

# LESSON THREE: THE POSSIBILITY OF FREEDOM FOR SLAVES

## INTRODUCTION

In 1775, Lord Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation offering freedom to any slave or indentured servant willing to bear arms and fight for the British. In this activity, students will examine Dunmore's Proclamation and use other primary sources to determine Virginians' reaction to the proclamation.

## OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze primary source documents to complete an issue analysis.
2. Explain how Dunmore's Proclamation challenged the institution of slavery.
3. Identify the potential consequences of Dunmore's Proclamation for all the parties involved—black and white, British and Virginian.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Teacher Reference—Background Information on Dunmore's Proclamation

Transcription of Dunmore's Proclamation

Letter to the *Virginia Gazette* Regarding Dunmore's Proclamation

LearningCheck™ Files: BACKGR, GUIDE, SOURCES, and ASSESS

Class set of TI-83 Pluses or TI-83 Plus Silver Editions

TI-Navigator™ Classroom Learning System

LearningCheck™ Application for the TI-83 Plus and TI-83 Plus Silver Edition

LearningCheck Creator™

Class set of TI-Keyboards

TI-Navigator Instructions Tip Sheet (optional)

## PROCEDURE

### SETTING THE STAGE

1. Distribute copies of the Transcription of Dunmore's Proclamation to students.
2. Give students the **BACKGR** LearningCheck™ file containing teacher-generated questions. Have students access the file. (Additional instructions for using the LearningCheck™ application are available on the LearningCheck™ Tip Sheet.):
  - a. The first four questions are general comprehension multiple-choice questions about the document, with the first question being "What is the main idea of the document?"
  - b. Question five is an open response question asking students to provide supporting material for the main idea drawn from the document.

3. After students have responded to the questions in the **BACKGR** LearningCheck™ file, use the Class Analysis function of the TI-Navigator™ system to review their responses.

## **STRATEGY**

1. After reviewing the questions and checking comprehension, inform students that they will be discussing Virginians' reaction to Dunmore's Proclamation.
2. Have students access the **GUIDE** LearningCheck™ file. This file is a series of ten statements with which students will agree or disagree as an Anticipation Guide. All answers should be phrased as opinion statements regarding what students think will happen and the effect Dunmore's Proclamation may have on *all* of the involved parties.
3. Ask students to use their ten opinion statements to create a prediction about the effect(s) of Dunmore's Proclamation. [NOTE: Students will return to these statements at the end of the activity to determine if their assessment of the situation was correct.]
4. Give students copies of the Transcription of Dunmore's Proclamation and the Letter to the *Virginia Gazette* Regarding Dunmore's Proclamation. Instruct them to open the **SOURCES** LearningCheck™ file containing the following questions:

**A multiple-choice question.** "What issue does Dunmore's Proclamation address?"

*Choice 1: Freedom for the slaves*

*Choice 2: Governor Dunmore's threat against the colony of Virginia*

*Choice 3: Governor Dunmore needs troops*

*Choice 4: Governor Dunmore is opposed to slavery*

*Choice 5: Not enough information to express an opinion*

**Directed Reading Thinking (DRT) questions.** Brief response comprehension questions designed to help lead students through the sources:

- How has examining these primary sources changed your point of view?
- What else do you need to know?
- What is the Dunmore's Proclamation about?
- What does the proclamation offer?
- Which slaves is the offer being made to?
- What restrictions are being placed on the offer?
- What would argue in favor of accepting the proclamation?
- What would argue against accepting the proclamation?
- Why did so few slaves accept the offer?
- Is Dunmore's Proclamation being used as a weapon?
- What is the implied threat?
- Who is this threat directed against?
- What do the people being threatened fear most?
- How is the British government using that fear?
- How is the threat tied to the Virginia economy?

5. Debrief students. Their responses to the questions can be displayed using the Slide Show feature in Class Analysis. Return to the **GUIDE** LearningCheck™ file and have students answer the questions again. How did their opinions change as a result of their research?

## **EVALUATION**

1. Conduct a whole-class discussion using the following question as the prompt:  
Did reading Dunmore's Proclamation and/or the letter to the *Virginia Gazette* regarding the proclamation influence your thinking about the American Revolution, either positively or negatively?
2. Have students open the **ASSESS** LearningCheck™ file. Have each student assume **one** of the following roles and write a paragraph identifying actions they would take regarding Dunmore's Proclamation. Students must defend their choice(s).

### **ROLES:**

- A fence-sitter
- A patriot slave owner
- A loyalist slave owner
- A black adult male slave
- A black adult female slave

## TEACHER REFERENCE—BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON DUNMORE’S PROCLAMATION

In November of 1775, Virginia’s royal governor, John Murray, fourth Earl of Dunmore, issued a proclamation in response to information that the colonists had begun forming armies and attacking British troops. Dunmore wanted to put a quick end to the fighting and other activities he considered traitorous. Known as “Dunmore’s Proclamation,” the governor’s announcement created a fervor among the populace and may have actually helped secure the alignment of many moderate or undecided white Virginians against the British government. The proclamation declared Virginia in a state of rebellion and placed the colony under martial law. The most offensive portion of the document, though, was the section that offered freedom to slaves and bonded servants of patriot sympathizers and forces if they were willing to bear arms and fight for the British.

