

Barbara Walker



Picture available at <http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/planetarium/ftdg1.htm>

Subject

History & Language Arts

Grade

3rd and 4th

Topic

Underground Railroad

Length

1 hour

Objectives

- I. Students will have a beginning foundation of knowledge about the Underground Railroad.
- II. Students will analyze reading material and media to determine important information.
- III. Students will engage in a sensory activity and develop meaningful, personal definitions to enhance learning .

Materials and Technology

- *Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Jeanette Winter
- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils
- TV/VCR

- *Reading Rainbow: Follow The Drinking Gourd*
- Black construction paper
- Star stickers

Procedures

- I. To engage students, have them think about and define as a class the word “freedom” by using sticky notes and pens. What is “freedom” to them? Why has it? Why is it important? Under what conditions might people not have freedom? Discuss as a class and post the notes in the front of class.
- II. Introduce the history of American slaves and how they defined “freedom” through the video *Reading Rainbow: Follow The Drinking Gourd*. (Cue from the beginning of the tape and play until the beginning of the reading of the book.)
- III. Discuss their perceptions of the video. In the program, there are recreations of slaves and their lives. Discuss how these may be different from what really happened.
- IV. Discuss with students what the Underground Railroad really was and why the railroad metaphor was a good description.
- V. Read the book *Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Jeanette Winter to the class. Discuss with the student the difficulties the slaves has during the trip (i.e. lack of food, travel at night and in the winter, no heat or fire for cooking, through the woods, wildlife, slave catchers, etc.)
- VI. Return to the cover of the book and ask students what the Drinking Gourd meant to a runaway slave? Discuss.
- VII. Have students go back to their “freedom” definition and create their own constellations based upon that using the black construction paper as their night sky and the star stickers.
- VIII. Post in the classroom for all to see and discuss.

Additional Resources

Reading Rainbow Website: <http://gpn.unl.edu/rainbow/>

Uncle Remus Website: <http://www.uncleremus.com/>

The Drinking Gourd by F.N. Monjo

Harriet Tubman by Catherine Nichols

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing by James Weldon Johnson

Shake It To The One That You Love The Best by Cheryl Warren Mattox

Shades of Black by Sandra L. Pinkney