

The Teacher's Guide©

The Freedom Stone

By

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Learn More About It

General background information:

1. The Underground Railroad was not underground and it was not a railroad. Instead, it was a term used to describe a series of secret routes and safe houses used by runaway slaves. It was called "underground" because it was secret. It was called a "railroad" because words associated with trains were used to identify the persons who helped slaves to escape. Homes that welcomed runaways were called 'stations'; the families who lived in these homes were called 'station masters'. Station masters often provided a guide to help slaves to the next station; these guides were called 'conductors'. Slaves themselves were called 'passengers'.

There were many routes on the Underground Railroad. Most slaves chose eastern routes. Some went along the Atlantic Coast via Washington, DC, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont into Canada. Probably most chose the route through Pennsylvania and into New York City (some choosing this route went all the way to Canada). A smaller number of escapees went through southwestern Pennsylvania and northeastern Ohio, crossing Lake Erie into Canada (this is the route our travelers in this book have chosen). Some slaves escaped from Tennessee and Missouri through Illinois and Michigan. Kentucky slaves preferred the route through Ohio to Lake Erie and then on to Canada. Not all slaves chose to go north. Slaves in Texas fled to Mexico. Many slaves in South Carolina and Georgia fled south through Florida and into the Caribbean. The main objective of a runaway was to get to a "free state".

2. History of Slavery: Slavery in America is but one example of slavery in the world throughout history. There were slaves in ancient societies, going back as far as the 18th century BC - slaves in most countries around the Mediterranean Sea, in Slavic countries, in African nations, and in England.

Large towns, estates, or plantations needed cheap or free labor to do the necessary work to sustain them. Such was the condition for slavery. Slavery could be called "forced labor." People became enslaved in many ways. Wars between towns, tribes,

or civilizations meant that there were winners and losers. The winners could take losers by force into slavery; typically, those taken were the ones thought to be strong workers. Criminals were enslaved. People who could not pay their bills were enslaved. Pirates captured people in order to sell them.

Enslaved people were first brought to America in 1619. The number of slaves increased each year until 1807 when the Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves was passed. Though the law prohibited slave trade, it was enforced poorly and some slave trade continued. The number of slaves traded, however, diminished rapidly. In 1790, there were 697,524 slaves in the United States. By 1850, the time period of *The Freedom Stone*, the population in the United States was 23,191,876, of which 3,204,313 were slaves, about 14% of the total population. The population of Virginia in 1850 was 1,119,348 of which 452,028 were slaves. There were more slaves in Virginia in 1850 than in any other state. There were 34,026 slave holding families in Virginia in 1850; 4880 of those held 20-49 slaves on their properties. The fictional slave holding family in *The Freedom Stone* owned 28 slaves.

The routes used by slave ships became known as Triangular Trade. Three regions are involved in Triangular Trade:

- One region had goods or commodities in excess of its needs. Examples are: fish, agricultural products, lumber, wine, rum, olive oil, copper, cloth, guns, ammunition, and luxury items such as silver, glassware, even furniture. These goods were shipped on the first leg to another location. Upon arrival at the second region, the goods were paid for or bartered for slaves.

- The next leg of the triangle occurred when slaves were loaded onto ships carrying them to the third location where they were sold. Ship owners benefitted from all three trips.

The Triangle Trade route bringing slaves to America started in the British Isles, sailed to Africa, where slaves were then brought to America. This was called The Middle Passage.

Slavery became illegal with the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and effectively ended with the end of the Civil War in 1865. The 13th amendment to the constitution legally ended slavery permanently.

3. Slave resistance: Becoming enslaved was not a choice. Slaves were brought to North America and sold as property to the highest bidder. Their work was coerced free labor. It is not surprising that slaves did not accept their situation willingly. Slaves found ways to resist. Some acts of resistance were aimed at ending their enslavement; others were intended to change, even slightly their daily living conditions. Listed here are various forms of slave resistance.

Enslaved people:

- slowed their work
- pretended to be ill
- broke the tools they needed to do their work
- stole from their masters (vegetables, fruit, liquor, money, guns)
- kept their African culture and traditions alive in their music and in their beliefs
- used their knowledge of herbs and plants to poison their masters or make them ill
- ran away
- organized rebellions

Because slave owners exercised control over their slaves, organized rebellion was rare. Slaves did not have access to guns. Their movement away from the owner's property was limited. And, severe methods were employed by their owners to deter resistance: public hangings, decapitation, burning slaves alive, and other brutal punishments. Whipping, or flogging, was the most common form of punishment used by slaveholders to control the behavior of slaves. The number of lashes depended on the severity of the slaves' 'crime', decided by the overseer or the master. Typically, the number of lashes ranged from 10 to 30, but 100 or more lashes was not uncommon; rarely was a slave whipped to death, but it did occur occasionally. Men were whipped more frequently than women, but both women and children were whipped.

More severe punishments included shackling, hanging, burning, mutilation, branding and imprisonment. Wearing a metal collar around the neck was one form of punishment. The collars were thick and heavy, and often had protruding spikes which made the slaves' work very difficult, and it made lying down to sleep nearly

impossible. When hangings occurred, the master hung the slave in the presence of the other slaves, believing that their witness would deter further resistance. Branding was not uncommon. Mutilation included knife slashing, particularly on the face, smashing of thumbs, and amputation of a finger or an ear.

4. Slaves' lives compared to the lives of indentured servants: Indentured servants willingly signed a contract to provide free labor in exchange for transportation, food, clothing, and lodging. The contracts were for a specified length of time, usually 4-7 years. Once the time period was complete, the indentured servant became a free member of society, giving him/her the right to own property, to hold a paying job, and to vote. Many indentured servants contracted in this way came from northern Europe, hoping to escape the poverty, sickness, and generally difficult situations in their home countries. Most were young, white men. In contrast, enslaved people did not choose to endure the horrible conditions of being transported to America. They were, instead, captured and brought across the ocean against their will. Slaves were considered the property of a slave owner, an asset; they could be sold and re-sold. As an asset, slaves were more valuable to their owners than indentured servants. However, they could not own property, could not earn money for services, and could not vote. Slaves were black men, women, and children.

Once in America, conditions for slaves and indentured servants were similar. Both worked for no pay and had no control of their lives. Living conditions were crude and the work was equally hard.

Indentured servants were assumed to be Christians while slaves were treated as pagans.

Being enslaved is a life condition; indentured servants knew that their indenture would end at a point in time.

Background information pertinent to each chapter of *The Freedom Stone*:

Chapter One:

1. Babies born to a slave mother became slaves too. Children took the legal status of the mother. Thus, even if the father was free, if the mother was a slave, the baby would be a slave. It is a fact that slave owners often forced themselves sexually on their female slaves. Babies born of such a situation thus increased the slave owners' assets. In that way, female slaves were more valuable to slave owners than male slaves because women could work and have children. A pregnant slave worked until the baby was delivered and returned to her work within days. Older women, no longer able to perform hard labor, were charged with the care of babies and toddlers. Generally, women sold for more money than a male field slave, although very strong men could bring a higher price.

Many slave owners believed that slave marriages were a good idea, even though slave marriages were not recognized by any law. They thought that married slaves would be less likely to be rebellious or to run away.

Most slave cabins had only one room. Some had two rooms and a sleeping loft. The entire size was typically about 14-16 feet by 14-16 feet. Though some were made of brick, typically they were made of wood, usually pine; sometimes they used pine planks, and sometimes they actually used logs. There was one door and one window and a fireplace and chimney. Sometimes there was not a fireplace. Instead there would be a big fire pit in the common yard of the slave quarters. Most often there was a wood plank floor, but sometimes there was no floor, just the dirt on the ground. Slaves would put paper, straw, moss, or rags in the cracks in the walls to keep the wind out. The fireplace was used to keep the cabin warm in the winter and to keep the mosquitoes out in the summer. Cooking was done in the fireplace as well.

There were different categories of slaves. A house slave was one who worked in the Master's house, called the Big House. Men, women, and children were house slaves, depending on the size of the plantation and the number of slaves owned by the plantation master. Sometimes house slaves lived in the Big House, but sometimes they lived in cabins in the slaves' quarters. Field slaves worked in the fields. Some slaves were called 'skilled'; they had jobs like carpenter or blacksmith.

