

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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MISSION 1: "For Crown or Colony?"

Phillis Wheatley, "To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth," 1773

In this stanza from one of Wheatley's best known poems, Wheatley describes the human costs of the slave trade and links her own captivity from Africa to her support for liberty in America. Despite her acknowledged prowess as a writer, the accompanying illustration still describes Wheatley as a "Negro Servant," or slave.

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of Freedom sprung,
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd
That from a father seiz'd his babe below'd:
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?



Published according to Act of Parliament, Sept. 11, 1773 by Arch^d. Bell.
Bookseller N^o. 8 near the Saracens Head Aldgate.

Image Source: The Library of Congress Online, Prints and Photographs Division, <http://www.loc.gov>.
Text Source: John C. Shields, ed., *The Collected Works of Phillis Wheatley* (New York: Oxford, 1988), 73.