

Introduction

There is a worldwide quest for freedom everywhere. People want freedom. Nations want freedom. Some will sacrifice life, fortune, success, for freedom.

This video on "The Quest for Freedom" tells of the quest by one woman--perhaps the greatest heroine of the abolitionist movement in the mid-1800s. Born into slavery in Maryland, Harriet Tubman escaped to freedom, but then returned again and again to her slave homeland to help hundreds of other fugitives escape. Her story is a tale of unimaginable bravery and courage. Her story is a beginning for teaching students about their own quest for freedom.

What is this freedom for which so many search?

Freedom is the power to choose--the right not to be a slave or be under another's control.

Freedom is the choice to live where and how we want.

Freedom is the power to pursue happiness. To study and work for the kind of job we want. To choose our friends, and the color of clothes we wear. To worship as we are led.

However, freedom is also responsibility.

This means voting and making changes in our society.

This means being real, and not lying, and not faking it. It's allowing others to have their freedoms. To choose their friends, and to wear the clothes they want. To worship as they are led.

This means embarking on a lifelong quest to make a difference.

Using The Video

How can a teacher or instructor use this video? This dramatization is a springboard to launch a whole study in history of the slavery years before the Civil War. The objective is to interest students in finding more about what it means to be a slave, more about the history of African-Americans, and more about the roots of prejudice.

Preview the video before showing to your class, and then use the teaching ideas and exercises included in this book to supplement your study. At the end of the video, the lead character gives a set of 12 questions for class use, and we provide a note sheet to accompany these questions. Simply remove the note sheet from the center of this handbook, and make as many copies as needed for your class.

We have included a wide variety of follow-up ideas in this manual, including games, puzzles and activities that you may wish to use for making students participants in learning history.

The Life of Harriet Tubman

- **Born**--Harriet Tubman was born in 1820 or 1821 in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, near the town of Cambridge. Her name given at birth was Araminta Ross, but she was called by her mother's name of Harriet in her youth and in later years by her married name of Tubman.
- **Family**--Her parents were Benjamin Ross and Harriet Greene and she was the granddaughter of a slave who came from Africa. Her father worked as a timber inspector, but as a slave, supervising the cutting and hauling of wood for the Baltimore shipyards.
- **Experiences as a child**--When Harriet was six, she was taken from her mother and sent away ten miles to live with James Cook, whose wife was a weaver and was to teach her the trade of weaving. While still a small child, Cook had her work his trap line, which was the set of traps he used to catch wild animals. To work the trap line, Harriet had to wade through water. Once she had to work the lines while she was ill with the measles, and catching cold from wading in the water in this condition, she grew very sick. Then Harriet's mother persuaded the slavemaster to take Harriet away from Cook's until she could get well. Another time she was sent out to a home to care for a small baby. She was to tend the baby constantly--24 hours a day--and the woman of the home was very cruel. Harriet was whipped over and over for the smallest of offenses--simply allowing the baby to cry out was enough for a beating. Harriet did work traditionally given to both men and women--experiences which later in life would give her the tools and skills necessary to survive in her many trials. During her teen years she worked for a man named John Stewart doing some very rough labours--driving oxen, plowing, etc. She also worked with her father cutting and hauling logs--she could cut a half cord of wood (a pile of wood 4 ft high, 4 ft wide, and 4 ft across) in a day.
- **The head wound**--She received a terrible head wound as a child that in later life caused her bouts of somnolence (the tendency to easily fall asleep, even at odd times). In her early teens she was hired out as a field hand one fall. The slaves worked in the evening on such jobs as husking corn, but one evening a slave owned by a farmer named Barrett left the work to go to the village store without permission. He was followed by the overseer and by Harriet. When the slave was found, the overseer decided he should be whipped (a common punishment in those days) and he asked Harriet as well as others to help tie him up. Harriet refused, but then the captured slave tried to run away, and Harriet placed herself in the doorway to stop him. The overseer grabbed a two-pound weight from the counter and threw it at the fleeing man, but instead it hit Harriet in the head. It was a long time before she recovered, but from that time on she would readily fall asleep; even during conversations she would drift in and out of sleep.
- **Marriage**--Harriet was married about 1844 while in her early 20s to a free black named John Tubman, but they had no children. She escaped alone from slavery in 1849, and some two years after that she returned in secret for her husband; but he had married another woman and no longer cared to live with Harriet.

I had reasoned this out in my mind; there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty, or death; if I could not have one, I would have the other; for no man should take me alive; I should fight for my liberty as long as my strength lasted, and when the time came for me to go, the Lord would let them take me. --Harriet Tubman

- **Escape**--In 1849, she was to be sold to a new owner because her former owner had died. She had no idea where she would be taken, so she decided to escape to freedom. She left in the middle of the night from her home in eastern Maryland, at first with her brothers, but then alone because they turned back. She had no knowledge of where she was going, except that she was headed north--to Pennsylvania or New Jersey--with the north star as her guide. Despite the loneliness, she had an innate feeling that there would be new friends waiting for her where she was going. It was on this trip that she met many individuals involved in the Underground Railroad. After many ordeals, she reached Philadelphia where she found work and was able to save some money.

