

Lesson Title: Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad

Grade Levels: K-3

Class Time needed: Two class sessions (Varies depending on the age of students)

Content Standards: See pages 16-19

Objectives:

1. Reveal stories of the Underground Railroad and its role in helping the enslaved.
2. Learn about Harriet Tubman, who helped 350 enslaved people to freedom.
3. Discuss slavery and its dehumanizing effect on African Americans.

Description of lesson/activity:

1. Read David A. Adler's A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman (New York: Holiday House, 1992) or Jacob Lawrence's Harriet and the Promised Land (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993). After the story, discuss the treatment of enslaved persons mentioned in the book. Discuss the events in Harriet's life that made her want to escape from slavery. Introduce the concept of the Underground Railroad and the definitions of "conductor, abolitionist, bondage, chattel, overseer, plantation, Freedom Seeker, and Underground Railroad." How did Harriet help enslaved persons gain their freedom?

2. Read another account of the Underground Railroad in Allen Jay and the Underground Railroad, by Marlene Targ Bull. This is a story about a young boy and his family who belonged to a religious group called the Society of Friends, or Quakers. This story deals with a boy, Allen Jay, and his relatives helping a Freedom Seeker escape to Canada. Talk about the danger to this family, as well as other people helping on the Underground Railroad. What were these dangers? Why were these people helping on the Underground Railroad? Why were these people willing to endanger themselves and their families?

Materials:

David A. Alder's book A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman

Jacob Lawrence's book Harriet and the Promised Land

Marlene Targ Bull's book Allen Jay and the Underground Railroad

Student Assessment:

Formal: Assess and evaluate students' ability to state the definitions of vocabulary words.

Informal: Observe comprehension of Harriet Tubman's role in the Underground Railroad and the danger involved with assisting freedom seekers.



Lesson Title: Underground Railroad Cross Word Puzzle

Grade Levels: 2-4

Class Time needed: Varies depending on the age of students

Content Standards: See pages 16-19

Objectives:

The purpose of this activity is to build students' vocabulary with words associated with the Underground Railroad.

Rationale:

Through a word search and definition activity, students will learn new vocabulary words which will increase their retention of the lessons learned at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

Description of lesson/activity:

1. Discuss the Underground Railroad.
2. Have students look up definitions for the words on Crossword Puzzle worksheet.
2. Circle all words in crossword puzzle using the word bank provided. Words appear horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

Materials:

Crossword puzzle (attached)

Pencil or pen

Student Assessment:

Formal: Definitions and Crossword Puzzle



S L A V E H C Y S N D D I
 R F U N O I T A T N A L P
 O U O F O P U B U O D D F
 C O N D U C T O R T A H S
 G S R A T G R L I T N C E
 U T B I W G I I A O A A T
 E K O O R A L T N C C M U
 W N N E R F Y I I O S Y O
 M O D E E R F O G V R N R
 D N A L O I H N H O E T Y
 U Y G R E C U I T T K E H
 N V E L T A C S N I A H C
 O C D T A T I T G O U R D
 U S O U T H Y T A A Q N L

Abolitionist
 Africa
 Auction
 Bondage
 Canada
 Chains
 Conductor
 Cotton

Freedom
 Land
 Night
 North
 Plantation
 Quakers
 Railroad
 Routes

Slave
 South
 Underground



S L A V E H C Y S N D D I
 R F U N O I T A T N A L P
 O U O F O P U B U O D D F
 C O N D U C T O R T A H S
 G S R A T G R L I T N C E
 U T B I W G I I A O A A T
 E K O O R A L T N C C M U
 W N N E R F Y I I O S Y O
 M O D E E R F O G V R N R
 D N A L O I H N H O E T Y
 U Y G R E C U I T T K E H
 N V E L T A C S N I A H C
 O C D T A T I T G O U R D
 U S O U T H Y T A A Q N L



Lesson Title: Heroes of the Underground Railroad

Grade Levels: K-3

Class Time needed: 3 Days– Each approximately one hour in length
(Can be divided into three separate lessons)

Content Standards: See pages 16-19

Objectives:

Students will develop an awareness of the risks taken by those who took part in the Underground Railroad, and will increase their understanding of the concept of a “hero.”

