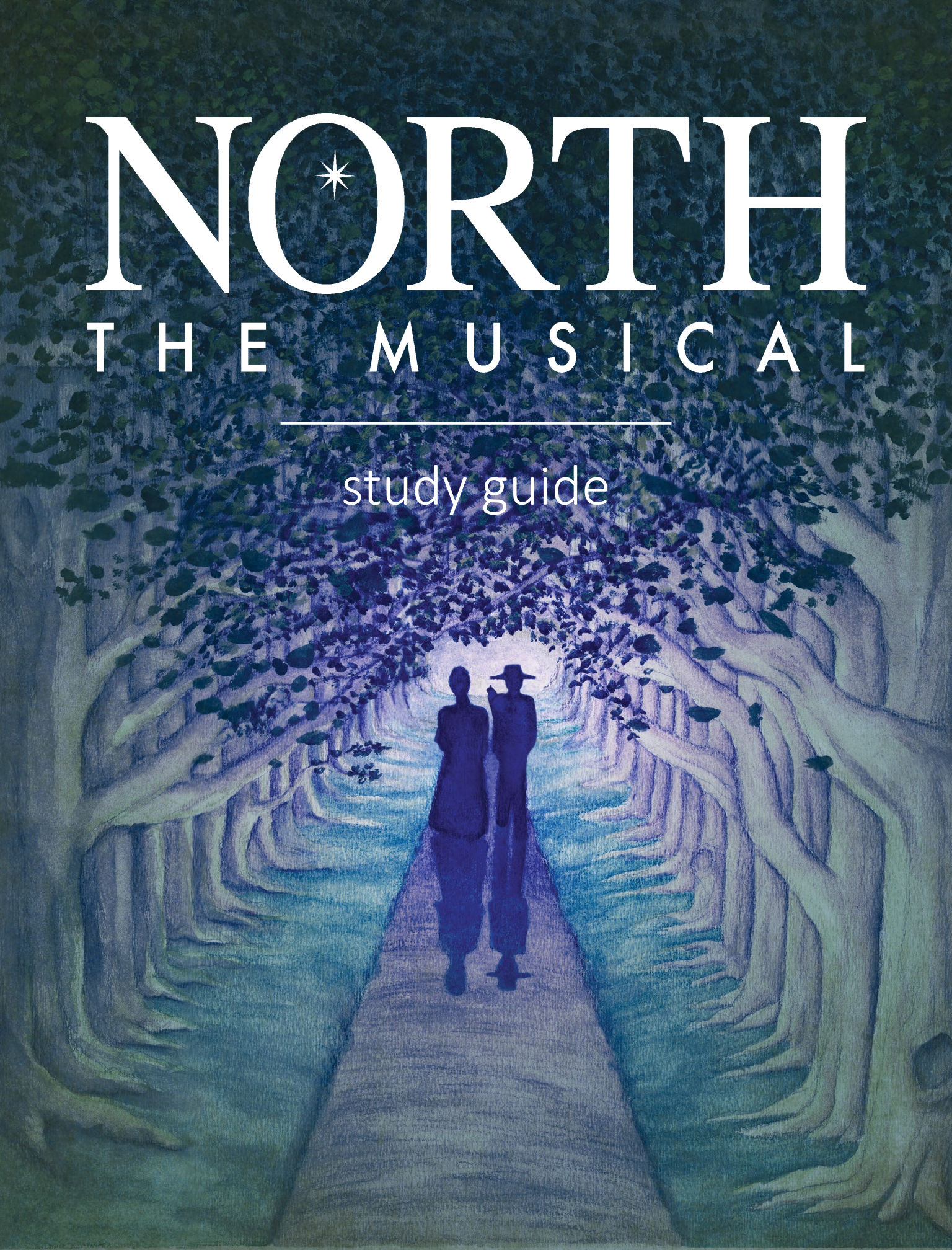


NORTH

THE MUSICAL

study guide



About the Show

NORTH: The Musical

Follow precocious Lawrence and his mother, Minnie, as they escape the Deep South and travel North through the Underground Railroad, to seek freedom. Their route through the Louisiana's bayous, the bustling city of New Orleans, and the young town of Lawrence, Kansas introduces Lawrence, Minnie, and the audience to the diverse, multi-faceted lives of Black Americans during this time period.

Set in the 1850s, *NORTH* is based on actual accounts of slave escapes through the Underground Railroad network, as well as Ashli St. Armant's personal family history of overcoming slavery in Louisiana. While acknowledging the realities of slavery, the book and original musical compositions by St. Armant bring out the full experience of freedom-seekers: optimism, bravery, playfulness, wonder, suspense and mystery.

Who is Ashli St Armant?