2. Overseers were men hired by the plantation owner to watch over the work of the slaves. The overseer was usually paid a portion of the profit from the sales of the crops, so it was in his best interests to make the slaves work harder and harder so that there would be more crops to sell. Overseers were often mean-spirited people who enforced the rules with a whip. Overseers of black slaves were typically white, but not always; occasionally there was a black overseer. President Thomas Jefferson had a black overseer at his home in Virginia, Monticello. White overseers belonged to a poor rank in society and they often hated black slaves because they believed that the black slaves had taken the jobs that, in their opinion, should have gone to them. This is but one example of slavery being about the supremacy of whiteness.

Slaves belonged to the poorest, lowest rank in society. Laws ensured that they would stay that way. In many states, slaves could not earn wages for performing a trade or labor. They were not allowed to own property. Slaves could not go outside after dark. They could not gather in groups of three or more. They could not own weapons. Most slave owners believed that slaves were less smart, less capable than white people. Slave owners could sell any slave at any time, and in many cases, they sold one or more slaves in a family, but not the others. Slaves were always afraid of having their families separated.

Chapter Two:

1. An abolitionist was a person who believed in immediately abolishing the practice of slavery. Some abolitionists began advocating for the elimination of slavery as early as the late 1600s and by 1804 all northern states had abolished it. But in the 1860 census, the slave population in the United States was four million. The abolitionist movement was based in the North. Most were white and many were Quakers who opposed slavery on religious grounds. One of the most famous abolitionists was William Lloyd Garrison, who began publishing a newspaper in Boston called *The Liberator* in 1831. The newspaper, supported by free African Americans, led to the establishment of the American Anti-Slavery Society. A famous African American abolitionist was Frederick Douglass, whose powerful speaking style helped to spread the word of the abolitionist movement. His newspaper *The North Star* was published from 1838-1851.

2. Songs were important to slaves. Their lives were harsh; music seemed to help them to endure. Singing while working on a difficult task helped to make the time go faster. Some songs came from their African roots; however, most slaves had become Christian and many of their songs were religious. What was interesting about their singing was that the words had secret meanings, that neither the overseer nor the Master figured out. For example, in the words to “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”, when the slaves sang ‘coming for to carry me home’, ‘home’ meant ‘freedom’ whereas the slave owner just thought it meant ‘heaven’. In the song, “Sweet Canaan’s Happy Land”, the slaves meant Canada. Slaves also sang songs simply to cheer themselves and they often did so on Sundays to the accompaniment of a banjo and rhythm instruments improvised out of sticks, pans, etc.

Chapter Three:

1. Slaves learned about what was going on outside of the plantation by listening. House slaves always kept their ears open and their mouths closed in order to overhear conversations among family members, or between the overseer and the master. Some slaves were asked to take a wagon pulled by a mule into town to get the mail or to purchase rations or supplies. These were good times to listen in on conversations in the post office or in the general stores. There were a few slaves who could read; if they were in town they could glance at newspapers or on flyers

posted on public bulletin boards. Occasionally field slaves learned about slave uprisings or about runaways when the overseer used that information as a threat as to what might happen if the field slaves did not work hard or fast enough to please the overseer. Slaves passed on information to each other during private times in their cabins, gatherings in the slave quarters' yard, or by singing certain songs which cleverly provided news.

Chapter Four:

In most southern states, it was illegal to teach a slave to read or write. Slave owners feared that if slaves could read and write, they would be more likely to learn about abolitionist activities, would run away, would rebel, and they might question the authority of the overseer and the Master. Each state, therefore, passed its own laws about teaching slaves to read and write, and each state had its own penalties for doing so. In some states, a fine was imposed on slave owners who violated the law; in others the slave owner would receive no penalty, but the slave participating in such education would be whipped, incarcerated, or sold. In some states, it was written into the law that any person teaching a slave to read or write could be imprisoned. Some slave owner Mistresses did teach the slave children to read and write in spite of the stiff rules and punishments spelled out in the law.

Chapter Five:

1. Slave holders provided food rations to their slaves once a week. Typically, rations were distributed at the end of the work day on Saturday as slaves usually did not work on Sunday. On some plantations, slaves worked seven days a week. The food rations commonly included corn meal, flour, meat (usually bacon or ham, very seldom beef), corn, and molasses. Slaves met at the smoke house or at the corn crib to receive their rations, or the overseer delivered their rations on a large wagon pulled by a pair of mules. Each slave owner made his own decision about what provisions to give the slaves. Occasionally, perhaps at Christmas, sugar, coffee, and salt would be added to the weekly rations. Most slave holders allowed their slaves to have a small garden in the slave quarters for the purpose of growing vegetables to supplement their diets. Some slave owners allowed their slaves to raise chickens. Slaves fished where and when they could and also killed squirrels or rabbits. Some resourceful slaves dug root cellars underneath their cabins to store

potatoes and other vegetables. These root cellars also proved to be good hiding places if they wanted to hide something from the overseer or the slave holder.

2. Slaves occasionally were allowed to leave the plantation, but only with permission from the slave master. They had to carry a written pass explaining the reason for their presence outside the plantation. The reasons given for such passes were usually to get supplies, rations, telegrams, etc. for the Master and his family.

3. Every southern state had its own set of laws regarding the identification, capture, and jailing of runaway slaves. Each state also had a set of laws about returning and/or selling runaway slaves. State legislatures granted local officials, including county judges, authority as patrols. They operated similarly to the military, with captains, sergeants, and patrollers, whose rank was similar to privates. They had legal authority to search anywhere they wished. They could come onto anyone's property, search any building or home. Some thought they had the right to shoot and kill any runaway they found.

4. Slave catchers were somewhat different from patrollers and were more effective. Slave catchers were men who owned so-called 'negro dogs' trained to follow a runaway slave's scent. They were hired by slave owners and they were paid by the day and the mile. It was possible to earn about ten to fifty dollars for the capture and return of a runaway. Usually slave catchers travelled on horses, but some did their hunting by foot.

5. Most slaves adapted to the doctrines of Christianity, but some rejected Christianity and continued to hold to their traditional African beliefs or to a belief in Islam. Some slave owners required their slaves to go to the slave owners' church where they had to sit in the back or in a seating area in a loft. At the time of the telling of The Freedom Stone, it would have been unusual for slaves to have their own churches and preachers. Instead, informal prayer meetings were held quietly in the slave cabins or in secluded places such as the woods or ravines. Some slave owners allowed slaves to have prayer meetings, but most did not, so slaves had to attend in secret for fear of being punished if they were discovered. Slaves tried various methods to keep their religious meetings secret. One method was to form a circle around the slave preacher; all would be on their knees. The preacher would

bend forward and speak over a big pot of water to drown out the sound of his voice. Another common method was to thoroughly soak quilts or other large pieces of cloth; the wet cloths were then hung from tree branches to form a little room into which the slaves gathered. Again, the wetness on the quilts drowned out their voices.

6. Prayer meetings were very important to the slaves. It was a time when they could forget all their suffering and dream about a time when they would be free. Slaves worshipped with great enthusiasm, dancing, singing, clapping hands, foot-stomping, and head-shaking.

Chapter Six:

1. Once a year, usually at Christmas time, slaves were given clothing meant to last them through the entire year. The clothes were purchased by the slave owners, or they were sewn by slave girls and women. Though each slave owner provided clothing in his own way, typically men were given 2 shirts, 2 pairs of summer pants, 2 pairs of winter pants, a coat made out of blankets, 1 pair of shoes and a hat. Women usually were given 2 dresses, 2 cotton slips, a blanket coat, and cloth for a turban. On many plantations children wore no clothing or shoes until they were eight or nine years old, then they were given a few pants or dresses and a coat. Boys were given a hat and girls were given a cloth for a turban.

