Tuesday: Oloudah Equiano (Gustavus Vassa), *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Oloudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Written by Himself*” pages 315 – 325;

Thursday: Cultural Portfolio: Slavery, Freedom, and Identity,” p 327 –341

**Write** in response to **one or two** of the following:

- Oloudah Equiano was extraordinarily well read as well as an “impressively self-conscious writer.” In his essay on Equiano, Henry Louis Gates describes a rhetorical strategy that future slave narrative writers of the 18th century would employ: the use of two distinct voices to distinguish “the simple wonder with which the young Equiano approached the New World of his captors and a more eloquently articulated voice that he employs to describe the author’s narrative present” (362). Another scholar refers to this rhetorical strategy as a “double-voice,” one which uses the language and rhetorical strategies of the dominant culture to represent a subjectivity that that culture refuses to recognize: “In the *Narrative*, Equiano’s doubled voice, as both the naïve captive and the worldly educated abolitionist, works to forcefully persuade the ‘red face[d]’ ‘long hair[ed]’ whites of his audience to acknowledge the humanity of those they have wrongfully enslaved.” As you read the excerpt from this narrative, listen for these voices. Identify these distinct voices (by drawing quotes from the text), then explain in your own ways the rhetorical effect that this has on you, a 21st century reader.

- Compare Equiano’s narrative with Rowlandson’s as captivity narratives and/or as spiritual autobiographies. Consider the *transformations* that occur in both. How are they similar? How are they different?

- Take on the persona of a contemporary of Equiano’s and argue – in essay format – for abolition based on his writings. (Place Equiano in his times: Congress was formally prohibited from abolishing the slave trade.)

- Take on the persona of a contemporary of Equiano’s and write a poem or story which argues for abolition.

- Study the writers on slavery in our cultural portfolio (pages 327 – 341). Keep in mind that what seems manifest to us – *slavery should not exist* – might not seem manifest even to abolitionists in colonial America. What strategies do these writers employ to argue for abolition?