. The color green could symbolize nature or money.

Explain the difference between a concrete and abstract symbols. A picture of a baseball could be a concrete symbol representing the game of baseball. An abstract symbol could be a picture of a lighthouse that represents help, or safety. Show the pictures of the African symbols and other symbols in culture. Explain to the students that the African symbols are examples of abstract symbols.

Divide the class into small groups. Ask the students to think of different themes represented in the Fort Mose history (slavery, freedom, allies, war, religion, family). Ask the groups to create a symbol from a theme of Fort Mose. Students could sketch the symbol or make a poster.

Point out some design ideas to help the students create the poster or sketch.

a limited amount of words, if any at all

a few large images, instead of many small images

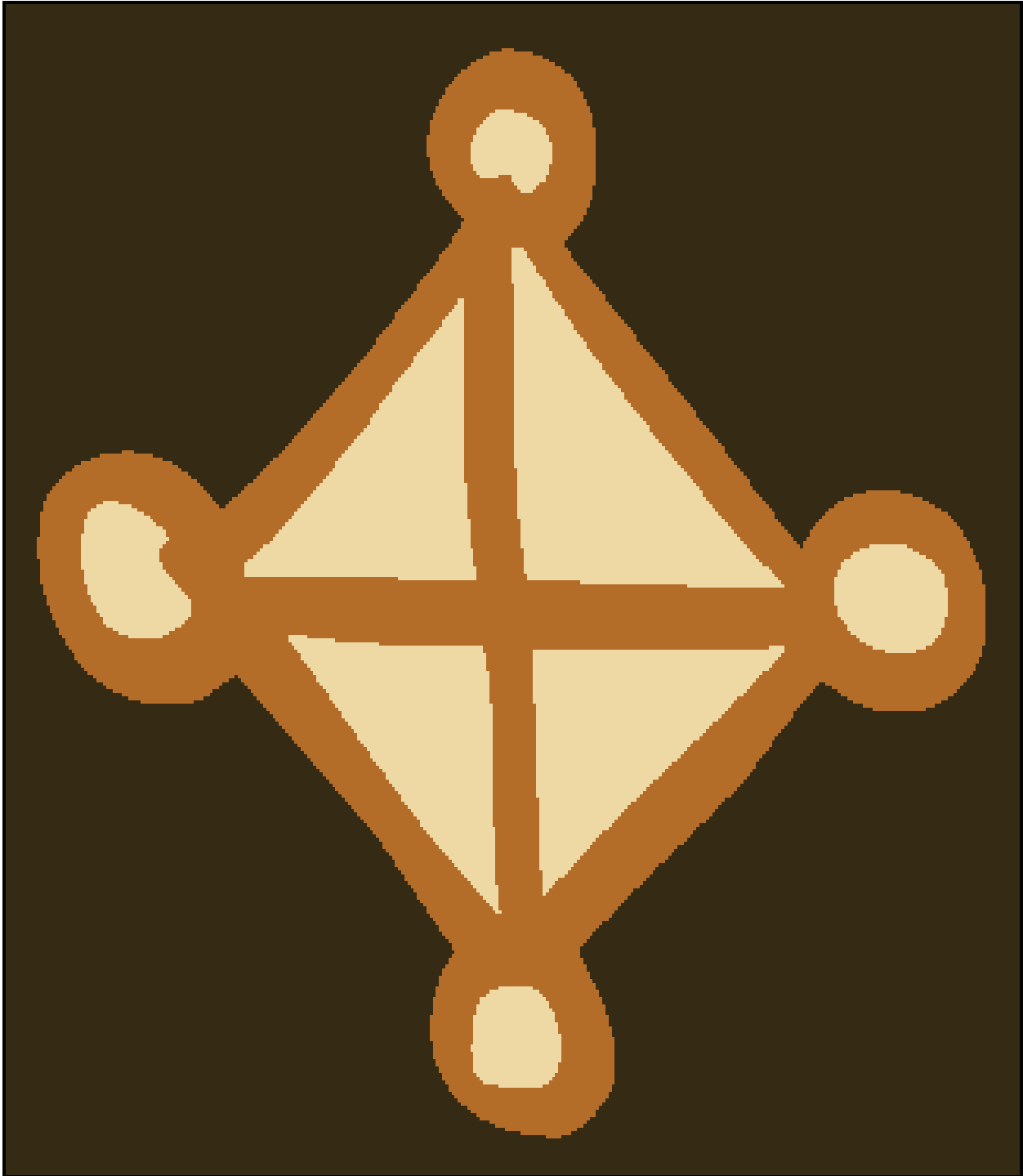
limit color used and use colors that go together

