# LESSON

<table>
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<th>Grade Level: 6-8</th>
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<tr>
<td>Subject: History and Social Studies</td>
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<td>Time needed: 1 to 2 class periods</td>
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## MATERIALS

- The North Star Video is highly recommended, but not required. This lesson uses the North Star segment about Emily Grey titled “On the Side of Freedom”
- Copies of handouts and primary sources

## NORTH STAR CLASSROOM MATERIALS

### EMILY GREY: ON THE SIDE OF FREEDOM

## OVERVIEW

This lesson asks students to uncover evidence of St. Anthony’s diversity when Emily Grey lived there. Students analyze Emily’s reminiscences to find how different groups supported each other and how Emily’s status as a black woman affected her experience. In the final project, students write a letter from the perspective of Emily, summarizing what they have learned.

## BACKGROUND

From 1849 to 1858, territorial Minnesota was a place on the edge. It was on the geographic edge of the expanding western frontier, on the political edge of becoming a state, on the economic edge of developing industrial commerce, and on the historical edge of the coming Civil War.

When Emily Goodridge Grey arrived in St. Anthony in 1857, she joined a small but growing community of African Americans. Territorial Minnesota was booming with a mix of new immigrants. In 1851, the native Dakota had signed their last major treaty, ceding their lands and shifting to reservations. In the north, the Ojibwe were in the midst of a similar pattern. In the cities, the mixed-blood descendants of the Fur Trade were soon joined by immigrants from New England and the South. In a time when the Red River carts of Métis still filled the streets of St. Anthony and St. Paul, and the first waves of foreign immigrants from Europe were beginning to arrive, Emily and the African American community were all a part of developing the new town’s identity.

While Emily and her husband, Ralph Grey, certainly blended in with the multi-ethnic Minnesota, they must have stood out as community leaders. Like 94 percent of Minnesota’s black community at the time, Emily was literate. Her father was a freed slave who had been involved in the Underground Railroad. Her father’s sense of justice and activism clearly influenced Emily, as her later involvement in the Eliza Winston case shows.

For more information about events during this time period, see the North Star website’s timeline at [http://www.tpt.org/northstar/Timeline.html](http://www.tpt.org/northstar/Timeline.html)

For suggested resources on Emil Goodridge Grey and this era, see the North Star website’s Resources section at [http://www.tpt.org/northstar/Resources.html](http://www.tpt.org/northstar/Resources.html)

For background on Emily Goodridge Grey, visit the Emily Grey section of the North Star website at [http://www.tpt.org/northstar/MakingHome.html?quick_link=emily_grey](http://www.tpt.org/northstar/MakingHome.html?quick_link=emily_grey)
OBJECTIVES

• To identify evidence of the diverse ethnic and racial groups in early St. Anthony.
• To infer the ways that settlers of different ethnic and racial backgrounds shared cultural knowledge and skills.
• To uncover evidence of how Emily's role as a black woman and abolitionist affected her experiences in early St. Anthony.

A NOTE ON DIVERSITY

Emily Grey’s reminiscences focus largely on her struggles to create a home in Minnesota and develop connections to her community. Emily’s references to her own race and the black community in St. Anthony are enveloped in those broader concerns. Students may be surprised at the small number of references to her race or the black community, but this may be a good opportunity to discuss how personal and public perception of race is strongly connected to time, place, and economics (beyond the obvious influence of education).

CONTENT CONNECTIONS

This lesson fits well within the teaching of Minnesota’s early immigration and pioneer era, a discussion of changing gender and race roles, and the concepts of activism. Emily’s story makes a good connection to Harriet Tubman and other Underground Railroad activists.

CONNECTIONS TO MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS IN HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Minnesota History Grades 4-8; II. Minnesota History, C. Early Settlement and Statehood 1810-1860, “The student will know and understand the factors that led to rapid settlement of Minnesota in the 19th Century and the changes the new Minnesotans brought with them,”; II. Minnesota History, D. Civil War and Dakota War 1860-1864, “The student will know and understand Minnesota's role in the Civil War and the impact of the Dakota War of 1862,”; Historical Skills grades 4-8, IV Historical Skills, B. Historical Resources, “The student will begin to use historical resources,”; C. Historical Inquiry, “The student will analyze historical evidence and draw conclusions,” C. Historical Inquiry, “The student will present and explain the findings of a research project.”
INTRODUCTION
Connecting to Students’ Experiences
Count the students into threes, and ask the students who counted as “ones” to individually recall a time that they were a newcomer and brainstorm a list describing the experience or emotions they had. Ask the students who counted as “twos” to brainstorm a list of likely experiences or emotions that migrants, or people moving within a country, might have. Ask the students who counted as “threes” to brainstorm a list of likely experiences or emotions that immigrants, or people moving in from a different country, might have. Next, create small groups that include a “one”, “two”, and “three” student. Ask the students to share their lists and discuss what similarities exist between these groups. As a class, discuss how people experiencing new things have certain common reactions – fear, hope, a desire to return to the old place, a need to make friends. As students learn about Emily Goodridge Grey’s experiences, ask them to keep these ideas in mind.