Chapter Seven:

1. Growing tobacco was almost a year-round job. It was hard on the soil, so the acreage devoted to tobacco had to change often. In January, slaves made seed beds in which they would plant the tiny tobacco seeds. When the seeds grew large enough, they would be transplanted to fields that they had themselves prepared. Transplanting the seedlings occurred in April or May. In June and July, the plants were primed and topped. Tobacco plants were ready to harvest in August or September. After cutting the plant, the leaves were left on the ground to wilt for a few hours before hanging on lines, sticks, or fence rails in the tobacco barns. Heat was necessary to cure tobacco. Fire boxes made of rock were inside the barns

and the smoke from the fires warmed the tobacco so that it would dry. After curing, tobacco was taken to processing centers; then it could be sold.

2. The law did not give slaves any protection from their masters. Slaves could not testify in court against their masters. So, Masters and their overseers felt safe when whipping their slaves because they knew that they would not themselves get into any trouble for so cruelly treating the slaves. Many Masters and their overseers believed that bullying the slaves with the fear of the whip would encourage the slaves to work harder and faster to produce more of the crops, tobacco or cotton primarily. Whipping was the main method used to control slaves. The number of lashes depended on the seriousness of the offence, ranging from five to over 200.

3. Slaves prayed and dreamed about the day that they would be free, but most died as slaves. They believed that in their death, they were set free. Some believed that the person who died went to heaven where there was no slavery. Some believed that the deceased was returned to Africa. Singing and dancing was common at slave funerals.

4. Funerals often took place on Sundays to allow for slaves from other plantations to attend; they were also conducted in the evening because slaves could not miss work during the day.

Slaves were often buried with their faces toward the east. Some thought that in this way the deceased person would see the sun each day as it rose in the east. Others who could read the Bible thought that the angel Gabriel would blow his trumpet from the east and in this way, the deceased would not have to turn around to see Gabriel.

Graves were often decorated with broken pieces of pottery to symbolize the broken body of the slave. Personal items belonging to the dead person (clocks, cups, bowls, clothing, etc.) were sometimes placed on the grave. Seashells or white pebbles found in streams and rivers usually marked the burial site as a reminder that slaves were transported to America via the sea.

Slave funerals ended as celebrations with singing, dancing, eating, and drinking, often throughout the night.

5. Nat Turner was a lonely, intelligent Virginia slave who spent much of his time praying. He believed in spirits and he often had visions about things to come. The visions he saw made him believe that he should fight against all things evil in order that he could go to heaven. One day the sun appeared blue-green, an unusual sight. Turned decided that this was a sign that he should follow through with his plan to get rid of evil. He and several other rebels went on an assault stabbing, shooting and clubbing at least 55 white people. He was captured, tried in court, and sentenced to execution. He was hanged. Following the rebellion, slaveholders were hysterical and they then murdered about 200 black people, most of whom had nothing to do with the rebellion. Also, slaves who lived in neighboring states were also accused of having a connection to the rebellion even though they did not. They were also killed.

Chapter Eight:

1. The Underground Railroad was *not* ‘under ground’ and it was *not* a ‘railroad.’ Underground simply meant that it was secret. It was a system of helping runaway slaves to escape to the ‘free’ northern states of Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. Once they reached a free state, many slaves continued on to Canada. Words associated with trains were used to define how people helped slaves to escape. Homes that welcomed runaways were called ‘stations’; the families who lived in these homes were called ‘station masters’. Station masters often provided a guide to help slaves to the next station; these guides were called ‘conductors’. Slaves themselves were called ‘passengers’.

2. Harriet Tubman (born 1820, named Araminta Ross) was a Maryland slave who escaped in 1849 to Philadelphia. She returned to Maryland to free her sister and her sister’s two children. Later she returned to rescue her brother. Tubman made trip after trip bringing slaves to freedom, traveling by night and in extreme secrecy. Though no one knows for sure, it is estimated that she made 19 trips helping about three hundred slaves escape slavery. Nicknamed ‘Moses’, Harriet Tubman used the Underground Railroad and she was known as its most famous ‘conductor’. She

became friends with many of the abolitionists and she took part in antislavery meetings. Tubman was never captured and neither were any of the runaway slaves she guided. Tubman commented, “I was a conductor on the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can’t say – I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger.” Tubman and Frederick Douglass were friends.

Chapter Nine:

1. There were many reasons why slaves chose to run away: fear of being sold, transferred or traded to another plantation, dissatisfaction with the Master or the overseer, ill-treatment, food allotments, clothing, housing, Sunday work, excessive drinking by the Master, arguments and violence in the Master’s household.

2. The largest majority of runaways were young men in their teens and twenties. Stronger, healthier, and with more energy than older slaves, these young men were more willing to defy their Masters and overseers. Slave women were more reluctant to run away as they usually had children. Runaways usually travelled alone. Often a man would escape and hope to send for his family later. Occasionally family members would run together. It was extremely rare for a group of more than three people to run away together.

3. Some runaways carried guns; most did not. It was more common for a runaway to carry a knife or an ax.

4. Runaways sometimes stole things from their Master as they began their journey. Slaves, of course, looked at the property of their Master differently than the Master himself. They felt that the Master’s riches were earned from their labor, so they felt they were taking what was due them. Clothing was the most common thing stolen. Horses were stolen as well. Corn, meat, coffee, or sugar were stolen by a few runaways. Missus Porter, in *The Freedom Stone*, was a kind mistress. Not all were so nice.

Chapter Ten:

1. When a slave ran away, the slave owner would post flyers in public places advertising rewards for the capture and return of the slave. Such advertisements were found in taverns, post offices, court houses, and newspapers. Seeking the return of a runaway, a master or an overseer might write out thousands of these ads. The notices were quite descriptive including details about the slave's appearance, dress, speech, character, skills, intellectual capacity, how dark or light their skin was, gender, and age.

2. Most slaves ran away at night. Some did not travel as far as Moses and his family. Some were content to get to a free state like Pennsylvania or Ohio. They would then go to the larger cities where there were 'free' slaves allowing them to pass more easily as 'free'.

Courageous steps were taken by runaways. They sneaked onto trains. They camped out in the woods or in swamps. They hid in steamboats. Some carried forged papers identifying them as 'free'. Some tried to purchase train tickets. Some changed their names. Some wore disguises. Some obtained 'passes' saying that they should be permitted to travel to a certain place.

Chapter Eleven:

1. Quakers are members of a religious group called *The Society of Friends*. One of their beliefs is that all human beings are equal. Quakers wanted to rid slavery from the United States. They worked in two different ways: 1) they created a public awareness campaign, speaking anywhere they could about the evils of slavery and writing articles for publication in important newspapers; 2) they supported escaping slaves by hiding them in their homes and connecting them with other anti-slavery citizens who shared their beliefs. Therefore, Quakers played a major role in the Underground Railroad.

2. Quakers were not the only helpers along the Underground Railroad. Pennsylvania and Ohio were home to many free blacks who also participated in aiding the runaway slave in his/her path to freedom.

3. Frederick Douglass, the son of a slave woman and an unknown white man, lived with his grandmother as a child. His mother, whom he did not see often, died when he was quite young; some reports say that he was seven when she died, others say he was ten. Shortly after his mother's death, he was sent to Baltimore where he lived with a ship carpenter, Hugh Auld and his wife Sophia. Sophia taught Douglas to read and write even though her husband forbade it. He tried to escape twice before he finally succeeded. Always wanting to better himself, Douglass read everything he could get his hands on and he soon became quite an educated man, giving lectures in northern states and in the Midwest. After meeting William Lloyd Garrison, a noted abolitionist and publisher of the weekly journal *The Liberator*, Douglass started making speeches about slavery. Some years later, he began publishing his own weekly, *The North Star*. He met with Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War and recruited northern blacks to fight on the side of the North.

Chapter Twelve:

1. Those helping slaves in their passage to freedom risked great danger for themselves and for their families. Fines and imprisonment were imposed on those who were caught aiding runaways. Still, many, believing it was the right thing to do, were willing to take those risks. Some important people that you may wish to study include: Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, William Still, Levi Coffin, and Thomas Garrett.