Dunmore’s strategy was one that he had considered before. In a 1772 report to Lord Dartmouth, the British secretary of state for the colonies, Dunmore had suggested that in case of war with foreign powers, the colonists “trembled at the facility that an enemy would find in procuring Such a body of men.” Dunmore had further expressed a belief that the slaves would rise up in huge numbers against their masters “and therefore are ready to join the first that would encourage them to revenge themselves.”<sup>2</sup> Shortly after the Gunpowder Incident in April 1775,<sup>3</sup> Dunmore threatened the mayor of Williamsburg by stating that he would destroy the town and “proclaim liberty” for slaves in response to civil unrest.

Dunmore misunderstood the slaves’ potential motivation. It was not the opportunity to avenge themselves that caused them to join the British, it was the desire to secure freedom. Noted historian Dr. Benjamin Quarles assessed that the slaves “reserved allegiance for whoever made them the best and most concrete offer.”<sup>4</sup> The fact that Dunmore was basically in exile on board a ship did little to motivate large numbers to join him, but nonetheless, a considerable number made the attempt. When a slave owned by Robert Brent in the Northern Neck of Virginia escaped, Brent noted that the slave’s action “was long premeditated.” Brent also stated that the slave’s escape “was from no cause of complaint. . . but from a determined resolution to get liberty, as he conceived, by flying to lord Dunmore.”<sup>5</sup>

The number of slaves that actually joined the British is questionable. Dr. Quarles estimates that it may have been about 800. It should be noted, however, that other historians now suggest that this figure may be conservative. Accounts from the period support the view that there may have been considerably more. Robert Carter Nicholas, president of the Virginia Convention, wrote to the Virginia delegates in Congress that “many of our Natives it is said have been intimidated and compelled to join them [the British] and great Numbers of Slaves from different Quarters have graced their Corps.” The British, he continued, were “using every Art to seduce the Negroes.”<sup>6</sup> Edmund Pendleton wrote to Richard Lee, “letters mention that slaves flock to him [Dunmore] in abundance; but I hope it is magnified.” Even George Washington warned, “Dunmore should be instantly crushed. . . otherwise, like a snowball rolling, his army will get size.”<sup>7</sup>

The decision to join Dunmore and support the British cause must have created tremendous debate and concern throughout the slave community. What factors influenced whether or not a slave’s allegiance was given to the British or to the colonists? There are a variety of possible answers. It is likely that the desire for freedom was so overwhelming that the slaves seized the first viable offer. It is also possible that the slaves wanted to show that they

were worthy of respect and the rights of citizenry by remaining faithful to the authority of the British government. On the other hand, how does one explain the numbers of blacks, such as Salem Poor, Oliver Cromwell, and Peter Salem, who wholeheartedly supported the colonists? Were their reasons for supporting the American cause the same as those of white patriots? Possibly. After learning of the death of Crispus Attucks, a free black killed in the Boston Massacre in March 1770, the colonists revered him for having lost his life for liberty. But the slaves must have surely asked, whose liberty? Even as free blacks, the full rights of citizenry were denied African-Americans. Generally, they were still subject to the same curfews and laws that applied to slaves. The only difference between free blacks and slaves in the eighteenth century was that free blacks had the right to own and protect property.

The decision to join the British or support the patriots was one that surely split some slave families and friendships, just as it did the white citizenry. The American Revolution, for all intents and purposes, was a civil war, one that affected every member of society in some way.

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<sup>2</sup>Gerald W. Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (New York, 1972), p. 131.

<sup>3</sup>Early in the morning of April 21, 1775, British sailors and marines acting on orders from Governor Dunmore removed gunpowder from the public Magazine in Williamsburg. Angry citizens quickly gathered in Market Square. Only the intervention of moderate political leaders such as Speaker of the House of Burgesses Peyton Randolph, Williamsburg Mayor John Dixon, and treasurer of the colony Robert Carter Nicholas prevented the angry populace from attacking the Governor's Palace.

<sup>4</sup>Benjamin Quarles, "The Revolutionary War as a Black Declaration of Independence," in Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffman, eds., *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville, Va., 1983), pp. 292-293.

<sup>5</sup>*Virginia Gazette* (Purdie), Nov. 17, 1775. Supplement.

<sup>6</sup>Letter dated Nov. 25, 1775, quoted in Robert L. Scribner and Brent Tarter, eds., *Revolutionary Virginia and the Road to Independence, IV: The Committee of Safety and the Balance of Forces*, (Charlottesville, Va., 1978), p. 470.

