

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Harriet Tubman - Answer Key

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. 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."

Based on the passage, Harriet Tubman's parents \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. named all of their children after themselves      B. encouraged Tubman to marry a free man  
C. were born free but captured and sold into slavery as teenagers      ☒ D. were owned by other people and forced to work for no pay

*The passage states, "Harriet Tubman was born into slavery...she was owned by a White family and forced to work for them for no pay." The passage then states that Tubman's parents "were also enslaved."*

2. 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.

According to the passage, why would Harriet Tubman often get headaches and feel dizzy?

- ✓ A. Because she was hit in the head while trying to protect another enslaved person
- The passage states that "an overseer threw a two-pound weight" at another enslaved person when Tubman "refused" to help stop him from leaving. "As a result, for the rest of her life, she would often get bad headaches and feel dizzy and sleepy."*
- B. Because she left the fields without permission and an overseer yelled at her loudly
- C. Because she fell down while she was trying to run after another enslaved person
- D. Because she stopped another enslaved person from escaping, and that person hurt her

3. 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.

What is the purpose of the underlined sentence in the passage above?

- A. To explain why the North Star is difficult to find
- B. To introduce the Big Dipper by describing how to find it in the sky
- ✓ C. To introduce the North Star by describing its location
- D. To explain how the North Star is different from the Big Dipper

*The passage describes the North Star, why escaped enslaved people were able to use it to guide them to freedom, and how it can be found in the sky. The underlined sentence introduces the North Star by describing its location: "above the North Pole."*

4. 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.

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.

According to the passage, a “passenger” on the Underground Railroad was \_\_\_\_\_.

A. a person who helped enslaved people escape by going with them on the Underground Railroad



**B.**

an enslaved person who escaped through the Underground Railroad

*The sentence “Enslaved people who escaped using the Underground Railroad were called passengers” supports this answer.*

C. a famous person who helped many enslaved people escape on the Underground Railroad

D. a person who hid enslaved people in his home along the Underground Railroad

5. 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.

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.

Based on the passage, runaway enslaved people who made it to Canada \_\_\_\_\_.

A. then took a journey from Canada to Africa



B.

legally could not be returned to the South to be enslaved again

*The passage states that because of the Fugitive Slave Act, runaways who “reached the North...could be brought back to the South to be enslaved again.” As a result, Tubman began leading runaways into Canada, “where they could be free.” These details show that runaways who made it to Canada legally could not be returned to slavery in the South.*

C. were forced to be slaves in Canada

D. went to the northern states when the Fugitive Slave Act was ended

6. 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.

What is the meaning of the word “abolish” in the passage above?

A. Disagree about

B. Guide



C.

Get rid of

*The passage states that one of the causes of the Civil War between the North and the South was “a disagreement about whether to abolish slavery. The North wanted to get rid of slavery, but the South did not.” This detail shows that “abolish” means “get rid of.”*

D. Rescue