I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person now that I was free. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven. --Harriet Tubman

- **Leading her people from bondage**--In subsequent years, until the War Between the States, she used all her money and resources to return to the south in secret, mainly to her home area in Maryland, to lead friends and relatives to freedom in the North through the Underground Railroad. There were some nineteen trips of this type, in which she brought more than 300 slaves out of bondage. None of the slaves who placed themselves in her care were ever captured. Her heroism was beyond belief. She relied on her own courage and intuitions. The slaves called her "Moses," because just like the Moses who led the Israelites from slavery in Biblical times, she went south to lead her people to freedom. Slaves would say, "When Moses comes again I'm going with her!" "Moses is coming soon!" And Moses would appear suddenly on a dark night, and in the morning slaves would be gone. After 1851, the Fugitive Slave Law was in effect in the United States. This allowed any runaway slave in any state--even the free states--to be apprehended and returned to his or her owner. Philadelphia, where she had been going, was no longer safe, so she began to transport her charges to Canada, mainly to the area of St. Catherines in Ontario.

I had crossed the line of which I had so long been dreaming. I was free; but there was no one to welcome me to the land of freedom, I was a stranger in a strange land, and my home after all was down in the old cabin quarter, with the old folks, and my brothers and sisters. But to this solemn resolution I came; I was free, and they should be free also; I would make a home for them in the North, and the Lord helping me, I would bring them all there. --Harriet Tubman

- **The War Between the States**--Harriet was brought into the war effort for the North as a spy and scout. Her bravery was well known to many of the Union leaders. There were several reasons for her going. By traveling among the slave population there were many things she could learn of value to the army. Also, many of the slaves had been told to fear the soldiers, and Harriet could gain their trust and reassure them. Harriet used songs and words and hymns to bring her message. She served as a nurse, with faithfulness and bravery and without concern for her own health, tending both Northern and Southern soldiers without regard, and using remedies from herbs and roots when there were no other medicines available. During the war years she never drew more than 20 days of rations from the army. She earned her own money at night selling baked goods to the soldiers--items that she had prepared after working all day at her other duties.
- **The Auburn years**--After the war Harriet returned to her home in Auburn, New York. She became active in a variety of causes, including women's suffrage. She met and supported Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth, who were well known suffrage leaders. Most of her money went to helping the poor who came to her door. There was money that she had been promised for serving in the war effort, but the government never paid her, even though many influential friends came to her support. However, she earned money in other ways and always managed to carry on.
- **A second marriage**--In 1869 Harriet married Nelson Davis, who was a younger man who served in the War Between the States. When they married he was in ill health and Harriet took care of him until his death in 1888.
- **The Harriet Tubman Home**--In 1896, at the age of 75 Harriet began to fulfill a dream of a cooperative farm she planned to give to the poor and elderly. She bought 25 acres of land next to her own property at auction for \$1,450. She didn't have the money, but she knew the bank would lend it to her. The work was started, but she was too old to manage the property herself, so in 1903 she gave ownership of the farm to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, which opened a home on the site in 1908. To the very end of her life she was fighting for what she felt was right. She wanted the home named after her old friend John Brown, but the church named it the Harriet Tubman home. She wanted both blacks and whites on the Board of Directors, but the church wanted only people of color. She wanted the home to be free of cost, but the church charged \$100 per year. Because of this she chose to have little to do with running the home.
- **The End**--Harriet Tubman died on March 10, 1913 in Auburn, New York at the home she had started, surrounded by friends who softly sang "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot."

The Rescue Trips

After her escape from slavery, Harriet made numerous trips back to her home country to lead others away. Here is a chronology of some of the trips as reported in various historical records.

- **1849**--Harriet escaped from her home in Maryland (near Cambridge) and made her way north to Philadelphia.
- **December, 1850**--She went to Baltimore and led away her sister and two children who had come across the Chesapeake Bay from Cambridge in a boat under charge of her sister's husband, a free black.
- **Early 1851**--She brought back her brother and two other men.
- **Fall, 1851**--Harriet found her husband in Maryland and learned that he had married another woman. He chose to stay in Maryland, so she collected a party of other slaves and led them north to Philadelphia.
- **December, 1851**--She returned to the Cambridge area and brought out eleven slaves, including her brother and his wife. These she took to Canada because the Fugitive Slave Law was under enforcement in Philadelphia and other places in the North, and there was no longer safety for "runaways" in the United States. The group spent the winter there under harsh conditions, earning money chopping wood, and Harriet was the encourager that carried them through.
- **Fall, 1852**--Harriet returned to Maryland and brought out nine more fugitives. About this time also she became known to abolitionists in the North, many of them Quakers, who began to help her with money and refuge, but still she earned much of her money through her own hard work and wit, and she used this money for her expeditions.
- **The years 1852 to 1857**--During these years Harriet lived part of the time in St. Catharines on the shore of Lake Ontario in Canada. It was here that she brought many of her fugitives. Sources report up to as many as 11 trips into Maryland during this time. She had become so familiar with the network of the Underground Railroad that even though there was bounty of some \$40,000 on her head, and although she and her charges were nearly captured on several occasions, they always escaped, relying on Harriet's cunning and intuitions. She seemed to have incredible "warnings" just before danger came.
- **1857**--Harriet made a daring journey to Maryland and brought her elderly parents back with her. They could not walk the distances needed to be covered at night, and she had to arrange a wagon for them. They were brought safely to Canada where they spent the winter, and in later years settled near Auburn, New York, where Harriet bought some land for them.
- **December, 1860**--She made her last trip to Maryland and brought out 7 fugitives, one of them a baby.

What Was She Like?