2. Railroads had come into existence by the time the Underground Railroad started. Railroad language was used to develop secret codes to help slaves escape. Here are the most common codes and their meanings:

-baggage	fugitive slaves
-bundles of wood	slaves that were expected
-Canaan	Canada
-conductor	person who directly transported slaves
-drinking gourd	the Big Dipper and the North Star
-Freedom train	the Underground Railroad
-Gospel train	the Underground Railroad

-heaven	Canada, freedom
-load of potatoes produce in a wagon	escaping slaves hidden under farm
-Moses	Harriet Tubman
-Promised Land	Canada
-River Jordan	Ohio River
-station	safe house
-station master	owner of a safe house

3. Henry ‘Box’ Brown, born in 1815 or 1816 in Louisa County, Virginia, was a slave whose pregnant wife and their three children were sold to a master in North Carolina, separating his family forever. He mourned their loss for quite some time before deciding that he wanted to escape slavery. Brown and a fellow choir member of the First African Baptist Church, James Smith, dreamed up an idea of how he would escape. James Smith knew a shoemaker and sympathizer, Samuel Smith, who agreed for a price to ship ‘Box’ Brown in a wooden crate from Richmond to Philadelphia. The box measured 3 feet long by 2 feet 8 inches deep by 2 feet wide and sent labeled ‘dry goods’. The box was lined with wool cloth and had one small hole for air. Brown only carried a small amount of water and a few biscuits. During the train journey, the box was turned upside down many times and was handled quite roughly. When the box arrived in Philadelphia, it was received by members of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society. When the box was opened, Henry Brown stepped out and said, “How do you do, gentlemen?” Then he sang a psalm, “I waited patiently on the Lord and He heard my prayer. From then on, he was known as Henry ‘Box’ Brown. He traveled around the northeast telling his story. He created a stage show, called a panorama, about slavery where he re-created his climbing out of the box. There is no information about his death.

4. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was an act of Congress, signed by President George Washington, himself a slave owner, guaranteeing the right of the slave owner to recapture runaways. The act called runaway slaves ‘fugitives from justice’. The Act was made even stronger in 1850 after the slave states of the South fought for the passage of the Compromise of 1850 which required that even the governments and residents of free states had to enforce the capture and return runaway slaves. The enforcement of this act made anti-slavery Northerners angry

as it fined any person aiding a runaway slave \$500 in addition to a six-month prison sentence. The people who captured a slave were paid a fee for doing so. This actually encouraged some unscrupulous (not honest or fair) people to capture free black men and sell them to slave owners.

Chapter Thirteen:

1. Dr. Edmundson is a fictional character. His home and his family in the story are fictional. However, there is a National Historic Landmark in Washington, Pennsylvania named for a Dr. F. Julius LeMoyne. Dr. LeMoyne and his wife Madelaine had eight children, three sons and five daughters. As a young doctor, LeMoyne was shown the constitution of the Anti-Slavery Society, an organization founded by William Lloyd Garrison and Arthur Tappan. Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave, was a leader of this society and often spoke at its meetings. The constitution of the organization was basically a discussion about the rights of man. From the moment of reading it, Dr. LeMoyne became committed to the anti-slavery movement. He, his wife, and all of their children were active in the Underground Railroad.

2. In southwest Pennsylvania, there was a close group of people, both white and free blacks, who helped slaves escape. Together they established an elaborate network of other activists who relied on one another to help slaves on their journey to freedom.

Chapter Fourteen:

1. It was the custom to require a free colored person to have with him/her a document that was called 'free papers', or a 'certificate of freedom'. The papers had to be renewed very often for a fee. The papers outlined the person's name, age, color, height, and mention of any scars or other identifying marks on the person's skin. Though technically free, 'free people of color' were in constant fear of being kidnapped and sold into slavery. It was important, therefore, for a free

person of color to carry his/her papers at all times. Without such a document, it would have been impossible for a free person of color to obtain a job.

The type of document described in *The Freedom Stone* is typical. Other samples of typical documents follow here:

Certificate of Emancipation of Moses Porter
State of Virginia
Culpeper County

I hereby certify to all whom it doth or may concern, that it hath been proved to my satisfaction that the bearer hereof, Moses Porter, aged about fourteen years of light complexion, five feet eight inches tall with no scars or other identifying marks on his person, was born free and raised free in the State of Virginia.

In Testimony whereof I have hereto set my hand and affixed the seal of Culpeper County this tenth day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and fifty two.

William Johnston, Clerk
Culpeper County

-or-

Know all Men by these Presents that I, Catharine Thompson of Culpeper County for an in consideration of the services which I have received from Moses Porter, my slave, do now release and forever set free the said Moses Porter from all claim or claims which I ever had or now have and from all manner of claim or claims to servitude which by me my heirs or assigns or which any other person or persons might or could be made in virtue of his being my former property I do release him. In witness, whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed my Seal this tenth day of September in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and fifty two.

Signed and sealed in the presence of William Johnston, Clerk
Culpeper County, State of Virginia

These documents were written in formal, legal English, barely understandable by anyone. It is likely that those requesting to see the papers, patrollers, slave catchers, train conductors, steamship captains, store owners, etc. may not have been able to read them at all. A slave acting comfortably and normally and carrying a forged document could often pass for 'free'.

Chapter Fifteen:

1. During the mid-1800's, steamboats were common on the Great Lakes as lumber, coal, iron and agricultural products were hauled back and forth from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois. These boats helped to build some of the major cities in these states as it was easier to get goods from one place to another. However, traveling by steamboat was also dangerous. The boats were made of wood. They had huge boilers fueled by wood fires. There were often dangerous storms, especially in the month of November. The biggest danger was boiler explosions and the second most common danger was fire. One steamboat caught fire after somebody tamped (to press something down by tapping it lightly) out his smoking pipe on the wood deck of the boat.

There were so many steamboats on Lake Erie in the 1850's that today we would call it a traffic jam. Many of the steamboats were called passenger and package freight steamers as they carried both people and goods.

Epilogue:

The beginning of railroad traffic in the US dates back to the early 1800's. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad began service in 1827 connecting Baltimore with Washington, DC. By 1831 there was rail service in New York. By the 1840's there were about 3000 miles of track going up and down the east coast. As larger cities grew in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois, railroads extended service to these cities by 1860.

At the end of the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment ended slavery. But people still had a lot of questions about what would

happened to those who had just gained their freedom. In 1868, the 14th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified (made official by signing it or voting for it). This amendment granted citizenship and all of its benefits to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States” – a right that had been denied to slaves. In 1870, the 15th Amendment was ratified. This amendment granted African American men the right to vote by declaring that “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

However, Southern states found ways through the use of poll taxes, literacy tests and other means to deny African Americans the right to vote for almost another one hundred years. (Poll taxes had to be paid by each adult before they could vote in an election. Poll taxes are now illegal.) The Voting Rights Act of 1965 allowed African Americans to register to vote as any other American citizen.

Think About It

Discussion Questions and Writing Prompts

Chapter One:

1. *The Freedom Stone* begins in 1850. How long ago was that? Make a list of the things we enjoy in our lives today that were not available in 1850. A few ideas to get you started...a toilet...a car, etc. Keep adding to this list as you read the book. You may think of new things after each chapter.
2. How would you feel if you did the work that Moses did in the fields every day instead of going to school? Why?
3. How do you think Moses felt about being a slave? What makes you think that?
4. Describe Massa. Do you like him? Explain.
5. Should Moses have told the Massa about the carrots he had stuffed in his pockets? Why, or why not?
6. How did the picture of the whipping scars on Paris' back make you feel?
7. Writing prompt: Moses' home is not like mine.

Chapter Two:

1. Compare the Big House and Moses' home.
2. How was Addie's life different from Moses'? How was it the same?
3. Describe James. Do you like him? Explain.
4. What are the ways that Addie and Mama stay out of trouble when Massa gets crabby? Would that method work for you? Is it a good or a bad idea to say nothing? Give examples of times when it is a good idea to say nothing, and times when it is bad to say nothing. How does James deal with his Father? How do Sarah and Missus deal with Massa?
5. Mama sang a song after breakfast as she headed into the kitchen. What do you think the words in the song meant?

