

THE LIFE OF HARRIET TUBMAN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY: BRIGHT STAR TOURING THEATRE

The Underground what?

One of the most important things about the Underground Railroad to remember, was that it was not a railroad or even underground! In fact, the Underground Railroad was a network of people and safe homes that helped escaping slaves of the 19th century get to their freedom. Harriet Tubman is the most well-known of all of the “conductors” on the Underground Railroad. On her 19 journeys she helped more than 70 slaves escape.



Meet Harriet...

My name is Harriet Tubman. But, I was born with the name Araminta Harriet Ross. Most people back then just called me “Minty.” I am an abolitionist and humanitarian. This just means that I worked against segregation and slavery while always fighting for equal rights. Once, I even worked as a spy for the Union Army during the American

Civil War! After I found my freedom, I began working to help with the Women’s Suffrage Movement. This means I was working towards equal rights for women. I have always been a fighter and I never gave up. I hope that, if nothing else, these are the lessons you learn from my life.



THE LANTERN: The lantern was one of the many hidden symbols of The Underground Railroad. Hung in a window, it might mean that that particular home was safe for escaping slaves to stay the night.



THE QUILT: Another important hidden symbol of The Underground Railroad was the quilt. Draped over a fence, a slave might know they could receive some supplies or a quick meal at this home.

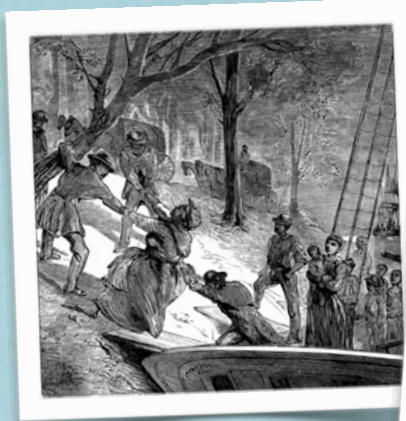


MUSIC: Singing songs of hope was one of the most inspiring and important secrets of The Underground Railroad. These songs were used to communicate directions or other important escaping information.

IMAGINE THIS...

You are a slave. Every morning you tend to the fields, pick the cotton, clean, build, and do whatever your master tells you to do. Sometimes you are even beaten or punished senselessly for the smallest mistake. You have no family with you. They have already been sold off. And you, yourself, could be sold off to another slave master any day! But, you hear there might be hope. Slaves from other nearby farms have been escaping through a secret connection of people and

THE BIG ESCAPE



Crossing the Ohio River meant you had made it to the North. And you were FREE. But getting there took months. Slaves would wade in the water to keep hunting dogs off their scent.

Making your escape was a dangerous move. To seek your freedom meant you would be risking your life. Slaves had to travel mostly by night. They carried very little with them.



homes who disagree with slavery. They call it, The Underground Railroad. You hear of one brave woman who would be coming again in a few weeks time. Her name is Harriet Tubman.

You have a decision to make. Are you going to stay at this farm to lead a life of suffering or are you going to join Harriet on one of her journeys? The choice is yours. What would you do?

THE SOUND OF FREEDOM



Spirituals are songs created by slaves, typically religious in nature. These songs were used to create hope and joy during some of the hardest times in American History. Many of these songs contained instructions and hidden messages to help fugitives.



"Wade in the Water." tells escaping slaves to wade in bodies of water. This threw off pursuing bloodhound dogs. "Follow the Drinking Gourd" tells escapees to follow the North Star. Can you find any more hidden messages in these popular spirituals?

Popular Spirituals:

1. His Eye is on the Sparrow
2. Swing Low Sweet Chariot
3. Wade in the Water
4. Keep Your Hand on the Plow
5. Go Down Moses
6. Poor Wayfarin' Stranger
7. Ain't That Good News?
8. Follow the Drinking Gourd



PROFILE:

Name: Araminta Harriet Ross; Harriet Tubman

Lived: 1820 - 1913

Nicknames: Minty, Moses, Harriet

Known for: Work with the Underground Railroad, Women's Suffrage, and Civil War Service.

Occupations:

Abolitionist, fugitive slave, UR conductor, spy, soldier, nurse.

Hometown: Dorchester County, Maryland

Family: Grew up with 8 siblings. She married John Tubman at age 24.

Did you know?

Harriet Tubman once stood up to a slave master and was hit over the head with a 2 lb weight!!! Because of this, she suffered blackouts for many years. Ultimately, a doctor performed a surgery to help relieve her of this issue. Can you imagine the fear of having a blackout amidst an escape journey on the Underground Railroad?

FREE AT LAST, FREE AT LAST!