- **Appearance**--She was short of stature, with a modest frame that hid her incredible physical strength. She had cut and hauled timbers as a youth and worked side-by-side with the men. Her physical and mental strength were such that her friend John Brown, who led the raid on Harper's Ferry, called her "General Tubman." Her eyes were piercing and direct, set beneath dark brows on a rounded face. In photographs of Harriet her mouth neither smiles nor frowns, but is set as though her emotions are hidden deep within by years of harsh experience. She is watching you from the photograph, and the more you study her face, it is no longer you looking, but rather her seeing deep within you and knowing who you really are.
- **Determination**--She was willing to do whatever it took to bring her fugitive charges to freedom. More than once a member of one of her escape parties became faint hearted and wanted to quit. This is when Harriet took her pistol, and pointing it with deadly aim, gave the would-be quitter a choice of going on or ending it. For a fugitive to be caught, and perhaps tortured, and to talk would mean that houses of safety on the Underground Railroad and individuals who helped the runaways would be revealed, and this could not be allowed. Harriet in her determination knew the price of freedom.
- **Sleep**--As a youth Harriet had received a severe head wound from a weight thrown at her by a slavemaster. This caused her to lapse into sleep, often at inopportune times. The condition continued into old age, and perhaps became worse.
- **Soldier**--Harriet had the cold steel nerves of a soldier and scout. In the summer of 1863, during the war, Harriet led a major raid into enemy territory. The purpose was to bring out slaves and destroy supplies that could support the war. She had run a number of scouting trips into the area before the raid, using the skills she learned on the Underground Railroad. Her bravery was beyond question. She assembled and led a boatload of slaves back to her own lines.
- **Care-giver**--Harriet had the gifts of a nurse and healer. During the war, Harriet served at a number of field hospitals. In Florida, where both whites and blacks were dying at an alarming rate, she made a medicine from roots that she gathered locally. There were soldiers with smallpox and other deadly diseases, but she cared for them regardless, and she never got any of the diseases herself. After the war, until her death in early 1913, Harriet worked for the poor, the disadvantaged and the aged among African-Americans. Many came to her door, and always she helped as she was able.

People

Many prominent individuals played a part in Harriet Tubman's life. The persons described here can be included in a number of classroom activities such as historical interviews, role playing, or character sketches. A teacher may assign these individuals as essay topics, with students selecting an individual for a biographical review using library resources (see [Activities for Students](#)).

- **John Brown** was a militant white abolitionist who eventually took up arms to free slaves. He was born in Connecticut in 1800, grew up in Ohio, lived in Kansas, and later lived in the northeastern United States where he worked for African-American rights. In the 1850s he was involved in a number of armed actions in Kansas where there were fights between proslavery and antislavery groups. In October, 1859, a year before the start of the War Between the States, Brown and a group of armed followers captured the U. S. military arsenal at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. They intended to use this mountain base to incite slaves to rise up and win their freedom. The attack failed and Brown was captured, tried for treason, and hanged. He became a martyr for the abolition of slavery, and was immortalized in the song which began: "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave," The melody for this song was later used for the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Harriet Tubman met with John Brown prior to his ill-fated final battle, and is said to have aided him in the planning of the operation, and in finding recruits. She considered him a hero.
- **Frederick Douglass** was an African-American journalist, writer and speaker, and one of the most prominent spokesmen for blacks in the 1800s. He published an antislavery magazine called the North Star (later known as Frederick Douglass' Paper) in Rochester, New York. Mr. Douglass was born into slavery in 1817 near Easton on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, which was just to the north of Harriet Tubman's girlhood home. He educated himself as a young man. Then in 1838, he escaped to New England where at first he worked at low-paying jobs, but then he began to catch the attention of abolitionists and became a forceful activist against slavery and mistreatment of blacks. During the War Between the States he worked to recruit African-Americans for the army, and in later years held a number of government positions until his death in 1895. His eloquence is shown in comments he wrote to Harriet in 1867:

The difference between us is very marked. Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way. You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way. I have wrought in the day--you at night. I have had the applause of the crowd and the satisfaction that comes of being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scared, and foot-sore bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage, and whose heartfelt "God bless you" has been your only reward.

- **William Lloyd Garrison** was a journalist and staunch abolitionist who led in the movement to end slavery. From his base in Boston, he published an influential paper called *The Liberator*. Garrison was uncompromising and unrelenting in his attacks on the institution of slavery, beginning in the early 1830s and continuing until 1865 when the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution ended slavery. Harriet traveled to Boston and was acquainted with Garrison and his work.
- **Thomas Garrett** was a Quaker in Wilmington, Delaware who helped thousands of slaves escape along the Underground Railroad. During his life he was arrested, fined, thrown into jail, and lost all his money twice to court judgments, each time starting over again, but he continued regardless. When he was 60 years old, court fines left him without a penny, but he went back to work and regained some of his fortune. Garrett is credited with helping more than 2,700 fugitive slaves, including fugitives brought out by Harriet Tubman, who stayed with him on more than a few occasions during her rescue trips to Maryland. Once when Garrett was brought to court and ordered to pay a large fine for having helped slaves escape, the judge told him in a stern voice that this would be a lesson to him never to help runaway slaves again. Garrett fixed his eyes on the judge and defiantly said to the court:

Judge--thee hasn't left me a dollar, but I wish to say to thee [Quakers of that day used the word "thee" in their speech], and to all in this court room, that if anyone knows of a fugitive who wants a shelter, and a friend, send him to Thomas Garrett, and he will befriend him!