Three Sessions focusing on:

1. Building Background Knowledge
2. John P. Parker
3. Harriet Tubman

Day One (One hour session)

Objectives:

Students will learn key vocabulary to increase their understanding of events and people in the Civil War and Underground Railroad exhibits at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

1. Students will summarize what character traits they feel make a person a hero.
2. Students will recognize that the Underground Railroad was not an actual railroad, but a group of people that took great risks in order to be free from slavery and to help others be free.



1. Any and all materials relating to the Underground Railroad. (trade books, maps, photographs, newspaper articles, notices of escaped slaves, etc.). Try to have enough for students to use in groups of two or three with all groups having materials.
2. Access to the Internet if possible
3. Paper
4. Pencils

Procedures:

1. Begin a group discussion by asking, “What makes someone a hero?” Discuss all answers.
2. Have students write a paragraph describing what makes a person a hero or who they feel is a hero and why.
3. As students finish, have volunteers take turns sharing what they wrote with the whole group.
4. Tell students that, since they are beginning to think about heroes, you are going to tell them about some of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad.
5. Assess background knowledge by asking, “What was the Underground Railroad?” and “What was it all about?”
6. Discuss answers and clarify information for students. Stress the following key points and vocabulary:
 - A. The Underground Railroad was not an actual railroad
 - B. The Underground Railroad was made up of people: those who wanted to be free, called “Freedom Seekers,” and those who wanted to help people seeking freedom.
 - C. The Ohio River played a very important part in the Underground Railroad. Once Freedom Seekers crossed the river, they were getting closer to freedom (Canada) and there were even more people to help them.
 - D. Vocabulary

Abolitionist– A person who spoke out against slavery.

Agent– A person who helped fugitives know where to go and who would help them.

Conductor– A person who took Freedom Seekers along the path to freedom.

North Star– The Little Dipper. Fugitives followed the North Star on their way north.

Jordan River– The Ohio River (geographical divide between free and slave states).

Promised Land– Canada, which symbolized the land of freedom for Freedom Seekers.

Station– Safe houses, churches, or any place of safety along the route to freedom.

Passenger– A runaway slave, also called a Freedom Seeker.

7. For the remainder of the hour, allow students to work in groups of two or three. They are to look through the Underground Railroad materials they choose. Assign some students to use the Internet websites (see Resources).

Student Assessment:

Assess and evaluate students’ ability to state or write what character traits make a person a hero. Determine comprehension during discussion of Underground Railroad background knowledge. Observe students as they locate and analyze information in the Underground Railroad materials.



Day Two (One hour session)

Objectives:

1. Students will paraphrase the meanings of UGRR vocabulary learned during the first session.
2. Students will recognize John P. Parker's role in the UGRR
3. Students will infer what risks were taken by characters in the story.
4. Students will justify their positions as to whether they would have run if they were enslaved during the 1800's.

Materials/Technology:

1. UGRR Vocabulary (words only) listed on separate index cards. (See words in Day one). Repeat words as needed until there are enough for each student to have one card.
2. Large white paper (11" x 17")
3. Markers
4. Freedom River, by Doreen Rappaport
5. Writing prompt (See next page)
6. Paper
7. Pencils

Procedures:

1. Review Underground Railroad vocabulary by distributing the index cards with vocabulary terms written on them (one word on each card). Have students form cooperative groups by finding others in the room with their same word. Groups then use markers to write their vocabulary word and everything they know about that term on a large piece of white paper. Encourage them to make it visually appealing. Provide help when needed. Ask questions such as, "What does this term mean?" "Why was it important?" "Can you think of any examples?" When all groups finish, hang the papers to create a bulletin board or "Underground Railroad word wall."
2. Prepare students by telling them that they will be learning about a very brave man named John P. Parker.
3. Read Freedom River by Doreen Rappaport (New York: Hyperion, 2000)
4. Discuss the story by asking the following questions, "Which character (s) in this story would you consider a hero?" and "What was John P. Parker risking by helping this family?" and "What was the family risking?"
5. Have students respond in writing to the following question: If you were enslaved during the 1800's in America, would you have run away or stayed? Give three reasons for your decision. (See writing prompt on next page)