Ashli St. Armant is a jazz vocalist, composer, musician and musical theater playwright. She is known for her award-winning work in children's education and entertainment, including her band, [Jazzy Ash and the Leaping Lizards](#), and her Audible mystery series, [Viva Durant](#), which includes the New York Times bestselling story, [Viva Durant and the Secret of the Silver Buttons](#).



St. Armant's new work, *NORTH* is about a teenage boy and his mother who escape slavery in the deep south through the Underground Railroad. *NORTH* is a story that explores the multi-faceted reality of Black life during the antebellum period and which aims to bring out the full range of experiences of freedom seekers. While acknowledging the realities of slavery, the narrative and original musical compositions by St. Armant explore themes of optimism, bravery, playfulness, wonder, suspense and mystery.



Inspired by true accounts of escape through the Underground Railroad, the story begins in Vacherie, Louisiana in the middle of the 19th century. To save her son Lawrence, Minnie realizes that they must seek their freedom by finding their way through the intricate network of the Underground Railroad. Their travels take them to Lawrence, Kansas with the hope of finding John Brown and eventually finding freedom in Canada.

St. Armant's own ancestors were enslaved in Vacherie, Louisiana, and she discovered incredible connections to her own family and experiences. Many of those findings influenced the final story, including characters like Tham The Brave, a real-life leader in a Maroons community who had been enslaved on the same plantation as St. Armant's family members in the 1780's. The set design and the song "Oh What These Trees Have Seen" come from her personal experience visiting the area where this plantation had been located.

To complement the story, the musical genres in this show are equal parts jazz, musical theatre, and St. Armant's own signature style. For inspiration she drew from an array of musical heroes, including Nat King Cole, Mahalia Jackson, Fela Kuti and Stephen Sondheim. Songs include "Never", "Git On Board", "Oh What These Trees Have Seen", "On The Run", "Head Straight, Shoulders Back" and more.

"This play is bigger than me, and it's a part of me." says St. Armant "I hope the audience feels the humanity in these characters because they're alive. For myself, the creative team, and the actors, we've all said that being part of creating this piece has changed us — we've all grown as people. I hope the audience feels this too."

Section 1.

About the Show

Actors and the Characters They Play



Alyssa Holmes

Alyssa Holmes is a Los Angeles native, and a graduate from Howard University, where she earned a BFA in Theatre Arts with an emphasis in Dance. This is her first production post-graduation, and she is very excited to be a part of this show.

NORTH character played: MINNIE

Life on the plantation is all Minnie knows. And Lawrence's young mother has a steadfast strategy for survival - just keep your head down and be grateful. But after making an earth-shattering discovery, she's forced to consider other plans. Now the real question is, will Lawrence be a trustworthy partner on this journey of life-or-death, or will he be a burden?

Jordan Crawford is a professional dancer/choreographer, singer-songwriter and actor. In 2022, he graduated from the American Musical and Dramatic Academy with a Bachelors of Fine Arts. Jordan's credits include Off-Broadway shows 'Revelation: The Musical' and 'A Soulful Christmas', the Super Bowl LVI Halftime Show, television shows, music videos and more.

NORTH character played: Lawrence

Young Lawrence is clever, quick, and hopelessly naive. Perhaps his zest for life and quest for something more will carry him through the darkness and into free land. Lawrence is also on a journey of self-discovery. So, as he navigates the wilderness and strange lands, he must also navigate the power struggle between mother and nearly-adult son.



Jordan Crawford



Jazmine Chappel

Jazmine Chappel is a singer/songwriter from Decatur, Georgia. She started singing in church at the age of five, when her passion for music began. She fell in love with theatre after being cast in her first role as the Fairy Godmother in Cinderella. After graduating from Cosmetology school in 2015, her passion for the arts has continued and flourished, recently wrapping a tour with Kirk Franklin and company. She is grateful for her family and friends for pushing her to pursue her dreams and looks forward to what's to come.

NORTH characters played: ALTHEA, Maroon, Boatman, Border Ruffian

ALTHEA

Althea, Minnie's best friend and confidant, has co-conspired a plan for her son to escape slavery by faking his death - and it worked! Now Minnie must trust her friend's instinct and wisdom as she helps Minnie and Lawrence concoct a plan of their own..

continued

About the Show

Actors and the Characters they Play

Jazmine Chappel's Characters continued

A MAROON

Maroons were people who escaped slavery but didn't travel far. Instead, they settled in the hinterlands of the forests and bayous near their point of escape. This was usually a temporary solution, but some Maroons lived in communities for up to ten years. Learn more about Maroon communities in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 12.

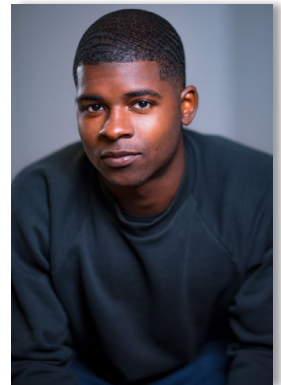
A BOATMAN

The Underground Railroad was a massive operation, hidden in plain sight. Often, abolitionists and freedom seekers disguised themselves in ordinary jobs and moved through ordinary means. For example, Frederick Douglass escaped slavery by pretending to be a sailor and boarding a sailboat with falsified papers.

