

Publishers' Bindings Online, 1815-1930: The Art of Books
bindings.lib.ua.edu

Sample Hand-out: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
Grades 9-12

Assignment:

Prepare a five-minute presentation covering the following points regarding the decade your group has been assigned:

- How did the events of the decade impact the general bookbinding trends?
- Which *Uncle Tom's Cabin* cover from the decade most represents the trends?
- What are the differences and similarities among the covers from your decade?
- How do the covers as a group compare with the general trends?
- Explain why the covers as a group either do or do not represent the trends.

You may select a single spokesperson, or divide your discussion answers among group members. However, all group members must be involved in discussing the questions and coming up with answers.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- 1) To access the PBO Decades gallery, go to bindings.lib.ua.edu/gallery/decades.html
- 2) From the timeline, select your assigned decade. Example: If your group has been assigned the 1850s, click on the link to 1850-1859.
- 3) Read the essay describing the decade. Take special note of sweeping historical events and trends in bookbinding.
- 4) Discuss as a group how the events of the decade impacted the general trends in bookbinding. Decide what your answer will be and write it down.
- 5) Search for editions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* published during your assigned decade:
 - Go to <http://bindings.lib.ua.edu/sitesearch.html>.
 - Select the "Search by Keyword" link.
 - Click on "Guided Search" at the top of the page.
 - In the first search box, type in each year of your decade, separated by the word "or." Example: If your group has been assigned the 1850s, you would type "1850 or 1851 or 1852 or 1853 or 1854 or 1855 or 1856 or 1857 or 1858 or 1859."
 - Select "any of these" from the first drop-down menu.
 - Select "date" from the second drop-down menu.
 - In the second search box, type "Uncle Tom's Cabin."
 - Select "as a phrase" from the first-drop down menu to the right of the search box.
 - Select "title" from the second drop-down menu.
 - At the bottom of the search page, designate 50 records to be "displayed in gallery."
 - Click "search."
- 6) As a group, determine which book is most representative of the bookbinding trends discussed in the essay for your decade.

- 7) Click on the thumbnail for that book. Enlarge the image by clicking on the largest box in the series of boxes under the image.
- 8) Explore the book cover by clicking on other images available. These may include the back, the spine, and the endpapers.
- 9) Discuss as a group how this book best represents the trends of your assigned decade. Decide on your final answer and write it down.
- 10) Click on “Results” to return to the gallery view.
- 11) Discuss as a group similarities and differences, both among all of the *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* covers from the decade and between the covers and general trends. Write down your answers.
- 12) If there are major differences between a majority of the covers and the general trends of the decade, discuss why that might be. Think in particular about how the topic of the book might relate to the sweeping historical events.
OR
If most of the covers are representative of the trends, explain why.

Write down your answers.