



## **Flight to Freedom Learning Resource**

### **KWL Chart**

**Fort Mose Historical Society:**  
**African American Community of Freedom**  
[connect@FortMose.org](mailto:connect@FortMose.org)  
<https://fortmose.org/>

**Fort Mose Historic State Park**  
<https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fort-mose-historic-state-park>

**Fort Mose: Selected Awards & Honors**  
U.S. National Historic Landmark  
Site of Memory, UNESCO Slave Route Project  
Site: National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom  
Site: Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor



## **Fort Mose Historical Society: African American Community of Freedom**

### **Flight to Freedom Learning Resource: KWL Chart**

**Note:** This educational resource is designed to accompany the popular **Flight to Freedom Encounter** that takes place annually at Fort Mose Historic State Park. Flight to Freedom re-creates the perilous journey of Freedom Seekers as they escape from enslavement on British plantations and flee southward, for a free life in Spanish Florida.

Fort Mose Historical Society offers use of these materials free-of-charge. The materials may be downloaded and reproduced for educational use. Editing is prohibited.

For more information on the **Flight to Freedom Encounter**, or to register youth groups for the unique experience, please visit [FortMose.org](http://FortMose.org). For information or feedback on these educational resources, please contact [Connect@FortMose.org](mailto:Connect@FortMose.org).

Thank you for sharing the Fort Mose history!

### **FL Learning Standards**

- **SS.4.A.3.5** Identify the significance of Fort Mose as the first free African community in the United States.
- **S5.4.A.3.In.e** Identify that African slaves escaped to Fort Mose to live in freedom
- **S5.4.A.3.Su.e:** Recognize that African slaves went to Fort Mose to be free.
- **S5.4.A.3.Pa.e:** Recognize an aspect of freedom.
- **SS.4.A.3.3** Identify the significance of St. Augustine as the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States.
- **SS.8.A.2.7** Describe the contributions of key groups (Africans, Native Americans, women, and children) to the society and culture of colonial America.

## The Fort Mose Story

- ♦ **First free legally sanctioned Black community in what became the United States of America**
- ♦ **Destination of the original Underground Railroad, running south**

Welcome to Fort Mose Historic State Park, a National Historic Landmark, and to the unique Flight to Freedom encounter!

As you travel the Freedom Trail with your students, you will be transported to a time nearly three hundred years ago when courageous freedom seekers risked everything to live at Fort Mose, the first legally sanctioned free Black community in what is now the United States.

Africans who were taken from their homes sought to reclaim their freedom. Those born into enslavement sought relief from the hereditary system of bondage. When word spread that free life might be possible in Spanish Florida, the Flight to Freedom began.

Enslaved men, women and children within the British colonies of the Carolinas and Georgia began the perilous journey southward. They were aided by indigenous Yamassee people along the way.

Upon safe arrival in St. Augustine, the freedom seekers were asked to pledge allegiance to the Spanish crown and accept the Catholic religion. Able-bodied men were required to complete a term of service in the militia.

The Spanish colonial government established *Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose*, or Fort Mose, in 1738. Located on St. Augustine's northern border, Fort Mose became the first legally sanctioned free Black community in what was to become the United States. It was an important military outpost where free Fort Mose militia defended all of St. Augustine from attack. The free women of Fort Mose provided vital community support.

Today, Fort Mose is preserved as a Florida State Park, open 365 days per year for visitation by the public. It's designated a National Historic Landmark and a Site of Memory of the UNESCO Slave Route Project. Fort Mose is also honored as a site on the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and as southernmost site on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor.

At its core, the Fort Mose story is one of tremendous human agency, perseverance, ingenuity, courage and accomplishment. As such, it stands in sharp contrast to the standard narrative of subjugation and oppression. Fort Mose citizens made significant contributions to colonial Spanish society. These freedom seekers had claimed their liberty, and secured the blessing of freedom for their offspring.