A BORDER RUFFIAN

Border ruffians were pro-slavery vigilantes who patrolled, raided, and intimidated abolitionists and their anti-slavery operations near the border of Missouri and the Kansas Territory. These self-organized groups worked outside of the law, and were often violent. Learn more about *border ruffians* in the "glossary" section of this study guide on page 7.

Ethan Williams is an actor hailing from Dallas, Texas. Inspired by Pop and R&B, he is also an established 1st Tenor vocalist. He began his career in the arts during his junior year in high school then went on to attend the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, in Los Angeles California training in musical theater, dialects, sketch comedy, and drama. With a wide variety of skills when he isn't studying his craft, he swims competitively and practices two forms of martial arts.



Ethan Williams

NORTH characters played: THAM the Brave, Newsome, Boatman, Williams, George DeBaptiste

THAM THE BRAVE

Based on a distant relative of playwright Ashli St. Armant, "Tham the Brave" is an almost-mythical character who emerges from the forest and introduces Minnie and Lawrence to his community of Maroons. This accidental meeting has the potential to change the course of their path - and lives - forever. Learn more about Tham and the maroon communities in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 14.

NEWSOME (seen in silhouette)

A plantation owner who enslaved Minnie and Lawrence.

A BOATMAN

The Underground Railroad was a massive operation, hidden in plain sight. Often, abolitionists and freedom seekers disguised themselves in ordinary jobs and moved through ordinary means. For example, Frederick Douglass escaped slavery by pretending to be a sailor and boarding a sailboat with falsified papers. .

continued

Section 1.

About the Show

Actors and the Characters they Play

Ethan Williams' characters continued

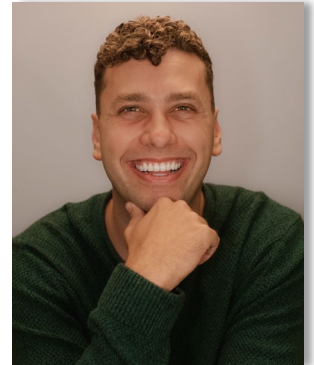
WILLIAMS

Williams is a carpenter in a wagon wheel shop, and an agent of the Underground Railroad. He's an assistant to John Brown, the renowned abolitionist.

GEORGE DEBAPTISTE

George DeBaptiste was a real Underground Railroad conductor who used his steamboat, the T. Whitney, to move freedom seekers from the shores of Detroit, Michigan in the United States to Whistler, Ontario in Canada, where slavery was illegal. Learn more about George DeBaptiste in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 14.

Josh Howerton is a singer/songwriter from Phoenix, Arizona now setting his sights on the stage. The dream of acting seemed unrealistic growing up in small town Missouri, but *with North: The Musical* being his first production, he feels excited to finally be stepping into a creative field he has always wanted to pursue.



Josh Howerton

NORTH characters played: Boudreaux, Walter Wetherby, "Celia" Boat Caller, John Brown, Stephens

BOUDREAUX (seen in silhouette)

A plantation owner who strikes a sickening deal with Newsome.

WALTER WETHERBY

Inspired by real-life abolitionists William Still, Walter Wetherby is a conductor on the Underground Railroad, and Minnie and Lawrence's guide to freedom. But can Minnie trust this unusual man with a mysterious past?

"CELIA" BOAT CALLER

The Underground Railroad was a massive operation, hidden in plain sight. Often, abolitionists and freedom seekers disguised themselves in ordinary jobs and moved through ordinary means. For example, Frederick Douglass escaped slavery by pretending to be a sailor and boarding a sailboat with falsified papers. Learn more about Frederick Douglass and how other real people escaped slavery in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 13.

JOHN BROWN

John Brown was an infamous, real-life abolitionist who was known for taking matters into his own hands in the name of anti-slavery. His tactics were often unconventional, violent and sometimes deadly. It begs the question: Was John Brown a good guy or a bad one? Learn more about John Brown in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 13.

STEPHENS

A Quaker, farmer, and an agent on the Underground Railroad. Although Stephens is a fictional character, real-life Quakers held religious beliefs that aligned with anti-slavery ideology. Many Quakers served as conductors and agents on the Underground Railroad. Learn more about Quakers in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 14.

continued

Section 1.

About the Show

Actors and the Characters they Play



Reyna Papotto

Reyna Papotto is an aspiring model, singer and actor, currently studying performing arts at Savannah College of Arts and Design (SCAD) in Savannah, Georgia. Her professional credits include work behind the camera with companies like Netflix, and center stage with performances like BAM!, a celebration of Black artists in music. NORTH: The Musical is Reyna's first national tour.

