



Subject: History & Language Arts

Grade: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>

Topic: Underground Railroad

Lesson Length: Two - 1 hour sessions

**Objectives:**

- 1) Students will have a beginning foundation of knowledge about the Underground Railroad.
- 2) Students will analyze reading material to determine important information.
- 3) Students operate in cooperative groups to obtain a common goal.

**Materials/Technology:**

...If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine (5 copies), KWL chart, recording sheet

**Procedures:**

- 1) To catch student interest, tell the story of Box Brown (see related sources below)
- 2) Tell students that they will be reading a nonfiction book about the Underground Railroad. Have students complete the “Knowledge” and “Want to Know” section of the KWL chart.
- 3) Students will participate in a jigsaw activity. Break students into 5 multi-ability groups. This group will be called their “Home Station.” Explain that each student will become an expert on a section out of the book. Number each child in the group 1-5. Now have all of the 1’s get together, 2’s get together, and so on. These groups are called “Conductor Groups.” Next assign a section of the book to each group as noted below:
  - a. Conductor Group 1 – pages 12-22
  - b. Conductor Group 2 – pages 23-35
  - c. Conductor Group 3 – pages 36-45
  - d. Conductor Group 4 – pages 46-55
  - e. Conductor Group 5 – pages 56-64
- 4) After students have broken into Conductor Groups, read aloud pages 7-11 together.
- 5) As a class, write down 3 interesting or important facts from the section under “What I Learned” on the KWL chart.
- 6) Tell students that each person needs to write down three facts from their Conductor Group that they find interesting or important. They also need to be on

the look out for answers to the “Want to Know” section on the KWL chart. Let students know that they are responsible for going back to their Home Station as an “Expert” to share what they found out.

- 7) Allow students time to read and record information in Conductor Groups.
- 8) For students who have finished reading and recording early, they may explore websites listed at the bottom. Another option is to have a selection of books available for students to read regarding the Underground Railroad (see Related Sources below).
- 9) When all students are finished reading and recording information, have students return to their Home Station to share.
- 10) Allow students time to share their expertise knowledge with other members of their Home group.
- 11) After students have shared come back together as a class to wrap up the lesson. Students should complete the “What I Learned” section of the KWL chart.
- 12) If you plan on continuing the lesson, you might want to add a new section to the KWL chart entitled “New Questions I Want Answered.”

#### **Student Assessment:**

Assessment will consist of teacher observations/anecdotal notes as students work in various cooperative groups during the activity.

#### **Resources:**

##### **A)Web Site Links:**

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/>

<http://artsci.wustl.edu/~educ/historyweb/>

[http://www.americangirl.com/collection/addy/addy\\_test\\_1.html](http://www.americangirl.com/collection/addy/addy_test_1.html)

<http://www.ket.org/underground/>

##### **B)Related Sources:**

National Park Service (1998). *Underground Railroad*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior.

#### **Children’s Literature:**

Aunt Harriet’s Underground Railroad in the Sky by Faith Ringgold

The Drinking Gourd by F.N. Monjo

Freedom Train the Story of Harriet Tubman by Dorothy Sterling

Frederick Douglass Fights for Freedom by Margaret Davidson

From Slave Ship to Freedom Road by Julius Lester

Get on Board The Story of the Underground Railroad by Jim Haskins

Nettie’s Trip South by Ann Turner

Sojourner Truth Ain’t I a Woman by Patricia C. and Fredrick McKissack

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson

Two Tickets to Freedom the True Story of William and Ellen Craft, Fugitive Slaves by Florence B. Freedman

“Wanted Dead or Alive” the True Story of Harriet Tubman by Ann McGovern