"I LOOKED AT MY HANDS TO SEE IF I WAS THE SAME PERSON NOW THAT I WAS FREE. THERE WAS SUCH GLORY OVER EVERYTHING. THE SUN CAME UP LIKE GOLD THROUGH THE TREES AND OVER THE FIELDS AND I FELT LIKE I WAS IN HEAVEN."

Harriet Tubman received her freedom in 1849. But that was not the end of the struggle. She took many more journeys south to free those she loved. She was able to free her brothers and parents before the Civil War began. However, this did not mean that she was free of fear. In 1850, a law was passed called "The Fugitive Slave Act." This law said that slave hunters from the South could take people they thought might be slaves or escapees and bring them back South...even if they had been freed! This meant that these freed people had to always be on their guard. At one point, there was a \$40,000 reward for Harriet Tubman's capture. But...she was never caught. She just kept going.

HARRIET FACTS

Journeys to the South on the Underground Railroad:

19

Slaves Harriet helped reach freedom:

70+

Year she freed herself:

1849

Reward for her capture:

\$40,000

Sing a Song!

Learning about Spirituals

Pick two or three of the sacred spirituals listed previously in the study guide. Print out lyrics for students and also be prepared with tracks for listening. Discuss the themes in the songs. What are some of those hidden messages and meanings? What lines really speak to the students? Ask them about how they sound. Do you notice any musical similarities? Which songs are joyful and which songs are full of sadness and despair. Then, break into small groups and

have students write their own songs! Try to help them stick to the themes of slavery, The Underground Railroad, and Harriet Tubman. Then, have students get

up and perform the songs for one another. Perhaps they can use simple instrumentation: Claps, stomps, bells, whistles, or anything else they can imagine!

ACTIVITIES!



✦ Draw a picture of what you would have brought on your journey? Be specific. You can't overpack!

PACK YOUR BAGS!!! Imagine you are an escaping slave. You have very few belongings in the first place. But what important items might you need? Food? Rope? A Lantern?



WADE IN THE WATER, CHILDREN.



A whole new meaning to a favorite childhood game! Create a safe space. Perhaps an open gym floor. Have some of the students hide. Then turn the lights down to half lit. Give one or two the students flashlights. They are the seekers. Encourage silence.



A single footstep or scratch might give their hiding spot away. After the game, ask students how they felt? What would this have been like if their lives were on the line? For fugitive slaves, this was no game. It was terrifying and real. Have a discussion.

A FUN VARIATION:

To add some spice to the game, create a home "base." Perhaps this is just a designated area on the ground. Now, give students the opportunity to escape their hiding spots to reach safety. Have students write about their experience.

MY FIRST TIME WITH LIVE THEATRE!!!!

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Attending the theatre is very different than going to the movies or watching television. For one thing, the actors are real people who can hear and see everything that's happening in the audience. It's important to know a few rules before seeing a play:

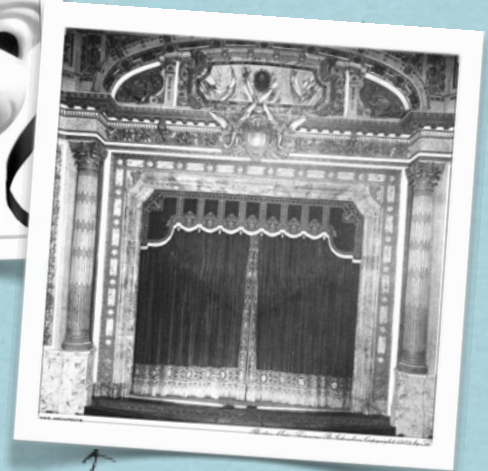
1. Please be quiet and respectful during the performance so that those around you can hear what is happening.
2. If something is funny, it is okay to laugh.
3. If the actors ask you a question, respond! Volunteer!
4. Keep your hands to yourself and your eyes up front.
5. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
6. Have fun! Enjoy yourself!

SEEING A PLAY!



Try to notice all the things around you! The colors, the objects, the people, the voices...take it all in!

* Seeing a play can be a truly memorable experience! What was your favorite part of seeing a live play?



WRITE US!

It would be a great honor if your class sent us pictures, drawings, letters, or any other thoughts about our play. We cannot thank you enough for them - and neither can our performers!

Address:

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www.brightstartheatre.com

YOU MAY NOTICE...



The actors will be using various objects and hold different things in their hands. We call these properties, or simply put, props! What props did you notice? Did you have a favorite prop?



The clothing that the actors are wearing may be very different from what you normally see. These are their costumes. Did you have a favorite costume? Do you ever dress up? It can be fun to make believe!

ACTORS

Actors are people just like you! They pretend to be different characters on stage to tell a story. Maybe one day you will want to be an actor too!