

# Underground Railroad Unit

3rd/4th Grade



Social Studies: Geography, economics, civics, anthropology, history

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Unit Goals:

- Students will be able to identify key people in the Underground Railroad
  - Harriet Tubman
  - Quakers
- Students will be able to identify components of the Underground Railroad
  - Stations
  - Conductors
- Students will be able to describe the route of the Underground Railroad
- Students will be able to describe the impact the Underground Railroad had on the Civil War
- Students will be able to describe forms of communication used between the slaves on the Underground Railroad
- Students will be able to describe some of the laws inflicted upon the slaves
- Students will be able to describe how slave trade impacted the economy

# Lesson 1

## History of the Underground Railroad

### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to identify Harriet Tubman and relay facts about the Underground Railroad
- Affective: Students will feel empathy for the slaves and they will feel amazed at the work of Harriet Tubman
- Psychomotor:

### Standards:

- 3.4.2.3.1 3. Historical events have multiple causes and can lead to varied and unintended outcomes.
- 3.4.2.5.1 5. History is made by individuals acting alone and collectively to address problems in their communities, state, nation and world.

### Plan:

- Write the word “goal” on the board and ask the students what this means?
  - Wait for responses
  - Explain to students that a goal is something that we want and hope will happen. When we have a goal, we try to reach it.
- Today we are going to talk about someone who worked hard to reach her goal. Her plan was successful.
- Distribute a copy of “Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad” to all the students
- Have the class volunteer read as a whole group
- After reading, ask the following questions:
  - Harriet saw a problem that needed a solution. What was the problem?
  - What was her solution?
  - Why did she want to help the enslaved people?
  - After she rescued the first people, how do you think she felt?
  - When Harriet’s plan didn’t always work, what do you think she told herself to not give up?
    - What kinds of things do you think we can say to ourselves to not give up in tough circumstances?
      - Write students’ responses on the board
- Activities/Formative Assessments:
  - Have students create a play about the biography
  - Make a mural regarding Tubman’s story
  - Draw a picture of how you can help others

- Journal: What would I say to Harriet Tubman if she were still alive?

## *Harriet Tubman*

### **Conductor on the Underground Railroad**

Harriet Tubman was born to slave parents in 1820. She grew up in a family of ten brothers and sisters. She is remembered as a hero because of her role as a “conductor” on the Underground Railroad. In 1849, Harriet left her husband and family to escape to freedom. Although she felt very sad leaving her family, Harriet knew that she would no longer live the life of a slave.

Living in the North, Harriet loved her freedom. In the North, she was free to go wherever she pleased. She could work any job she wanted and all the money she earned was hers to spend as she pleased. Living “Up North” was indeed living in the “Promised Land.” But Harriet was not satisfied with freedom only for herself. She decided her goal was for all slaves to be freed. It was then that Harriet decided to help others escape to freedom.

During her life Harriet made nineteen trips, bringing 300 slaves to freedom. Often she wore disguises, dressed as an elderly woman or man. Harriet was not alone in her work. There were many other “conductors” along the Underground Railroad, who provided food, a place to stay, and directions to the next “station.” The conductors and other people who hid and fed slaves on their way to freedom showed teamwork and patience in the face of great odds and danger. Harriet was so successful in her mission that the slave owners became angry and offered a reward of \$40,000 for her capture. However this obstacle did not stop Harriet from continuing to work toward her goal. She was known as “Moses” because like the Moses of long ago, she has led her people to freedom. Harriet was known to creep quietly into the slaves’ quarters and softly sing “Go Down Moses” in a deep strong voice. Suddenly the message that “Moses is here! Moses is here!” would be known through the slave rows of slave cabins. She would take into the night those willing to travel and they would make their escape to freedom.

During the Civil War, Harriet worked as a nurse, helping hundreds of slaves and soldiers regain their health. During the war, she also served as a scout for the Union Army helping soldiers rescue slaves from their owners. On one trip led by Harriet, nearly 800 slaves were rescued. One Union general called Harriet “a most remarkable woman, and invaluable as a scout.” After the Civil War Harriet returned home to Auburn, New York. Here she looked after her elderly parents. Harriet also opened her home as a haven for the homeless. Anyone needing food or shelter was welcome there.

In 1903, she gave her house and twenty-five acres of land to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church to be used for a home for the sick and homeless. She lived there until her death, which occurred on March 10, 1913, at the age of ninety-three.

For all of her feats and acts of heroism and bravery, she will always be remembered as a conductor of the Underground Railroad. "On my Underground Railroad," Harriet said with pride, "I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger."