<sup>7</sup>Pendleton to Lee, Nov. 27, 1775, quoted in Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion*, p.131; Washington to Joseph Reed, Dec. 15, 1775, quoted *ibid.*

## TRANSCRIPTION OF DUNMORE'S PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency the Right Honorable JOHN Earl of DUNMORE, His Majesty's Lieutenant and Governor General of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia, and Vice Admiral of the same:

### A P R O C L A M A T I O N.

As I have ever entertained Hopes that an Accommodation might have taken Place between Great Britain and this colony, without being compelled, by my Duty, to this most disagreeable, but now absolutely necessary Step, rendered so by a Body of armed Men, unlawfully assembled, firing on his Majesty's Tenders, and the Formation of an Army, and that Army now on their March to attack his Majesty's Troops, and destroy the well-disposed Subjects of this Colony: To defeat such treasonable Purposes, and that all such Traitors, and their Abettors, may be brought to Justice, and that the Peace and good Order of this Colony may be again restored, which the ordinary Course of the civil Law is unable to effect, I have thought fit to issue this my Proclamation, hereby declaring, that until the aforesaid good Purposes can be obtained, I do, in Virtue of the Power and Authority to me given, by his Majesty, determine to execute Martial Law, and cause the same to be executed throughout this Colony; and to the End that Peace and good Order may the sooner be restored, I do require every Person capable of bearing Arms to report to his Majesty's STANDARD, or be looked upon as Traitors to his Majesty's Crown and Government, and thereby become liable to the Penalty the Law inflicts upon such Offences, such as Forfeiture of Life, Confiscation of Lands, &c. &c. And I do hereby further declare all indentured Servants, Negroes or others (appertaining to Rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining his Majesty's Troops, as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper Sense of their Duty, to his Majesty's Crown and Dignity. I do farther order, and require, all his Majesty's liege Subjects, to retain their Quitrents, or any other Taxes due or that may become due, in their own Custody, till such Time as Peace may be again restored to this at present most unhappy Country, or demanded of them for their former salutary Purposes, by Officers properly authorised to receive the same.

GIVEN UNDER MY Hand, on Board the Ship William, off Norfolk, the 7th Day of November, in the sixteenth Year of his Majesty's Reign.

DUNMORE

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Source: Original document on file in the Tracy W. McGregor Library, University of Virginia.

## A LETTER TO THE *VIRGINIA GAZETTE* REGARDING DUNMORE'S PROCLAMATION

The second class of people, for whose sake a few remarks upon this proclamation seem necessary, is the Negroes. They have been flattered with their freedom, if they be able to bear arms, and will speedily join Lord Dunmore's troops. To none then is freedom promised but to such as are able to do Lord Dunmore service: The aged, the infirm, the women and children, are still to remain the property of their masters, masters who will be provoked to severity, should part of their slaves desert them. Lord Dunmore's declaration, therefore, is a cruel declaration to the Negroes. He does not even pretend to make it out of any tenderness to them, but solely on his own account; and should it meet with success, it leaves by far the greater number at the mercy of an enraged and injured people. But should there be any amongst the Negroes weak enough to believe that Dunmore intends to do them a kindness, and wicked enough to provoke the fury of the Americans against their defenceless fathers and mothers, their wives, their women and children, let them only consider the difficulty of effecting their escape, and what they must expect to suffer if they fall into the hands of the Americans. Let them farther consider what must be their fate, should the English prove conquerors in this dispute. If we can judge of the future from the past, it will not be much mended. Long have the Americans, moved by compassion, and actuated by sound policy, endeavoured to stop the progress of slavery. Our Assemblies have repeatedly passed acts laying heavy duties upon imported Negroes, by which they meant altogether to prevent the horrid traffick; but their humane intentions have been as often frustrated by the cruelty and covetousness of a set of English merchants, who prevailed upon the King to repeal our kind and merciful acts, little indeed to the credit of his humanity. Can it then be supposed that the Negroes will be better used by the English, who have always encouraged and upheld this slavery, than by their present masters, who pity their condition, who wish, in general, to make it as easy and comfortable as possible, and who would willingly, were it in their power, or were they permitted, not only prevent any more Negroes from losing their freedom, but restore it to such as have already unhappily lost it. No, the ends of Lord Dunmore and his party being answered, they will either give up the offending Negroes to the rigour of the laws they have broken, or sell them in the West Indies, where every year they sell many thousands of their miserable brethren, to perish either by the inclemency of the weather, or the cruelty of barbarous masters. Be not then, ye Negroes, tempted by this proclamation to ruin yourselves. I have given you a faithful view of what you are to expect; and I declare, before GOD, in doing it, I have considered your welfare, as well as that of the country. Whether you will profit by my advice I cannot tell; but this I know, that whether we suffer or not, if you desert us, you most certainly will.

Source: *Virginia Gazette* (Dixon and Hunter), Nov. 5, 1775.

