

Name _____

Date _____

Harriet Tubman & Courage

“Let My People Go”

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

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Harriet Tubman was born enslaved 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 slaves. 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.”

Notes

2.



b'

Slaves were always closely watched while they worked.

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Overseers were in charge of plantations. As a teenager, Tubman

suffered a bad injury when she tried to protect another slave from an overseer. Another slave 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 slave. 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.

Notes

3.



b'

The star at the end of the "handle" in the Little Dipper constellation is the North Star.

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The North Star is above the North Pole. It always points north. So, escaped slaves 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.

Notes

4.



b'

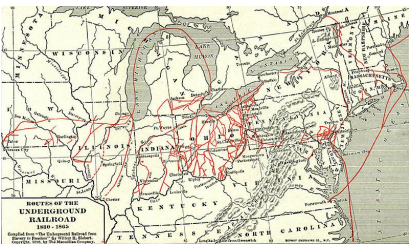
The Underground Railroad was an escape route for slaves.

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The Underground Railroad was not a real railroad with real trains. It was a secret network, or system, of people who helped slaves escape to the North. These people were called abolitionists. They wanted to end slavery. Slaves who escaped using the Underground Railroad were called passengers. Conductors were people who went with slaves 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 slaves to hide in these places.

Notes

5.



b'

The Fugitive Slave Act pushed slaves toward Canada.

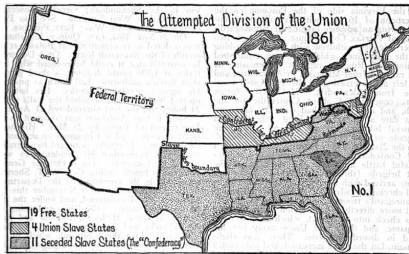
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The first slaves were forced to come to the United States from Africa in 1619. African-Americans were enslaved in both the North and the South. There were more slaves in the South because the South had more plantations where slaves were needed. Slavery 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 runaway slaves. 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 runaway slaves from the South past the northern states into Canada where they could be free.

Notes

6.



b'

During the Civil War, the North was called "the Union" and the South, "the Confederacy."

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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 slaves. 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.

Notes