Images of Slavery in Colonial New York

The New York African American Burial Ground sponsors an annual writing competition for students. The theme for the contest is the African presence in colonial New York City. Poems should be 150 words or less. Use these pictures to help you write your poem. It is okay to be angry about what you see in the images. To learn more about the contest, contact its sponsors at:

This woodcut from 17th century New Amsterdam shows a group of enslaved Africans doing the work of the city.

This map from 1755 shows the African American Burial ground in lower Manhattan. It is outside the city walls because Africans could not be buried inside the city limits.

This painting shows the sale of an enslaved African in 1655 at the Wall Street slave market.

New Yorkers feared a slave rebellion. In 1741 they executed enslaved Africans suspected of plotting a slave rebellion. They were burned alive.