## Using the TI-Navigator™ System with this Lesson

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### *Introduction*

This document provides ideas about how the lesson you have chosen can be enhanced by using the TI-Navigator™ Classroom Learning System. Read further to learn about:

- ◆ Enhancing Your Lessons with the TI-Navigator™ System
- ◆ Sending Files to Your Class
- ◆ Receiving and Viewing LearningCheck™ Results From Your Students
- ◆ Using LearningCheck™ Results

### Notes:

Detailed instructions for specific TI-Navigator™ tasks are available in the *Getting Started Guide* that accompanies the System.

The examples provided in this document will not necessarily match the text you see on your computer or device. They are provided as a guideline for using the hardware and software.



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## Enhancing Your Lessons with the TI-Navigator™ System

- ◆ Use the TI-Navigator System to efficiently send Notefolio™, LearningCheck™, StudyCards™, CellSheet™, and TImeSpan™ files to students, to save time and paper.
- ◆ Use the Notefolio™, LearningCheck™, TImeSpan™, or StudyCard™ Creator or the CellSheet™ Converter software to modify any of the ready-made lesson files to better fit the needs of your students.
- ◆ Use the TI-Navigator™ System and LearningCheck™ Application to measure student understanding at any point during a lesson. To do this, use the LearningCheck™ Creator software to make an assignment using a variety of questioning types such as Likert Scale (shown below), Yes/No, Agree/Disagree, and so forth. This technique is an excellent way to spark lively class discussions.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Structure Template (Multiple Choice - Standard Choices)". The window has a menu bar with "File", "Edit", "Tools", and "Help". Below the menu bar are tabs for "Question", "Properties", "Hint & Feedback", "Keywords", and "Copyright". The "Question" tab is active. The "Title" field contains the text "Structure". The "Question" section has a "Text" field with the text "The poem was structured as a pantoum." and an "Image" section with tabs for "General", "TI-83 Plus", "TI-89", "TI-92 Plus", and "Voyage 200". The "Response" section has a dropdown menu showing "Strongly Disagree - Somewhat Disagree - Neutral - Somew..." and a "Correct" section with five radio button options: "Strongly Disagree", "Somewhat Disagree", "Neutral", "Somewhat Agree", and "Strongly Agree". At the bottom of the window, there is an "Incomplete" checkbox, "Browse..." and "Remove" buttons, and "OK" and "Cancel" buttons.

### Likert Scale Question

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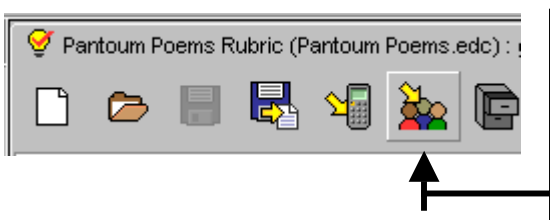
## *Sending Files to Your Class*

Most lessons begin with a ready-made file (called an Application Variable or AppVar for short), such as a LearningCheck™ file, that you distribute to the class. Using the TI-Navigator™ System, you can quickly send these files to the whole class at one time. This eliminates the need for students to use the unit-to-unit cables to distribute the files, thus saving valuable class time. With the TI-Navigator™ System, any student who arrives late to class can obtain their file with minimum disruption to the class.

### *Creating and Sending LearningCheck™ Files*

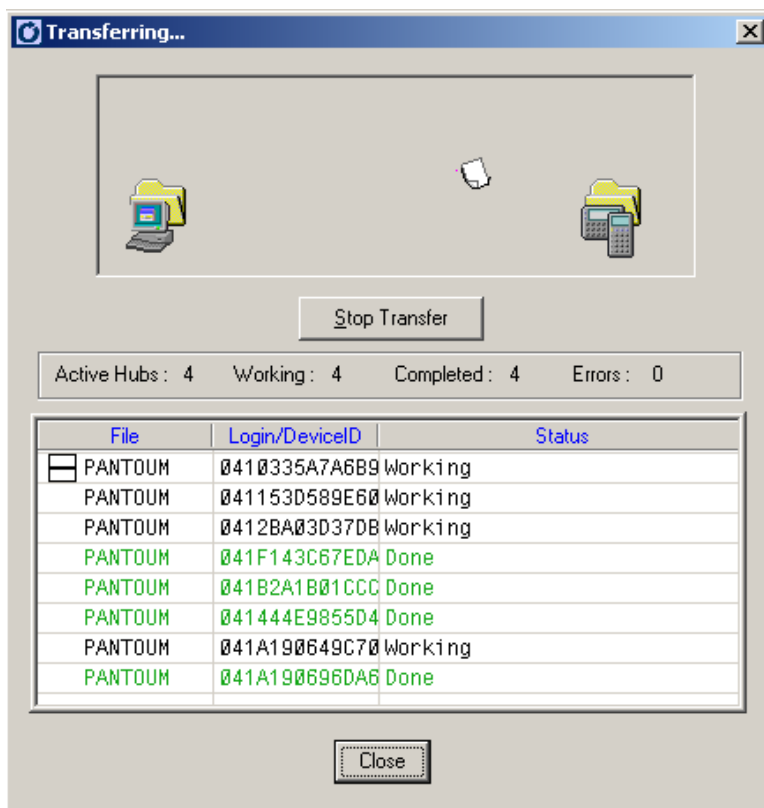
Since the LearningCheck™ Creator software is a part of the TI-Navigator™ System, you can quickly check student comprehension during a lesson by creating a file with one or two questions, and then sending it to the class. Use the following procedure to send a newly created file using the TI-Navigator™ System.