Student Assessment:

Assess and evaluate students' ability to work with group members and create an appropriate definition for their vocabulary word. Assess students' ability to state a position, (running away or staying), and give three appropriate reasons why they chose that position.



The Underground Railroad

Over the last several days, you have learned about the hardships faced by enslaved people as they tried to escape on the Underground Railroad. Think about how hard it was for them on their journey. They risked their lives when they ran to freedom.

Answer the following question

If you were enslaved during the 1800's in America, would you have run away or stayed with your master?
Give three reasons for your decision.

(Write your answer in paragraphs, one paragraph for each reason. You will have to describe each reason with more than one sentence.)



Day three: (One hour session)**Objectives:**

1. Students will recognize Harriet Tubman's role in the Underground Railroad.
2. Students will create a booklet depicting Harriet Tubman's acts of heroism.

Materials/Technology:

1. A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman by David A. Adler (New York: Holiday House, 1992)
2. One booklet for each student. Using two pieces of plain white paper, fold one down from the top about one third of the way. Fold the other about two thirds of the way down. Insert one into the other to create a "flip book" with four tabs. Staple at the top.
3. Chart tablet, dry erase board or overhead projector.
4. Markers for teacher use
5. Pencils
6. Crayons

Procedures:

1. Prepare students by telling them that they will be learning about one of the most famous heroes of the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman.
2. Read A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman, by David A. Adler.
3. Have students help you create a list of the things Harriet did to help others. Use the book to help you. Write responses on a class list (overhead projector, dry erase board, etc.).
4. Explain to students that they are going to make a flip book about Harriet Tubman's life. Demonstrate how the book will be set up. The top flap is for the title and the student's name. The other three flaps are for sentences describing how Harriet Tubman helped people on the Underground Railroad. Students can use the ideas generated by the class to help them. After writing the three sentences on the flaps, students are to open the pages and illustrate the sentences.
5. If possible, display the flip books in the hall on a table, or in the school library so that others can see and read them.

Student Assessment:

Assess and evaluate students ability to cite passages from the story that depict how Harriet Tubman helped others. Assess students' ability to use that information to create a flip book with appropriate sentences and illustrations.



Underground Railroad Resources for Primary Students

Books:

Adler, D. (1992). *A Picture book of Harriet Tubman*. New York: Holiday House.

Bial, R. (1995). *The Underground Railroad*. Boston: The Houghton Mifflin Company.

Lawrence, J. (1993). *Harriet and the Promised Land*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Levine, E. (2007). *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Nelson, V. (2003) *Almost to Freedom*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

Osborne, M. (2000). *Civil War on Sunday*. New York: Random House.

Rappaport, D. (2000). *Freedom River*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.

Schroeder, A. (1996). *Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman*. New York: Puffin Books.

Woodruff, E. (1998). *Dear Austin: Letters from the Underground Railroad*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Videos:

Animated Hero Classics. *Harriet Tubman*. Nest Entertainment, Inc.

Websites:

Harriet Tubman

PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p1535.html>

United States Library of Congress: <http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/tubman>

National Geographic: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad/j2.html>

Underground Railroad

National Geographic: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad/kids.html>

Social Studies for Kids: <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/ushistory/undergroundrailroad1.htm>

PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2944.html>



Key Words

1. Abolitionists
2. Bounty Hunter
3. Conductor
4. Cooperation
5. Courage
6. Freedom
7. Freedom Seeker
8. Fugitive Slave Act
9. Hero
10. Passenger
11. Perseverance
12. Safe House
13. Slavery
14. Slave Catcher
15. Underground Railroad



Lesson Title: Book Discussion Activity

Grade Levels: K-3

Class Time needed: (Varies depending on the age of students)

Content Standards: See pages 16-19

Objectives:

Introduce the Underground Railroad to students using a grade or age appropriate book while using the questions provided to encourage dialogue about the Underground Railroad.