- **William Seward** was the U. S. Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln during the War Between the States, and later under Andrew Johnson. He worked actively against the spread of slavery, and became a friend of Harriet Tubman, helping her gain a home and property for her parents in Auburn, New York in the 1850s. This is where Harriet herself went to live in the years after the war.
- **William Still** was an African-American activist in Philadelphia who helped fugitives escape to Canada along the Underground Railroad. He was one of the first prominent abolitionists that Harriet Tubman met in Philadelphia following her escape from slavery, and his influence helped her realize the potential for her own work in rescuing slaves. He was born as a free black in New Jersey in 1821, where he worked on his parent's farm until the age of 23. At that time he moved to Philadelphia, taught himself to read and write, and became the Director of the "Vigilance Committee," which was a group that helped fugitive slaves. He kept records of activities on the Underground Railroad, thereby giving later generations important historical documents of underground activities of the times.
- **Sojourner Truth** was the name taken by Isabella Baumfree, who was known as an orator and abolitionist in the days before the War Between the States. She was born a slave in New York state in 1797, but gained her freedom in 1828 when that state ended slavery. She had a series of visions, and in 1843, in New York City, she changed her name to Sojourner, and began to appear at rallies and gatherings as a forceful speaker against slavery and an advocate of truth. During the War Between the States she lived in Washington, D.C. where she helped care for

soldiers and newly freed slaves. She died in Battle Creek, Michigan in 1883. During her lifetime she knew and worked with Harriet on issues of slavery and women's rights.

Words and Explanations

- **Abolitionists**--Individuals who believed that slavery should be abolished and were willing to express their views through political movements, newspapers and journals.
- **Amendment**--A change for the better. Amendments have been made to the United States Constitution which have affected people who were held as slaves. Amendment 13 freed the slaves. Amendment 14 gave all Americans certain civil rights. Amendment 15 guaranteed the right to vote for Americans of any race, including those who had been slaves.
- **Constellation**--A pattern formed by a group of stars. Specific patterns have been recognized since ancient times (see an astronomy text in your library). The slaves who fled to freedom in the North often followed the constellation named the "Big Dipper" which is in the northern sky.
- **Emancipation Proclamation**--A decree by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, which declared that all slaves in the states or parts of states that were in rebellion against the United States were free. The proclamation applied only to the Confederate States where it could not be enforced until the Civil War ended. Lincoln also urged the loyal border states which had slavery but were not in rebellion to voluntarily free their slaves.
- **Fugitive Slave Law**--A law passed in 1850 that said that a runaway slave could be arrested and returned to his or her owner anywhere in the United States, even in states where slavery was not allowed. Also those who helped slaves escape could be penalized. There had been other slave laws prior to this, dating back to the 1700s, but they had not been widely enforced. The 1850 law was part of the Compromise of 1850 which settled disputes between the North and South about slavery in the western part of the United States, as well as other matters.
- **Fugitive**--A person who is running away. Fugitive slaves were running away from slavery to freedom in the North or in Canada.
- **Humanitarian**--A person who is consistently helpful to other people in a real and caring way.
- **Prejudice**--An opinion formed without taking the time or having the concern to judge fairly. Many individuals have prejudice toward people who are different, without really understanding those people.
- **Quakers**--The popular name for members of the "Religious Society of Friends," a Christian denomination. Among other things, Quakers believe in humanitarian activities. They do not go to war and they believe in peace. Quakers of Harriet Tubman's time helped widely in the Underground Railroad and the abolitionist movement.
- **Slavery**--The practice of making one person the property of another. In the slavery of the early years of United States history, Africans were made slaves, and were bought and sold like any piece of property
- **Suffrage**--The right to vote. The women's suffrage movement of the 1800s and early 1900s was the political push to give women the right to vote. It was not until the ratification of the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution in 1920 that women gained full suffrage in the United States.

- **Tolerance**--The willingness to let other people do as they feel best. The attitude of being understanding and considerate toward people who are different.
- **Unalienable-Inseparable**--Unalienable rights are rights from which we can never be separated. They cannot be taken away.
- **Underground Railroad**--A loose network of homes, churches, individuals and institutions in the North and South that helped runaway slaves escape to freedom. It was underground in the sense that it was secretive--very few knew of the places where fugitive slaves hid and the routes they traveled. It was a railroad in the sense that it was a transportation route. Slaves traveled along routes of the Underground Railroad from Texas to the East Coast. Harriet Tubman operated between Maryland, Philadelphia, New York and Canada. Other runaways traveled through the Midwest--up the Mississippi, across Ohio and Michigan, and other states. Slaves went from Georgia into Florida and the Caribbean. In Texas, slaves ran to Mexico.

Many terms were used to describe the Underground Railroad. **Stations** on the Railroad were houses or churches where fugitive slaves took shelter. An **agent** was the owner of a station. **Passengers** were the fugitive slaves who were escaping. **Conductors** were individuals who guided groups of slaves between stations and eventually to freedom. Harriet Tubman was a conductor on her many trips to bring slaves back from the South.

Slavery and Prejudice

What was it like to be a slave--bought and sold, families torn apart? May we never know first hand. But still, what was it like? Some of the classroom exercises included here are meant to give students just a hint of the feelings of slavery, to give touches of understanding that can help avoid such inhumanities in the future.

What is it like to feel prejudice? Prejudice is a subtle form of man's inhumanity to man. It's not the overt slavery of Harriet Tubman's youth, but it has many of the same roots--the feeling that one group of individuals is different from another group and should be excluded from this and relegated to that. Exercises included here let students experience prejudice in a learning environment, so that when they leave the classroom there will be more understanding and more tolerance.

- **The blue tag-red tag game**--As students come into a classroom, give them either a red tag or blue tag. The tags can simply be pieces of paper that they hold in their hands. Have the red-tag people sit toward the back or along the side of the room, and the blue-tag people at a prominent place at the front center of the room. Do not tell them why you are making the distinction. Then proceed with your planned class lesson. The lesson can be totally unrelated to the topics of prejudice or slavery--do it with a math class or another history session. Ignore questions and participation from the red-tags and encourage questions from the blue-tags, praising them for their answers.

