

TUBMAN: ROAD TO FREEDOM

STUDY GUIDE



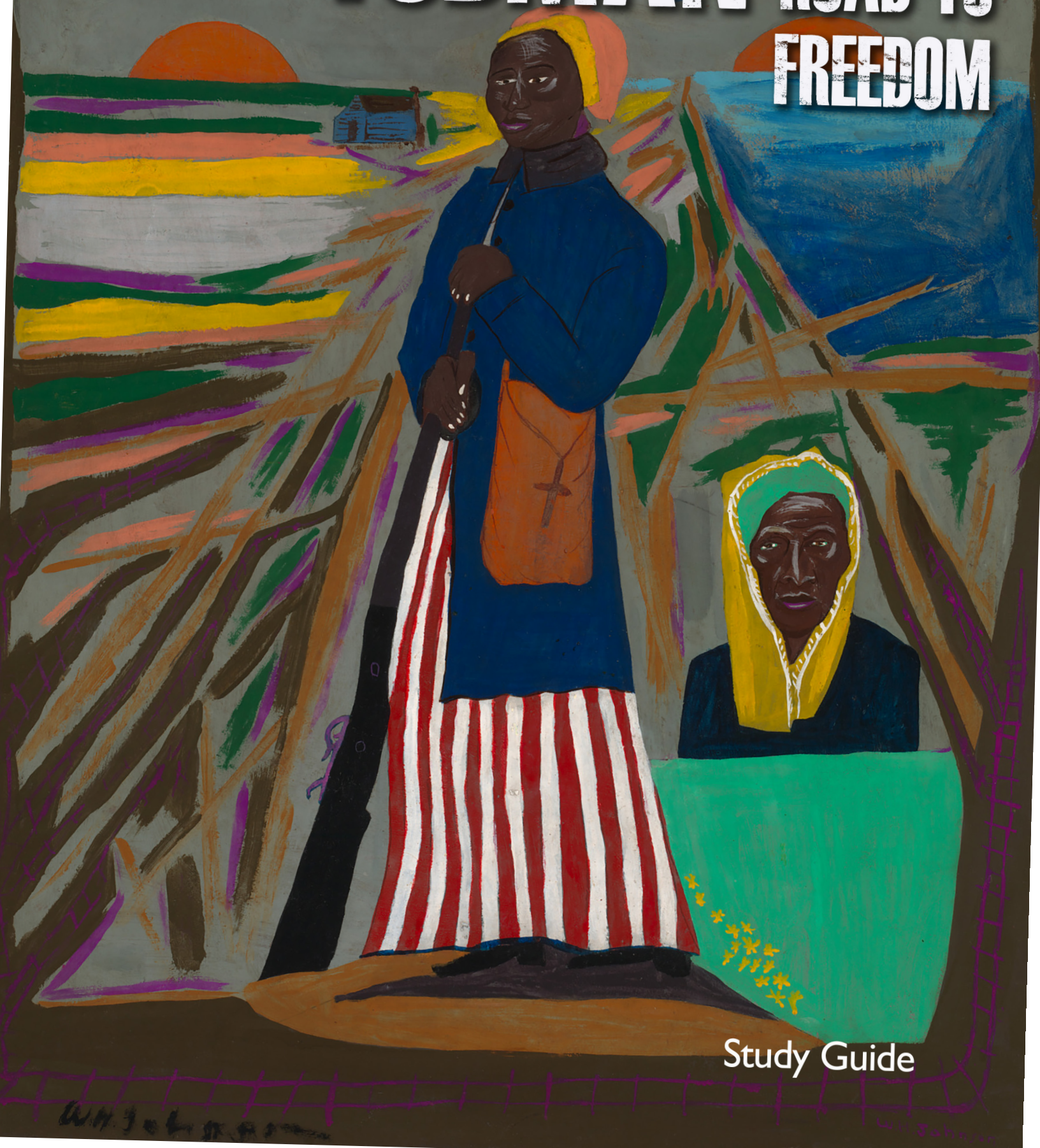
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TUBMAN ROAD TO FREEDOM



HARRIET TUBMAN

The Moses of her People

Harriet Tubman was born Araminta Ross to Ben and Aramint Ross, a slave couple, sometime around 1820 (the exact date isn't known, as records were not always kept of slave births and deaths). She was hired out at very young ages to neighbors of her master and was often treated especially harshly at these places because of her headstrong nature. As an adolescent, she was hit in the head with a lead weight, when she stepped between an angry master and another slave. She suffered from visions and debilitating periods throughout her life due to that head injury.