Chapter Three:

1. Why was it important to listen and learn, but not to repeat things heard or seen?
2. Have you ever had to do a job where you got blisters all over both hands or that made you sore and tired at the end of a day? In the United States, the Fair Labor Standards Act, passed in 1938, ensures that when young people work, the workplace

is safe, does not jeopardize their health and well-being, and does not interfere with their education. Research project: Find three examples of child labor prior to 1938. With each example, write 2-3 sentences about how the job was unsafe, jeopardized the child's health, or interrupted their education.

3. Moses was embarrassed that he fell and messed up the plowed field when he picked up the quartz stone. Share with us an example of when something similar happened to you.
4. Why did a slave owner want to own slaves?
5. Writing prompt: James plays a trick on his father because.....

Chapter Four:

1. Why do you think that Missus and James started teaching Addie and Moses to read and write?
2. Imagine that you are the only person in your class who does not even know the alphabet. Imagine that you do not know how to read. Imagine that you do not know how to do simple, basic math. How would that make you feel?
3. Why do you think that slave owners did not want slaves to learn how to read and write?
4. When Addie sang, what do you think she was feeling? How can you tell?
5. Missus winked at Addie at the end of the chapter. What do you think that meant?
6. Writing prompt: Missus was courageous.
7. Writing prompt: Slavery was not fun, but enslaved children found ways to have fun anyway.

Chapter Five:

1. What were the hardest parts of being a slave? Why? What does the story tell you that makes you believe that?
2. Make a log of everything you eat for a whole week. Then compare your diet to the slaves' diet. Would you be able to do your school work well or perform well in your sports or other recreational activities on the diet of a slave?
3. Moses and Addie are about the same age as you are. What games do you like to play with your friends? Are any of them similar to the games Moses and Addie enjoyed?
4. Why do you think the slaves sang so much?
5. How did the story of the escaped slave make you feel? How did it make Moses feel?

6. At the end of the chapter, the slaves sing a song. What do you think the words mean?
7. Writing prompt: Moses, rubbing the stone in his pocket, is thinking...

Chapter Six:

1. Compare Christmas in the Big House to Christmas in the slave quarters.
2. Why did Mama and Addie look forward to helping with the Christmas decorations? How do you know?
3. Smells or aromas can make us feel a certain way. Or, they might cause us to think about a special memory. What are the aromas in the air at the Big House during the Christmas season? Can you close your eyes and think about the aromas in your house during the holiday season? What are they?
4. What was the best part of the Christmas holiday for a slave?
5. Explain how Massa and Missus treated Addie after she fell while serving the pies to their guests.
6. How would you feel if, one day without any notice, your sister or brother and your Mother were suddenly taken away?
7. Writing prompt: I might run away at Christmas.

Chapter Seven:

1. How do you think it felt for Papa to work in the fields when he was sick?
2. How did everyone feel when Papa died?
3. Why do you think Papa's funeral was at night?
4. What did Moses know he needed to do? Why couldn't anyone know?
5. Writing prompt: What makes you want to work harder? Fear of punishment or encouragement?
6. Writing prompt: How did the slaves show the spirit of 'community'? Think about all of the chapters you have read so far.
7. Research: Write a two-page paper about the Nat Turner Rebellion. Be sure to include why you think Turner organized the rebellion. Did the rebellion accomplish what Turner hoped for? Explain.

Chapter Eight:

1. What is the job of an overseer?
2. Explain why Massa was angry at Ben.
3. Moses felt that there were both good and bad things about moving into the Big House. What are they? Do the good things outweigh the bad?
4. How did Moses feel about Missus? Why?
5. Why did Missus say that Moses had to be brave? Was he?
6. Writing prompt: Sometimes you want something very badly, but you are afraid to do what must be done to achieve it.

Chapter Nine:

1. Why was it so hard to say good-bye to Missus, James, and Sarah?
2. In groups of three, let's try to walk around the room in the manner of the Monacan Indians.
3. How do you think Mama, Addie, and Moses felt when they were standing in the cold water all night? Why? Have you ever felt that way?
4. We talked about smells after Chapter Six -aromas of Christmas. In this chapter, Mama makes us think about some awful smells when she was on the ship coming to America. What were those smells? Can you close your eyes and smell them?
5. How do you think Mama felt when she was sold at auction. Why?
6. Writing prompt: Why do you think that Mama had never told Addie and Moses the story of her capture in Africa and her journey to America on a slave ship?

Chapter Ten:

1. Who taught Moses to fish and hunt? Why was this important for Moses to know? Is that a skill that is as important today as it was in the 1850s?
2. How do you think Addie felt when she fell? How do you think Moses and Mama felt when they heard the three knocks on Addie's water gourd?
3. Have you ever had an experience where you were hurt and somehow had to call for help? What did you do? Could Addie have done what you did?
4. Demonstrate a four-handed carry.
5. Writing prompt: Moses was a good leader.

Chapter Thirteen:

1. How did you feel when Mama knocked out the slave catcher with an oar from the boat? Did you think it was funny? Did you feel sorry for the man?
2. Would you have let the slave catcher drown? Why, or why not? Discuss how slaves might have understood what it feels like to be taken advantage of. Would a slave have wanted revenge? Or, would a slave have had compassion, given their own circumstances?
3. Why did the doctor shake their hands?
4. Imagine that you only have the clothes that are on your back right now. What would it feel like if someone told you that they wanted you to select three full changes of clothes, including shoes and coats?
5. Use your imagination. Why did the old fisherman never reveal his name?

Chapter Fourteen:

1. What is a 'forged' document? Why was it necessary for runaway slaves to carry forged freedom papers?
2. Were Moses, Addie, and mama afraid on the train? Why?
3. Do you think the friendly conductor could read the freedom papers? If he could, what was he thinking?
4. Was the conductor on the second train white or black? Why do you think so? Could you be wrong? Let's discuss assumptions and why we make them.
5. Writing prompt: We cannot do it alone. How do we need the help of others?

Chapter Fifteen:

1. Having never seen a body of water larger than the creeks, streams, and rivers of Virginia, Moses was shocked at the size of Lake Erie. Have you ever been completely surprised at the size of something? What?
2. Think about a time when you were in a crowd of people. As a good people-watcher, were you curious about anyone in particular. Who? Why?
3. Was it easier to run away, or would it have been easier to stay?
4. Writing prompt: What does it feel like to achieve something that you once thought impossible?

Epilogue:

1. In our memories of times past, we remember both the really, really bad things and the really, really good things. Which did James and Moses remember? Why? Or, did they remember both, but only focus on one?
2. Discuss differences and similarities between Papa's funeral and Missus' funeral.

Research and report on one of the following persons:

1. Frederick Douglass
2. Harriet Tubman
3. Theodore S. Wright
4. Lewis Tappan
5. Sydney Howard Gay
6. John Brown
7. Sojourner Truth
8. William Wells Brown
9. Daniel A. Payne
10. David Ruggles
11. William Still
12. Charles B. Ray
13. Charles Pinckney
14. John Jay
15. William Lloyd Garrison
16. Thomas Garrett
17. Dr. Francis LeMoyne
18. Henry 'Box' Brown
19. Henry Bibb
20. Jermaen Loguen
21. Richard Allen
22. Daniel Coker
23. Benjamin Banneker
24. Phyllis Wheatley
25. Edmonia Lewis
26. Eliza Harris
27. Levi Coffin
28. John Rankin

Topics for further research

1. Routes on the Underground Railroad
2. Methods for punishing slaves
3. Reasons white people gave as their reasons for supporting slavery
4. Quaker beliefs and logic for protecting runaways
5. Catching runaways - patrollers, slave catchers, public notices
6. The Underground Railroad
 - when
 - where
 - how many assisted
7. Slave population in US
 - 1840
 - 1850
 - 1860
 - 1870
8. Black regiments in the Civil War
9. The Emancipation Proclamation
10. Black writers
11. Black artists
12. Black musicians
13. Differences between life in the 1850s and life today
 - electricity
 - cars
 - planes, etc.
14. The adaptation of blacks to Christianity
15. Negro spirituals
16. The Nat Turner Rebellion
17. Life after the Emancipation Proclamation
18. Schools for blacks after The Civil War
19. Runaway Slave Communities:
 - Fort Mose - Florida
 - The Great Dismal Swamp - Virginia and North Carolina
 - Grand Contraband Camp - Virginia
 - Lyles Station - Indiana

7. Pallet: A wooden platform used to support something, a small, hard bed, a cloth bag that is filled with straw and used as a bed

Papa and I slept on a pallet in our small cabin.