NORTH characters played: Genevieve LeGrange, Maroon, Boatman, Border Ruffian

GENEVIEVE LEGRANGE

Genevieve is a free woman of color - poised, well-dressed and eloquent. This agent of the Underground Railroad was born free and lives in a Creole cottage, which she owns. She's a complete anomaly to Lawrence and Minnie, but they'll have to learn to trust her if the plan is going to work. Genevieve represents a unique society of mixed-race women who lived freely and lavishly, often because of a *plaçage*, or a non-legal partnership with a white man. These women were sometimes referred to as *quadroons* meaning they were a quarter black (or less), and would sometimes attend *quadroon balls* in search of a suitor. **PLEASE NOTE: Both of *plaçage* and *quadroon balls* is now considered derogatory.** Learn more about *quadroon* in the "glossary" section of this study guide on page 7.

A MAROON

Maroons were people who escaped slavery but didn't travel far. Instead, they settled in the hinterlands of the forests and bayous near their point of escape. This was usually a temporary solution, but some Maroons lived in communities for up to ten years. Learn more about Maroon communities in the "Historical People and Places" section of this study guide on page 12.

A BOATMAN

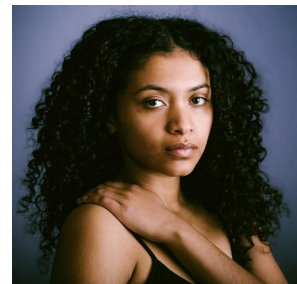
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BORDER RUFFIAN

Border ruffians were pro-slavery vigilantes who patrolled, raided, and intimidated abolitionists and their anti-slavery operations near the border of Missouri and the Kansas Territory. These self-organized groups worked outside of the law, and were often violent. Learn more about *border ruffians* in the "glossary" section of this study guide on page 7.

JULIET PARKER (COMPANY/SWING)

Juliet is delighted to be joining the cast of NORTH The Musical! She has been enjoying her time in the musical theater track at Fullerton College and looks forward to continuing her training. Some of her favorite roles include Richie (A Chorus Line), Esmerelda U/S, Ensemble (The Hunchback of Notre Dame), Bree (Fancy Nancy) and a Lost Boy (Peter Pan). She would like to thank everybody involved in this production for making her feel welcomed and for this amazing opportunity. She also would like to thank her Mom, Dad, Chavyn, Josiah, God, and family for their love and support.



Juliet Parker

Section 1.

About the Show

NORTH Glossary Terms

(Please note to students that in earlier times some of these words were an acceptable term for referring to African Americans. While not offensive in the past, today the term like “Negro” or “Mulato” are outdated and inappropriate, unless one is reading aloud directly from a historical document.)

Abolitionist – a person who sought to end the practice of slavery in the United States during the 19th century. A majority of early abolitionists were white, but the most prominent leaders of the movement were escaped or freed black men and women, such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman. Other famous abolitionists include William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe and John Brown.

Border ruffians – a group of proslavery Missourians who used to cross the border into Kansas to vote illegally, raid towns and intimidate anti-slavery settlers. The term originated after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which allowed local voters to decide whether Kansas would be a free or slave state. Border ruffians, or “bushwackers,” clashed with anti-slavery groups through the outbreak of the Civil War, prompting the name “Bleeding Kansas” due to years of violent civil disturbances.

Conductor – a person who guided runaway slaves from place to place along the routes of the Underground Railroad. Perhaps the most famous conductor was Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave who helped hundreds to freedom over the course of eight years.

Free people of color – people of Black heritage who were born free or escaped the bonds of slavery before its practice was abolished in 1865. The rights of these individuals varied by state, but many enjoyed a high level of acceptance and prosperity, though still set apart from their white neighbors.

Freedom seekers – an enslaved person who takes action to obtain freedom from slavery, either by attempting escape on their own or through the Underground Railroad. Another common term is a “runaway slave.”

Maroons – formerly enslaved Black people and their descendants who gained their freedom by fleeing for cover in remote mountains or dense tropical terrains, particularly in the marshes of the lower South. They developed their own culture, government, trade and as ranks grew, often took to guerrilla warfare against their oppressors. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maroons>

Mulatto – a person of mixed white and Black ancestry, usually the first-generation offspring of Black and white parentage. While this was a common term used during the time of the Underground Railroad, today the term mulatto is considered to be a dated and offensive term with many preferring to identify themselves as biracial, mixed or simply “other.”

Negro or Colored – a term historically used to denote a person of black heritage, usually classified according to black ancestry and physical traits such as dark skin pigmentation. In the past these words were commonly used, though in the late 1900s there was a push toward a preference for “black” and “African American.” In 2016, President Barack Obama [signed a law](#) pushing to modernize some 1970s-era laws and calling for the removal of these terms on federal forms.

