

All Aboard the Freedom Train!

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OVERVIEW

Topic: This lesson deals with the life and times of Harriet Tubman. Students will learn about historical events and people of other times. Students will discover and recognize the significance and importance of courage and other admirable character traits found in famous Americans.

LENGTH OF LESSON

One 60-minute session

VIDEO/TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Television
VCR

Us That's Us #103, Harriet Tubman

WEB APPLICATIONS

- Impersonations by a fellow teacher, pretending to be Harriet Tubman, using email.
- Telefieldtrips:

<http://www.harriettubmanhome.org/home.htm>

<http://www.harriettubman.com/>

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- Identify who Harriet Tubman was.
- Recognize courage and other admirable character traits.
- Role-play the role of a conductor on the Underground Railroad.
- Create a map of escape using the classroom with map legends and the directions north, south, east, and west.

This lesson addresses the Virginia Standards of Learning Social Studies K.1, K.2, K.3, K.4, and K.7. Other SOLS listed in the Extension Activities.

MATERIALS AND TEACHER PREPARATIONS

For Post viewing activities:

- “Follow the Drinking Gourd” Reading Rainbow episode #1001.
- Paper, pencils and crayons to create a map.
- Computers with Internet access for telefieldtrips.

PREPARATORY/PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Turn off the lights in the room. Ask the students to close their eyes and pretend to be turning back time and returning to the 1680's. Say, It's dark, and you're an escaped slave trying to escape from the south on the Underground Railroad. Role-play the following variation of red light green light. The teacher is the game caller who will be referred to as the Master. Randomly select one student to be the conductor out of every 5 students. The other students will be slaves. It is the conductors' responsibility to move their charges to safety with out being caught. To experience anticipation, tell the conductors that they may move the students when the Master's back is turned. If the Master turns around and catches the slaves moving, they and their charges are out of the game. The winner is the group that makes it to the finish point. After the game is over discuss with the children how they felt trying to sneak to the finish line. Lead this into a discussion about how they think the slaves felt trying to escape to freedom. Tell the students that they are now going to learn about Harriet Tubman, a woman, who really was a

conductor of the Underground Railroad just like they were in the game they played.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING/ OTHER TECHNOLOGY

To give the students a specific responsibility while viewing the video, tell the students: You have just acted like Harriet Tubman, an American hero who showed great courage in helping others. We are now going to watch as a young girl and her brother learn from a penny what Harriet Tubman did that made her a hero. Listen to see why the young girl should be proud of her name.

VIEWING AND /OR ONLINE ACTIVITIES

1. **FOCUS:** Say: As you watch the first part of the video see if you can find out when Harriet Tubman lived in history. **Start** at beginning of *U.S. That's US #103 Harriet Tubman* video. **Pause** (1:10) when Abe Lincoln says, "It was very different." Ask: Did Harriet Tubman live a long time ago? (Ans.: Yes, she lived a long time ago in the 1800's before cars, televisions, radios, refrigerators, and computers.)
2. **REFOCUS:** Say: A long time ago people used to own people the same way we would own a house, car, or a pet. These people were called slaves. Let's watch now and listen for what kind of life the slaves lived. **Resume** and **Pause** (1:54) when Abe Lincoln says, "Whatever the owner wanted done the slaves had to do". Ask: What kind of life did the slaves live? (Ans.: They lived hard lives by having to work early in the morning until late at night, everyday, their whole lives. They had to work in the fields in the hot sun, carry heavy loads, cut down trees and dig ditches. They had to clean and cook in the owner's home, and even take care of the owner's children.)
3. **REFOCUS:** Say: Do you think slave kids had to work too? What about going to school for slave children? Listen to this next part and find out if slave children were allowed to go to school. **Start** video and **Pause** when the narrator says, "They were punished very, very badly." Ask: Did slave children have to work? (Ans. Yes) Were they allowed to attend school? (Ans. No, they weren't allowed.) Ask: What happened when they didn't do what they were told? (Ans. They were punished very badly.)
4. **REFOCUS:** Say: So why didn't they all just run away? Listen to find out. **Resume** and **Pause** (2:29) when Abe says, "The owners would chase them, often using dogs to track them down." Ask: What was it like if a slave decided to run away? (Ans.: Hard, they had no money and little food. They had to be very careful because they had to go through the woods and swamp at night so they wouldn't be seen, with their master chasing them with dogs to track them down.)
5. **REFOCUS:** Say: There were a few heroes who helped slaves escape. One of them was named Harriet Tubman. Let's watch and listen to find out how Harriet Tubman helped the slaves escape. **Resume** and **Pause** (3:15) when Harriet Tubman says "Follow me and I'll lead you to freedom on the Underground Railroad". Ask: How did Harriet Tubman help the slaves escape? (Ans.: on the Underground Railroad.)
6. **REFOCUS:** Say: Was the Underground Railroad a train? Listen for responses. Tell the students that the Underground Railroad was NOT a train like we know about and see today. It was different. Say: Listen for what the Underground Railroad was in this next segment of video. **Resume** and **Pause** (3:42) when Harriet Tubman says, "We had better get moving". Ask- Was the Underground Railroad a train? (Ans.: No, it was a path through the woods, fields and swamps that led slaves to places where they could be free to live and work on their own. So they had to walk and sometimes swim.)
7. **FOCUS:** Say: Do you think there were people along the way who helped the slaves escape? Let's listen and find out. **Resume** and **Pause** (4:42) when Harriet Tubman says, "It's time for the journey to begin". Say: Were there people along the way that helped the slaves escape? How