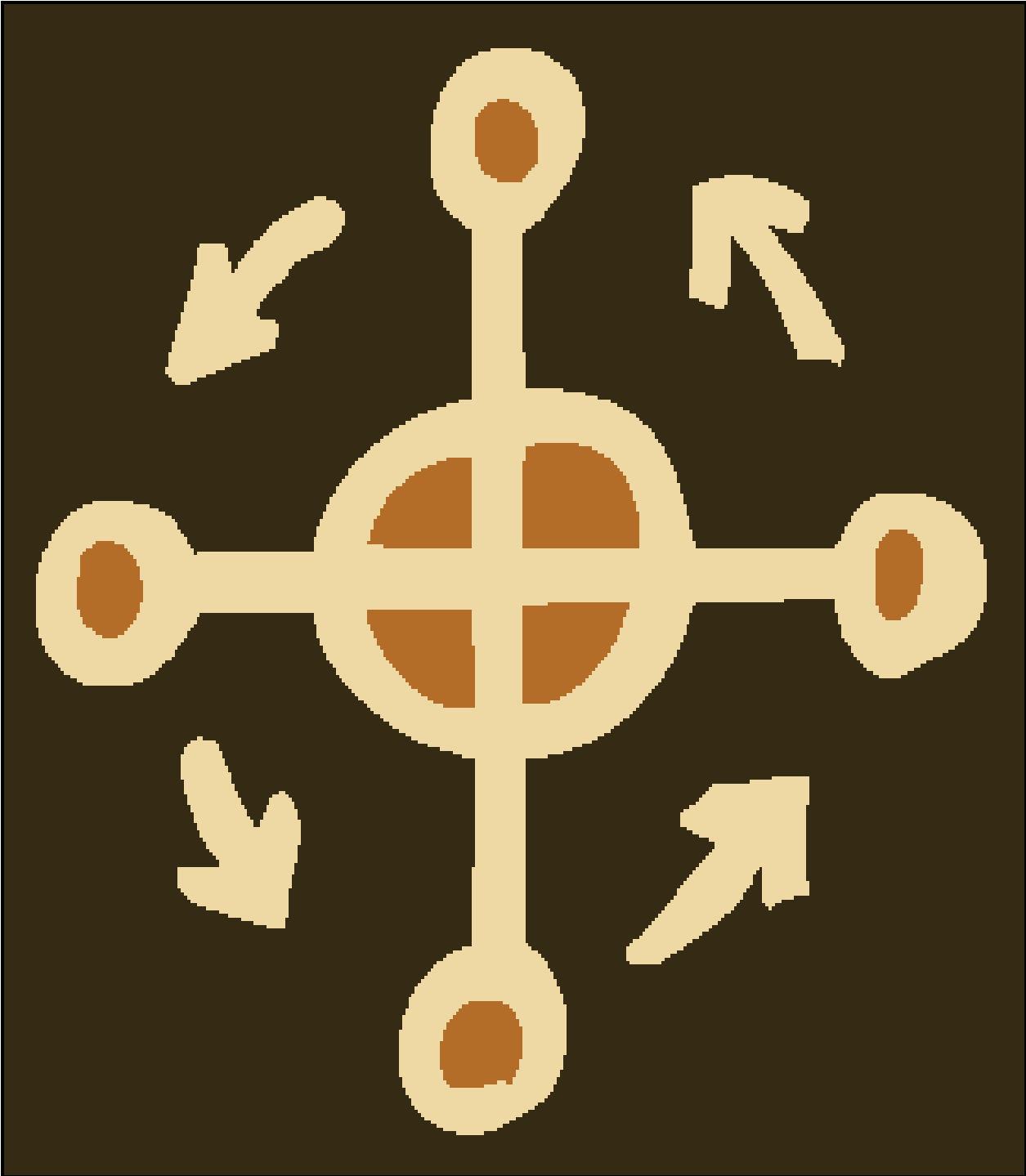
Students can also write an essay about why their group chose that theme and the symbol they created to represent that theme.

