

Lesson Plan 2

TRAVEL ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Intermediate (grades 6-8)

1-2 class periods

Program Segments

Sydney Still's Run for Freedom
Chief Conductor
Freedom's Land

NYS Core Curriculum - Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, 6-12

Reading

- Key Ideas and Details (pull info from Primary and Secondary sources)
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Integrate information from maps)

Writing

- Text Types and Purposes (support claim and reasoning why, and formatting and multimedia use)
- Production and Distribution of Writing (use of technology, organize appropriate to task)
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge (Gather information, draw evidence from support)

NCSS Themes

- I. Time, Continuity and Change
- III. People, Places, and Environments
- IV. Individual Development and Identity
- V. Individuals, Groups and Institutions
- VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
- IX. Global Connections

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- define the Underground Railroad
- identify the journey of the fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad
- discuss the dangers of the journey of the fugitives as they traveled on the Underground Railroad
- realize the significance of the conductors on the Underground Railroad
- use Google Maps to create an escape route for slaves

Focus Questions

- What states did the fugitive slaves travel through as they moved through the Underground Railroad?
- What dangers did the fugitives face as they travelled on the Underground Railroad? How did they travel safely from one "station" to another?

Key Concepts

Conductors, Stations, Geography, Transportation

Instructional Resources

- *Underground Railroad: The William Still Story* DVD
- Underground Railroad Worksheet
- Blank map of North America
- Colored pencils
- Computers to access Google Maps (maps.google.com/)

Procedures

1. Watch the *Underground Railroad: The William Still Story* segments.
2. Students should fill out the Underground Railroad Worksheet while watching the segments.
3. When the segments are over, have a discussion based on the program and the worksheet.
4. Then, using the map, have students imagine that they are slaves and plot out their escape route to Canada. Draw an arrow line of the path of a fugitive slave escaping from a plantation in Mississippi, stopping in Philadelphia (where William Still resided), and on to Canada.
5. Engage in a class discussion:
 - Is the path the shortest route?
 - What rivers did you cross or travel near?
 - What cities would you stop in?
 - How long do you think your journey would take?
6. Have the students work in groups at computers. After a brief overview of plotting routes on Google Maps, have

the students plot an escape route. So they differ somewhat, provide these routes:

- a. Start in Montgomery, Alabama; go through Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, stopping in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
 - b. Start in Richmond, Virginia; go through Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, stopping in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
 - c. Start in Savannah, Georgia; go through Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, stopping in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.
 - d. Start in Jackson, Mississippi; go through Detroit, Michigan, stopping in Windsor, Ontario, Canada
7. Have a discussion about how many miles each route is and how long it would take to **drive**. Point out how much longer it would take by foot and without modern day vehicles.

Assessment Tasks

The students will complete the Underground Railroad Worksheet based upon individual thoughts and class discussions. Students will complete an escape route on a blank map. Students will also create escape routes using Google Maps.

Extension Activity

Write on board or give to students in a hand out:

You are an enslaved person headed for the Underground Railroad. You can only choose one thing most special to you to escape with. On a sheet of paper draw the thing that you chose and write two paragraphs explaining why you chose that thing.



From: UNDERGROUND RAILROAD: THE WILLIAM STILL STORY: A young William Still.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD WORKSHEET

Name _____

1. What is the Underground Railroad?
2. What dangers did the slaves face as they traveled through the Underground Railroad?
3. How did they travel safely from one “station” to another?
4. What was the role of the conductors of the Underground Railroad?

NORTH AMERICA