This is not to say Mose's founders and their offspring did not suffer. They did, enduring hardships, illness, hunger and constant danger. Many fought and died protecting Saint

Augustine. These facts highlight the sacrifices people are willing to make to be free and can lead to rich and meaningful conversations with students.

Ultimately, the story of Fort Mose is one of hope, endurance, and triumph. Therefore, Fort Mose's story appeals to all who yearn for a broader, more inclusive and accurate depiction of colonial history that led to our country's founding.

We thank you for introducing your students to Fort Mose and the story of its courageous citizens, as defined in Florida Social Studies Standards.

For a more complete history of Fort Mose, please visit the Fort Mose Historical Society's website, and please forward questions to: [Connect@FortMose.org](mailto:Connect@FortMose.org).

Fort Mose Historical Society: African American Community of Freedom

## **Introduction: Flight to Freedom KWL Chart**

### **What is a KWL Chart?**

K-W-L charts are graphic aids that help students organize information before, during, and after a unit or a lesson. The acronym 'KWL' stands for the three standard sections of the chart. These are:

- What do you KNOW about the topic?
- What do you WANT TO KNOW about the topic?
- What did you LEARN?

The KWL Chart is an active reading strategy, designed by Donna Ogle in 1986. The chart can be used to engage students in a new topic, activate prior knowledge, share unit objectives and monitor students' learning.

The KWL chart can be used both before, during and after students have engaged with a structured learning experience.

**Before:** Students begin thinking about what they already know about a topic, before formal teaching begins. Activating prior knowledge is important because it helps students form connections with new information that they will be encountering.

**During:** Students are actively engaged in seeking new knowledge.

**After:** The KWL Chart can be used as a useful assessment tool, both for teachers and students.

## Materials

- Printed copies of the KWL Chart found in the Resources section, at the end of this document.) (Suggestions for the visually impaired: 20-24 point font and braille copies.)
- Suggested images: Fort Mose artifacts. <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/100years/fort-mose-artifacts/>

## Vocabulary

**Enslaved** - A person forced into the control of another, in violation of their human rights

**Fort Mose (Moh-say')** – First legally sanctioned free African community in what became the United States

**Freedom** - Not being imprisoned or enslaved

**Freedom seeker** - An enslaved person who seeks a life of freedom

**Perilous** - Dangerous

**Yamasse (ya mah' see)** - Native peoples who lived in the coastal region of present-day northern Georgia, and later in northeastern Florida

**Underground Railroad** - A secret network and routes, co-created by people of various backgrounds, and used by enslaved people to escape to freedom

## Instruction: Flight to Freedom KWL Chart©

## Lesson Objectives

- To pre-assess and establish students' background knowledge pertaining to the historical significance of Fort Mose and the historic Flight to Freedom, as defined in FL Learning Standards.
- To encourage students to seek out and engage in new learning experiences, while at Fort Mose.
- To assess students' knowledge following a visit to Fort Mose and participation in the Flight to Freedom Encounter.

## Preliminary Activities

1. Share the story of Fort Mose with students (see above).
2. Share the props and images listed above with students. Describe the use of these items by Freedom Seekers, Spanish soldiers and citizens, and Native peoples.

**Directions**

Before visiting Fort Mose for the Flight to Freedom event, encourage students to fill out the “What I Know” and “What I Want to Know” sections of the K-W-L chart below.

After visiting Fort Mose and the Flight to Freedom event, ask students to complete the “What I Learned” section.

**Next Steps**

Visit Fort Mose Historic State Park in St. Augustine, FL. Explore the on-site museum, where you will learn much more about the Fort Mose community.

Soon, you will also be able to experience the Flight to Freedom Encounter 365 days per year, through the use of interpretive panels. For more information visit: <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/fort-mose-historic-state-park>.

Visit the Castillo des San Marcos National Monument in downtown St. Augustine to learn more of the city’s colonial history. For more information visit: <https://www.nps.gov/casa/index.htm>.

**Resources**

- Flight to Freedom KWL Chart (below)

## Flight to Freedom KWL Chart

### Flight to Freedom, 1738

**Name:**

**Date:**

[illegible]