1. On the computer, click **Start > Programs > TI-Navigator > TI Navigator**. The TI-Navigator™ System Home screen opens.
2. Click the LearningCheck™ button on the left to launch the LearningCheck™ Creator program. Create the new assessment or assignment.  
Note: Instructions for using the LearningCheck™ Creator are available with the creator software.
3. When the file is completed, click **File > Send to > Class**. An alternate method of sending files is to click on the **Send to Class** icon.



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The Transfer window opens, letting you see the progress of the files as they are sent to your class.



**Window with Transfer In Progress**

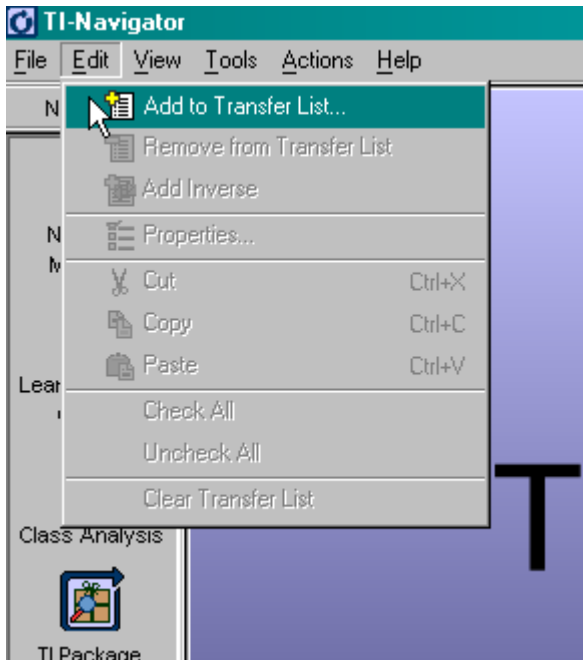
4. When the Status column shows Done for all the devices in your classroom, click **Done**.
5. Click **File > Close** to close the LearningCheck™ Creator. Click **No** when asked whether to save your document. Each student has the new file.

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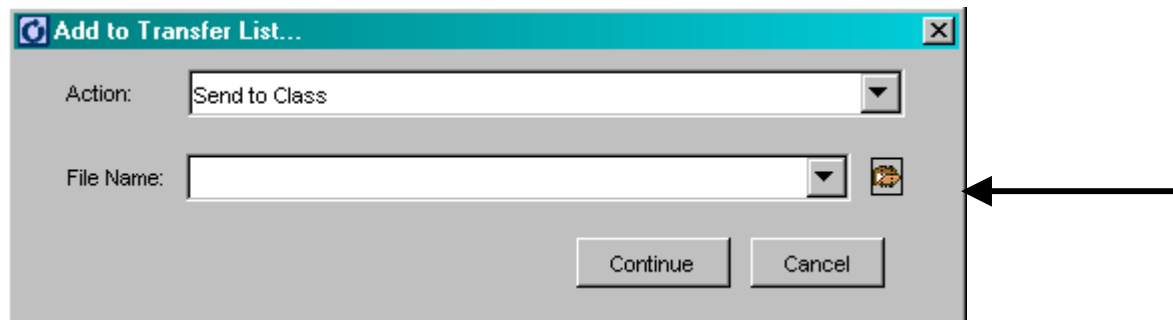
## *Sending Existing Files*

If you have AppVars (LearningCheck™, CellSheet™, or NoteFolio™ files) already created and saved, you can send these to a class without opening the creator software.

1. Start the TI-Navigator™ System. Select the **Edit** menu.
2. Select **Add To Transfer List** from the Edit menu options.

