

HISTORY 201: UNITED STATES HISTORY TO 1865  
RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

RESPONSE PAPER

**Instructions:**

A famous Hollywood filmmaker is interested in making a movie about Nat Turner, and she asks you to assess *The Confessions of Nat Turner* in a four-page letter (double-spaced with page numbers) that demonstrates critical thinking. You should answer the following questions for the filmmaker:

1. What information from *The Confessions of Nat Turner* could be used in the screenplay for the film?
2. Are there questions about Nat Turner **not** answered in *The Confessions*?
3. Do you believe that *The Confessions of Nat Turner* is a reliable primary source? Why/why not?

**How To Get Started:**

**Step #1:** Rent or purchase *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, ed. Kenneth S. Greenberg (Bedford Books, 2017).

**Step #2:** Read the introduction (pp. 1-33). Make sure to take notes while you are reading.

**Step #3:** Read *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (pp. 36-56). Make sure to take notes while you are reading.

**Step #4:** Read any documents from Part III that interest you.

**Step #5:** Develop an outline for the paper.

**Step #6:** Write a paper that includes answers to the three questions listed above.

**Step #7:** If you have any questions about the paper, please stop by during my office hours (137 SSHE). I also encourage you to visit the Writing Lab (222 SSHE).

**Step #8:** Upload the paper from your computer to Canvas using Google Chrome.

**Citation:**

All papers will be screened for plagiarism using Turnitin.com. Plagiarized papers will receive a failing grade.

## **Richard Bland College QEP—“IMPACT: Improving Mental Power and Critical Thinking”**

As part of its ongoing accreditation process, Richard Bland College is required to have a five year strategy or “Quality Enhancement Plan” (QEP) to improve student learning in one particular area. The area of focus that was chosen by the faculty, staff, and students is *critical thinking*, and the name and slogan for our QEP is “IMPACT: Improving Mental Power and Critical Thinking.” Critical thinking involves a wide variety of skills that include formulating questions, evaluating information, recognizing assumptions, defending a thesis, and drawing informed conclusions.

The QEP has many parts. Your professors will be learning how to more reliably measure and assess your critical thinking. Your courses will be offering more frequent and more creative opportunities to develop and demonstrate your critical thinking skills. The Library will offer programs to help you critically evaluate sources of information. And the college will hold events and public forums that stress the importance of critical thinking outside of the walls of the classroom. In many of your courses, your professors will be discussing the ways in which critical and higher-order thinking skills manifest themselves in their particular discipline. If you have any questions about the QEP ask your professors or email [QEP@rbc.edu](mailto:QEP@rbc.edu).