Have each group hold up their sketch or poster and see if the other students can guess what the image represents. Discuss the difficulty of designing a symbol and how it's easy to misinterpret symbols.

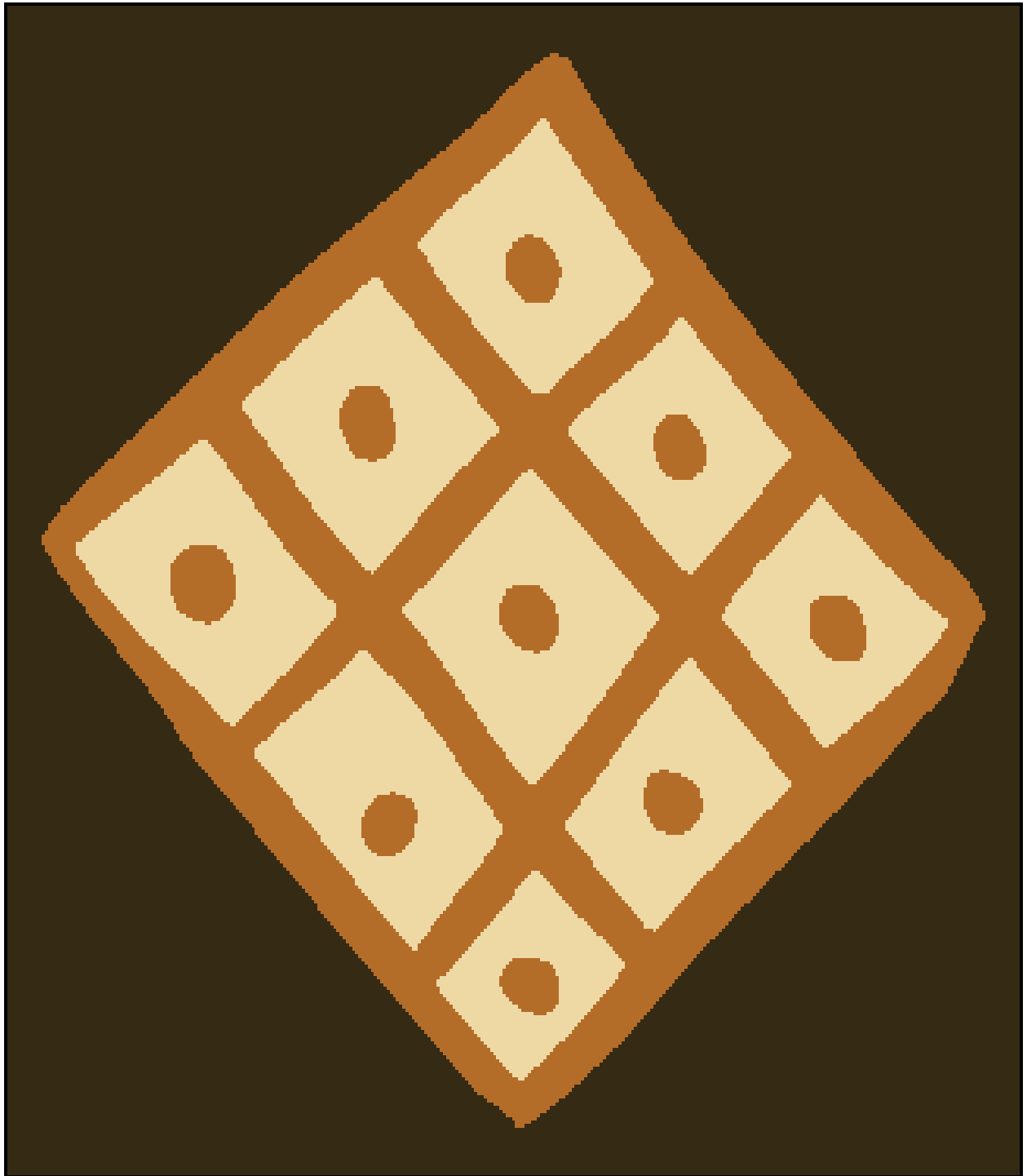
**Additional Lesson**

Divide the students into small groups to research another symbol in a culture. They should be able to understand the history of a symbol and appreciate its significance. Each group could research either online or in the library.









# Fort Mose Word Search

S Y S J M C B E L A T T M I B  
 H E Q O O O V O Y U W N O A A  
 T C T L C A S A G G A I D F T  
 W R O T L R M E Y U I A E R T  
 O N A S L M A A R S T S E I L  
 Y L K P A E W M F T I J R C E  
 F Z L S P A M A N I L O R A C  
 F M S I N E B E R N I R F N V  
 A E E U T R R O N E M F O R T  
 E D R N I S N W T T S B J V B  
 M A I T E R A H I S T O R I C  
 Q T I R E N I C E S N E F E D  
 X S O V O C D X S P A N I S H  
 H K O N B L U E A I C R A G V  
 K G N O N V F C Z P H E D I Y

Africa

Augustine

Battle

British

Carolina

Castillo

Colony

Defense

Florida

Fort

Freedom

Garcia

Governor

Historic

Marcos

Menendez

Militia

Mose

Runaway

Saint

Settlement

Slave

Spanish

Trapper

# Fort Mose Quiz

1. What is the name of the first free black settlement in what is now the United States?
2. When was the first Fort Mose built?
3. When was the second Fort Mose built?