She married John Tubman, a free Black man, but in 1849, Araminta escaped to freedom in the North with the help of the Underground Railroad, a network of people who helped slaves to freedom. John refused to go with her, which ended their marriage. She settled in Philadelphia and took the name Harriet Tubman. Soon after she escaped, new laws were passed making it easier for slave catchers to pursue escaped slaves in the North, so she had to be very careful to avoid detection.

Within a year of her escape, returned south to help several family members escape before they were sold to another plantation. Her abilities to avoid detection and her success in helping others escape soon became legendary, and she was soon known as "the Moses of her people", referencing the Biblical character of Moses who led the Children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt.

When the Civil War began in 1861, with the slave-owning states fighting against the Northern states, Tubman volunteered to work as a nurse, cook, and laundress with the United States Army. In 1863, Tubman was asked to organize scouts to infiltrate and map the interior. Her spy ring was responsible for the famed Combahee River Raid in June 1863, which freed over 300 slaves.

After the war ended, she returned to Auburn, NY, where she had a house and where her parents now lived. She became involved in women's suffrage, trying to win women the right to vote, and continued to speak on the lecture circuit on the subject of equal rights for Black Americans.

She died in March, 1913





Follow the Drinking Gourd

When Harriet's Mother hears that she's planning on escaping, she tells Harriet to "follow the drinking gourd" - a common name for the constellation also known as "The Big Dipper."

The Big Dipper has been used by sailors and others to locate north for thousands of years, since if you follow the line from the two stars at the very front of the ladle, it draws a line to the star named "**Polaris**", otherwise known as "the North Star." Polaris is ALWAYS to the north of anyone in the northern hemisphere on earth, and is one of the quickest and easiest to locate stars in the sky, thanks to the Drinking Gourd!

*Follow the drinkin' gourd
Follow the drinkin' gourd
For the old man is comin' just to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*When the sun comes back, and the first quail calls
Follow the drinkin' gourd
For the old man is waiting just to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*Well the river bank makes a mighty good road
Dead trees will show you the way
Left foot, peg foot, travelin' on
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*Well the river ends, between two hills
Follow the drinkin' gourd
There's another river on the other side
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

FREEDOM QUILTS

It's a popular legend that quilts were used to aid runaways on the Underground Railroad. While it may not be true, it's absolutely true that Harriet and others would need ways to communicate secretly. Come up with some ways YOU would let other freedom fighters know how to avoid capture!



\$150 REWARD



RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he

make his escape to a free state, (in
haps he may try to get employment
is handy in any capacity as a boy
assinett conf

The Underground Railroad was a secret method to help escaped men and women find freedom in the north. Prior to being given a name, The Underground Railroad existed through efforts made by Quakers to aid escaped individuals in the seventeenth century.

Quaker Isaac T. Hopper organized an arrangement in Philadelphia to accomplish this in the early 1800s. Hopper hid slaves in his home and created safe passages for them to travel by. He later moved to New York City and continued his efforts there.

Another Quaker, Levi Coffin, also gave help to escaped individuals, starting when he was only 15-years-old. Coffin explained that he originally started by finding the fugitives himself and would then provide them with assistance on their journey. As time progressed, escaped slaves began to approach Coffin to seek his help.

The first mentions of the railroad were heard as early as 1831 when a man named Tice Davids managed to escape from his Kentucky owner and made his way to Ohio. Davids's owner claimed that an "underground railroad" gave him assistance in his escape.



AN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

HARRIET THE SPY

Early on in the Civil War (1861-1865), Harriet volunteered as a nurse with US Army units made of of Black soldiers. But soon she would be doing something even more demanding - acting as a spy and a scout for the Army!

In June 1863, she became the first woman to lead an armed military raid when she guided Col. James Montgomery and his 2nd South Carolina black regiment up the Combahee River, destroying Confederate outposts, liberating more than 700 slaves, and destroying stockpiles of cotton, food and weapons.

It was of her service to the U.S. Army that she was most proud. She successfully petitioned to receive a veteran's pension, and at her funeral in 1913, she received semi-military honors.



Thousands of free Black men and escaped slaves fought with the Union Army to help defeat the slave-owning states' rebellion. Harriet volunteered, just as these soldiers did, to do whatever they could to defeat the Southern rebellion against the North and end slavery.