Description of lesson/activity:

1. First read Almost to Freedom by Vaundra Micheaux Nelson or another book about the Underground Railroad.
2. After reading, lead a class discussion based from the questions that have been provided.

Materials:

1. Almost to Freedom by Vaundra Micheaux Nelson.
2. Discussion questions (provided)



1. What is slavery?
2. What is freedom and why should we appreciate it?
3. What is a hero? Can anyone be a hero or heroine?
4. What is the Underground Railroad? Was it underground? Was it a railroad? How did the Underground Railroad get that name?
5. What do you expect to see at the Freedom Center?
6. Define the Underground Railroad. Why did enslaved people attempt to escape?
7. Why did conductors help enslaved people try to escape?
8. Name some potential hiding places for freedom seekers.
9. How were songs used as a means of aiding escape?



Lesson Title: Henry Box Brown

Grade Levels: K-3

Class Time needed: One class session

Content Standard: See pages 16-19

Objective:

To introduce the Underground Railroad and the conditions that enslaved people experienced.

Rationale:

By hearing a first-hand account of the risks enslaved people took to gain their freedom, students will be able to empathize with African Americans who suffered under the institution of slavery. This lesson also serves as a good introduction to students' visit to the Freedom Center.

Description of lesson/activity:

1. First read *Henry's Freedom Box* by Ellen Levine.
2. After the reading the book, complete the worksheet.

Materials:

Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Assessment:

Formal: Worksheet



Social Studies Content Standards Addressed in Tours of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Kindergarten

History

Benchmark D: Indicator 5: Listen to and discuss songs, poetry, literature and drama that reflect the cultural heritages of the people of the United States.

People in Societies

Benchmark A: Indicator 1. Identify ways that individuals in the family, school and community are unique and ways that they are the same.

Grade 1

History

Benchmark C: Indicator 4: Raise questions about how families lived in the past and used photographs, letters, artifacts and books to clarify what is known and what is unknown.

Grade 2

History

Benchmark C: Indicator 4: Use historical artifacts, photographs, biographies, maps, diaries, and folklore to answer question about daily life in the past.

Benchmark D: Indicator 7: Recognize the importance of individual action and character and explain how they have made a difference in others' lives with emphasis on the importance of: a. Social and political leaders in the United States (e.g., Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth)

People in Societies

Benchmark B: Indicator 2. Identify cultural practices of a culture on each continent through the study of the folktales, music and art created by people living in that culture.

Grade 3

People in Society

Benchmark A: Indicator 1. Compare some of the cultural practices and products of various groups of people who have lived in the local community including: a. Artistic expression;



Language Arts Content Standards Addressed in Lesson Plans

Kindergarten

Acquisition of Vocabulary

Contextual Understanding: 1. Understand new words from the context of conversations or from the use of pictures within a text.

Reading Process

Comprehension Strategies: 8. Answer literal questions to demonstrate comprehension of orally read grade-appropriate texts.

Self-Monitoring Strategies: 9. Monitor comprehension of orally read texts by asking and answering questions.

Reading Applications

3. Tell the main idea of a selection that has been read aloud.

Writing Processes

Drafting, Revising and Editing: 4. Organize and group related ideas., 6. Use correct sentence structures when expressing thoughts and ideas., 8. Use resources (e.g., a word wall) to enhance vocabulary.

Publishing: 9. Rewrite and illustrate writing samples for display and for sharing with others.

Research

2. Use books or observations to gather information, with teacher assistance, to explain a topic or unit of study.

Communication: Oral and Visual

Listening and Viewing: 1. Listen attentively to speaker, stories, poems and songs.

