

FOLLOWING THE TRAIN: MAPPING ESCAPE STORIES FROM THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

OBJECTIVES

National US History Standards

Era 4 – Expansion and Reform

Standard 2D – The students understand the rapid growth of the “peculiar Institution” after 1800 and the varied experiences of African Americans under slavery.

Identify the various ways in which African Americans resisted the conditions of their enslavement and analyze the consequences of violent uprisings.

Standard 4A – The student understands the abolitionist movement.

Analyze the changing ideas about race and assess the reception of proslavery and antislavery ideologies in the North and South.

Era 5 – The causes of the Civil War

Standard 1A – The student understands how the North and the South differed and how politics and ideologies led to the Civil War.

Explain how events after the Compromise of 1850 and the Dred Scott in 1857 contributed to increasing sectional polarization.

National Geography Standards

Standard 1 – How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a special perspective.

Texas State Eighth Grade Social Studies TAKS Objectives

SS.8.7C – Analyze the impact of slavery on different sections of the United States in the eras preceding the Civil War.

SS8.10B – The student is expected to answer questions about geographic distribution and patterns shown on maps, graphs, and charts.

SS.8.11C – The student will analyze the effects of physical and human geographic factors on major historical events in the United States.

SS.25 – The student will describe the issues and leaders of the Abolition movement and evaluate its impact.

SS.8.07B – The student will analyze the political, economic and social impact of the Abolition movement on slaves and free blacks in the North and South.

SS.8.10 – The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data.

INTRODUCTION (ten minutes)

- 1. Open by showing the scene in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” video of the river crossing.**
- 2. Discuss what geographic challenges the escaping slaves would encounter on the trail.**

KEY CONCEPTS

Various routes and methods were taken and used by escaping slaves.

VOCABULARY

Abolition, Harriet Jacobs, Henry “Box” Brown, Emeline Chapman, Ellen and William Craft

LESSON DEVELOPMENT

- 1. Place students in groups of two to four.**
- 2. Tell the students that for as long as there has been slavery in America, there have been slaves who have tried to escape to places where they would be considered free. Also tell them there have always been people willing to help slaves escape slavery. Have the students brainstorm various ways escaping slaves could have escaped and where they would go.**

Student Practice and Assessment

- 1. Each group is given one escape story. Students will rotate reading their story to the members of their group.**
- 2. Each group will then answer the questions on the worksheet, plot the cities listed (if any) in the story, and map out the route the escaping slave took (with a line connecting all the locations).**
- 3. Each group will select a spokesperson who will give a brief overview of their person and the route they took.**

4. At the same time, each group will select a recorder who will plot the cities and trace the route taken on a large map or a map on a transparency on the overhead as it is being described by the spokesperson thus creating one large combined map of all the different routes taken.
5. While the students are observing the other trails being included on the large map, they will draw in the other routes onto their group map.
6. After all the presentations have been made, the students will answer the questions below the map.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What methods did slaves use to escape?
2. Where did most of the slaves find freedom?
3. What was an abolitionist?
4. What factors do all the routes have in common?

CLOSURE

1. Review the key questions.
2. Point out that the general direction taken by the escaping slaves was to the north and have them brainstorm why. Explain to them that these are just a handful of stories and that many other routes were taken, as well as they ones they mapped. Discuss possible ways geography may have influenced the routes that were taken. If time permits, have the students brainstorm possible routes slaves in the Deep South and Texas may have taken and their possible final destinations.

MATERIALS

Handouts – stories, worksheet, maps, overhead and transparencies OR laptop and LCD projector, US Atlases – one per group

Links - <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/home.html> for stories

<http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/hist/NEHworkshops/NEH/resource/index.html> for images and stories

<http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/hist/NEHworkshops/NEH/resource/ugrrDocs.htm> for Henry Box Brown's story

http://housedivided.dickinson.edu/ugrr/img_escape.cfm for Emeline Chapman/Susan Bell's story

<http://www.lkwdpl.org/wihohio/jaco-har.htm> for Harriet Jacobs' story

For further readings on Harriet Jacobs:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2924t.html> for Harriet Jacobs' story and
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h1541b.html> for Harriet Jacobs' Runaway Ad

<http://www.georgiawomen.org/honorees/craftes/index.htm> for Ellen and William
Craft's story