# Teacher Resource Set

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Clara Brown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed by</td>
<td>Elizabeth Duncan and Rae Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>3–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Question</td>
<td>In what ways did Clara Brown overcome personal challenges and make a difference to the lives of people in Colorado, especially other freed slaves?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Contextual Paragraph
Clara Brown was likely the first African American woman to come to Colorado. Born a slave in Virginia, Brown was freed in Kentucky and headed west during the Colorado Gold Rush of 1859. Overcoming a very difficult personal history, Brown acquired mining properties in Gilpin County and used her wealth to become a philanthropist who helped former slaves rebuild their lives in Colorado.

## Resource Set

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plaque at St. James Methodist Church</th>
<th>Aunt Clara Brown, undated photo</th>
<th>Slaves on the Auction Block</th>
<th>Aunt Clara Brown Dies in Denver</th>
<th>Trouble Marked the Life of Clara Brown</th>
<th>Central City after the Fire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A plaque on St. James Methodist Church in Central City (the oldest Methodist church in Colorado) honors Clara Brown.</td>
<td>Aunt Clara Brown settled in Denver or Auraria Cherry Creek in 1859.</td>
<td>This 1870s engraving depicts an enslaved woman and young girl being auctioned as property.</td>
<td>A brief article in the Gunnison-Review Press, 10/27/1885, notes the passing of Clara Brown</td>
<td>Column on “Remarkable Coloradans” in the Golden Transcript, 8/11/1975.</td>
<td>Clara owned seven different houses in Central City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clara’s home was used for the first church services. She was an active member and donated to churches throughout</td>
<td>This is the only known photograph of Clara Brown.</td>
<td>Clara Brown was born into slavery. Later, her husband and children were sold away from her. When she gained her freedom as an</td>
<td>Clara Brown was known and appreciated throughout Colorado.</td>
<td>The author made note of how Clara Brown overcame adversity. The column also includes an 1880 sketch of Clara</td>
<td>In 1873, Clara’s home and several of her other properties went up in flames in a huge fire in Central City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her life. Her Christian beliefs were the basis of her charitable work.</td>
<td>adult, she immigrated to Colorado.</td>
<td>Brown.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Colorado Black Hall of Fame**

“Aunt” Clara Brown
1800-1882
Pres. Sam J. Ferguson

**https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm**

**https://digital.denverlibrary.org/digital/collection/p**

**https://www.history.com/topics/black-**

**https://www.coloradohistoricalnewspapers.org/?a=**

**https://www.coloradohistoricalnewspapers.org/?a=**

**https://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/digital-**
## Wagon Train

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wagon Train</th>
<th>Central City Before the Fire</th>
<th>Gold Mining in Central City</th>
<th>Exodusters in Kansas</th>
<th>Clara Brown Gravestone</th>
<th>Stained Glass window in the Colorado Capitol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wagon trains were the means of getting to the gold country. This picture is of a wagon train going to Utah, but Clara did not go that far.</td>
<td>Clara worked as a laundress and owned property in a thriving Central City during the gold rush.</td>
<td>Many people went west to find gold.</td>
<td>View of Washington Street in Nicodemus, Kansas in 1885.</td>
<td>Clara Brown is buried in Riverside cemetery in Denver.</td>
<td>Clara Brown was selected to be honored with a stained glass window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks were forbidden to buy a ticket on the wagon train, but Clara arranged to be hired as a cook to secure her passage.</td>
<td>Clara’s investments in Central City were lost during a fire in 1873.</td>
<td>Clara left the South and headed west to find work doing laundry for the miners and to try to find her daughter.</td>
<td>Exodusters were former slaves who migrated to the west after the Civil War in search of a better life. Clara helped them move to Colorado where there were better opportunities.</td>
<td>The gravestone notes that Clara was the first woman member of the Colorado Society of Pioneers.</td>
<td>In 1976, Clara’s contributions to Colorado were recognized with a stained glass window in the old Supreme Court Chamber.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Laundry Sign