4. In St. Augustine the runaway slaves obtained their freedom by becoming Catholic and joining the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. When did British troops attack the first Fort Mose?
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ Indians helped the runaway slaves get to St. Augustine.
7. Who issued the first law giving liberty to all?
8. Who was Captain of the black militia?
9. Many of the residents of Fort Mose escaped from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. All the people of St. Augustine, including the residents of Fort Mose, sailed to \_\_\_\_\_ in 1763.

# Further Reading

Richmond E. Brown . A Nation Divided: Free Blacks and Indians on the Florida Frontier, in Coastal Encounters: Confrontations, Accommodations, and Transformations in the Eighteenth-Century Gulf South. 2007

Kathleen Deagan. Fort Mose, Colonial America's Black Fortress of Freedom. 1995

Sharon Draper. Copper Sun. 2006

Cristobal Figuero Y Del Campo. Franciscan Missions in Florida. 2000

The Mariner's Museum with the Smithsonian. Captive Passage. 2002

Jane Landers. Black Society in Spanish Florida. 1999

Jerald T. Milanich. Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe. 1995

Jerald T. Milanich. Florida's Indian from Ancient Times to the Present. 1998

Richard Price. Maroon Societies. 1979

Larry Eugene Rivers. Slavery in Florida. 2000

Answers to Fort Mose Quiz: 1. Fort Mose or Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose 2. 1738  
3. 1752 4. militia or military 5. 1740 6. Yamasee 7. Charles II 8. Francisco Menendez  
9. South Carolina, Georgia 10. Cuba