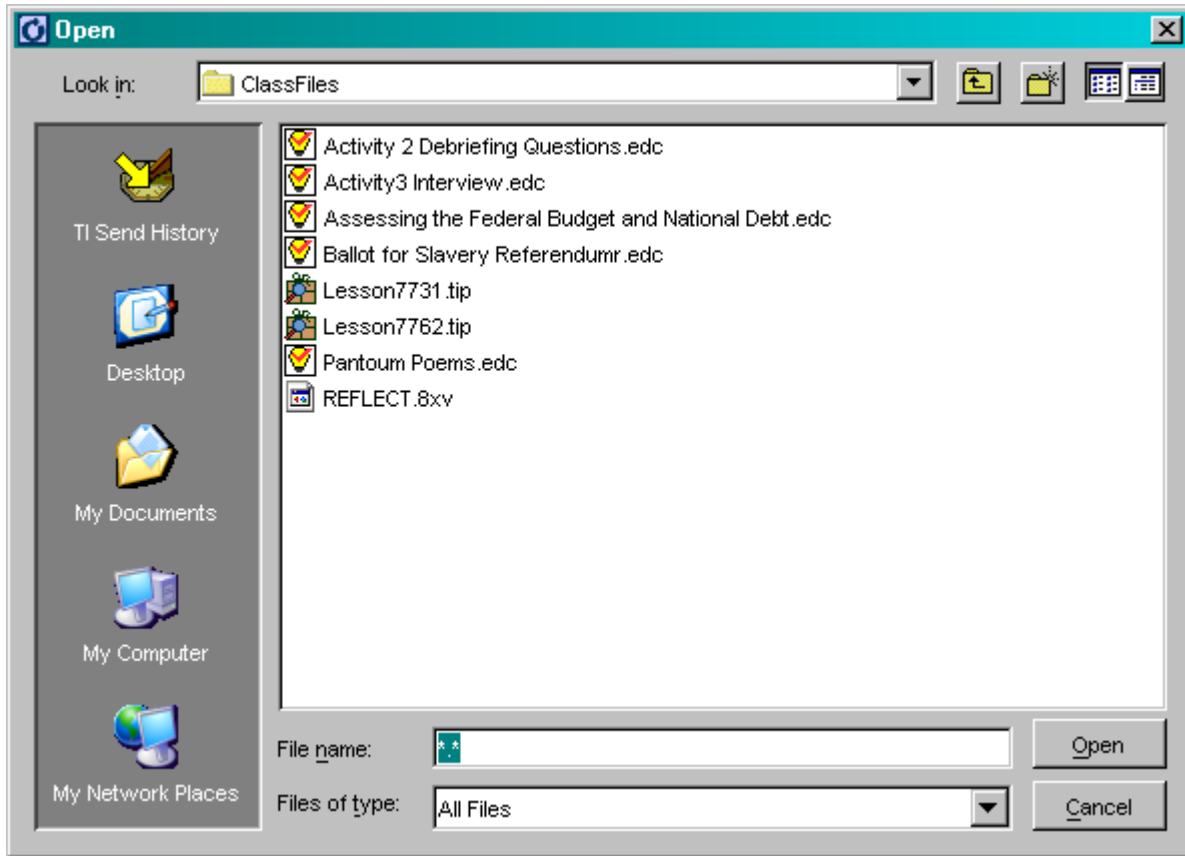


A box opens that enables you to type the name of the file you want added to the transfer list. If you do not know the path and name of the file, click the browse icon to the right of the file name box.



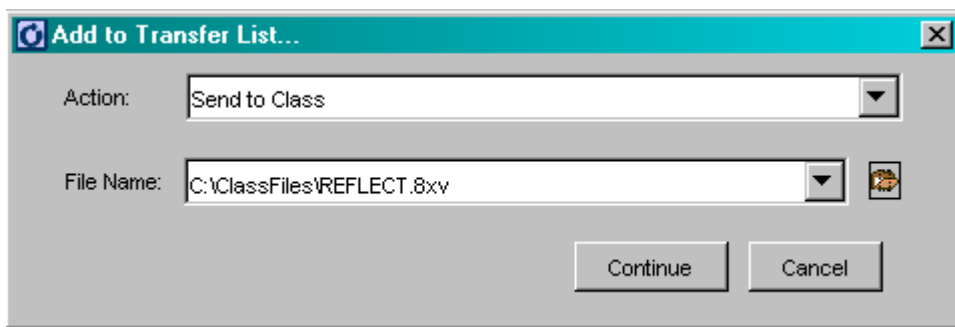
**Add to Transfer List Box with Browse Button Indicated**

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3. If you choose to search for your files, a window opens that enables you to search for the AppVars (files) you want to send to the class. Note that these must be device-specific AppVars (such as .8xv files), not creator files such as the .edc files from LearningCheck™ Creator.