At some point you will have to reveal to the class what is happening (or they may figure it out on their own). Have individual students share feelings about what they experienced. Include observations from both groups. Have them write a short essay about what was done and their personal experiences during the exercise. Many can express in writing to a teacher things they would be embarrassed to say before their peers.

Do not separate students on the basis of any personal characteristics such as hair color, clothing types, and height; and it is certainly important to stay away from race, gender, religion, etc., since these are areas of real-life discrimination.

- **The wall**--Place a divider down the center of the classroom and talk to the students about walls. This is a good exercise to teach about the former "Iron Curtain" in Europe or the so-called "Bamboo Curtain" in the orient.

The divider can be considered a little "Berlin wall," with one side of the room having the enslaved people of Eastern Europe (prior to the fall of the wall and the opening of the East), and the other side the democracies of the West. Give all the students a worksheet with 3 to 5 questions which ask for opinions about freedom and personal liberty. The students on the "West" side of the classroom can write anything they want on the worksheets, freely expressing their opinions. For the

students on the "East" side, however, attach an answer guide to the worksheets with specific answers the students have to copy word-by-word on their papers.

After the exercise discuss experiences. The results may be contrary to expectations. Some of the students on the "West" side may have been uncomfortable defining their own answers, while students on the "East" side may have liked having answers given to them. It is often difficult to express personal opinions, but it is more in the spirit of the responsibility of freedom. Stress to the students that freedom involves personal responsibility--having opinions about things that matter. Freedom means working for what one believes. Relate all of this to the control of people by totalitarian powers that live behind walls. The nations of Eastern Europe lived in a system in which answers were provided, and individual creativity was suppressed.

For a literature emphasis on walls, include Robert Frost's poem "Mending Wall." Why do we have walls? Can walls be good? Name examples of walls--what do they wall in and wall out? Do good fences make good neighbors?

- **Man in the Middle**--"Man in the Middle" is a debating game best used in gifted and talented situations where students are willing to explore ideas. Select a single student to be the "Man (or Woman) in the Middle." This first student should have self-confidence and leadership potential, in addition to being a good debater, to set the example for subsequent participants. Give this student a position to defend--that is, ask the student to take a certain point of view and defend the correctness of that point of view, regardless of how he or she personally feels about the topic. Typically this is a controversial position which goes contrary to established norms. The other students in the class may challenge the Man in the Middle with any questions, and he or she must defend the position against all comers. The debate should be free-form (that is, it need not follow traditional rules of formal debate), but the teacher will need to set some guidelines to maintain order. Questions and answers should be limited only by the creativity of the students.

For example, the student may be asked to take the role of a slave owner and defend why he or she would want to keep slaves. Why would a person want to own slaves? Why does one group of people subject another to inhumanity and injustice? Those who would partake in such practices often defend their positions using spurious arguments and half-truths. The objective of the exercise is to have the students learn to separate the true from the false.

There are many possible contrary positions for the Man in the Middle. Was the underground railroad a good thing? It was against the law, but could bad laws be broken? Was it right for slaves to escape? Was it right for this country to fight a war in which slavery was a critical issue (note that historians argue to our present day over whether the War Between the States was about slavery or states rights)?

Some advice to the teacher is as follows:

1. A typical Man-in-the-Middle session will last for a few minutes until the debate has run its course. At the end, spread compliments and encouragement to sooth egos, and then use the time to summarize the ideas presented. A good way to summarize is to have the students write lists of the key arguments.
 2. The students must be reminded that this is only a game. In the first place there is always the danger that some students may take the exercise personally. Keep the more sensitive out of the middle, because there is intimidation pressure on the person making the defense.
 3. Do not score points. Let the fact that the student met the challenge of the debate be the reward. For many students, simply accepting the challenge is a victory, and compliments should be given in this regard.
- **The outcast**--Select one student who has a strong self image and is a good actor. Tell the student ahead of time that you plan to have the class ostracize him or her as part of a lesson about prejudice and have the student agree to participate. Remove the student from the classroom on some pretense, and then instruct the class to exclude the student when he or she returns. The class doesn't know that the student knows and the student has to act his or her part, using creative drama. After the exercise, have the students explore their feelings about what was done. Again, it is good to have students write their responses.
 - **News notebook**--Have the students keep a notebook of items related to slavery, prejudice, and the violation of civil rights in magazines and newspapers. Many nations these days are experiencing freedom from dictators and repressive politics. Have them keep a notebook about changes in eastern Europe or in third-world countries. There is news related to minorities in the United States and other nations.
 - **Handicap awareness**--There is definitely a need for students to have an positive awareness of persons with physical, emotional or mental limitations. Have individuals with handicaps visit the class and discuss openly their lives and livelihoods. Have members of the class volunteer for such activities as special olympics. The objective in this is to teach students that we all have potential for success, regardless of our limitations.
 - **Slavery in ancient times**--Have the students do a research topic on slavery in ancient times. They will find that both whites and blacks were slaves, and that slavery crossed racial lines. The ancient Romans and Greeks held slaves from nations they had conquered. The Vikings had slaves captured from their raids on the people of northern Europe.
 - **Finding the Good in all of us**--Have class discussions that help the students learn that differences between individuals are good. If we were all the same, life would be very boring. Discuss the differences and similarities between men and women, and why those differences and similarities are good. Discuss the positive things that individuals from different racial groups have contributed to our society. Challenge your students to be positive, and eliminate the negative. It is so easy to

complain, and so many people think of complaints before they think of praise.
Use your classroom to change attitudes to the good.

Books

Bentley, Judith. *Harriet Tubman*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1990.
A recent volume on the Harriet Tubman story, includes photographs.