Connecting to Minnesota History
Ask students to brainstorm what groups of people they think were living in Minnesota Territory from 1849 to 1858. What were the main characteristics of these groups? Where did they live and what did they do? Discuss with students how the social expectations for men and women in Territorial Minnesota were different then they are today. Outline a chart for “White City Man, White City Woman, Black City Man, and Black City Woman.” Ask students to predict what were the expected roles or jobs for each of these groups. How might these roles have changed if there were no or few women present? How might these roles have changed if this chart were developed for a different place, like rural Minnesota or the South during slavery? How might it have changed if developed for a different time, like the 1950s?

PROCEDURE
This lesson works well either before or after showing the film segment. Divide the class into three groups, and give each group one of the primary sources. Ask the students to use their student worksheets to help guide their analysis (you may want to give them fresh copies of the worksheet for each source, or have them record their findings in a notebook). As they finish analyzing each source, move the source around so that every group gets a chance to analyze each source. As you move about the room, use the following questions to help guide each group’s analysis, or after the groups are done, use the questions below to guide a class discussion of their findings.
PRIMARY SOURCE 1 ANALYSIS:
EMILY GOODRIDGE GREY'S REMINISCENCE
Introduce Emily's reminiscence and explain that Emily wrote this in 1893, forty-five years after her arrival in St. Anthony. She presented this reminiscence at the “Query Club,” about which historians know little. It was likely a social or educational club, and it is not known if the membership was white, black, or integrated. Note: this reminiscence is fairly long, and may require extra time to analyze in the classroom. Explain that this reminiscence has been edited from the original. Emily’s reminiscence makes only a small reference to her involvement in the Eliza Winston case, which is why it is not included in this selection. Read through Emily’s reminiscence and discuss the following questions:

- What is this document? When was it created? Who created it? Why was it created? What is it about?
- What did Emily do to try and fit in with her neighbors? Who did Emily spend time with? What sorts of things did people do together?
- What evidence is there of a broad mixing of ethnic groups in St. Anthony at this time?
- What is the tone of Emily’s reminiscence? Are there any reasons to question what she remembers?
- What kind of a woman do you think Emily was? What sorts of things was she concerned about? What sorts of things did she enjoy doing?
- How is Emily’s status as a black woman reflected in these reminiscences?
- How did Emily feel about abolition and slavery? How can you tell?
- How does this reminiscence compare to what we learn about Emily in the documentary film?

PRIMARY SOURCE 2 ANALYSIS:
PHOTO OF RED RIVER CARTS
This photo was taken along the main street in St. Anthony along the river. This was near Ralph Grey’s barbershop. Remind students that territorial St. Anthony was on the edge of economic transformation—the end of the fur trade era and the beginning of the milling and industrial era. If students have already studied George Bonga, they will be aware that the fur trade economy was run by mixed-blood Indian, white, and black employees. If they are not familiar with fur trade history, you may want to help them realize that the men on the carts are likely of a different class and race than the men on the sidewalk. Ask them to analyze this photo and discuss:

- When was this photograph taken? Who took it? Why might he have taken it? What does it show?
- What sorts of people do you see in this photograph? What are their occupations? What can you tell about their gender, race, or ethnicity?
- What evidence do you see of businesses in this photo? How do these businesses compare to the businesses that are implied in Emily Grey’s reminiscence and the documentary?
- What kinds of place does St. Anthony look like in this photo?
PRIMARY SOURCE 3 ANALYSIS:
CENSUS RECORDS
Review the purpose of a census with students. Explain that the 1850 Territory census covered what is now the state of Minnesota, plus the Eastern half of North and South Dakota up to the Missouri River. The 1860 State census covers what is now the state of Minnesota. In both census, thousands of Dakota and Ojibwe were not counted. Note that census takers were inconsistent in the information that they documented, so the numbers and racial categorization are not entirely reliable. In addition, not everyone interviewed by the census takers gave complete or accurate information to them. Discuss with your students:

• What are these documents? When were they created? What do they show us? How are the categories of people different? What does this tell us about the census officials?
• What groups of people are not counted in this census?
• How did the population of Minnesota change between 1850 and 1860?
• Where did most blacks come from in 1850 and 1860?
• Which group had the largest increase from 1850 to 1860?
• What does this information show about Minnesota’s diversity in the 1850s and 1860s?

