

# Museum in a Box MINI LESSONS



BY: SYNATRA SMITH, PH.D.

## War of 1812: The Life and Times of Charles Ball

1. About Charles Ball: Charles Ball was an African American enslaved in Calvert County, Maryland who served as a naval officer during the War of 1812. He is best known for his account as a fugitive slave in his memoir *Slavery in the United States: A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Charles Ball*, first published in 1837. Born into slavery in Calvert County, Maryland, Charles Ball was separated from his family at the early age of four years old.
2. Read Aloud: "When she [mother] saw me leaving her for the first time, [she] ran after me, took me down from the horse, clasped me in her arms, and wept loudly and bitterly over me...young as I was, the horrors of that day sank deeply into my heart." -Charles Ball
3. Discussion Question:
  - a. Describe how you would feel if your parents were sold away.
4. Read Aloud: During adulthood, Charles Ball was sold to southern plantations. he walked from Calvert County, Maryland to Savannah, Georgia, 600 miles. He was attached to two other enslaved Africans. They had steel chains around their necks, and no shoes. They did not receive much sleep on this journey.
5. Discussion Questions:
  - a. Can you imagine walking in chains back and forth to the White House for three months with two or three hours of sleep each day? Describe.
  - b. What would you do to return to your family?
6. Activity: Write your escape plan.
7. About Charles Ball: The War of 1812 was a war declared by the US against the British and officially ended in 1815. As depicted in his memoir, Charles Ball, like thousands of African Americans, escaped the atrocities of slavery and served both British and US armed forces during the War of 1812.
8. Discussion Question:
  - a. Whose side would you choose? Why?

For more information please contact:

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## Other Museum in a Box sessions available:

### **Coming Home**

Objective: Explore and celebrate the history of African Americans who served in World War II

### **A Space of Their Own: A Celebration of Prince George's Historic Black Townships - North Brentwood, Eagle Harbor, Fairmount Heights, and Glenarden**

Objective: Learn about Romare Bearden and African American community life in the turn of the century. Create a history of one of Prince George's County's historic black townships: North Brentwood, Eagle Harbor, Fairmount Heights, and Glenarden.

### **A Struggle for Dignity**

Objective: Learn the history of emancipation and enslavement in Prince George's County.

### **Paper Dolls: Poetic Responses to the Artwork of Ulysses S. Marshall**

Objective: Learn about the artwork of Ulysses S. Marshall and discover the connection between visual art and written poetry.

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