Blockson, Charles L., "The Underground Railroad," in *National Geographic Magazine*, v. 166, No. 1 (July, 1984), p. 2-39.

Pictures and images of the underground railroad in a magazine format easily accessible at most local libraries.

Bradford, Sarah. *Harriet Tubman, The Moses of Her People*. Original version published privately by Sarah Bradford in 1869, more recent edition available from the Citadel Press, Secaucus, New Jersey.

The classic biography of Harriet Tubman, written by her friend Sarah Bradford to raise funds to help Harriet in her work and personal affairs.

Epstein, Sam and Beryl. *Harriet Tubman: Guide to Freedom*. Champaign, Illinois: Garrard, 1968.

For below level readers, a readable version of Harriet's story.

Ferris, Jeri. *Go Free or Die: A Story About Harriet Tubman*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1989.

Petry, Ann. *Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad*. New York: Pocket Books (division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.), 1955.

For secondary grade levels, junior high and above, a readable account of the Harriet Tubman story, with incidents and journeys brought to life.

Robinson, Wilhelmena S. *International Library of Negro Life and History*. New York: Publishers Company, Inc., 1967.

A compendium of history and facts about African-Americans in a ten volume set. An excellent reference on people, places and history in Harriet Tubman's time, and in later years.

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Disclaimer

The movie *The Quest for Freedom: Harriet Tubman* is a fictionalized account of an historical event. Some characters have been changed and others added for dramatic effect.

It is important to remember that the handbook and the video are part of interdisciplinary and multi-cultural studies of history, biography, literature, geography, tolerance, and intolerance and should be included in the broader scope of any curriculum.

Activities for Students

The following activities can be adapted to a range of age levels. In all of these activities, the objective is to make students participants in their learning experiences rather than just observers.

- **Cameo Interview**--Have a student take the part of one of the historical characters in Harriet Tubman's life, and be interviewed by others in the class. The student needs to prepare for the role by finding out about the life of the character, so give the assignment ahead of time--as much as a week in advance--so preparations can be made. Give the role player some specific questions that the class will ask (20 questions are appropriate); parents can help the students research the questions at home to help support the educational experience. Questions asked should reflect a knowledge of the historical events and attitudes of the times. On the day of the interview, younger students may want to dress in a costume of the period to add effect and otherwise enrich the performance. If a video recorder is available, try making a recording of the interview to play back to the class.

Possible roles include Harriet Tubman herself, a slave left behind in the South, a slave who has gained freedom, a helper (a "conductor") along the underground railway, a slave owner. For specific historical figures, refer to the section entitled "People" in this guide.

- **Speeches from the past**--As another role playing exercise, have a student prepare a speech that dramatizes a character or point of view of Harriet Tubman's time. The speech can be directed toward attitudes, fears and feelings about such things as freedom, slavery and the pursuit of happiness. For example, a student can write a speech playing the role of a slave planning an escape for freedom. Emotional issues in the speech and the character development can be interpretive on the student's part. Time can be taken to have the students write their own scripts, individually or in groups. A video recording of the speech can be useful for a follow-up.
- **Star Search**--Fugitive slaves would often use stars to follow their route to freedom. In particular, there is the constellation called the "Big Dipper" which is close to the north star. Travelers could head to the north by following the "drinking gourd," which was another name given to the Big Dipper. Teach your students to identify this constellation and use it to find the north star. To find this star, draw a line through the two stars that form the outer edge of the cup of the dipper, and continue this line outward from the "open" side of the cup. The north star lies along this line at a distance of about 5 times the length between the two stars. Also, help your students to identify the "Little Dipper" (the north star is at the tail end of the Little Dipper), and other constellations. Be sure to tell the students that these were the stars the fugitives saw in the night sky.
- **Essays**--Essays are a fine activity. Try a short essay--one to three pages. Topics can cover any of the historical episodes before and after the War Between the

States, the history of slavery in America, the fallout (the continuing effects) of slavery to our present day, etc.

- **Self-evident truths**--One important essay topic is certainly the meaning of the words from our Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Harriet Tubman was patriotic in a way that many today cannot be. She had to win her liberty and freedom. She had to learn of the pursuit of happiness in America from a place in which she was not free. What does it mean that all men are created equal? Why was slavery allowed when the Declaration of Independence said all men are created equal? What does unalienable mean? What are some of the unalienable rights with which men are endowed? What does freedom mean to you? Are people still treated as slaves today?

- **The Thirteenth Amendment**--The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States abolished slavery. This completed the process started by the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln, which had ended slavery in the Confederacy.

The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Have your students learn this amendment. Ask for and discuss student reactions to the passage. Why was it necessary to have an amendment to end slavery? What is involuntary servitude? The distinction of punishment for crime as separate from slavery is interesting, and can lead to an interesting discussion of the role of prisons in our society. Have the students write an essay on the meaning of the Thirteenth Amendment.

A study of the Fourteenth Amendment, which covers civil rights, is appropriate for this general topic. Also, there is Amendment 15, which guarantees individuals the right to vote regardless of race or having been a slave. Find a copy of the Emancipation Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln, and have the students discuss issues related to this document.

- **Biographical Sketches**--For a focused essay topic have each student select a character for biographical research and the writing of a condensed biography. This can be a longer-term project to cover an entire study unit. For the names of some individuals see the section entitled "People" in this study guide.