Section 1.

About the Show

NORTH Glossary Terms (continued)

Plaçage – a contract relationship between a white man and a free woman of color, in which the man agrees to take care of the young woman and any children she may bear him by providing housing and a form of income.

Plantation owners – a person who owned an estate in the American South on which crops such as coffee, sugar and tobacco were generally cultivated by the exploitation of slave or indentured labor. Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, most plantation owners owned 20 or more slaves.

Quadroon – a person of one-quarter black ancestry and three-quarters white ancestry. Following the accomplishments of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s, this term is now considered to be a dated and offensive term.

“Sound on the goose” – a phrase used during colonial America to signify commitment to the pro-slavery cause in Kansas.

Stations – the places on the Underground Railroad that sheltered runaway slaves, often these were homes, barns, churches and businesses of anti-slavery sympathizers.

Underground Railroad – a network of routes, places and people that helped enslaved people in the American South escape to the North. The name was used metaphorically as it was not located underground nor was an actual railroad instead operating through “safe houses” and properties of anti-slavery sympathizers. Routes took freedom seekers in many directions and was often not a direct line to northern states. Between 1810 and 1850, it is estimated to have helped guide 100,000 slaves to freedom.

For deeper understanding, here are a few resources that discuss the “language of slavery.”

National Parks Underground Railroad – Language of Slavery

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/undergroundrailroad/language-of-slavery.htm>

Chicago Tribune column, “Language matters: The shift from ‘slave’ to ‘enslaved person’ may be difficult, but it’s important”

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/columns/eric-zorn/ct-column-slave-enslaved-language-people-first-debate-zorn-20190906-audknctayrarfijimpz6uk7hvy-story.html>

Section 2.

Music

Musical Inspiration

Music Inspirations

Creator and composer Ashli St. Armant drew inspiration from an array of musical heroes, including crooner Nat King Cole, gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, Fela Kuti - father of Afrobeat, and legendary lyricist Stephen Sondheim. Songs include “Never”, “Git On Board”, “Oh What These Trees Have Seen”, “On The Run”, “Head Straight, Shoulders Back” and more.

As a result, the score of NORTH covers a wide breadth of musical genres including spirituals, worker songs, the blues, traditional pop, Afrobeat, musical theatre, St. Armant’s own signature style, and of course, jazz! Jazz is a foundational building block of NORTH, as jazz represents a culmination of many early Black American experiences, and their musical expressions.

What are Spirituals?

Spirituals were songs born from black churches during the 1700s and 1800s. Although lyrics often carried religious themes, spirituals also spoke to the Black experience in the Antebellum South and the quest for freedom. It is also said that freedom seekers use spirituals as codes to navigate the Underground Railroad.

Spirituals like “Wade In The Water” and Black American folks songs like “All The Pretty Little Horses” are woven through NORTH as musical interludes.

NORTH’S “All The Pretty Little Horses”:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/hgme7zk6pu3aef0/18%20All%20The%20Pretty%20Horses.wav?dl=0>

“All The Pretty Little Horses” by Jazzy Ash (aka Ashli St. Armant):

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/s7klalz9gg9ejkd/13%20All%20The%20Pretty%20Little%20Horses.mp3?dl=0>

NORTH’S “Wade in the Water”:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/tvje46n4m1fwt2/07%20Wade%20In%20The%20Water.wav?dl=0>

“Wade In The Water” performed by Ella Jenkins

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/y7own5yimo5c4jf/Ella%20Jenkins%20-%20Wade%20in%20the%20Water.mp3?dl=0>

Smithsonian Folkways

For many more resources on spirituals and Black American folk music, check out [Smithsonian Folkways](#), an incredible non-profit national archive of music and sound recordings & history.

NORTH Musical Score

This QR code will take you to the soundtrack for NORTH. These tracks are just the instrumentation, but will give your students idea of what they will be hearing.



Section 3. History

Kansas and Beyond

Bleeding Kansas

Bleeding Kansas describes the period of repeated outbreaks of violent guerrilla warfare between pro-slavery and anti-slavery forces following the creation of the new territory of Kansas in 1854. In all, some 55 people were killed between 1855 and 1859. <https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/bleeding-kansas>

The Fugitive Slave Act

Passed on September 18, 1850 by Congress, The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was part of the Compromise of 1850. The act required that slaves be returned to their owners, even if they were in a free state. The act also made the federal government responsible for finding, returning, and trying escaped slaves. This act made the city of Philadelphia, once the center of the UGRR, a dangerous place for freedom seekers. Other routes to freedom were established as well. <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fugitive-slave-acts>

