

Harriet & the North Star | Lesson Plan

Why is it important to be brave and help others, even when it's hard?

Students will understand the importance of courage and resilience through the story of Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, highlighting how her faith, hope, and determination led to freedom for herself and others.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify key facts about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.
- Explain the concepts of freedom and bravery demonstrated in Harriet Tubman's life.
- Relate the values of hope and courage to personal experiences.
- Differentiate between the concepts of slavery and freedom.
- Discuss the importance of helping others and standing up for what is right.
- Express thoughts about the story through a creative activity.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Underground Railroad:** A secret network of safe houses and brave people who helped slaves escape to freedom in the North.
- **Freedom:** The right to live as you wish and make your own choices.
- **Bravery:** Being strong and standing up for what is right, even when it is scary or difficult.
- **North Star:** A bright star that always stays in the same place, allowing people to navigate north.
- **Slave:** A person who is forced to work for someone else without being paid or having the freedom to make their own choices.
- **Faith:** Believing in something even when it cannot be seen.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.6, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Life Lessons, Character Development, Liberty

What You'll Need

- Video: Harriet & the North Star (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: Harriet & the North Star (Click [Here](#))
- Coloring materials: crayons, markers, etc.

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by asking students what their prior knowledge is about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Continue by showing students pictures of Harriet Tubman, a map of the Underground Railroad, and symbols of freedom and bravery (e.g., North Star, chains breaking) as a brief introduction to the topics of the lesson's story.



2. Briefly explain each image, introducing key vocabulary terms and discussing their meanings.
3. Ask students to think about being brave and invite a few to share their definitions. Prompt students to be on the lookout for examples of how the main character in the story demonstrates bravery.

Watch and Complete: (20 mins.)

1. Show the video *Harriet & the North Star* to the class.
2. Pause at opportune moments in the video to ask questions and check for understanding.
 - When Harriet would say her prayers every night, what would she pray for?
 - Why did Harriet want to travel to the North?
 - Why was Harriet's family nervous to make the journey north with her?
 - How did the North Star help Harriet on her journey?
 - How did members of the Underground Railroad show bravery and kindness to Harriet?
 - What is the Mason-Dixon Line?
 - How did Harriet show bravery when she decided to travel back and forth from the North to the South on her many journeys?
3. Facilitate a class discussion about Harriet Tubman's bravery and determination.
4. Ask students to share why it is important to help others in need.

Wrap-Up: (15 mins.)

1. Distribute the worksheet.
2. Encourage students to decorate their stars with drawings showing how Harriet demonstrated bravery or a time they were brave. (These can be used as a formative assessment.)
3. Invite students to share their stars and express their thoughts about bravery and helping others.
4. Create a classroom display as a reminder that they can be brave and help others just like Harriet did.

Extension Activity: Create a Freedom Quilt

Explain how those on the Underground Railroad used quilts as secret codes. Provide simple quilt square templates, and have students color or decorate them with symbols representing freedom and safe houses. Assemble their squares into a class "Freedom Quilt."

Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)

After watching the video, facilitate a discussion about bravery with the class.