**[On the Plantation: Life as Slave](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/plantation.htm)**

Curriculum Theme: Slavery in America

**Travel along with the runaway slave**

* Close your eyes. What images and feelings do you remember most from Walter's story?

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* What are some of the main reasons Walter would want to escape the plantation?

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**Explore the scene**

* What was a common crop in Kentucky?

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* Describe the slaves' living quarters.

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* What could happen if a slave showed up late to the fields?

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**[Watch the Slideshow: Slavery](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/slideshows/plantation_slides.htm)**

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* How and from where were the first slaves brought to America?

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* What did it mean to be a slave?

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* Why was slavery so important to the South's economy?

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[**Growing Up In Slavery**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/children.htm)

Read the interview with Fannie Mae, who was born a slave in South Carolina. Imagine yourselves in Fannie's shoes and write a story about a day in your life.

* What were some of the worst parts of being a slave?

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* Where did Fannie find joy in her life?

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* What were some of the jobs children had on the plantation?

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[**Write About It: On the Plantation (PDF)**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/pdfs/printable_plantation.pdf)

Use this printable, which includes critical thinking and reflection questions about what you've learned. Try to answer some or all of the questions before moving on to the next stop.

[**Escape! The Underground Railroad**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/escape.htm)

Curriculum theme: The Underground Railroad

**Travel along with the runaway slave**

Read the first-hand account of the young slave as he escapes on the Underground Railroad. Click the audio button to listen along.

* How did Walter find his way?

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* What challenges did he face?

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* What was his biggest fear?

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**Explore the scene**

Find the clickable objects and person to learn about the slave's escape. Discuss what you've learned:

* Name two ways slaves knew which direction to travel.

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* What happened if a runaway slave was caught?

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[**Watch the Slideshow: Underground Railroad**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/slideshows/escape_slides.htm)

You will now watch the slideshow about the Underground Railroad. Click the audio button to listen along. When you're done, we will share what you learned.

* Why was it so dangerous for slaves to escape?

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* Were slaves free once they got off the plantation?

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* Why not?

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* How did most fugitives travel?

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[**Write a Secret Letter**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/write_letter.htm)

In this activity, you will learn about some common words and phrases used on the Underground Railroad. You'll also learn how some people used a "secret code" to keep their work hidden. Then you will complete the coded letter using some of the secret language of the Underground Railroad.

* What was the difference between a passenger, a conductor, and a stationmaster on the Underground Railroad?

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* Why was it so important to keep the work of the Underground Railroad hidden?

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[**Write About It: Escape! (PDF)**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/pdfs/printable_escape.pdf)

Use the printable included in this packet titled “Write About It: Escape!” Try to answer some or all of the questions before moving on to the next stop.

[**Reaching Safety: Heroes for the Cause**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/safety.htm)

Curriculum theme: Abolitionists and Harriet Tubman

**Travel along with the runaway slave**

Next, you will read how the runaway slave finds his way to a safe house, the home of a stationmaster named John. Click the audio button to listen along.

* Why do you think people used phrases like "a friend of friends"?

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* Why was Walter so afraid of John at first?

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* Is Walter free in Ohio? Why or why not?

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**Explore the scene**

Find the clickable objects and person to learn about the work of abolitionists, and the few who helped fugitives. Discuss what you've learned:

* Name two ways stationmasters and conductors kept fugitives safe from slave catchers.

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* Who was John Rankin and why was he famous?

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* Why were newspapers important to the abolitionists?

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[**Watch the Slideshow: Abolitionists**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/slideshows/safety_slides.htm)

Watch the slideshow about the abolitionists. You can click the audio button to listen along. When you're done, we will share what you learned.

* Who were the abolitionists?

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* Why was it so dangerous for those who worked on the Underground Railroad?

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* Name one famous abolitionist and describe what he or she did to fight against slavery.

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[**Harriet Tubman Web Hunt**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/harriet_tubman.htm)

In this activity, you will explore sites about the most famous conductor on the Underground Railroad, and record some of her most notable accomplishments.

* What do you think made Harriet Tubman so successful at helping slaves escape the South?

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* Why do you think Harriet Tubman continues to be such an American hero today?

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[**Write About It: Reaching Safety (PDF)**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/pdfs/printable_safety.pdf)

[**Almost Free: Life in the North**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/almost_free.htm)

Curriculum theme: Causes of the Civil War

**Travel along with the runaway slave**

You will read how the runaway slave reaches Cleveland on his way to Canada. Click the audio button to listen along.