FINAL ACTIVITY AND EVALUATION
Ask students to consider everything they have learned about Emily through the primary source and documentary film. Ask them to write a letter from Emily Goodridge Grey back to her parents our east. In their letters, they should describe what life was like for Emily in St. Anthony, as well as what the town of St. Anthony was like. A successful letter will:

• Describe what types of people lived in St. Anthony at the time. Describe their races, ethnicities, genders, and occupations.
• Describe what Emily Goodridge Grey did to make her home in St. Anthony.
• Describe the groups or people with whom Emily Goodridge Grey associated.
• Be creative, clear, and carefully written.
PRIMARY SOURCE 1:
EMILY GOODRIDGE GREY REMINISCENCE

Emily Goodridge Grey, 1831-1916
Presented at the Query Club on July 19, 1893

In the course of events, we all became established in our new homes. The lack of women’s companionship began to be felt. The want was not long endured. First one neighbor called and then another, until we became acquainted and our visiting relations were easy and smooth. Fashionable and formal visits were not much in vogue, but the good, old-time neighborly calls... were more generally indulged in. A grateful remembrance of the kind deeds done for us by our new-made friends placed us in a lifelong indebtedness.... [Friends gave me] suggestions in domestic economy.... New methods of breadmaking and vegetable cooking were learned. I was taught the art of baking that toothsome New England dish of “pork and beans” in the same way they were cooked in the lumber camps. The dish seemed to occupy the relative degree of general enjoyment of a boiled dinner dish, composed of sauerkraut, part of the pickled backbone of a pig, and Irish potatoes. There was always some woman friend who would gladly be to me a guiding star to lead me out of the many little difficulties met with in all households....

One afternoon I received a visit from a gentleman and lady who introduced themselves as the Reverend C.C. Seccombe and wife and received from them a whole-souled, Christianlike invitation to attend services at the Congregational Church of which he was pastor. ...Mr. Secoombe’s Christianity was of such enlightenment as permitted him to be of a pronounced antislavery type. His mouth was not muzzled in the pulpit when occasion required he should speak against the national crime of American slavery. There were many who, in their enmity, denounced this procedure [as] “preaching politics” in the pulpit. This was a shocking nightmare to many in those days, but [people] never aroused except when the sinfulness of slavery was exposed, its patrons characterized as moral lepers, or their livelihood in any way placed in jeopardy, by awakening the conscience of the nation...

Very soon after my arrival, I became acquainted with all the persons of color living in St. Anthony.... Of the little group of colored women living on either side of the Falls of St. Anthony in the spring on 1857, I have been spared to live more consecutive years and am the only survivor... except [for] ... Mrs. Mary Smallwood Grey, now residing in York, Pennsylvania....

When I meet so many faces of colored men, women, and children in my travels throughout the city, it seems so marvelous, so like a dream, and the surprise is increased from the fact that I have learned we are a population of colored American citizens of between 2,500 and 3,000.
PRIMARY SOURCE 2:
RED RIVER CARTS IN ST. ANTHONY PHOTOGRAPH

View of St. Anthony Falls from Main Street of the town of St. Anthony
Daguerreotype, ca. 1854
**PRIMARY SOURCE 3:**
**CENSUS RECORDS 1850 AND 1860**

**U.S. Census, 1850**

1850 Non-Indian Population of Minnesota Territory

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>White Male*</th>
<th>White Female*</th>
<th>Free Colored Male</th>
<th>Free Colored Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. (excluding Minnesota)</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,511</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota Territory</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,586</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,695</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,343</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,077</strong></td>
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*“White” includes all people marked as half breed by the census takers

**U.S. Census, 1860**

1860 Non-Indian Population of Minnesota State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>White Male</th>
<th>White Female</th>
<th>Black Male</th>
<th>Mulatto Male</th>
<th>Black Female</th>
<th>Mulatto Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. (Including Minnesota)</td>
<td>60,176</td>
<td>52,872</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>113,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>32,782</td>
<td>25,934</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
<td>58,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>92,958</strong></td>
<td><strong>88,806</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
<td><strong>172,023</strong></td>
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EMILY GREY:
MAKING A HOME IN
TERRITORIAL ST. ANTHONY
Student Worksheet

STEP 1: ANALYZE THE SOURCES

1. What is the source? Describe what the source is, who created it, when it was created, and where it was created.

2. What does this source tell you about people in St. Anthony and Minnesota? What kinds of people does the source mention or show? What does it tell you about their gender, race, ethnicity, jobs, and class? How did these different groups interact?

3. From what this source tells you about St. Anthony and Minnesota, how would Emily Goodridge Grey fit in with other residents? Would Emily’s status as a black female seamstress have made her stand out from others or blend in with them? Considering her background and values, which groups would she have associated with more? Which groups would she have associated with less?

STEP 2: WRITE A LETTER FROM EMILY TO HER PARENTS

Imagine that you are Emily Goodridge Grey writing to your parents out east. Consider everything you have learned about Emily through the primary source and documentary film. In your letter, describe what life was like in St. Anthony, as well as what the town of St. Anthony was like. A successful letter will:

- Describe what types of people lived in St. Anthony at the time, including their races, ethnicities, genders, and occupations
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