

LESSON PLAN – READING *MOSES: WHEN HARRIET TUBMAN LED HER PEOPLE TO FREEDOM* (GRADES 3-5)

OBJECTIVE: Introduce students to Harriet Tubman and the legacy of the Underground Railroad.

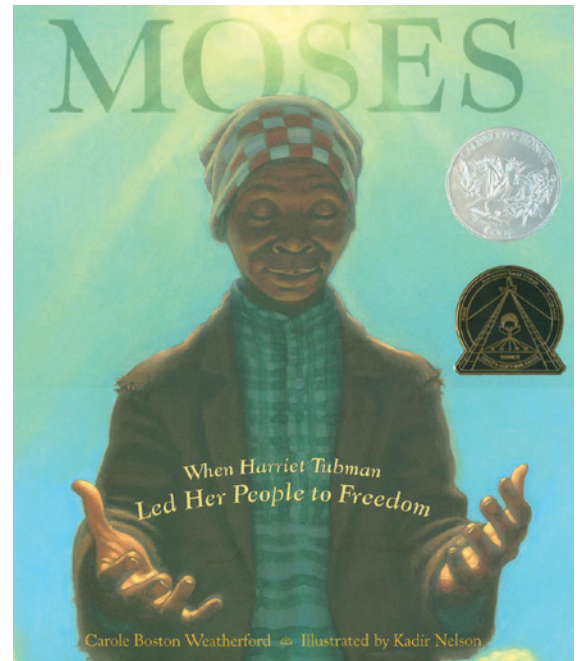
CONTENT AREA: Social Studies

SKILLS: Reading and analysis, cause and effect of historical events

TIME ALLOTMENT: One class period (could be extended)

DESCRIPTION: Describes Harriet Tubman’s spiritual journey as she hears the voice of God guiding her to freedom on that very first trip to escape the brutality of slavery. This is a moving portrait of one of the most notable figures of the Underground Railroad.

TEACHER TIP: Great lesson plan for Black History Month, Women’s History Month or remote learning opportunities.



PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Ask students: Who is Harriet Tubman? What is the Underground Railroad?

READING

Dramatically read *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford and Kadir Nelson (Illustrator) with students.

POST-READING ACTIVITY I

Ask students: Why is Harriet Tubman called Moses? Is Harriet Tubman a hero? Why did Harriet Tubman help enslaved people escape?

POST-READING ACTIVITY II

Ask students to consider the setting, characters, conflict, and resolution of the story by writing or drawing.



KEY FACTS AND INFORMATION

Personal And Early Life

- » Harriet Tubman was born as Araminta “Minty” Ross in Dorchester County, Maryland. She was the daughter of Harriet Green and Ben Ross, both were born into slavery. The couple had nine children, Minty was the fifth child.
- » At the age of five, Minty was hired to take care of an infant. By eight, she served in a household where she experienced punishment from her mistress because she took a lump of sugar and tasted it.
- » Four years later, she worked in the plantation of a man named Barrett. Minty preferred working outside instead of domestic works.
- » When Minty was twelve years old, an overseer threw an iron weight at her and struck her in the head. She was standing up for another slave and for the rest of her life she suffered from blackouts and headaches.
- » Minty and her family were hired by John Stewart to cut timber in Baltimore. Minty changed her name to Harriet in honor of her mother, and when she married John Tubman in 1844, her last name also changed.

Death And Legacy

- » At the age of 30 in 1849, Harriet ran away to the north and ended up in Philadelphia where she learned about a movement to abolish slavery with the group of people who were dedicated to helping slaves escape to the north. These people created the Underground Railroad.
- » The Underground Railroad was not an actual railroad. It was a path that slaves traveled at night with the help

of conductors, or people who guided them from safe house to safe house until they reached Canada. The station masters were the people who lived at the safe-house. These houses could be identified by the candles or lanterns that stood in the window.

- » During the Civil War, Tubman was recruited as a volunteer by General Benjamin Butler. She became the only African American to be part of an all-white troop. Tubman worked as a cook, nurse, and laundry washer without compensation.
- » From Virginia, she traveled to Port Royal, South Carolina, where she joined Dr. Henry K. Durand, Director of the Freedman's Hospital.
- » On January 1, 1863, right after the Emancipation Proclamation, she became the commander of the team in charge of espionage. Tubman led the creation of lifelines and escape routes for trapped slaves.
- » On June 2, 1863, the Combahee River Raid took place. It was led by Tubman who guided 150 black soldiers and they liberated more than 750 slaves.
- » Harriet Tubman was known as Moses after the Biblical Moses, who led his people out of Egypt, and Harriet led her people out of the south and out of slavery.
- » After the Civil War, Tubman returned to Auburn, New York. Her father died in 1871 while her mother passed nine years later.
- » On March 18, 1869, Tubman married Nelson Davis, a former soldier and brick-maker.
- » She worked for the rights of African Americans until she died on March 10, 1913, at the age of 93.
- » Harriet Tubman has been honored many times since her death for her bravery and humanitarian efforts.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

Students may want to learn more about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Those interested in learning more will find the following websites offer a variety of materials:

The Animated Hero Classics Resource and Activity Book: Harriet Tubman

Help children learn and retain this lesson in a fun and educational way. The activity book includes coloring pages, puzzles, matching games, word searches, as well as challenging and age-appropriate questions and activities for children from preschool through middle school.

<https://www.dscl.org/kids/nest-activity-resources/harriettubman.pdf>

Myths and Facts about Harriet Tubman, and Selected Quotes and Misquotes

Sort out the myths and facts about Harriet Tubman with Kate Clifford Larson, Ph.D., a historian, leading Harriet Tubman scholar and author of *Bound For the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero* (Ballantine/One World, 2004).

<http://www.harriettubmanbiography.com/harriet-tubman-myths-and-facts.html>