- **Newspaper**--Have the students produce an abolitionist newspaper. A front page of a newspaper may be enough for a small project. Allow two weeks or longer of project time for development of a full paper. Assemble a newspaper team, and give each individual a writing assignment. Two journalists were particularly famous for their abolitionist writings in Harriet Tubman's time: Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, and their writings and personal histories could be incorporated into the project.
- **The Railway Lunch**--Prepare the type of meal that Harriet and her fellow fugitives may have eaten during their escapes. These may have been simple breads and biscuits. Perhaps some dried meat (beef jerky will do) and less perishable vegetables such as carrots, turnips and other roots that could be easily carried or picked up along the way.
- **Time line**--Have the students draw a time line for Harriet Tubman's life. Important events can include: (1) born in 1820 or 1821, (2) married John Tubman in 1844, (3) escaped from slavery in 1849, (4) made rescue trips along the underground railway from 1850 to 1860, (5) served as a scout and nurse for the army during the War Between the States, 1862 to 1865, (6) married Nelson Davis in 1869, (7) supported Susan B. Anthony in founding the women's suffrage movement in 1870, (8) started work on the Harriet Tubman home in 1896, (9) founded a home in 1908, and (10) died in 1913. See the opening section on "The Life of Harriet Tubman" for more details. For younger students, the teacher should give the class a start on the blackboard, showing the line work for the project, and having the students fill in labels.
- **Letter Contest**--Have the students write a letter telling of an attempted escape to freedom. They can make up imaginative adventures about almost being captured and how they escaped. Perhaps it is more important for them to tell why they wanted to escape and why they appreciate freedom. Harriet once wrote a letter to her friend Jacob Jackson, a free black, telling him she was coming south again to help more fugitives, but she had to write the letter in a coded message using symbols and stories because she knew it would be read by others who were watching the mail. She wrote, "Read my letter to the old folks, and give my love to them, and tell my brothers to be always watching unto prayer, and when the good old ship of Zion comes along, to be ready to step on board." The letter was signed William Henry Jackson, who was Jacob Jackson's son, but Jacob was able to read between the lines and tell that Harriet had really written the letter and to be prepared for her coming. Tell the students in your class about this letter, and have them write their own rescue warning using code words and symbols to convey the real meaning. The students must assume that their letter will be read by someone who means them harm, and they will have to be careful with their words.
- **Artifacts**--Some students in a class may have artifacts of slavery and plantation days--or perhaps from the War Between the States--that can be brought to school as a demonstration project. Take extra caution to be sure that these materials are respected by members of the class and that nothing is damaged. In fact, if there are particularly precious artifacts, it may be best to have them handled only by adults--parents or friends who own the materials and are willing to bring them to class. If real artifacts are scarce, have the students make their own artifacts. Use

your library resources to find books with pictures of plantation or Civil War items.

- **Collage**--A collage activity is always useful as a hands-on project and to develop creativity. A collage is simply a poster with many pictures and/or blocks of text pasted in an artistic manner to convey an idea or image. All sorts of themes are possible, and the collage can include pictures from magazines, student drawings, student writing, etc. The collage could be on "What Freedom Means to Me." If a stack of recent magazines are available, have them use cutouts from the magazine pages. Reverse the idea and ask them to show "What It Means to be a Captive."
- **Draw a picture**--Give a child a blank sheet of paper and have them draw their image of slavery. Let the students express their creativity. For younger students give specific ideas such as: (1) slaves at work in the fields, (2) runaway slaves escaping through the forest, (3) fugitive slaves in a secret room in a home on the Underground Railroad, (4) fugitive slaves learning that they have reached a place of freedom. Have them draw a picture of the American flag and then surround the flag with images that represent freedom.
- **The railroad hideaway**--Partition off a small area in your classroom, with a crawl-through entry and enough space to hold a few students, and have the students pretend it's a hiding place along the underground railroad. Place books on topics related to your lessons inside the enclosure, along with other materials for browsing, and try to create the feeling that this is a special place. Students can go there before class or when their work is done. Also it can be used for rewarding students--a retreat where they can go when they have done well.
- **Oral history**--The students can interview grandparents or others who have memories of earlier days before the civil rights movement. Interviews can be with individuals from many different ethnic backgrounds who feel comfortable talking straight with the students. Bring community leaders to your class who will talk about issues of freedom. Communication in this area is so important.

Fun and Games for History

The following activities can make history fun by creating competition for learning. These are group exercises that let the students work for success.

- **History Basketball**--Make history into a game to break the pace from the normal cycle of structured class lessons. Try history basketball. You will need two lists of questions: one list relatively easy, the other relatively hard. Choose two teams from the group and seat the teams at the front of the room. The class itself can be divided into two teams if it is not too large. Each team needs to choose a captain. Make it clear that you will accept final answers only from the captain. Choose the starting team with a coin toss.

Play begins with the starting team (team 1) choosing a two-point shot (easy question) or a three-pointer (hard question). Read the question to the team, allow an appropriate time for an answer, and then after accepting the answer given by the captain, tell them whether the answer is right or wrong. A right answer scores either the two or three points, and then play moves to the second team (team 2). For a wrong response, the opposing team may try to answer for a one-point free throw. If the answer is still incorrect, give the correct answer, and play moves to team 2, which then selects their shot and attempts to answer another question for either two or three points. At any point, if one of the teams is disruptive or speaks out of turn, you can award a free throw (one or two points depending on the severity of the foul) to the other team, and in this case, if you call the foul be sure to follow through.

Use a set time limit for the game. For example, try a ten minute game using teams selected from a class. At the end of ten minutes, the team with the highest score wins. Then select two more teams from the class and run another 10-minute game. If the entire class is split into two teams, the game can last an entire class period.

You can add some interest to the play by giving colorful names to the two teams. Choose a panel of judges from the students to rule on whether near-miss answers can be accepted. Use a buzzer or whistle to make calls or signal time.