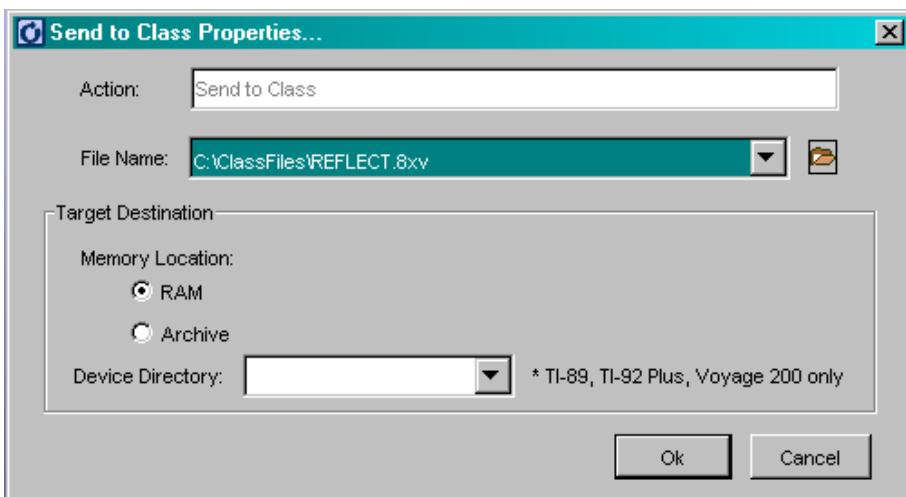
**Browse for Files Box**

4. Double-click the mouse button to enter the name of the file in the File Name field.



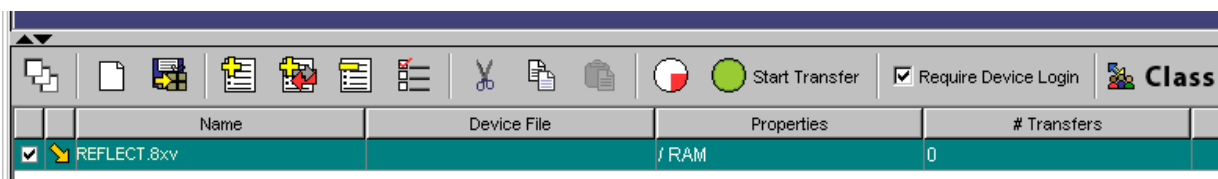
**Selected File entered**

- Click **Continue**. A Properties window opens before each file is added. This box informs you of the target destination and estimated size of the file on the device.

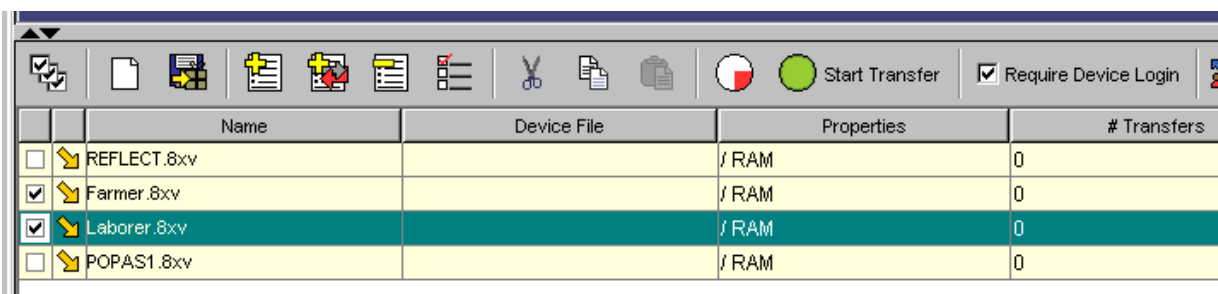


**Send to Class Properties Box**

- Click **OK** to add a file to the list. Repeat these steps to add all AppVars files you want to transmit to the class.



During class, you can send specific files to the class by clicking the checkbox at the far left of the file name in the Class Connect section of the TI-Navigator™ screen. (This is a toggle—turn the check mark on/off by clicking on the box. See the example below.)



**Send to Class file list (note green Start Transfer button)**

To send the selected file(s), click the **Start Transfer** button that appears just above the Properties column heading. The Transferring window opens and shows the progress of the file transfers. When the Status column shows Done for all the devices in your classroom, click **Done**.

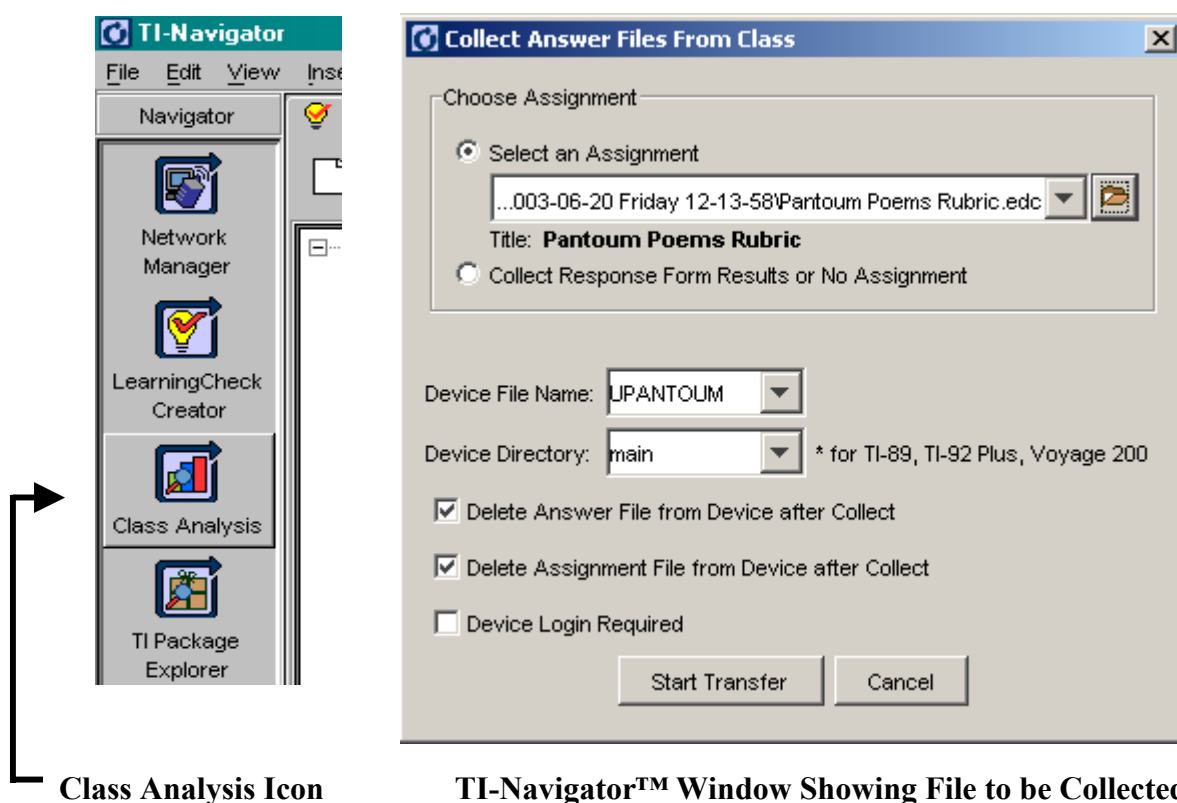
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## Receiving and Viewing LearningCheck™ Results from Your Students