Grade 1

Reading Process

Concepts of Print: 2. Establish a purpose for reading (e.g. to be informed, to follow directions or to be entertained).

Comprehension Strategies: 6. Recall the important ideas in fictional and non-fictional texts., 8. Answer literal, simple inferential and evaluative questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade appropriate print texts and electronic and visual media.

Self-Monitoring Strategies: 9. Monitor comprehension of independently– or group-read texts by asking and answering questions.

Independent Reading: 10. Use criteria to choose independent reading materials

Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text

3. Ask questions concerning essential elements of informational text., 4. Identify central ideas and supporting details of informational text with teacher assistance., 6. Follow multiple-step directions.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

2. Identify characters, setting and events in a story.



Language Arts Content Standards Addressed in Lesson Plans

Grade 1 (Continued)

Writing Processes

Drafting, Revising and Editing: 5. Organize writing to include a beginning, middle and end., 6. Construct complete sentences with subjects and verbs., 8. Use available technology to compose text., 11. Use resources (e.g. a word wall, beginner’s dictionary, word bank) to select effective vocabulary.

Publishing: 14. Rewrite and illustrate writing samples for display and for sharing with others.

Writing Applications

2. Write responses to stories that include simple judgments about the text.

Research

3. Use books or observations to gather information to explain a topic or unit of study with teacher assistance., 4. Recall important information about a topic with teacher assistance.

Communication: Oral and Visual

Listening and Viewing: 1. Use active listening skills, such as making eye contact or asking questions., 2. Compare what is heard with prior knowledge and experience.

Speaking Applications: 5. Deliver brief informational presentations.

Grade 2

Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency

8. Demonstrate a growing stock of sight words.

Reading Process

Comprehension Strategies: 1. Establish a purpose for reading, 4. Summarize text by recalling main ideas and some supporting details., 6. Answer literal, inferential and evaluative questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate print texts and electronic and visual media.

Reading Applications

2. Describe characters and setting., 3. Retell the plot of a story.

Writing Processes

Printing: 1. Generate writing ideas through discussion with others., Drafting, Revising and Editing: 5. Organize writing with a developed beginning, middle and end., 12. Use resources to select effective vocabulary., Publishing: 15. Rewrite and illustrate writing samples for display and for sharing with others.

Writing Applications

1. Write stories that convey a clear message, include details, use vivid language and move through a logical sequence of steps and events.



Language Arts Content Standards Addressed in Lesson Plans

Grade 2 (Cont.)

Research

2. Utilize appropriate searching techniques to gather information from a variety of locations., 3. Acquire information, with teacher assistance, from multiple sources and collect data about the topic., 4. Identify the important information and write brief notes about the information., 6. Report important findings to others.

Communication: Oral and Visual

Listening and Viewing: 1. Use active listening strategies, such as making eye contact and asking for clarification and explanation.

Grade 3

Acquisition of Vocabulary

Tools and Resources: 9. Determine the meanings and pronunciations of unknown words by using dictionaries, glossaries, technology and textual features, such as definitional footnotes or sidebars.

Reading Process

Comprehension Strategies: 4. Summarize texts, sequencing information accurately and include main ideas and details as appropriate., 7. Answer literal, inferential and evaluative questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate print texts and electronic and visual media.

Reading Applications

3. Identify and list the important central ideas and supporting details of informational text.

Reading Applications: Literary Text

2. Use concrete and describe similarities and differences of plot across literary works.

Writing Processes

Publishing: 16. Rewrite and illustrate writing samples for sdisplay and for sharing with others.

Writing Applications

2. Write responses to novels, stories and poems that demonstrate an understanding of the text and support judgments with specific references to the text.

Research

3. Acquire information from multiple sources and collect data about the topic., 4. Identify important information found in the sources and summarize the important findings.

Communication: Oral and Visual

Speaking Applications: 8. Deliver informational presentations.

