

Welcome to the Teachers' Instructions area for this student activity. Here you'll find directions and suggestions for using this activity along with the materials you need to evaluate your students' work.

Title: Frame That Conductor!

Audience: Middle

Duration: 45 minutes

Subject Area(s):

Language Arts

Social Studies - United States history

Grade Level(s): 6,7,8

Teacher Directions:

The *Eyewitness to History* interactive on the Pathways to Freedom: Maryland & the Underground Railroad Website contains a variety of primary source material from which the user can gain valuable firsthand knowledge about important people involved in slavery and the Underground Railroad. In this activity, students will use an excerpt from *Harriet: The Moses of Her People* to gain an understanding of the situations Harriet Tubman faced and the decisions she made as she contemplated her escape from slavery. Students will collect details about Ms. Tubman's life and will use these details to complete a frame around a picture of Ms. Tubman comprised of statements about her life.

This activity can be completed using a variety of technology configurations. If a computer lab is available, students can access the activity, worksheets and web pages through Thinkport. You may choose to bookmark this activity on each student computer or save the activity on your Thinkport classroom website. If students are comfortable with typing and they are all on computers they may complete the worksheets online and save them to your school's network. Another option would be to display the activity and web page on a classroom computer with a projection device. In this case students would need copies of all worksheets.

Pre-Viewing Activity

Before viewing the interactive, discuss the use of primary source material with the students.

- Show students pictures of Harriet Tubman and ask them to identify her. Tell them that Tubman was one of the most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad, and that it is said that she "never lost a 'passenger.'"
- Ask the students how they think we know about Harriet Tubman. How did we find out about her life and about all the people she helped? As students provide answers to this question, divide their answers into two columns: one for primary sources and the one for all other sources. Their responses might include the following:

For primary resources:

Letters she wrote

Records of conversations with people

Biographies or autobiographies of her life

Photographs

Diaries

Government documents

For other resources:

Museum exhibits

Textbooks

Television shows

Lectures

- Tell the students that you purposely divided their answers into these two columns. Ask them to identify what the entries in each column have in common. Why did you divide them this way?
- Tell the students that the first column includes items that contain firsthand testimony or direct evidence of Harriet Tubman's life. These are called **primary source documents**. The second column includes useful information that can certainly be learned from, but it lacks this firsthand connection to the subject.

Tell the students that in this activity, they will have the opportunity read from a primary source document about Harriet Tubman as she made decisions about her escape from slavery. The primary source document is a biography of her life entitled *Harriet: The Moses of Her People* by Sarah H. Bradford. Their task as they read this excerpt from her biography will be to gather facts about Tubman's life and her decision to escape.

By the end of the activity, the students **will be able to** describe facts about Harriet Tubman's life including:

- She was born in Maryland around 1820.
- She escaped from slavery when she was about 20 or 25.
- She could not read or write.
- She was one of the most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad.

Give each student a copy of the **Harriet: The Moses of Her People** worksheet. Read the directions on this worksheet together, and review the questions that are included. Tell the students that they are responsible for finding the answers to these questions as they read the excerpt from the biography. Since they will be using the answers to these questions later in this activity, it is important for them to use complete sentences.

Focus for Media Interaction

The focus for viewing the *Eyewitness to History* interactive on the Pathways to Freedom: Maryland & the Underground Railroad Website is for students to read a section of Harriet Tubman's biography and to gather details about her life as she contemplated her escape from slavery.

Viewing Activity

Before Reading:

Tell students to open the Pathways to Freedom: Maryland & the Underground Railroad Website at http://pathways.thinkport.org/flash_home.cfm, and click on *Eyewitness to History* from the list on the left side of the screen. They will see the title "Steal Away..." at the top of the screen.

Ask the students to read the information on this introductory screen. It provides them with brief comments on slavery, as well as information about primary source documents. Review the icons listed; these will help them as they use the interactive. The text on this screen is as follows:

Steal Away...

Deciding to try to escape slavery was very complicated. Living as a slave was extremely hard. But escaping meant leaving family behind.

It also might lead to eventual capture, punishment, and sometimes, even death.

The resources here will help you see how people made this complicated decision. They include:

- o autobiographies, or life stories written by the people who lived them.

- o biographies, or life stories written by others.

- o interviews with former slaves, conducted in the 1930s as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA)

Historians call these resources primary source documents or primary sources. They all provide clues to the past. By piecing them together, historians can form a more complete and accurate picture of past events.

As you read, you will notice questions and facts labeled in the left column. These labels will help guide your reading and identify the type of information presented:

Right There — The answer is stated in the text

Think and Search — Combine information highlighted with other things you've read and thought

On Your Own — Bring your own perspective to the ideas presented in the text

Bonus Fact — Extra information related to the text

Definition — These clues help you unlock the meaning of certain words in the text

For all the documents, keep this focus question in mind: "What were some of the factors people had to consider as they thought about escaping from slavery?" It is a complex question, and, as you will find, there are many answers.