Whenever a lesson requires students to send you their completed LearningCheck™ files, you can retrieve the file from the entire class almost instantaneously with the TI-Navigator™ System. (Refer to the TI-Navigator™ System *Getting Started Guide* for information on retrieving and viewing other file types.)

Use the Class Analysis tool to receive and view results from completed student LearningCheck™ files. Access it by clicking the icon in the left bar of the TI-Navigator™ Home screen.

With the Class Analysis tool opened, if you select Collect From Class, the system is automatically ready to retrieve the last LearningCheck™ file sent to the students. When file collection is completed, the system populates the Class Analysis File with the students' data.



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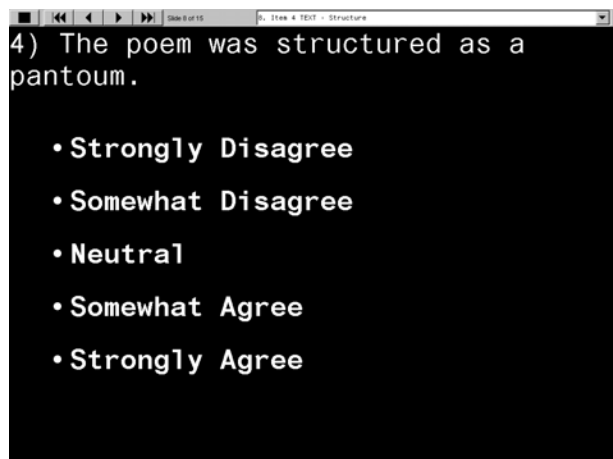
## Using LearningCheck™ Results

The Class Analysis tool does more than just allow you to quickly retrieve student files. Once you have retrieved a set of LearningCheck™ assignments, the software enables you to analyze the results of the assignment. With the Class Analysis tool, you have the ability to view and print

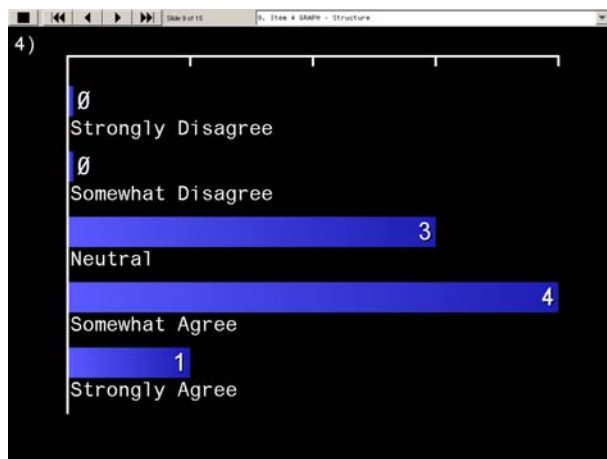
- ◆ A summary for all students and all questions (responses per question),
- ◆ A single student's results,
- ◆ A single item's responses (item analysis).

Class Analysis also allows you to display student responses anonymously, allowing you to conduct stimulating class discussions based on what was answered instead of who answered what.

### Class Analysis Slide Show of Results



Question To Which Students Responded



The Responses for Each Response Option

### For More Information

For more information about the TI-Navigator™ System, go to [education.ti.com](http://education.ti.com) and click on the link for the TI-Navigator™ System.



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This TI-83 Plus lesson was adapted from *Slavery: A Colonial Odyssey*, a lesson unit available from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. For more information on this lesson unit and other Colonial Williamsburg instructional materials and classroom resources, visit <http://www.history.org/teach>, or call 1-800-688-6473.

Special thanks for developing this lesson go to:

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Texas Instruments staff