



Field hands



Popular abolitionist emblem,
designed in 1787



Restraint devices

Underground Railroad Lesson Plan

Middle School – Grade 8

The Underground Railroad

3 Class Periods – 150 Minutes



WILLIAM STILL (1821-1902)

Indefatigable worker in the Philadelphia Underground Still kept rare day-to-day records, which were published in 1872. A successful coal merchant, he continued to campaign against discrimination.

OBJECTIVES:



FREDERICK DOUGLASS (ca 1817-1895)

A fugitive slave, Douglass became a skilled abolitionist speaker, praised for “wit, argument, sarcasm, and pathos.” He urged African Americans to pursue vocational education and the vote; his print shop in Rochester, New York, was a depot on the underground.

- Students will **gain an understanding** of the Underground Railroad.
- Students will **evaluate** the morality or immorality of slavery and the Underground Railroad.
- Students will **question and justify** their decision to aide a runaway slave on their quest for freedom.

Materials:

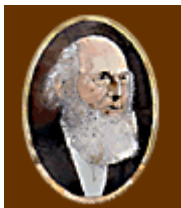


THOMAS GARRETT (1789-1871)

“Among the manliest of men, and the gentlest of spirits,” wrote William Lloyd Garrison about the Wilmington businessman who aided more than 2,700 slaves to freedom.

- History Channel Documentary *Underground Railroad* Hosted by Alfre Woodard 1998.
- Distribute a copy of teacher created questions covering the video *Underground Railroad*.
- Distribute a copy of ‘What Would You Do’ On-Demand questions.

Procedure:



JONATHAN WALKER (1799-1878)

Imprisoned for helping seven slaves sail from Florida bound for the Bahamas, he was branded on the hand with SS for “Slave Stealer.” After release he became a “conspicuous witness against slave power” for the abolitionists.

1. Spend 2 class periods (100 minutes) watching the History Channel Documentary and answering the movie questions.
2. Discuss the students' answers to the movie questions.
3. Complete and discuss the student answers to the "What Would You Do" On-Demand question.

Student Assessment:



WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON (1805-1879)

One of the earliest, most vitriolic abolitionists, he devoted full time to the cause, speaking against slavery and the Constitution that permitted it. By 1841 he was calling upon the North to secede.

- Students will be assessed through their answers to the video questions.
- Students will be monitored and assessed through their active participation in a class discussion of the Underground Railroad.
- Students will be asked to answer an On-Demand question dealing with slavery and the Underground Railroad.

Teacher Resources:



JOSIAH HENSON (1789-1883)

So trustworthy a slave that his owner made him an overseer, Henson, while transporting slaves to Kentucky, resisted others' efforts to free them all. Harriet Beecher Stowe attributed a similar episode to Uncle Tom in her novel. Henson eventually escaped to Canada, led others to safety, and traveled as abolitionist and businessman

- History Channel Documentary *Underground Railroad* Hosted by Alfre Woodard 1998.
- Website containing brief sketches of abolitionists:
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/hfame.html>
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/j1.html>
- <http://www.nku.edu/~undergroundrr/>

Underground Railroad Video Questions

Answer the following questions on your own paper.

1. What did Colonel William Cotton say Southern slave owners claimed ran under the Ohio River?
2. What was this Nation's first Civil Rights movement?
3. For every well known conductor/activist on the Underground Railroad how many have been lost to history?
4. What does the mythology of the Underground Railroad revolve around?
5. What are some of the obstacles fugitive slave had to overcome?
6. Why was escape epically hard for enslaved women?
7. How many slaves are thought to have traveled the Underground Railroad?
8. Of the original 100 Africans sent to Jamestown how many survived the Middle Passage?
9. In the 1600's and 1700's where did slavery exist in America?
10. In the 1600's and 1700's who became the runaway slaves' best ally?
11. What was the first legally sanctioned free black community in America?
12. Why did Africans fight in the Revolutionary War?
13. What crop became the most valuable export of the United States?
14. By 1786 how many states had abolished slavery or established policies for gradual emancipation?
15. Who wrote the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd"?
16. What was the "Drinking Gourd"?
17. Who were the most important Northern Abolitionists?
18. What kind of law are people who harbor a runaway slave breaking?
19. What was America's first abolitionist newspaper?
20. What was the name of Fredrick Douglass's abolitionist newspaper?
21. How many runaway slaves did William Still and his family harbor in their home?
22. How long did Henry "Box" Brown spend on the train to freedom?
23. How long did Samuel Smith, the man who helped "Box" Brown escape spend in prison for helping slaves escape?
24. What ended the security slaves had north of the Mason-Dixon Line in 1850?
25. Once the Northern United States was no longer safe for fugitive slaves where did they go to be free?
26. Why was Harriet Tubman beaten daily as a child?
27. How many times did Harriet Tubman go south to smuggle slaves out of bondage?
28. How much did slave catchers in Maryland offer as a bounty for Harriet Tubman?
29. Why was crossing the Ohio River such an obstacle for many slaves?
30. Where was "Freedom Town" in the 1840's and 50's?
31. What signaled a safe house for runaway slaves?
32. For how many years did John Rankin and his family harbor fugitive slaves?
33. How did John P. Parker gain his freedom and how long did it take?
34. What is the title of John P. Parker's autobiography?
35. What did the authorities do to black sailors in Charleston to ensure they did not get message to other blacks?

36. What was America's first integrated college?
37. What Supreme Court decision declared that Africans/Blacks had no legal rights?
38. Where did John Brown grow up?
39. What document written by Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the South?
40. What was the profession of all six of John P. Parker's children?
Where will the first museum dedicated to the Underground Railroad be located?

Underground Railroad Writing Prompt

Answer the following questions on another sheet of paper.

Imagine you are a slave. You have no rights and no freedom. Six days a week you toil in the fields for your master making him wealthy. One of your friends is talking about escaping north to freedom. Do you go with them? Explain your answer. Be sure to include reasons for escaping, hardships you must face/overcome, and possible sources of help. If you choose not to escape explain you reasons.

You have been asked to hide a fugitive slave overnight. If you get caught, you will be sent to prison. What would you do? Explain your answer. Be sure to include your reasons for aiding the fugitive slave. If you decide not to hide the fugitive slave explain you reasons.