Lawrence, Kansas and Surrounding Areas

Lawrence, Kansas

Founded by abolitionists from New England in the 1850s, Lawrence was established with a political agenda of seeing that Kansas joined the Union as a “free state.” The “sacking of Lawrence” took place on May 21, 1856 when pro-slavery settlers, led by the Douglas County Sheriff, attacked and ransacked Lawrence, Kansas, a town which had been founded by anti-slavery settlers from Massachusetts who were hoping to make Kansas a free state. This was the first major incident of what was called “Bleeding Kansas.” The human cost of the attack was low: only one person—a member of the pro-slavery gang—was killed, and his death was accidental. However, Jones and his men halted production of the Free-State newspapers the *Kansas Free State* and the *Herald of Freedom* (with the former ceasing publication altogether and the latter taking months to once again start up). The pro-slavery men also destroyed the Free State Hotel and Charles L. Robinson’s house. In 1863 Lawrence was burned to the ground and most of its men and young boys were massacred when Quantrill’s raiders sacked the town.

<https://www.explorelawrence.com/things-to-do/history-heritage/the-struggle-for-freedom/>
<https://youtu.be/XyVao0Y6Yxwhttps://www.c-span.org/video/?455837-1/tour-lawrence-kansas>

Grover Barn

<https://www.explorelawrence.com/blog/post/highly-documented-drama-on-the-underground-railroad/>

Built in 1858 by Joel and Emily Grover, the barn at 2819 Stonebarn Terrace in Lawrence, Kansas, played an important role in the Underground Railroad in Kansas. The Grover’s were abolitionist settlers in Kansas Territory. Following his December 1858 raid into Vernon County, Missouri, John Brown stopped at the barn with eleven formerly enslaved men, women, and children and a new free-born baby while escorting them to freedom in Canada. This was Brown’s last trip through Lawrence, Kansas.



Local Historical Narratives Video

This QR code will take you to a video of specific Lawrence historical narratives of: Link to video highlighting: Joel Grover, George Washington, Lizzie, Jane Harper, Jim Daniels

(click on QR code with phone camera)

(continued)

Section 3. History

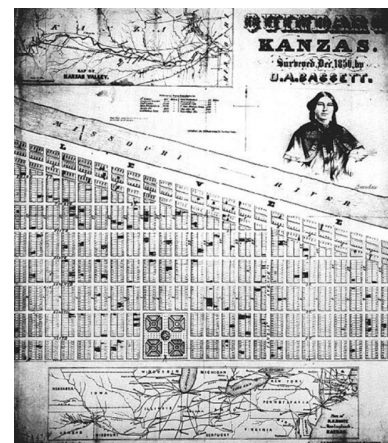
Regional Locations



Constitutional Hall, Lecompton, Kansas

https://www.kshs.org/constitution_hall

At this National Historic Landmark, a large antislavery delegation marched into Lecompton in 1857 to protest the pro-slavery constitutional convention meeting. The nation waited to see if the constitution written here would lead Kansas to join the Union as a slave state. Discover more about the pro-slavery and free-state forces along with the territorial history of Kansas.



Quindaro, Kansas

<https://civilwaronthewesternborder.org/encyclopedia/quindaro-kansas>

Named after the daughter of the Wyandotte chief who sold the land to abolitionist Abellard Guthrie, Quindaro was settled by abolitionists in late 1856, with construction starting in 1857. The boomtown population peaked at 600, rapidly settled by migrants. They were aided by the New England Emigrant Aid Company, who were trying to help secure Kansas as a free territory.^[2] One of several villages hugging the narrow bank of the Missouri River under the bluffs, the town was a free state port-of-entry for abolitionist forces of Kansas. It was established as part of the resistance to stop the westward spread of slavery. Quindaro's people also aided escaped slaves from Missouri and connected them with the Underground Railroad.

Freedom's Frontier: <https://freedomfrontier.org/>

Tours

- <https://ffnha.oncell.com/en/tours-218593.html>,
- <https://ffnha.oncell.com/en/international-underground-railroad-network-to-freedom-tour-256158.html>
- <https://youtu.be/XyVao0Y6Yxw>

**Freedom's
Frontier**
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



Other Underground Railroad Locations

- **National Parks Service**
 - <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/undergroundrailroad/index.htm>
 - <https://www.nps.gov/people/frederick-douglass.htm>
 - <https://www.nps.gov/people/harriet-tubman.htm>
 - <https://www.nps.gov/people/john-brown.htm>
 - <https://www.nps.gov/people/sojourner-truth.htm>
- **National Geographic**
 - <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/underground-railroad>



Section 3.

History

NORTH Escape Route

This link takes you to an interactive map that shows the journey Lawrence and his mother, Minnie take to freedom. There are clickable links that highlight specific historical people and places.