Timeline of Slavery in America

1619 First record of African slaves being sold in Jamestown, Virginia

1664 Maryland requires slaves to be held for life - no freedom allowed.

1793 Invention of the cotton gin increases the market for slave labor in cotton-growing states

1820 The "Missouri Compromise" allows more slave states to join the US, as long as each new slave state is matched with a new free state

1850 The Fugitive Slave Act says that even after escaping, a slave can be captured in the North and returned to their "owner" - that a slave is always property, not a person

1860 Abraham Lincoln is elected President with the support of anti-slavery groups in the Northern states.

1861 Eleven slave-owning states start the Civil War, out of fear that Lincoln and the Northern states will make slavery illegal.

1863 Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all slaves in the Confederacy free (even though the war is still being fought).

1865 The Confederacy is defeated, and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution is passed, ending slavery in the US.

An Acrostic Full of Character!

An acrostic is a type of poem that describes something (in this case a character from the play *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*) by using each of the letters in the word as the beginning of a line of poetry. For example, an acrostic about America might read:

Apple Pie from ear to ear!
Majesty in its purple mountains
Easy to love
Revolutionary men set us free.
Independent from any other nation.
Caring people live here
America is a wonderful nation!

For resources on sharing and creating poetry with children, visit:

www.poetryfoundation.org

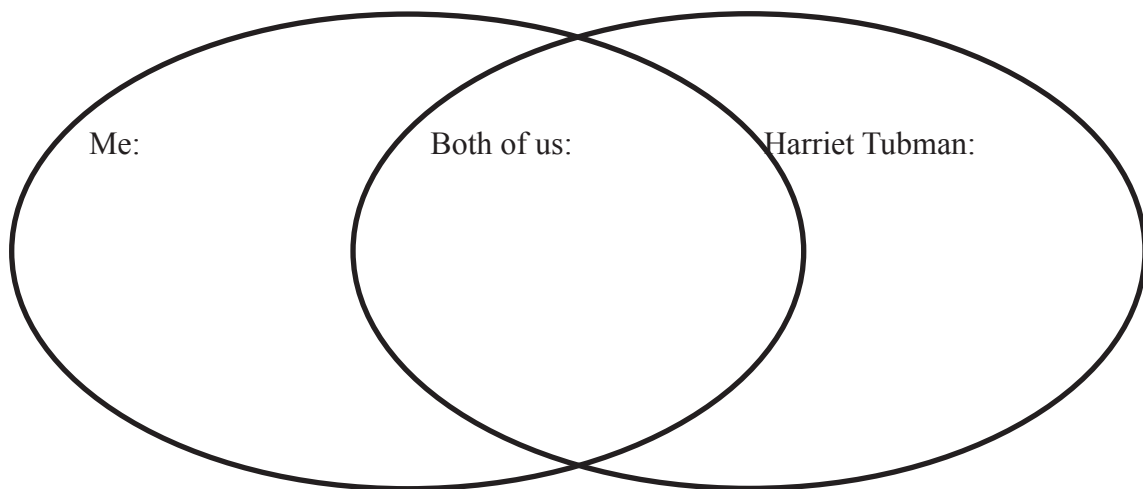
Write your own acrostic about Harriet Tubman, based on what you've learned about her.

H _____
A _____
R _____
R _____
I _____
E _____
T _____

With a partner, discuss which of the following statements best characterizes Harriet Tubman. Justify your choice:

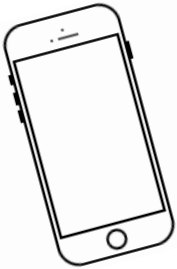
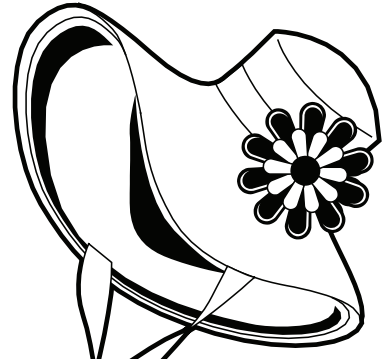
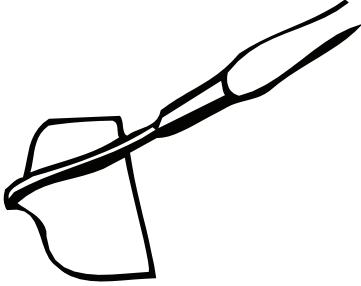
- a. She was a strong leader who was not afraid to face danger to free her people.
- b. She was an avid abolitionist who lived in the North.
- c. She was an obedient servant and loved her masters.
- d. She was in favor of states' rights over freedom for slaves.

What traits did Harriet Tubman possess? Do you have any traits in common with her? Use the venn diagram below to compare your personality and Harriet's personality.