8. Plantation: A large area of land with many acres; located in the South where cotton and tobacco were grown Master Porter owned a tobacco plantation.

9. Score: A mark or a cut made in a surface with a sharp object or whip

The scores on Paris' back were rippled and hard scars that would be there forever.

10. Scurry: To move quickly, with short steps

The mice scurried underneath our pallets as we tried to sleep.

11. Slatted: Made of thin, narrow strips of wood, like a fence or a wall in a wood cabin

We stuffed moss and straw into the cracks in the slatted wall.

12. Tight-lipped: Not willing to speak about something

Papa was tight-lipped about the conditions of slavery.

12. Unsettled: Feeling nervous, upset, or worried; not comfortable; not calm or stable

Massa was an unsettled man.

14. Varmint: A bad person, compared to rats; today we would use the word 'bum'

"Get away from me, you nasty varmint!"

15: Vulgar: Not having good manners, good taste, or politeness

Massa was a vulgar man.

Chapter Two:

1. Biting: Unpleasantly cold

I did not like walking out for firewood on biting winter days.

2. Comprehend: To understand something; such as a difficult subject

I could not comprehend why Ben was so mean.

3. Estate: A large piece of land with a large house on it

Massa was proud of his estate.

4. Gist: The general or basic meaning of something said or written

Rebecca understood the gist of what Massa said.

5. Gracious: Having charm, good taste, and comfort that comes with having a lot of money

Missus sat in the gracious chair at the end of the dining room table.

6. Lumber: To move in a slow or awkward

way Massa lumbered off to his study.

7. Luxury: A situation of great wealth; something that is expensive

The Porter family lives in luxury.

8. Nudge: To touch or push someone or something gently
Mama nudged Adeline from her slumber.

9. Ornate: Covered with decorations, fancy patterns, or shapes
The dining room chairs are very ornate.

10. Phony: Not real or true, not genuine; intended to make
someone think something that is not true
Addie wore a phony expression on her face so Massa would think she was happy.

11. Profit: Money that is made in a business
Massa hoped to make more profit than Frederick Adams, his neighbor.

12. Rile: To make someone angry; to irritate or annoy
James decided not to rile up his father any more.

13. Scamper: To run or move quickly
Addie scampered outside to bring in sticks and firewood.

14. Scrumptious: Delicious
My Mama made scrumptious biscuits.

15. Slumber: Sleep
Mama woke me from my slumber.

16. Solemnly: In a very serious manner, behavior, or expression
When Massa spoke to me, I nodded solemnly.

17. Somber: Very sad
The scary story put us in a somber mood.

18. Trek: To walk a long distance
I made the trek each day to the chicken coop.

19. Venture: To do or say something, such as an opinion
James ventured that he disagreed with his father.

20. Whimper: To make a quiet, crying sound
Missus whimpered after Massa slapped her.

Chapter Three:

1. Abolitionist: A person who wants to stop or abolish slavery

Dr. Edmundson was an abolitionist.

2. Absent-mindedly: Paying no attention; not noticing things

Stubby continued down the row absent-mindedly.

3. Berserk: Crazy and violent behavior because of anger

Father will go berserk when he smells the dead fish in his study.

4. Conceal: To hide something or someone from sight

Moses and Paris concealed some food in their 'for later' pot.

5. Crevice: A narrow opening or crack

Paris put the fishing net in the crevice between the two rocks.

6. Culprit: A person who has done something wrong

Won't your father suspect that you are the culprit?

7. Furrow: A long and narrow cut in the ground

We plowed furrows in the field.

8. Mimic: To copy someone's or something's behavior or speech;
imitate

He can mimic the way that the birds sing.

9. Muck out: To clean the place where farm animals live

The farmer had to muck out the horse stall every morning.

10. Mysterious: Strange, unknown, difficult to understand, secretive

James had a mysterious twinkle in his eye.

11. Oblige: To do something that someone has asked you to do; to
do a favor for someone

If Paris wanted to hold my hand, I was happy to oblige him.

12. Observation: Something you notice by watching and listening

My observation is that mules are stubborn.

13. Plodding: To walk slowly and heavily

Stubby kept plodding down the field.

14. Putrid: Decayed with a disgusting smell

The dead fish would put out a putrid odor.

15. Rampage: An occurrence of wild and destructive behavior

Massa went on a rampage when he smelled the dead fish.

16. Ramshackle: Not very well-made; in bad condition

We lived in a small, ramshackle plantation in the slave quarters.

17. Rhythm: A regular, repeated pattern of sounds or movements

I spoke the words to the rhythm of the drum.

18. Spindly: Long and thin

If I weren't so spindly, Stubby could not have pulled me so easily down the row.

19. Straddling: To sit, stand, or ride with a leg on either side for something

Paris was straddling the rocks when he fished with the net.

20. Wedge: To force something or someone into a very small or narrow space

Paris wedged the net down into the opening.

Chapter Four:

1. Calico: A light, printed cotton cloth Addie wore a calico apron.

2. Clomp: To walk with loud heavy steps. Massa clomped back to his study.

3. Confidence: A feeling or belief that you can do something well Sarah had confidence that I would learn to read.

4. Constant: Happening all the time or very often over a long period of time
We were in constant fear of being whipped.

5. Earshot: The distance within which someone's voice can be heard
Be careful. Someone might be in earshot.

6. Elaborate: Made with much care and detail; many parts or details that are carefully arranged Missus sat at her elaborate desk.

7. Light-hearted: Having a cheerful or happy nature
Missus talked to me in a light-hearted way.

8. Magnificent: Very beautiful or impressive
Missus' bedroom was magnificent.

9. Meandering: To have a lot of curves instead of going in a straight line
Mill Creek was a meandering stream.

10. Mounted: Climbed up
Addie mounted the stairs to join Missus for her reading lesson.

11. Periodically: Happening regularly over a period of time
Periodically Missus would join Lavinia in the quarters.

12. Rasping: To speak in a way that sounds rough
I was so shocked that when I spoke, my voice sounded funny, kind of rasping.

13. Spacious: Having a large amount of space
Missus' bedroom was more spacious than my room in the attic.

14. Stammer: To speak with many pauses because you are nervous or
frightened

I was so nervous that I barely stammered my reply to Missus' question.

15. Suspect: To think that someone is guilty of a crime or of doing
something wrong

We don't want William to suspect that I am teaching you to read and write.

Chapter Five:

1. Abruptly: Very sudden or not expected; rudely brief
She turned abruptly and walked away.

2. Contentment: The state of being happy or satisfied
There was a look of perfect contentment on Moses' face.

3. Dole: To give something to people
Ben doled out our rations on Saturday night.

4. Fetch: To go after and bring back
The slave catchers went out to fetch Demetry Field.

5. Flimsy: Easily broken or torn; not strong or solid
We tried to knock Addie off of her stilts with a flimsy stick.

6. Hefty: Large and heavy; big and strong
Cuffy, the carpenter, was a hefty man.

7. Materialize: To become real
My father's dreams for me actually materialized.

8. Muffle: To make sound quieter
The wet blankets muffled the sound of their voices.

9. Reassure: To make someone feel less afraid or upset or worried
Mama reassures me that everything will be OK.

10. Sap: To use up the supply of strength, energy, or courage.
The hot sun sapped all of our energy.

11. Scent: A smell that is left by a person or an animal that can be sensed and followed by some animals, usually dogs. The dogs followed the scent of the runaway slave.

12. Shindig: A big party
On Saturday nights, after receiving our rations for the week, we had a shindig in the slave quarters.

13. Soundly: Deeply and completely
Ben whipped Paris soundly.

14. Sustain: To provide what is needed for a person to exist
Our diet was not enough to sustain us.

15. Unraveled: Unfolded, unwound, or got explained; got told
I was more and more afraid as the story unraveled.

Chapter Six:

1. Altered: Changed

Our work schedule was altered during the Christmas season.