* Why was it difficult for Walter to trust the people he met?

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* Why did he feel "like a spy" traveling across Ohio?

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**Explore the scene**

Find the clickable objects and people to learn about life in a northern city. Discuss what you've learned:

* Do you think fugitives felt welcome in northern cities? Why or why not?

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* What might have surprised runaway slaves who reached northern cities?

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* Why do you think Harriet Tubman felt like "a stranger in a strange land"?

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[**Watch the Slideshow: A New Life of Freedom**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/slideshows/free_slides.htm)

Watch the slideshow about the challenges and support slaves faced when starting a new life in the north. Click the audio button to listen along. When you're done, share what they learned.

* Why did so many thriving black communities spring up in Canadian towns across the U.S. border?

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* What events brought an end to slavery?

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* Did the abolition of slavery mean complete equality for African Americans? Explain your answer.

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[**Compare Two Worlds: The North vs. South**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/map.htm)

In this activity, you will explore maps to identify important differences between the North and South before the Civil War. Use the [Printable 1860 U.S. Map](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/map.htm) to record and analyze important information about the two regions in one place.

* Where were the Union, Confederate, and Border states?

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* Describe the differences between the economies of the North and the South. Why were slaves crucial to the South's economy?

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* Which southern states had the highest slave population? Why do you think more slaves lived in this region?

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* Which region had more railroads and factories? What advantages did these provide in the Civil War?

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[**Write About It: Almost Free (PDF)**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/pdfs/printable_free.pdf)

Use the attached printable, which includes critical thinking and reflection questions about what you've learned. Try to answer some or all of the questions before moving on to the next stop.

[**Final Writing Activity: Tell the Story**](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/tell_story.asp)

As a culminating project, write a personal narrative as if you are an ex-slave who escaped on the Underground Railroad. Based on what you've learned throughout the site, students will answer questions about the life of a slave, their escapes, and their lives after reaching freedom. Print out your interviews and share them in small groups.

If you want to learn more, read "Slave Stories," actual interviews with slaves conducted in the 1930s as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

Throughout this activity, you'll find a wealth of resources to enhance your American History units. Here are a few suggestions for integrating the resources into your larger lessons:

**Reliving a Difficult Past**

Throughout this activity, students will find poignant and vivid primary source materials from the days of American slavery. Direct students to the collection of [Primary Sources](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/primary_sources.htm) , where they can explore many historical images, from slave photographs to reward posters for runaways. Then ask students to read one or more of the slave narratives in [Growing Up in Slavery](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/children.htm) and [Tell the Story](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad/tell_story.asp) , for first-hand accounts from people who lived through slavery and emancipation. Have students select the images or quotes that they feel are most powerful, then use them to create their own portrayal of American slavery. Encourage students to express their own feelings, giving them the liberty to produce the work that feels most personal to them. For example, they could write a fictional letter to a slave, produce a short play set on a plantation, make a collage of images, or write a poem from a modern-day perspective.

**What Would You Have Done?**

Ask students to imagine themselves in one of these situations in 1860. Have them write a personal narrative describing what choice they would have made:

* You are a slave in Maryland, the oldest of six children who were all born on the plantation. A friend has just told you he is planning an escape the following night. He knows it is safer to travel alone, but he's willing to let you travel with him. It could mean freedom, but it also means leaving your family behind. Would you go or stay? What are the risks with either choice?
* You live in Ohio, along the shore of the Ohio River. Rumors are swirling that fugitives from Kentucky will be crossing this evening. You are against slavery, and fear that slave hunters will be out in force to catch and return the runaways. But you know the repercussions of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. What do you do?

**Meet an Abolitionist**

In this project, students learn about a number of different abolitionists of the 1800s, from William Lloyd Garrison to Harriet Tubman. As a class, discuss the many roles that abolitionists played for one common cause - to end slavery. Have students work in pairs to research one of the abolitionists featured in the project or another one from this period. Then ask students to imagine they could talk to that abolitionist today, and write a mock interview with him or her. Have them to describe the abolitionist's work and influence in the interview. Let each pair perform their interview for the class. Finally, as a class, decide which 19th century American abolitionist you would choose if you could meet one today. What would they most like to ask him or her?