Now and Then

This play was set in the mid-1800's. Everyday life has changed in many ways since then. Classify the objects below in the "T" chart according to whether they'd be found at the time the play was set, or in today's world.



Now

Then



Challenge

Read about life during the 1800's. In what ways was it different than today's world? Write a paragraph describing all the ways your life would be different if you had lived back then.

Extend It!

If you could travel back to the 1800's, what one item from today's world would you take to give to Harriet Tubman to help her? Justify your choice.

Post-show Discussion

Here are some questions to help your students **start a conversation** after seeing the show.

Students can first discuss the questions **with a partner** and then share with the larger group:

- ❖ After seeing the performance, what moments were most **important to you**?
 - How did it impact you? How do you feel talking about it?
- ❖ Did any of the **characters** in the play remind you of yourself or someone you know?
 - What are the similarities between that person and the character?
 - What are the differences between that person and the character?
- ❖ What was your **favorite part** of *Tubman: Road to Freedom*?
 - How did it stand out from other moments?
 - How do you feel talking about it?
- ❖ Thinking about the **technical aspects** of the performance (**lights, sound, costumes, props, scenery**) are there any moments or specific details you remember most?
 - What was happening in the performance that stood out to you?
 - How did the technical features help improve the moment?

Illinois Fine Arts Learning Standards for Theatre, TH:Re9.1.a-c

Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

- a) Develop and apply criteria to evaluate a drama/theatre work.
- b) Evaluate the effectiveness of the technical elements.
- c) Establish an active relationship between audience and performer.

See Theatre Etiquette pg. 4, Theatre Vocabulary pg. 5, Post-Show Discussion pg.6



How do you Make a Play?

GreatWorks Theatre produces lot of shows every school year, but the process of putting together a play is pretty similar, whether it's a play for student audiences or a Broadway production!

at left - The BFG

Step One - Find a Story & Write the Play

We look at lots of different stories every year, and choose ones that we think will be entertaining for audiences. A person who writes plays is called a Playwright. Even though they're "writers", the job title uses the old English word "wright", which means a person who 'makes' something.

Step Two - Hire the Actors

Actors find new plays to be in by "auditioning" for the producers, where they will show the producer how they act and sound when playing the specific character. GreatWorks gets anywhere from 500 to 1000 actors every year for our audition process, and will end up hiring 50 to 60 for a season.

Step Three - Set/Costumes/Props

The 'set' describes the physical pieces on stage to help set the mood for the show. Costumes help the audience figure out who the characters are, and 'props' (short for "properties") are the things actors might pick up or carry on stage. All of them are designed to help the story make sense.

Step Four - Practice, practice, practice

Whether you're in a school play or a professional play, you have to learn your lines, learn your "blocking" (where you move on stage), and figure out how to make each moment the best it can be.

With professional actors, knowing how to learn lines quickly and make smart choices about the character and their performance is part of the job - and for most of them, our show is only one of 10 or 15 shows they might be in every year!

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE PLAY

Attending the theatre is very different from watching TV or going to the movies. For one thing, the actors are real people who are performing right then and there. They can see and hear everything that happens in the audience. Because of this, YOU are an important part of the play and its important to do your job as an audience member well. Here are some tips before you see the play.

1. Please be quiet and respectful so everyone else around you can hear what's happening and so the actors can do their job.
2. If something is funny, it is okay to laugh!
3. The actors may ask you to participate. Don't be afraid to respond, ask a question or volunteer!
4. Keep your hands to yourself and your eyes up front.
5. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
6. Have fun! Enjoy yourself! And if you like the idea of being on stage, make sure to audition next time your school does a show!



Theatre Vocabulary

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

Improvisation

Curtain Call

Backstage

Role

Green Room

Downstage

Scenery

Cast

Audience

Actor

Lines

Legs

What does it mean?

Improvisation – to make up dialogue and action as you go. Acting without rehearsal.

Green Room – the backstage lounge or waiting room for the actors (almost never painted green!)

Audience – the people who watch and/or listen and respond to a performance.

Curtain call – the appearance of the cast at the end of the show for bows in response to the audience applause.

Downstage – the portion of the stage closest to the audience; toward the audience.

Actor – a performer, player, thespian.

Backstage – the area of the stage that the audience cannot see.

Scenery – the large furniture, walls, and structures, etc. that represent a location or decorate the stage, the set.

Lines – pieces or sentences of dialogue.

Role – the part or character played by an actor.

Cast – the actors in a play.

Legs – the narrow curtains on either side of the stage that hide backstage.