2. Aroma: A very pleasant smell

The aroma of the food being prepared in the kitchen made the house smell wonderful.

3. Astride: With one leg on each side of something

James was astride his horse Thunder.

4. Barge: To move or push in an awkward, rude way

Massa barged into the kitchen to scold me.

5. Charmingly: Very pleasing

The musicians were entertaining the guests very charmingly.

6. Clenched: To set in a tightly closed position

Massa clenched his teeth when he was hissing at me.

7. Dazzling: Very impressive; very beautiful

The house was dazzling after we finished decorating it for Christmas.

8. Draping: Loosely hanging in a pleasant way

The greens were draping the staircase.

9. Extravagant: Very fancy; very expensive but not necessary

With all of the candles lit, the dining room table was extravagant.

10. Fragrant: Having a pleasant and sweet smell

The fragrant evergreen decorations made the house smell very nice.

11. Marvel: To feel great wonder and admiration

The guests marveled at the beautiful decorations.

12. Restrictions: Laws or rules that limit or control something or someone

We got passes at Christmas time, but there were restrictions about how far away we could go or how long we could stay away.

13. Tote: To carry

James toted us all over the plantation so we could gather evergreen branches and pine cones to make Christmas decorations.

14. Unaccustomed: Not used to something

I was unaccustomed to wearing such fancy clothes.

15. Varying: To be different; not always the same

The candlesticks on the dining room table were of varying heights.

Chapter Seven:

1. Chortling: Laughing because you are amused or pleased by something

Cuffy chortled when he told that funny story about Papa.

2. Execute: To kill someone

Nat Turner and his fellow slaves executed many white people.

3. Flog: To beat or whip someone severely

Ben flogged Paris in front of the other slaves.

4. Garbled: To cause words to become unclear or confusing

Massa couldn't understand my garbled speech.

5. Hilarity: Noisy fun or laughter

Cuffy doubled over in hilarity when he began to tell that funny story about the trick Papa played on Ben.

6. Instigator: A person who starts something

No one could believe that papa was the instigator of such a trick.

7. Interpret: To understand something in a certain way

Nat Turner interpreted the 'serpent' as his enemy.

8. Militia: A group of people who are not part of the armed forces

of a country but who are trained like soldiers. The militia captured Nat Turner.

9. Precious: Very valuable or important; worth a lot of money
Papa stumbled onto one of Massa's precious tobacco plants.

10. Rebellion: An effort by many people to change someone or something by use of violence
Nat Turner's rebellion frightened slave owners.

11. Retribution: Punishment for doing something wrong
The militia killed two hundred blacks in retribution.

12. Serpent: A very large snake
Nat Turner thought that the serpent was his enemy.

13. Sturdier: More strong and healthy
When Papa was sick, he didn't work as fast as some of the sturdier men.

14. Tragedy: A very bad event that causes great sadness or even someone's death
It was a tragedy that Papa died.

15. Trestle: A frame that is made of a horizontal piece atop two vertical pieces designed to hold something up Papa's coffin was set upon trestles.

Chapter Eight:

1. **Blurt:** To say something suddenly and without thinking
Massa blurted, "You are so dumb, Ben!"

2. **Efficiently:** Producing desired results without wasting energy, materials, or time
Slaves cannot work efficiently if they are sick.

3. **Irresistible:** Impossible to resist because of cuteness, attractiveness, or strength
Missus found the children irresistible.

4. **Loom:** To appear large, strange, or frightening
Massa loomed over Ben after he had slammed Ben down onto the bench.

5. **Meager:** Very small; too small in amount
Moses moved his meager belongings into the big house.

6. **Rant:** To talk or complain loudly in a way that shows anger
Massa ranted on and on about how dumb Ben was.

7. **Stifle:** To not allow yourself to express something
I stifled a grin as I ran to get Moses from the barn.

8. **Stoic:** Showing no emotion when something bad is happening
I wanted to cry, but I remained stoic.

9. Tolerate: To allow something that is bad or unpleasant to exist, to happen, or to be done

Ben simply had to tolerate Massa's rage.

10. Trickle: A slow, thin flow of water

You will be near your first station on the Underground Railroad when the stream narrows to a trickle.

Chapter Nine:

1. Adequate: Good enough; enough for some need or requirement
Our clothing was not adequate to keep us warm in the winter.

2. Canteen: A small container for carrying water
They filled their canteens in the stream.

3. Cargo hold: A place in the bottom of a ship where goods and
supplies are stored
They put Mama in the cargo hold along with hundreds of other slaves.

4. Conserve: To use something carefully in order to prevent waste or
to keep some for later use
We had to conserve what little food we had left.

5. Dense: Difficult to see through
We walked for hours through the dense forest.

6. Dungeon: A dark underground prison in a castle
Mama felt like she was in a dungeon when she was being held in the cargo hold.

7. Gangplank: A board or other structure that people walk on to get on
or off a boat

They dragged Mama down the gangplank when the ship arrived in America.

8. Gruesome: Horrible, disgusting

The whipping marks on Paris' back were gruesome.

9. Hoist: To raise or lift up

Mama hoisted the bundle containing our food up to a high branch.

10. Maniac: A person who behaves in a wild way; someone who is mentally ill

Mama was carrying on as if she were a maniac.

11. Property: Something that is owned by a person or a business

Massa treated us just like the other property he owned...horses, cows, mules.

12. Reserved: Not openly expressing feelings or opinions

Sarah was the more reserved child.

13. Strenuous: Requiring or showing great energy and effort

Working in the tobacco fields all day was strenuous.

14. Thicket: A group of bushes or small trees that grow very close together or tangled all together

We found a hiding place in a large thicket deep in the woods.

15. Underbrush: Plants, bushes, and small trees growing under larger trees in the forest

We made our beds in the underbrush.

16. Wracked: Suffering great pain

Mama was wracked with sobs when she was telling her story.

Chapter Ten:

1. Admonish: To tell or urge someone to do something

Missus admonished us to travel at night.

2. Assurance: A strong feeling of confidence about yourself or that you are right

Seeing the mountains gave me assurance that we were going north.

3. Consequently: Happening as a result of a particular action or a set of conditions

Our clothes were heavy and wet. Consequently, we walked slowly.

4. Depression: An area on a surface that is lower than other parts; a low spot

Addie was looking for a depression in the ground where we could hide.

5. Elevate: To lift up; make something higher

We had to elevate Addie's leg to keep the swelling down.

6. Gait: A particular way of walking

We had an awkward gait when we were carrying Addie.

7. Marvel: To feel great surprise, wonder, or admiration

I marveled that Addie was able to endure the pain that the bonesetter caused when he was fixing her ankle.

8. Perilous: Dangerous

Our journey over the mountains was perilous.

9. Ponder: To think about or consider carefully

I have to stop and ponder about which direction we should go.

10. Preposterous: Very foolish or silly

It was preposterous to think that we would see a bear.

11. Rapids: A part of a river where the water moves very fast over the rocks

Moses hoped he would catch a fish in the rapids.

12. Reef: A long line of rocks near the surface of the water

Moses stood on the reef while trying to catch a fish.

13. Relish: A feeling of liking something

I relish the idea that I will be free one day.

14. Summon: To order someone to come to a place

Lydia Harlan summoned her husband to come immediately.

Chapter Eleven:

1. Apologetic: Feeling or showing regret; sorry; expressing an apology

Ben was never apologetic after he whipped somebody.

2. Breakneck: Very fast; dangerously fast

When we heard the patrollers coming, we took off at breakneck speed.

3. Ferocious: Very fierce or violent

The dogs were ferocious when they caught the runaway.

4. Lurk: To wait in secret or in a hiding place to plan something
wrong or harmful

The slave catchers were lurking in the bushes.

5. Multiple: More than one; many, numerous

There were multiple hiding places on the Harlans' farm.

6. Object: To disagree or oppose something

The slave catcher objected when Lydia told him that he could not come into the house unless her husband was present.

7. Refuge: Shelter or protection from danger

The hiding place in the barn was my refuge.