**Harriet Tubman**

## Lesson 2

### Geography

#### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the completion of this lesson students will be able to develop a route that could have taken a runaway to freedom in the North.
- Affective: During the lesson students will have to think about how the slaves may have felt while running to safety. The students will show this in their writing journals.
- Psychomotor: During the lesson students will research different routes that could have worked and make a map of what they found. Students will also write in their journals about their experience as a runaway slave.

#### Standards:

- 3.3.1.1.1 People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.
- 3.3.1.1.2 People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

#### Plan:

- Wanted Poster:
- \$ 150 REWARD: RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Wednesday the 5th of June, a young negro about 12 or 13 years of age. The youth is of a dark color and has several old marks of the whip, one of them straight down the back. The youth could be traveling with other runaways.

A REWARD OF \$150 WILL BE PAID FOR THE APPREHENSION AND SECURITY IF TAKEN OUT OF THE STATE.

A reward of \$100 will be paid if taken in any county bordering on the Ohio river; \$50 if taken in any of the interior counties except Fayette; or \$20 if taken in the latter county.  
 June 6 - 1856 - tf B.L. BOSTON.

- **Project Scenario:** The wanted poster shown above is already being distributed on the streets, nailed to trees along the roadways and posted in towns throughout the South notifying the country of your escape. You left in the middle of the night. Your only plan was to follow the North Star. A Quaker who lived near the plantation gave you directions to a safe house or "station" on the mysterious Underground Railroad. After traveling all night through the woods, you reached the house. A candle in the window was your signal that it was safe to approach the house. The Quaker family hid you in a fake closet in their kitchen.
- **You are afraid to continue but terrified to go back. Where will you go on the underground railroad? What dangers might you face? Who is traveling**

with you? How will you know where to go? Who will help you? How will you know if it is safe to move on? Now, your journey begins.

- Pick a place of origin.
- Investigate how runaways traveled North on the Underground Railroad. Use all possible resources (books, articles, magazines, newspapers, internet)
- Develop your escape route to the North.
- Create a map tracking your journey North.
- Write a diary describing your adventures.

Formative Assessment:

- **Project Goals:** Students will research the Underground Railroad and develop a route that could have taken a runaway to freedom in the North. Students will build background knowledge about the biographies Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad and Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave and the novel Slave Dancer. Students will create maps of their escape routes, and they will write diaries recording their experiences during their journeys. The project will be evaluated using a rubric developed by the class.

Links:

- <http://web.archive.org/web/20010807154741/http://www.ash.udel.edu/incoming/palos7b/djames/ugrr.html>
- Websites that can be used for the project:
  - [Walk to Canada](#)
  - [North Star](#)
  - [Underground Railroad sites in different states](#)
  - [The Underground Railroad travel itinerary](#) - intro., maps, sites
  - [Conducting Underground Railroad research](#) - Conductors by state
  - [Underground Railroad](#) - intro., narratives, literature, music, maps
  - [The Underground Railroad in Rochester, New York](#)
  - [Milton House Wisconsin](#)
  - [Levi Coffin House Indiana](#)
  - [Levi Coffin brief info.](#)
  - [Levi Coffin detailed info.](#)
  - [Underground Railroad tour](#) - day by day tour with pictures of hiding places (go to day 2-5)
  - [Carneal House Northern Kentucky](#)
  - [Sites in Illinois](#)
  - [Sites in Connecticut](#)
  - [Sites in New York](#)
  - [Sites in Delaware](#)

- [Thomas Garrett abolitionist from Delaware](#)
- [Sites in North Carolina](#)
- [Sites in Canada](#)
- [Sites in Vermont](#)
- [Directory with the names of operators by state](#)
- [Old Slave House Illinois](#)
- [Routes in Northeastern New York](#)
- [Sites in Southeastern Ohio](#)
- Books that can be used for the project:
  - The Underground Railroad by Raymond Bial
  - Many Thousand Gone by Virginia Hamilton
  - Get on Board!: The Story of the Underground Railroad by Jim Haskins
  - Barefoot Escape on the Underground Railroad by Pamela Duncan Edwards
  - Follow the Drinking Gourd by Jeannette Winter
  - Underground Railroad Records by William Still

## Lesson 3

### Spirituals-culture

Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will understand the concept and historical context of spirituals and identify the secret messages found in the lyrics.
- Affective: Students will feel empathy for the slaves and amazement at the secrecy of the lyrics.
- Psychomotor: Students will create a personal spiritual that includes a line from a known spiritual

Standards:

- 4.4.2.4.1 4. The differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributable to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time.