When all the students have read these directions, ask them to look at the list of names at the top right hand side of this screen. The following names are included: James Pennington, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Caroline Hammond, Josiah Henson, and Charles Ball. Tell the students that they will be focusing on the primary source document for Harriet Tubman.

Ask the students to click on Harriet Tubman from the list. This will bring them to a screen that gives some information about Tubman's life. As a class review the basic information about Harriet Tubman's life by answering the questions on the **Harriet: The Moses of Her People introduction worksheet**. Discuss why Harriet Tubman's life was chosen for a biography.

Sample answers are as follows:

1. Harriet Tubman was born a slave around 1820 in Dorchester County, Maryland.
2. Harriet Tubman was called "The Moses of her People" because, like Moses, she led a great number of people to freedom as a conductor on the Underground Railroad.
3. Harriet Tubman could not
4. The title of Harriet Tubman's biography is "Harriet: The Moses of Her People." It was written by her friend, Sarah Bradford.

While Reading:

Ask students to click on *Go to the Interactive*. This will open a new window containing an excerpt from Harriet Tubman's biography, *Harriet: The Moses of Her People* by Harriet's friend, Sarah H. Bradford.

Explain to the students that this interactive is divided into two sections on the screen. The column on the right contains the excerpt from the biography. The column on the left contains questions about the information in the excerpt. Moving the mouse over the questions in this column creates a highlight in the excerpt relating to this question

As the students work in the interactive, have them answer the questions on the **Harriet The Moses of Her People primary source worksheet**. All of the questions on the worksheet are also in the left hand column of the interactive.

Postviewing Activity

When all the questions on the worksheet are completed, distribute the **Harriet Tubman Frame** worksheet. Ask students to summarize what they have learned about Harriet Tubman by adding information to the frame around Harriet's picture.

Student Directions:

Are you important enough for one of your friends to write a book about you? Have you accomplished so much in the span of your life that it would fill the pages of a book? Sarah Bradford thought that her friend, Harriet Tubman, was important enough to have a book written about her. She felt that Harriet Tubman, who was born a slave, escaped, and later helped countless others as a conductor on the Underground Railroad, had accomplished so much and helped so many people that her story had to be told.

In this activity, you will have a chance to read from Harriet's Tubman's biography, called *Harriet: The Moses of Her People*. You will use the information you find in this document to complete a picture frame telling about Harriet Tubman's life.

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Students will read, comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate informational text.

Grades 6-8

Topic

A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator

2. Analyze text features to facilitate understanding of informational texts
- e. Analyze online features that contribute to meaning

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Indicator

4. Analyze important ideas and messages in informational text
- c. State and support main ideas and messages
- d. Summarize or paraphrase

5.0 CONTENT STANDARD: HISTORY- Students will examine significant ideas, beliefs, and themes; organize patterns and events; and analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time in Maryland, the United States and around the world.

C. Conflict between Ideas and Institutions

Grade 4

4. Explain how the institution of slavery impacted individuals and groups in Maryland
 - a. Compare the living conditions of slave families and free blacks
 - b. Describe the abolitionist movement in Maryland
 - c. Describe the conditions that promoted the growth of the Underground Railroad in Maryland

The Students will:

Describe facts about Harriet Tubman's life.

Directions: Open the link below. As you view this web page you are responsible for identifying what a primary source document is. Discuss your findings with your class or a partner.

Eyewitness to History Using Primary Sources

The Eyewitness to History interactive on the Pathways to Freedom: Maryland & the Underground Railroad web site contains a variety of primary source material from which the user can gain valuable first hand knowledge about important people involved in slavery and the Underground Railroad.

<http://pathways.thinkport.org/eyewitness/>

What kinds of information do the primary source documents give you about the lives of these important people?

Directions: Open the link below. As you read this introduction to Harriet Tubman you are responsible for identifying why a biography was written about her life. Answer the questions on the "Harriet: The Moses of Her People introduction worksheet" below.

Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People introduction

Students are introduced to Harriet Tubman in this Eyewitness to History introductory page.

<http://pathways.thinkport.org/eyewitness/tubmanintro.cfm>

Who was Harriet Tubman? Why was a biography written about her life?

Harriet The Moses of Her People introduction worksheet ([View](#))

Directions: Open the link below. Click on "Go to the Interactive". As you read this primary source document you are responsible for identifying the challenges that Harriet faced in her life. Answer the questions on the "Harriet: The Moses of Her People primary source worksheet". The questions on the worksheet can be found in the left hand column of the interactive. Find and scroll your mouse over the question. The part of the text that will help answer the questions will be highlighted.

Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People primary source document

Examine facts about Harriet Tubman's life in this primary source document from Eyewitness to History titled "Harriet: The Moses of Her People". This interactive has reading enhancements that help students respond to primary source documents.

<http://pathways.thinkport.org/eyewitness/tubmanintro.cfm>

What challenges did Harriet Tubman face in her life?

Harriet The Moses of Her People primary source worksheet ([View](#))

Activity Signature

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