

Harriet Tubman And The Underground Railroad

SUBJECT/GRADE/STRAND: Social Studies/ Grade 3/Early Settlements in Upper Canada

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PURPOSE

- To introduce the subject of Black settlement in Canada
- To understand the workings of the Underground Railroad to Canada.
- To tell the story of the famous conductor on the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman
- To introduce students to the concepts heroism and bravery
- To develop the use of words and phrases (e.g., adjectives) which help convey their meaning as specifically as possible

ACTIVITIES

Description

The teacher will introduce the class to the story of the Underground Railroad and the Blacks who settled in Upper Canada (Ontario) during this time period. The teacher can read a picture book about Harriet Tubman or have the class read picture books about Harriet Tubman. Working individually or in small groups, the students will then complete the Harriet Tubman Life Chart and create a piece of artwork based on the information they have learned about this great heroine.

Expectations

Heritage and Citizenship: Grade 3 - Early Settlements in Upper Canada

Specific Expectations

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- identify the areas of early settlement in Upper Canada (e.g., English/Niagara; Francophone/Penetanguishene; African American/Chatham; Mennonite/Kitchener; Mohawk/Brantford);
- explain how the early settlers valued, used, and looked after natural resources (e.g., water, forests, land);
- describe the various roles of male and female settlers (e.g., farm worker, minister, teacher, merchant, blacksmith, homemaker).

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- collect information and draw conclusions about human and environmental interactions during the early settlement period (e.g., settlers storing food for long winters, using plants for medicinal purposes, using waterways for transportation);
- make and read a wide variety of graphs, charts, diagrams, maps, and models to understand and share their findings about early settlements in Upper Canada (e.g., a research organizer showing trades and tools; illustrations of period clothing; maps of settlements, including First Nation communities);
- use appropriate vocabulary (e.g., slavery, Underground Railroad, fugitive slaves, secret codes, Civil War, *settlement etc.*) to describe their inquiries and observations.

GETTING ORGANIZED

Prior Knowledge Required

The teacher should have prior knowledge about the Underground Railroad and the life of Harriet Tubman. In this regard, the teacher should read the conference papers of the Ontario Historical Society website *Forging Freedom: In Honour of the Bicentennial of the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, particularly Kate Clifford Larson's paper, "Bound for the Promised Land. Harriet Tubman: Portrait of an American Hero," and Bryan Walls' "The Road That Led to Somewhere."

Students should be familiar with various aspects of pioneer life in Upper Canada.

Required Time: 3 sessions

Session 1: Read a picture book or tell the story of Harriet Tubman and her road to freedom, and that of those she conducted out of slavery via the Underground Railroad.

Session 2: Ask students to complete Harriet Tubman's Life Chart. Students can work in pairs and do further research using available picture books on Tubman.

Session 3: Review the Harriet Tubman Life Chart once students have completed it and have students share their responses with the class. Get students to create an art project, using the North Star and "drinking gourd" concepts, and the fugitive slaves fleeing with Harriet. Another project might be to create a collage of word adjectives that describe Harriet Tubman.

Planning Notes

- Collect a list of available titles on Harriet Tubman for students to use in their research.
- Research the use of the North Star and Big Dipper which escaped slaves followed on their route to freedom in Canada.
- Photocopy Harriet Tubman charts for students to fill in.

Accommodations/Modifications

- Some students may need more teacher supervision and assistance to complete task.
- Pair students who have ability challenges with students who have strong developed skills.
- Alter size of artwork paper to postcard size if students have difficulty finding many adjectives.

Assessment/Evaluation Description

- Teacher observation
- Discussion participation
- Successful completion of Harriet Tubman's Life Chart and significance
- Formative rubric for Tubman chart

Resources Used and Consulted

- *Bound for the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of A Hero* by Kate Clifford Larson, New York: Random House, 2004 (and conference paper of the same name)
- *The Road That Led to Somewhere* by Bryan Walls, Windsor, 1980
- *The Blacks in Canada: a History* by Robin Winks, McGill University Press, 1997

Additional Resources for Teachers and Students

Books

- *African Canadian Contributions to New France and British North America* by Natasha Henry, (Self-published), Fundi Educational Resources, 2003
- *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad to the Sky* by Faith Ringgold, New York: Crown Publishers, 1992