- **What's My Line**--This activity is based on the old quiz show in which a panel of individuals--typically three--claimed to be the same person and have the same profession. One of the three was the actual person, the other two were pretenders. After asking the panel various questions, the participants voted on which individual was telling the truth. To apply this to a history lesson, have three students agree to take the part of a person in Harriet Tubman's life and times. The three students decide among themselves who will be the real character without the remainder of the class knowing. All three have to be knowledgeable about the person they are representing so that they know truth from falsehood. The real character has to tell the truth and the pretenders have to make things up, but in a

- convincing way by using a good bluff and a confident manner. Have each question answered by all three participants. After an appropriate time of questions, the students vote. There is no scoring, unless you want to divide the class into two teams, which then alternate asking questions of the panel.
- **Telling the Truth**--Telling the truth is a bluff game similar to What's My Line, but played in a tick-tack-toe format. To simplify the game for classroom use, have one or more panelists at the front of the room. These should be individuals who are particularly adept at bluffing and acting; ask for volunteers for this duty. Also, select two teams (in its simplest form the class can be divided in half)--one team will play the "O" players in tick-tack-toe, and the other team will play the "X" players. The teacher should draw a large tick-tack-toe grid on the board or on an overhead projection. The starting team (select the starters by a coin flip) plays for either their "X" or "O", and indicates where the letter will be placed on the grid if they win their round. The teacher then asks one of the panelists a question about the history topic being studied (do not be hesitant to intersperse questions from non-history topics, if these will add interest or add to the fun), which the panelist answers, either telling the truth or a falsehood (the panelist needs to fake an answer if he or she doesn't know). The team in play then has to tell if it is the truth or not, and if they answer correctly, their tick-tack-toe play is completed. If incorrect, they lose the turn. Whether they are right or wrong, play then moves to the other team.
 - **Twenty Questions**--Twenty questions is a family game adaptable to many classroom activities. The teacher thinks of something related to Harriet Tubman, slavery or the War Between the States, but keeps it secret from the class, writing it on a piece of paper. The class has to guess what it is. The only clue given is whether the secret something is (1) a person, (2) a place, or (3) a thing. The class then is allowed 20 questions to guess what it is. Note that the questions have to be phrased to allow yes or no answers. For example, if the teacher is thinking of a person such as Frederick Douglass, the students could ask "Was this person a woman?" With the answer of "No," they know that this eliminates Harriet Tubman, among others. The questioning needs to proceed in an orderly manner--try going in turn around the room. Well disciplined classes can often have open questioning. After the students understand the game, members of the class can then be the ones who decide on the secret (in consultation with the teacher).
 - **Name Tag Game**--Select an individual student to come to the front of the class and place a name tag on the student's back. The student then asks the class questions to guess the name. Once the name is guessed correctly another student is selected.

The game can also be played in small groups with a set of tags for each group. In this case, a tag is placed on the back of each student in the group, and the group members then interact among themselves to guess the names. A student cannot see his or her own tag, but others can read it. To learn the name, a student has to ask questions of others in the group--questions with yes or no answers, such as "Was this person a slave at one time--yes or no?" If the student runs out of questions, the group can be permitted to give clues.

Suggested Trips

- **Harriet Tubman Home**--Located in Auburn, New York, at 180 South St. Rd., the old Harriet Tubman home is open to the public by appointment. This home has been restored and welcomes an annual pilgrimage in May. For more information, call (315) 253-2621.
- **Harper's Ferry, West Virginia**--Within a day's trip from Washington, D.C., historic Harper's Ferry, West Virginia has memories of when John Brown captured its arsenal in the days before the Civil War. Visit "John Brown's Fort" at the Old Arsenal Square, which was the armory firehouse where John Brown was captured. There are museums and mountain scenery.
- **Local history**--Check with your local historical society or library for sites in your area which may date back to the days of the underground railroad or the Civil War.

Video Quiz

Answer the following questions after viewing the Harriet Tubman video, *The Quest for Freedom*.

1. What did it mean to be a slave?
2. What continent did the slaves come from?
3. What was the Underground Railroad?
4. What did the Underground Railroad do?
5. Who were the abolitionists?
6. Name a group of people who helped the slaves to freedom.
7. Did Harriet escape before or after the Civil War?
8. After Harriet escaped, how did she make her mark in American history?
9. What nickname was given to Harriet Tubman?
10. Why do you think Harriet was given this name?
11. Why is slavery contrary to our American values?
12. Would you have helped take slaves on a dangerous trip along the underground railroad? Why?

Essay Questions

1. Name some of the tickets to freedom we have today. Why are they like the underground railroad? (for example: education, hard work, voting, etc.)
2. In what ways would you pattern your life after Harriet Tubman? How can you help people who are in forms of slavery today? (for example: homelessness, sickness, etc.)

Answers to Video Quiz:

1. Answers will vary. However, it meant being the property of another person. It meant having no rights. It meant not being allowed to go where you wanted. It meant always having someone tell you what to do. It meant someone controlling your life.
2. Africa.
3. A network of homes, businesses and individuals who helped slaves escape to freedom in the years before the Civil War.
4. It helped slaves escape to freedom.
5. Individuals who actively spoke against slavery, and worked to bring freedom to slaves.
6. The Quakers.
7. Before the Civil War. Harriet escaped in 1849. The Civil War Began in 1860.

8. She returned to her slave homeland in Maryland many times to bring other slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad.
9. Moses.
10. The slaves called her "Moses," because just like the Moses who led the Israelites from slavery in Biblical times, she went to lead her people to freedom.
11. A basic American value is that all men are created equal. Slavery is completely contrary to this value.
12. Answers will vary.