**"Free" At Last?**

Students may be surprised to learn that runaway slaves who reached the North were not truly free. Ask them to imagine they are ex-slaves who made it safely to a northern city. Write a journal entry describing their experience. How is the city different from the southern plantation from which you escaped? What challenges do you still face as an African American? Will you keep traveling to Canada, or settle here? Why?

**To Fight or Not to Fight?**

Divide the class into two groups, the North and the South. Ask students to imagine themselves living in that region of the country in 1861. On each side, have students brainstorm reasons for and against going to war in 1861. What was each side fighting for? What would a victory or a loss mean for the region? What risks were they taking by going to war? What advantages did they have? Have each group write two persuasive speeches for their region, one for and one against going to war.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

**Utilize the following discussion topics to further the conversation**

Think of other times in history when doing what was right was in conflict with the laws of the time. Give examples such as the Civil Rights Movement, Gandhi, personal examples.

Describe what freedom means to you?

Who are the people in your lives today that exhibit great courage?  After the incredible hardships that followed for many enslaved African Americans who attempted to start a new life in the north, in what ways were their "freedoms" continually limited?

**Draw Your Own Timeline & Maps**

Ask students to retell the story of Walter through creation of their own timeline of key events. Have students draw symbols to represent the key episodes on his journey.

Have students chart their own course to freedom. Imagine each student as a slave from Kentucky and allow each to develop a route that will safely take them to the North.  **Write About It**

Ask your students to write a letter or journal entry in the voice of a runaway slave that reached the North. Have them write about their dangerous journey, how they crossed the North/South boarder and share about what life is now like as a "free" person.

Ask students to examine historical examples of slavery in other parts of the world. Assign a research project on a country that was affected by slavery aside from the United States.

**Read About It**

Encourage your students to read more about it - by providing an extended reading library of related books. The selections below provide a range of grade level titles to consider:

*Glory's Freedom: A Story of the Underground Railroad, by Joan Holub, for grade 3.*

*A Picture Book of Harriet Beecher Stowe, by David A. Adler, llustrated by Colin Bootman, for grade 4*

*I thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Dairy of Patsy, A Freed Girl, Mars Bluff, South Carolina 1865, by Joyce Hansen, for grade 5*

*The Glory Field, by Walter Dean Myers, for grade 6*

*Fields of Fury: The American Civil War, by James M. McPherson, for grade 6*

*One More River To Cross: The Stories of Twelve Black Americans, by Jim Haskins, Grade 6.*

*George Washington Carver: The Genius Behind the Peanut, Scholastic Biography Series, for grade 6.*

*5,000 Miles to Freedom: Ellen and William Craft's Flight from Slavery, by Judith Bloom Fradin and Dennis Brindell Fradin, for grade 9.*

*Growing Up in Slavery: Stories of Young Slaves as Told by Themselves, by Yuval Taylor, for grade 9.*

**MORE TO EXPLORE**

Here are some Web sites for kids (and teachers) who want to dig deeper into the some of the topics explored in [The Underground Railroad: Escape from Slavery.](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/underground_railroad)

Slavery in America

[Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938 (American Memory)](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html)

[Slavery and the Making of America](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/)

[Digital History: Slavery Fact Sheet](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/slav_fact.cfm)

[Slave Cabin at Mount Vernon](http://www.mountvernon.org/learn/pres_arch/index.cfm/pid/938//)

The Underground Railroad

[National Underground Railroad Freedom Center](http://www.freedomcenter.org/underground-railroad/)

[Aboard the Underground Railroad: A National Register Travel Itinerary](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/underground/)

[Freedom Bound: The Underground Railroad in Lycoming County, PA](http://www.lycoming.edu/underground/intro.htm)

Abolitionists

Library of Congress: [The African-American Mosaic: Abolition](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam005.html) (Posters and Publications)

[America's Story: Meet Amazing Americans](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/all) (See Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Abraham Lincoln)

["I Got A Right to Two Things": A Play about Harriet Tubman](http://www.chicagohistoryfair.org/3_htplay.html)

The Civil War

[Civil War Battles & Maps](http://civilwar.org/)

[What Caused the Civil War?](http://www.nps.gov/archive/gett/gettkidz/cause.htm)

**THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD WEBQUEST**

**Mr. Cutright’s Class**

**January 2013**