- <https://maphub.net/LiedCenterKS/north-underground-railroad>

The Lane Trail

This is the trail That John Brown, with eleven adults and a free-child, freed from slavery, plus ten of his own men (including three Iowans), took through eastern Kansas and crossed into Iowa on February 4, 1859. Throughout their journey they received help from the major UGR Stations in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois. Famous detective, Allan Pinkerton helped them get to Detroit via one of his trains. Once in Detroit they were able to be ferried across the Detroit River to freedom in Windsor, Canada

- <http://www.thecivilwarmuse.com/index.php?page=the-lane-trail>
- <http://www.kansasheritage.org/werner/lane.html>



Section 3.

History

Other Underground Railroad Locations continued

- Louisiana
 - <https://africanamericanmuseum.org/la-underground-railroad/>
- Oak Alley Plantation (where Ashli St. Armant's family members were enslaved)
 - <https://www.oakalleyplantation.org/>
- Armant Brothers Plantation (the last name given to Ashli's family members)
 - <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~lattrp/plantation.htm>
- New Orleans, LA
 - <https://utno.la.aft.org/new-orleans-black-history/some-new-orleans-black-history-you-should-know>
 - <https://www.leadinginsideout.org/the-whitney-plantation-museum-on-slavery/>



- **Philadelphia**
 - <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/underground-railroad/>
- **The Detroit/Windsor Border**
 - <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/underground-railroad>
 - <https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/Culture/Documents/Underground%20Railroad.pdf>

Section 4.

Historical People

NORTH was inspired by the lives and experiences of real people and places. Here's the list.

PEOPLE

Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman is best remembered as one of America's most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad. Born into slavery in early 1822 in Dorchester County, Maryland. Tubman gained international acclaim during her lifetime as an Underground Railroad agent, abolitionist, Civil War spy and nurse, suffragist, and humanitarian. Disabled by a near fatal head injury while enslaved, Tubman rose above horrific childhood adversity to emerge with a will of steel. Owing her success to unique survival techniques honed in the forests, fields and marshes of Maryland's Eastern Shore, Tubman transcended victimization to achieve personal and physical freedom from her oppressors.

"I was the conductor of 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. "

-Harriet Tubman, 1896

[Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/harriet-tubman-ugrr-nhp/)



William Still

William Still is best known for his self-published book *The Underground Railroad* (1872) where he documented the stories of formerly enslaved Africans who gained their freedom by escaping bondage. Still's *The Underground Railroad* is the only first person account of Black activities on the Underground Railroad written and self-published by an African American. He was also the director of a complex network of abolitionists, sympathizers and safe houses that stretched from Philadelphia to what is now Southern Ontario. He has been called the "Father of the Underground Railroad."

<http://stillfamily.library.temple.edu/stillfamily/exhibits/show/william-still>

[PBS documentary on William Still http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/shows/list/underground-railroad/film/watch-film-and-bonus-features/](http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/shows/list/underground-railroad/film/watch-film-and-bonus-features/)



Henrietta Duterte

Henrietta Duterte was born to an affluent, free black family and raised in Philadelphia. She was a funeral home owner, philanthropist, and abolitionist and was the first American woman to own a mortuary. Her mortuary also served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Henrietta would hide freedom seekers in her coffins or disguised them as part of funeral processions.

<https://www.historicamerica.org/journal/2021/4/8/the-work-and-activism-of-henrietta-s-bowers-duterte>

<https://damnjoan.com/henrietta>

Maroons

The term 'Maroon' refers to enslaved people who ran away from slave owners and remained in the south to join or establish independent, hidden settlements. Maroons utilized the area's topography to evade capture.

<https://neworleanshistorical.org/items/show/1371?tour=73&index=6>

<https://www.whitneyplantation.org/history/slavery-in-louisiana/resistance/>

<https://www.wwno.org/podcast/tripod-new-orleans-at-300/2015-12-10/more-than-a-runaway-maroons-in-louisiana>

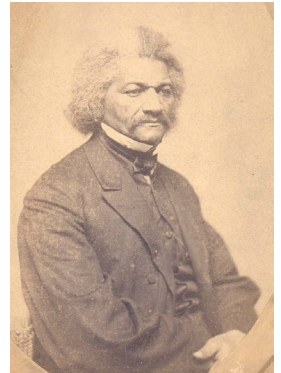
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Section 4.

Historical People

Frederick Douglass

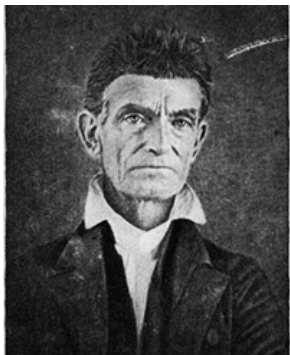
Frederick Douglass was an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. After escaping from slavery in Maryland, he became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York, becoming famous for his oratory and incisive antislavery writings. Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in February 1818. He had a difficult family life. He barely knew his mother, who lived on a different plantation and died when he was a young child. Aided by a disguise and job skills he had learned while forced to work in Baltimore's shipyards, Douglass posed as a sailor when he grabbed a train in Baltimore that was headed to Philadelphia.



