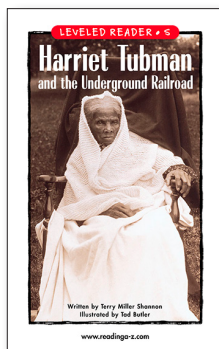


Lesson Plan

Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Biography Page Count: 20 Word Count: 1,257

Book Summary

Harriet Tubman was an African-American woman who daringly escaped slavery and helped hundreds of other slaves escape to freedom. She became the most famous of all “conductors” of the Underground Railroad, which was a system of safe houses that slaves used to travel to freedom in the North. Her inspiring story of courage and determination continued into her later life as she worked for aid and education for freed slaves, as well as for women’s right to vote.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Retell

Objectives

- Retell while reading to understand text
- Identify cause-and-effect relationships in nonfiction text
- Identify and use compound predicates
- Recognize and use content vocabulary

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Colored highlighters or colored pencils
- Cause and effect, compound predicates, content vocabulary worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting the book on an interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if the books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: **abolitionists** (n.), **meager** (adj.), **mocking** (v.), **perilous** (adj.), **plantation** (n.), **Underground Railroad** (n.)

Enrichment: **illegal** (adj.), **injustice** (n.), **network** (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Involve students in a discussion of slavery. Write the questions *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*? on the board. Ask who the slaves were and where they originally came from, what slaves were used for, and when and where slavery occurred. The question of *why* slavery occurred is an interesting topic for research and debate. Theories include European racial prejudice against Africans, European attitudes toward poor people, and the declining Native American and indentured servant work forces.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

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Preview the Book

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Retell**

- Explain to students that one way to understand a book is to remember what they read so they can tell the story to someone else.
- Show students the front and back covers of the book. Explain to students that the title of the book is *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad*. Ask students what they think the book will be about.
- **Think-aloud:** *On the front cover, I see an old person in a chair. I think it is a woman because of the clothing, but I'm not sure. My guess is that this person is Harriet Tubman since that's whom the book is about. I'm going to start reading so I can find out. I'll try to remember what I read so I can tell what happened.*
- Show students the title page. Ask students if they have ever seen a memorial marker similar to this. Ask why markers like this are used. Talk about the information that is written on the page (title of book, author's name, illustrator's name).
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to work out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for base words, prefixes, and suffixes. They can use the context to work out meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Model how to apply word-attack strategies. Point out a content vocabulary word in bold, such as the word *perilous* on page 13. Model how they can use the context to figure out the word's meaning by looking for a word or phrase in the sentence that might provide a clue. Point out that the word is one of two adjectives that tell about the trips Harriet made to the South. Ask students to read the second part of the sentence and look for a clue that provides more information about the trips she made. Ask students to tell in their own words what Harriet's trips were like (dangerous). Have students follow along as you substitute the word *dangerous* or *filled with danger* in the sentence to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Remind students that they should check whether words make sense by rereading the sentence.


Set the Purpose

- Have students stop and silently review what they have read at the end of each section so that they can retell what happens and why.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read the first section titled "Born a Slave." Ask a volunteer or volunteers to retell what has happened so far in the story. Have other students fill in details. Aim for as complete a retelling as possible.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

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Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Have volunteers retell individual sections or the entire book. Encourage students to recall as much as possible while retelling, including the answers to the *who, what, when, where, and why* questions you used in the “Build Background” section.
- Reinforce that retelling encourages retention of information and deeper understanding because that information is recast in a student’s own words.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Cause and effect**

- Direct students to page 6 in the book. Ask them to tell why Harriet was whipped cruelly (she did not mind her owner). Explain that one thing causes the other thing happen, and provide the following sentence: *Harriet was whipped cruelly when she did not obey her owner.* Underline *Harriet was whipped cruelly* and tell students that this tells the effect, or what happened. Underline *when she did not obey her owner* and explain that this tells the cause, or why.
- **Check for understanding:** Direct students to page 7. Read the paragraph to students. Ask them to find the sentence that tells what happened as a result of Harriet trying to help an escaping slave. (The slave’s master threw a metal weight at her and it struck her in the head.) Then ask students to complete the following sentence: *The slave’s master threw a metal weight that hit Harriet in the head because_____.* (She was trying to help an escaping slave). Explain to students that the word *because* is like a flashing red light. It tells them that what follows explains *why* something happened. Direct students to the last sentence on page 7. Ask them to tell the person sitting next to them what word is the flashing red light that lets them know that the rest of the sentence tells why something happens (*because*). Then have them identify the cause (*her injury*) and the effect (*she had headaches and sleeping spells*) in the sentence.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **cause-and-effect worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.



Extend the discussion: Instruct students to use the inside cover of their book to list four cause-and-effect relationships about prejudice. Have students share their list with the group.

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Subject and predicate**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *Harriet dreamed of living as a free woman in the North.* Explain that every sentence has two parts. One part is called the *subject*. It tells the *person, place, or thing* the sentence is about. The other part is called the *predicate*. The predicate tells the *action* of the subject. It is the part of the sentence that contains the verb. Ask students to identify the subject (*Harriet*). Circle the word. Ask students to tell the action of the subject (*dreamed of living as free woman in the North*). Explain that the entire phrase is the predicate. Underline the predicate.
- Tell students that sometimes the predicate can have more than one part to it. Add to the sentence on the board so that it now reads: *Harriet dreamed of living as a free woman in the North and wanted to help free other slaves.*
- Explain that this is an example of a *compound predicate* because it *contains two verbs (dreamed and wanted)* and the actions are joined by the word *and* or another conjunction. Compound predicates share the same subject. Circle the conjunction *and* in the sentence. Then ask a volunteer to identify the second part of the predicate (*wanted to help free other slaves*).



Check for understanding: Provide students with two colors of highlighters or pencils. Ask them to turn to page 5 and read the sixth sentence. Have students circle the subject (*Slaves*). Next, ask them to highlight or underline in one color the first part of the compound predicate (*had no freedom to go where they wanted*). Then have them circle the conjunction (*and*) and highlight or underline in the second color the second part of the compound predicate (*sometimes they were not allowed to marry or raise their own children*). Monitor for accuracy.

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

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- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [compound predicates worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: **Content vocabulary**

- Explain to students that many of words in the book are used to tell about slavery. Provide opportunities for students to talk about difficult words such as *abolitionists* or *meager*. Provide opportunities for students to say the new vocabulary words, talk about their meanings, and use the words in sentences.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [content vocabulary worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Invite students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Writing Connection

Provide additional resources for students to research slavery and the Underground Railroad. Have students select a person who fought for the rights of slaves or helped slaves travel the Underground Railroad and write a short report about him or her. Have students share their reports with the class. Visit [Writing A–Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on informational report writing.

Social Studies Connection

Have students research and make a map of states that slaves fled from and the free states that they traveled to. Have them mark known stops for slaves traveling the Underground Railroad.

Skill Review

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently retell in their mind the story of Harriet Tubman
- accurately identify cause-and-effect relationships in discussion and on a worksheet
- consistently identify compound predicates in discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately recognize and use content vocabulary in discussion and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)