- *The Kids Book of Black Canadian History* by Rosemary Sadlier, illustrated by Wang Qijun, Kids Can Press, 2003
- *The Last Safe House: A Story of the Underground Railroad* by Barbara Greenwood, Kids Can Press, 1998
- *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford, New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2006
- *North By Night: A Story of the Underground Railroad* by Katharine Ayres, New York: Delacorte Press, 1998
- *A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman* by David A. Adler, New York: Holiday House, 1992
- *Underground to Canada* by Barbara Smucker, Toronto: Irwin Clarke, 1977

Websites (as of July 2008)

- John Freeman Walls Historic Site and Underground Railroad Museum
<http://www.undergroundrailroadmuseum.com>
- Parks Canada Underground Railroad Online Resources
http://www.pc.gc.ca/culture/mhn-bhm/page4_e.asp
- Resources for Teachers: The Underground Railroad in Canada
<http://resources-teachers.blogspot.com/2007/6/underground-railroad-in-canada.html>
- Underground Railroad
www.blackhistorysociety.ca/URR.htm
- The Underground Railroad: Finding Freedom in the Niagara Region
<http://www.freedomtrail.ca/home.html>
- The Walk to Canada: Tracing the Underground Railroad
www.ecf.utoronto.ca/~shirley/african/walk.html

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Discussion: Discuss Upper Canada's early Black settlers, how they came from the United States escaping slavery.

Review: Review any unfamiliar terms and concepts in the lesson.

Cooperative Learning: Students can work in small groups to complete the assignments.

Writing: Students can write a paragraph describing the settlement of fugitive slaves who came via the Underground Railroad.

Oral Presentation: To wrap up the lesson, get students to make oral presentations to share their artwork with the class.

STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET

Harriet Tubman And The Underground Railroad

1. Complete a chart of the life of Harriet Tubman, describing key aspects of her story.
2. Create a piece of art using the guides of the North Star and Big Dipper to show how Harriet Tubman conducted escaped slaves to freedom in Canada.

OR

3. Create a piece of art called "Harriet Tubman is...." First make a list of characteristics to describe Harriet Tubman. Then create a collage of these words in artwork. Words and letters can be cut out of newspapers and magazines to construct the collage.

HARRIET TUBMAN LIFE CHART

Key Points of Harriet's Life	Description
Birth (birth name, date and place)	
Family History (mother, father, additional family members)	
Childhood Obstacles	
Major Turning Point (e.g., What made her decide to escape?)	
Achievements (How many people did she help to escape? How did she help during the Civil War? Other achievements?)	
Death (date, place?)	

MARKING RUBRIC FOR TUBMAN LIFE CHART

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Knowledge and Understanding The student demonstrates an understanding of the experience of fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad, including that of Harriet Tubman.	A clear, comprehensive, balanced and well integrated understanding of the information as it relates to the experience of fugitive slaves, particularly Harriet Tubman, in Upper Canada.	Clear and comprehensive understanding of the information as it relates to the experience of fugitive slaves, particularly Harriet Tubman, in Upper Canada.	Some understanding -- though lacking in completeness, clarity and integration - of the information as it relates to the experience of fugitive slaves in Upper Canada.	Limited understanding of the information as it relates to the fugitive slave experience in Upper Canada.
Thinking and Interpretation The student demonstrates critical and creative thinking skills and processes.	Demonstrates a high degree of effectiveness in the use of critical and creative thinking skills and processes.	Demonstrates considerable effectiveness in the use of critical and creative thinking skills and processes.	Demonstrates some degree of effectiveness in the use of critical and creative thinking skills and processes.	Demonstrates a limited degree of effectiveness in the use of critical and creative thinking skills and processes.
Communication The student writes effectively for the purpose, using clear and persuasive language that elicits a positive response.	Precise use of language, clarity of organization and good understanding of the conventions of written communication.	Consistent and effective use of language and clear organization of data transporting the reader into a clearly conceived time and place.	Somewhat effective use of language and organization of data but with limited understanding of the research and information.	Language and organization of data that demonstrates lack of sensitivity to the historical and geographical context.
Application The student makes personal imaginative connections with the fugitive slaves and Harriet Tubman and the challenges they faced in getting to Canada.	High degree of identification with the plight of the fugitive slaves and Harriet Tubman, and understanding of the challenges they faced.	Effective understanding and identification with the fugitive slaves and Harriet Tubman.	Some thoughtful and appropriate acknowledgement of personal connections to themes of the lesson plan.	Little personal identification with the plight of fugitive slaves and Harriet Tubman as they made their way to Canada.