did these brave people help the slaves?
(Ans.: Yes, there were brave and courageous people who would hide the slaves and help them along the way by providing them with food and shelter. These brave people would care for them and sometimes they would take them in their wagons to other safe places.)

8. **FOCUS:** Say: Harriet Tubman was brave and courageous in helping slaves escape and that made her a hero. But she did other things that took courage too. These things also made her a hero. Listen to find out what else she did. **Resume** and **Stop** (5:12) at the end of the episode. Ask: What other things did Harriet Tubman do? (Ans. She was a spy, a nurse and a military scout during the Civil War.)
9. Say: When you act bravely and lend a hand to others are you heroes just like Harriet Tubman? (Ans.: Yes) Say: Can anyone tell me a time when you had to be brave? (Answers will vary. Allow time for students to share their experiences.)

POST-VIEWING AND/OR ONLINE ACTIVITIES

1. Watch “Follow the Drinking Gourd” Reading Rainbow episode #1001 to learn additional information about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
2. Take these telefieldtrips by the following websites to explain what happened to Harriet Tubman after the Civil War:
<http://www.harriettubmanhome.org/home.htm>
<http://www.harriettubman.com/>
3. Make a map of escape. Use the classroom as terrain. Make your classroom door the “door to freedom”. Have the students create a map that would lead them to freedom from the classroom if they had to escape. Incorporate map legends for the room and directions of north, south, east, and west.

ASSESSMENT

1. Were the students able to correctly incorporate information gained on the Underground

Railroad and how Harriet Tubman would have led slaves to safety from viewing “Follow the Drinking Gourd” to what they had learned previously from viewing “U.S. That’s Us #103” on Harriet Tubman. Evaluate students by oral questioning during a class discussion on Harriet Tubman.

2. Check for understanding of subject by oral questioning during the telefieldtrip(s).
3. Were the students able to complete the escape map by following directions?

ACTION PLAN

1. Write The Harriet Tubman House in New York for information on Harriet Tubman. *The Harriet Tubman Home, 180 South Street, Auburn, NY 13201. (315) 252-2081. Email: HTHome@localnet.com*
2. Invite a historian to discuss what Harriet Tubman and others did (and the acts of courage they showed during their lives.
3. Invite a Civil War Reenactor to the classroom to speak on the Civil War and the difficulties that would have been faced by Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
4. Invite a local college history professor to speak to the class about Harriet Tubman and her contributions to American history.

EXTENSIONS

Language Arts:

- Read and discuss the following book to the class- *A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman* by David A. Adler, *Harriet Tubman, The Road To Freedom* by Rae Bains and *...If You Traveled On The Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine. (SOL K.1, K.2, and K.3)
- Write a sentence describing Harriet Tubman and what she did and make an illustration to go along with the sentence. (SOL K.11)

Math:

- Make paper chain patterns to represent the chains of bondage that the slaves were trying to escape. (SOL K18)
- Time- Harriet Tubman and the escaping slaves moved mostly at night. Have the children

estimate what time of night they think that Underground Railroad would have ran. (K.K.10 and K.11)

Science:

Discuss how the senses of sight, hearing, touch and smell would have been used to help the slaves escape at night. (K.2)

Social Studies:

- Map Skills: Locate the southern and northern United States on a map of the U.S. Discuss what routes the slaves might have taken to escape the South and get to the freedom of the North. (SOL K.2, K.3 and K.4)
- Brainstorm and discuss jobs today that would require courage for a person to work (i.e. state police officer, fireman, and soldier). (SOL K.6)

Technology:

- Draw a picture of Harriet Tubman helping slaves escape on the Underground Railroad using Kid Pix or another drawing program.
- Create a slide show of the children's work using Coral Presentation, Power Point, or Hyper Studio.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Kevin Marcus is a kindergarten teacher at Coeburn Primary School in Wise County.. Kevin has a Bachelor of Arts in History from The University of Virginias College at Wise, formally Clinch Valley College, and a certification in Early Childhood NK-3. Kevin enjoys the Martial Arts, Motuba-Ha Shito Ryu Karate, Historical Reenactment through the Society for Creative Anachronisms, leather working, strategic tactical simulation miniature games, painting miniatures and reading.