Plan:

- Watch the [video](#) on spirituals
- Talk about the differences between hymns and spirituals
  - They were a way for the slaves to communicate and express themselves
- Play the song [Swing Low Sweet Chariot](#)
- Periodically stop the video to discuss what the spiritual means
  - As you do this, students will fill out a worksheet that breaks the lyrics down and they can write the meaning next to them
- Play the song again uninterrupted
- Distribute a piece of the song lyric to each student (see attached document)
- Students will use this lyric to compose their own spiritual
  - Spirituals should reflect the life of a slave or impending travel on the Underground Railroad
  - Students should include a “code” with their song, so the teacher can see the meaning of the song
    - Historical facts can be included but must be accurate
- See if anyone is willing to share their songs

Formative Assessment:

- Students identifying hidden meaning in “Swing Low Sweet Chariot”
- The spiritual they composed

Worksheets:

- [Coded Lyrics Worksheet](#)
  - [Answer Key](#)

- [Distribute these lyrics](#)

## Lesson 4

### Civics-Laws

#### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the completion of the lesson students will be able to explain the different vocabulary that was learned and use it to tell a story.
- Affective: During the lesson students will be able to think about if they have heard any of the new vocabulary words and where they were used.
- Psychomotor: During the lesson students will create a storyboard either on paper or a computer to explain a new word that was learned.

#### Standards

- 3.1.1.1.1. Democratic government depends on informed and engaged citizens who exhibit civic skills and values, practice civic discourse, vote and participate in elections, apply inquiry and analysis skills and take action to solve problems and shape public policy.

#### Plan:

- Create a storyboard to introduce the new vocabulary (shown on the website)
- Vocabulary:
  - Abolition
  - Plantation
  - Fugitive
  - Abductions
  - Refugee
  - underground

#### Formative Assessment:

- In this activity, students demonstrate their understanding of several words using a spider map [vocabulary board](#). After choosing the word(s), students provide the part of speech, definition, an example from the text, and demonstrate their understanding of the word(s) through an illustration in the related storyboard cell.

#### Links:

- <http://www.storyboardthat.com/teacher-guide/underground-railroad-by-henrietta-buckmaster>
  - Shows different ways of teaching the new vocabulary

# Lesson 5

## Economics

### Objectives

**Cognitive:** at the completion of the lesson students will explain the political events that occurred after slavery was abolished.

**Affective:** Students will compare and contrast the economic opportunities of slaves before and after slavery was abolished.

**Psychomotor:** During the lesson students will identify three major political, social, and economic aspects of Reconstruction, and describe one goal, obstacle, and achievement within each.

Standards:

- 3.2.4.5.1 Individuals, businesses and governments interact and exchange goods, services and resources in different ways and for different reasons: Interactions between buyers and sellers in a market determines the price and quantity exchanged of a good service or resource.
- 3.2.4.5.2 Individuals, businesses and governments interact and exchange goods, services and resources in different ways and for different reasons: Interactions between buyers and sellers in a market determines the price and quantity exchanged of a good service or resource.

Plan:

- Build background knowledge by telling students you are going to show them actual work agreements between a former slave owner and his former slave after the civil war. Project the First primary source Document for the class to see.
- Assist students in reading and comprehending the source, and talk about any student misconceptions around the results of ending slavery. Explain that abolition of slavery often left former slaves unemployed and homeless
- Project the second primary source document and compare and contrast it with the first one. Are the contracts fair or unfair? Is one more favorable than the other?
- Guide students to understand that former slaves had extremely limited options after slavery ended. What could be done to support them in finding jobs and homes?

Encourage students to make suggestions based on both historical facts and their own opinions.

- Play the Reconstruction movie for the class, instructing students to listen to various ways the government intervened through passing new laws.
- Distribute copies of the Activity and have students choose three laws they heard during the movie and write them in the blanks.
- Play the movie through a second time, and provide an opportunity for students to fill in their charts to describe the law as fair or foul.
- For homework, have students conduct further research on each law, and add to their chart in defense of their opinion of the law.
- The next day activate students prior knowledge by displaying the Review quiz for the class to see. As you click through each question, have students use hand signals, devices, or individually dry erase boards to indicate their answer choices. You may want to discuss the answers as a whole class.
- Have students work in pairs to work on this with a graphical organizer. Challenge students to work and consider the political, social, and economic aspects of Reconstruction, and describe one goal, obstacle, and achievement within each.
- Have students share, was the law's fair, and how did the students decide?

Materials: Computers with internet access for BrainPOP

Formative Assessment: I would have students explain and describe one goal, obstacle, and achievement with me before they leave the room. Students would do this in their log.

Summative Assessment:

Students will create a PowerPoint presentation in groups of two. They will have to include the following:

Objective	3	2	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will identify key people in</li> </ul>				

the Undergr ound Railroad				
● Students will identify compon ents of the Undergr ound Railroad				
● Students will describe the route of the Undergr ound Railroad				
● Students will describe the impact the Undergr ound Railroad had on the Civil War				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Students will describe how slave trade impacted the economy</li></ul>				
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