



Harriet Tubman

Follow the North Star

Harriet Tubman, who lived from about 1820 to 1913, was born a slave in Maryland. Tubman escaped to the North with help from the Underground Railroad, but she didn't stop there. She made the treacherous trip back and forth again and again, leading more than 300 slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad—and never once losing a passenger.

Guided Reading Level: I

Word Count: 700

Average Words Per Page: 44

Spotlight Nonfiction Feature:
Map

Introducing the Book

Explain that long ago in our country, some people in the South had slaves. A slave was someone whom another person owned. Today no one is allowed to own another person. Back then, slaves had to do whatever their masters wanted. They were not free. They were not paid any money for their work, and they were treated poorly.

Help children understand how difficult life was for slaves. Ask: *Why is being free so important? How would you feel if you were not free?* Tell children that they will read about an incredibly brave woman who took risks not only to free herself but to help others escape, too.

Spotlight Nonfiction Feature: Map

Help children define what a map shows—a “bird’s-eye view” of the world, or part of the world. Then introduce the term *transportation map*. Explain that this kind of map shows a route, or how one can travel, from one place to another.

Have children turn to the map on page 10. Point out the caption and have a volunteer read it aloud, explaining that it tells what route the map shows. Explain how to use the compass rose and what the letters stand for.

Have children find the beginning of the route, and ask: *Where did Harriet begin her trip?*

(Bucktown, Maryland) *In what direction did she travel?* (She traveled north.) Invite children to trace Harriet’s route with a finger. When they reach the end of the line, ask: *Where did Harriet’s route end?* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).



Using the Reproducible

Discuss what it may have been like to travel on the Underground Railroad. Ask: *How would you feel at the start of the trip? What are some dangerous things that could happen along the way? How would you feel when you reached the North?* Distribute page 45 and have children write a travel log about their route to freedom. At each “stop,” they can write feelings and events. When they reach the star, they can write how it feels to be free.

Book Links

For more information on Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, try these titles:

- ♦ *A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman*
by David A. Adler (Holiday House, 1992)
- ♦ *If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad*
by Ellen Levine (Scholastic, 1993)
- ♦ *Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman*
by Alan Schroeder (Dial, 1996)

Name _____

Date _____

My Path to Freedom

Imagine you are a passenger on the Underground Railroad. As you follow the path, write what happens and how you feel at each stop along the way. When you reach the last stop, write in the star how it feels to be free.