8. Relentless: Continuing without getting weaker or less severe
His relentless banging on the door was frightening me.

9. Retrieve: To get something and bring it back
Those men were trying to retrieve a slave.

10. Robust: Impressively large and strong
Jacob was a robust man who picked Addie up easily.

11. Salve: A creamy substance that you put on a wound to make it
heal faster or to make it less painful
Lydia rubbed a soothing salve on our sore feet.

12. Scowl: To look at someone in a way that shows anger.
That mean man scowled at Lydia and Harlan as he stomped out of the house.

13. Shriveled: To become wrinkled, like a prune
Having been in wet shoes for so long made our feet all shriveled up.

Chapter Twelve:

1. Careen: To go forward quickly without control
The wagon careened into the ditch.

2. Churn: To stir or mix something with force
The air was filled with dust churned up by the wagon wheels.

3. Colossal: Very large or great
The wagon took a colossal tumble.

4. Daunting Very difficult to deal with
It was a daunting task helping a slave to escape.

5. Embark: To begin a journey
We were about to embark on an exciting adventure.

6. Escort: To go with someone to have protection or guidance
We were escorted to our sleeping safe haven in the barn.

7. Menacing: A dangerous or possibly harmful person or thing
The growl of the nasty dog was menacing.

8. Minuscule: Very small

The minuscule openings barely let in enough air so we could breathe.

9. Smidgen: A small amount; a little bit

There was a smidgen of straw on the bottom of the wagon.

10. Spellbound: Giving all of your attention to something or someone

I was spellbound by Elijah's and Betsy's story.

11. Surly: Rude and unfriendly

The slave catchers were surly characters.

12. Treacherous: Very dangerous and difficult

Elijah and Betsy's journey was more treacherous than ours.

13. Trance: A state in which you are not aware of what is happening around you because you are shocked or thinking about something else

Betsy thought that I was in a trance because I looked so odd while she was telling her story.

Chapter Thirteen:

1. Accommodations: A place such as a room where travelers can sleep
Elija and Betsey shared beautiful accommodations in the Edmundson's large home.

2. Clamber: To climb or crawl in awkwardly
I had to clamber back into the wagon.

3. Discreetly: Not likely to be seen or noticed
Discreetly I slid my hand down my leg to the sheathe that hid my knife.

4. Encounter: To meet someone without intending or expecting
to
Without a warning we encountered two slave catchers.

5. Gimmick: A trick
Sometimes abolitionists had to use clever gimmicks to help a slave.

6. Navigate: To find the way to get to a place while in a boat,
ship, airplane, car, etc.
The old fisherman helped us to navigate The Underground Railroad.

7. Sheathe: A covering that protects something such as a knife or a sword

The sheathe strapped around my leg covered my knife.

8. Skiff: A small light boat, usually for one or two people

We tied the skiff to a tree so we could eat our lunch.

9. Stately: Very impressive in appearance and size

Dr. Edmundson's home was stately.

10. Tethered: Tied by a rope or a chain so that it will stay in place

Our boat was tethered to the large tree.

11. Utterly: Complete and total

We were utterly exhausted after rowing for such a long time.

12. Vital: Extremely important

It was vital for us to rest occasionally.

Chapter Fourteen:

1. Conscientiously: Very careful about doing what you are supposed to do
The porter looked over my papers conscientiously.

2. Complexion: The color or appearance of someone's skin
My freedom document noted my especially light complexion.

3. Forge: To make or copy something in order to deceive someone
My forged freedom document said that I had been a free person for a long time.

4. Fumble: To handle something in an awkward or clumsy way
I was warned to act natural on the train, to not fumble when handing the porter my freedom papers.

5. Granted: Given something legally
The forged document said that I was granted my freedom.

6. Heretofore: Fancy legal language to mean 'up until now'
I had heretofore been registered with the court in Virginia.

7. Hurdle: Something that makes an achievement difficult
When the porter passed my papers, I cleared that hurdle.

8. Legitimate: Accepted according to rules or laws, real, official
The documents made it clear that I was a legitimate free woman.

9. Noticeable: Able to be easily seen or noticed
The document said that I had no noticeable scars.

10. Obvious: In a way that is easy to see, understand, or recognize
It was obvious to Anna that I was frightened.

11. Porter: A person whose job is to help passengers on a train
The porter lifted my satchel up onto the train.

12. Register: An official list, book, or system for keeping records
The forged document said that I had registered in the court in Virginia.

13. Renewal: Extending the period of time when something is legal
My new document stated that it was a renewal of an earlier freedom paper.

14. Satchel: A small bag that is used for carrying clothes
The porter helped me with my satchel.

15. Society: A group of people who work together on a cause
The Abolitionist Society had purchased my train ticket.

Chapter Fifteen:

1. Aspect: A part of something or someone

Massa controlled every aspect of our lives when we lived on the plantation.

2. Cargo: Goods and materials carried from one place to another by boat

The cargo included fruits and vegetables.

3. Companionship: The good feeling that comes from being with someone else

We enjoyed the companionship of Dr. Edmundson's family.

4. Fidgety: Moving around a lot because of nervousness

As we waited to depart, Addie was fidgety.

5. Gangway: A board or other structure that people walk on to get on or off a boat; also called a gangplank

The gangway was put in place so we could walk off the boat.

6. Genial: Cheerful and pleasant

Our hosts, the Edmundsons were genial people.

7. Grandly: Very well; very good

The Edmundsons treated us grandly while we stayed in their lovely home.

8. Helter-skelter: In a confused and careless way

Addie was jumping about helter-skelter.

9. Hospitality: Generous and friendly to visitors and guests

The Edmundsons extended their warm hospitality to us.

10. Overwhelming: Used to describe something that is so difficult, so confusing, that you are unable to do it or to understand it

The kindness shown to us by the family was overwhelming.

11. Primp: To try to make yourself more attractive by making small changes to your clothes, hair, etc.

Addie, primped, checking her clothes to be sure that she looked fine.

Chapter Sixteen and Epilogue:

1. Abscond: To escape from a place secretly

Four slaves absconded after they discovered that the overseer was missing.

2. Concept: An idea of what something is

Being allowed to learn was a new concept for us.

3. Contagious: Causing other people to feel or act in a similar way

James had such a contagious smile; it made me smile too.

4. Convulsed with: Used when something such as laughter causes a person's body to shake

Young Moses was convulsed with laughter when he met the other Moses.

5. Crossroad: A place where two or more roads cross

Culpeper was a crossroad for the Northern and Southern armies.

6. Eulogy: A speech that praises someone who has died James delivered the eulogy at his mother's funeral.

7. Innovative: Introducing new ideas or methods

Missus turned out to be an innovative businesswoman.

8. Interminable: Continuing for a very long time

There seemed to be an interminable quiet as we couldn't think of what we should say.

9. Journalist: The job of collecting, writing, and editing news stories

I was a journalist reporting on the war.

10. Levity: An amusing quality

James brought some levity to the serious moment.

11. Reconstruction: The act of rebuilding something that was damaged or destroyed

12. Rein in: To bring under control

I was trying to rein in my emotions.

13. Route: To send something to a particular place

The man in the post office routed Moses' letter to my post office box.

14. Tariffs: A tax on goods coming into or out of a country

Moses' daughter was arguing that tariffs should be reduced.

15. Wrestle: To struggle to control something; to struggle to deal with

James was wrestling with his emotions, just as I was.

16. Upheaval: A major change that causes a lot of conflict, anger or confusion

After the Civil War, many slave owners experienced an upheaval when they had to free their slaves.

Read More About It: Slavery and Racism in America

Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism
Experiences with Race and Racism (a lesson plan)

Books Matter

www.adl.org/education

First Encounters with Racism

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Slavery in America: The Montgomery Slave Trade

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<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/02/what-kids-are-really-learning-about-slavery/552098>

Race Problem in America & How to Solve It

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Why My First-Grader Doesn't Need a Whitewashed Plantation Field Trip

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2018/06/07/why-my-first-grader-doesn't-need-a-white-washed-plantation-field-trip/?utm_term=.5356ae6ccad