Laundries were profitable businesses in mining towns.
Clara Brown made a fortune from her laundry business in Central City. She charged 50 cents for each item she washed.

https://in.pinterest.com/pin/52473979408746476
Teacher Resource Set

Curriculum Standards

**CO State History Grade Level Expectation 1:** People in the past influenced the development and interaction of different communities and regions. (Third Grade) Students can:

- a) Give examples of people, events, and developments that brought important changes to a community or region.
- b) Recognize how members of a community rely on each other and interact to influence the development of their communities.
- c) Give examples of people, events, and developments that brought important changes to a community or region.
- d) Describe the history, interaction, and contribution of the various peoples and cultures that have lived in or migrated to a community or region and how that migration has influenced change and development.

**CO State History Grade Level Expectation 2:** The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas, and themes in Colorado history and their relationship to key events in the United States within the same historical period. (Fourth Grade) Students can:

- a. explain the relationship between major events in Colorado history and events in United States history during the same era.

**CO State History Grade Level Expectation 1:** Analyze historical sources from multiple points of view to develop an understanding of historical context. (Fifth Grade) Students can:

- a. recognize how historical context can affect the perspective of historical sources.
- b. make observations and draw conclusions from a variety of sources when studying American history.

Content and Thinking Objectives

The students will be able to:

- list the contributions of Clara Brown to the well-being of Black newcomers to Colorado.
- explain how Clara Brown’s life reflected the historical events of the times, such as slavery, westward expansion, discovery of gold, etc.
- examine how Clara Brown demonstrated perseverance and resilience in successfully facing the many challenges in her life.
- evaluate how Clara, as one person, brought important changes to Colorado.
Teacher Resource Set

Inquiry Questions, Activities and Strategies

Inquiry Questions: (You may also wish to support students in reading the full article as it provides considerably more detail.)

- What contributions did Clara make to improve the lives of Black people wherever she lived?
- How did historical events of the times such as slavery, westward expansion, and the discovery of gold, etc influence Clara’s life?
- What challenges did Clara face, beginning with her childhood? How did she respond to those challenges?
- How can one person’s sense of purpose and generosity impact those around her?

Activities and Strategies:

- Introductory activity or hook: This link to a short clip about Clara Brown from PBS’s Colorado Experience provides a nice overview of many interesting points referenced in the article: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=419fTxCShpg


- Using the primary sources provided, show how Clara’s life reflected the historical events taking place throughout the country, such as slavery, etc.

- Make a list of challenges Clara faced throughout her life. Discuss how she overcame these challenges and contributed in positive ways to the lives of others and her community.

Assessment Strategies

Depending upon how one uses the resources and which standards are chosen, assessment can take many forms. For example:

CO State History Grade Level Expectation 2: The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas, and themes in Colorado history and their relationship to key events in the United States within the same historical period. (Fourth Grade)

Explain the relationship between major events in Colorado history and events in United States history during the same era.
Create a double timeline with events in Clara Brown’s life (1803 to 1885) and the events in the history of the United States during those years. Include illustrations (hand-drawn or photo-copied).

or

**CO State History Grade Level Expectation 1:** Analyze historical sources from multiple points of view to develop an understanding of historical context. (Fifth Grade) Students can:

- Recognize how historical context can affect the perspective of historical sources.
- Make observations and draw conclusions from a variety of sources when studying American history.

Write a creative story, using information from multiple primary and secondary sources, that shows how Clara Brown overcame a particular challenge in her life. You may write the story from Clara’s point of view or as a narrator.

## Other Resources

### Web Resources

**Colorado Experience: Aunt Clara Brown.** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=419fTxCShpg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=419fTxCShpg) (3 minute overview of Clara’s life and contributions.)


### Secondary Sources

Teacher Resource Set

Working together to tell the story of our state!

Developers

Sponsors

Partners