

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Harriet Tubman

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. b'

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery around 1820. She was owned by a White family and forced to work for them for no pay. Her parents, Harriet Green and Ben Ross, were also enslaved. When she was born, Harriet's name was Araminta Ross. She was nicknamed Minty. As a child, Minty had to work in a house, cooking and taking care of a baby. She later worked in the fields of a plantation, a large farm where crops were grown to be sold. When she was about 23, she married a free Black man named John Tubman. She changed her last name from Ross to Tubman. Around this time, she also changed her first name from Araminta to Harriet. She may have done this to honor her mother. Araminta Ross became Harriet Tubman.

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Notes

2. b'

Overseers were in charge of plantations. As a teenager, Tubman suffered a bad injury when she tried to protect another enslaved person from an overseer. He had left the fields without permission. His overseer told Tubman to help stop him from leaving, but she refused. The overseer threw a two-pound weight at the other enslaved person. It hit Tubman's head. As a result, for the rest of her life, she would often get bad headaches and feel dizzy and sleepy.

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Notes

3. b'

Notes

The North Star is above the North Pole. It always points north. So, escaped enslaved people were able to use the North Star to guide them north to freedom. To find the North Star in the sky, you can first look for a group of stars called the Big Dipper. Some of the stars in the Big Dipper line up with the North Star. You can look from these stars to the North Star.

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4. b'

Notes

The Underground Railroad was not a real railroad with real trains. It was a secret network, or system, of people who helped enslaved people escape to the North. These people were called abolitionists. They wanted to end slavery. Conductors were people who went with enslaved people on the journey from the South to the North. They guided them to houses and businesses along the way called safe houses. It was safe for escaped enslaved people to hide in these places.

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Harriet Tubman was the most famous conductor on the Underground Railroad. She made 19 trips back to the South and rescued about 70 enslaved people. Enslaved people who escaped using the Underground Railroad were called passengers. Tubman succeeded in getting every one of her passengers to freedom safely.

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5. b'

The first enslaved people were forced to come to the United States from Africa in 1619. African-Americans were enslaved in both the North and the South. More people were enslaved in the South because the South had more plantations where forced labor was common. Slavery ended in the North before it did in the South. By 1804, all Northern states had voted to abolish slavery.

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However, in 1850, a law called the Fugitive Slave Act was passed. This law said that people in the North had to help capture enslaved people who had run away. These runaways were not free even if they reached the North. They could be brought back to the South to be enslaved again. So, Tubman began leading runaways from the South past the northern states into Canada where they could be free.

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6. b'

In 1861, a war broke out between the North and the South. One of the causes of the war was a disagreement about whether to abolish slavery. The North wanted to get rid of slavery, but the South did not. During the Civil War, Tubman worked for the North as a spy, cook, and nurse. One time, Tubman guided soldiers in boats along a river in South Carolina. They rescued over 700 enslaved people. In addition to being an abolitionist, Tubman fought for women's rights. In April 2016, the US government announced that they would put a picture of Tubman on the \$20 bill.

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