"My free life began on the third of September, 1838. On the morning of the fourth of that month, after an anxious and most perilous but safe journey, I found myself in the big city of New York, a *free man* - one more added to the mighty throng which, like the confused waves of the troubled sea, surged to and fro between the lofty walls of Broadway,"
–Frederick Douglass

<https://www.nps.gov/frdo/learn/historyculture/frederickdouglass.htm>

<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/blog/remembering-frederick-douglass-escape-from-slavery#:~:text=Frederick%20Douglass%20escaped%20from%20slavery,that%20was%20headed%20to%20Philadelphia.>



John Brown

John Brown was an American abolitionist leader. He dedicated his "life to the destruction of slavery," arriving in the Kansas Territory with other members of his family in 1855. It was here he came to the nation's attention as a leading figure in the free-state struggle, "Bleeding Kansas," engaging in armed struggles against slavery that not only foreshadowed the violence at Harpers Ferry, but the violence that would ultimately culminate in the Civil War. John Brown led one group of freedom seekers to freedom in Canada in 1859. Among them was Jane Barton Harper, Sam Harper and Jim Daniels and his family, as well as others. Brown and the group of 11 freedom seekers spent a number of Nights in the Grover Barn in Lawrence, KS before setting off north.

"I have only a short time to live, only one death to die, and I will die fighting for this cause. There will be no peace in this land until slavery is done for. "
– John Brown, Kansas Territory, 1856

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/an-inspiration-of-all-men.htm>

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/john-brown>

<https://www.explorelawrence.com/blog/post/encountering-john-brown-video-tour/>

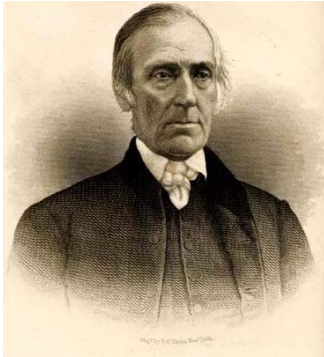
<https://guardiansofgroverbarn.com/>



continued

Section 4.

Historical People



Levi Coffin

Levi Coffin was an American Quaker, abolitionist, farmer, businessman and humanitarian. An active leader of the Underground Railroad in Indiana and Ohio, some unofficially called Coffin the "President of the Underground Railroad," estimating that three thousand fugitive slaves passed through his care.

<https://www.nps.gov/people/levi-coffin.htm>

<https://www.rbhayes.org/research/levi-coffin-the-president-of-the-underground-railroad/>

Other Quakers Involved in the Underground Railroad

- Thomas Garrett
- Isaac Hopper
- <https://www.history.com/news/8-key-contributors-to-the-underground-railroad>
- Hidden in plain sight: People who pretended to be slaves to escape slavery <https://www.pbs.org/black-culture/shows/list/underground-railroad/stories-freedom/peter-stills-story/>
- <https://pathways.thinkport.org/about/about11.cfm>

Ellen and William Craft

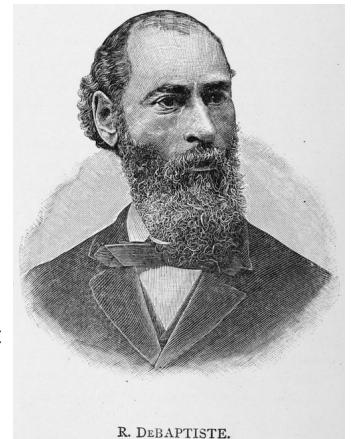
Ellen Craft and William Craft were American fugitives who were born and enslaved in Macon, Georgia. They escaped to the North in December 1848 by traveling by train and steamboat, arriving in Philadelphia on Christmas Day.

- <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-great-escape-from-slavery-of-ellen-and-william-craft-497960/>
- <https://www.history.com/news/slavery-escape-william-ellen-craft>

George DeBaptiste:

George DeBaptiste was an African American entrepreneur who made significant contributions to the [Underground Railroad](#) in Detroit, and Madison, Indiana. He was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, around 1815, to free black parents. After completing a rudimentary education, he became a barber. In his late teen years, he was hired as a valet by a wealthy Southerner and traveled the South. Thereafter, he married Lucinda Lee and the two moved to Madison, Indiana in 1838. Living on the northern border of the Ohio River, DeBaptiste worked as a barber while assisting as a conductor on the Underground Railroad, helping escaped slaves cross the river from Kentucky into free Indiana. He challenged an Indiana law that required free blacks to pay a \$500 bond for residence, winning the case but not overturning the law.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_DeBaptiste



Tham the Brave

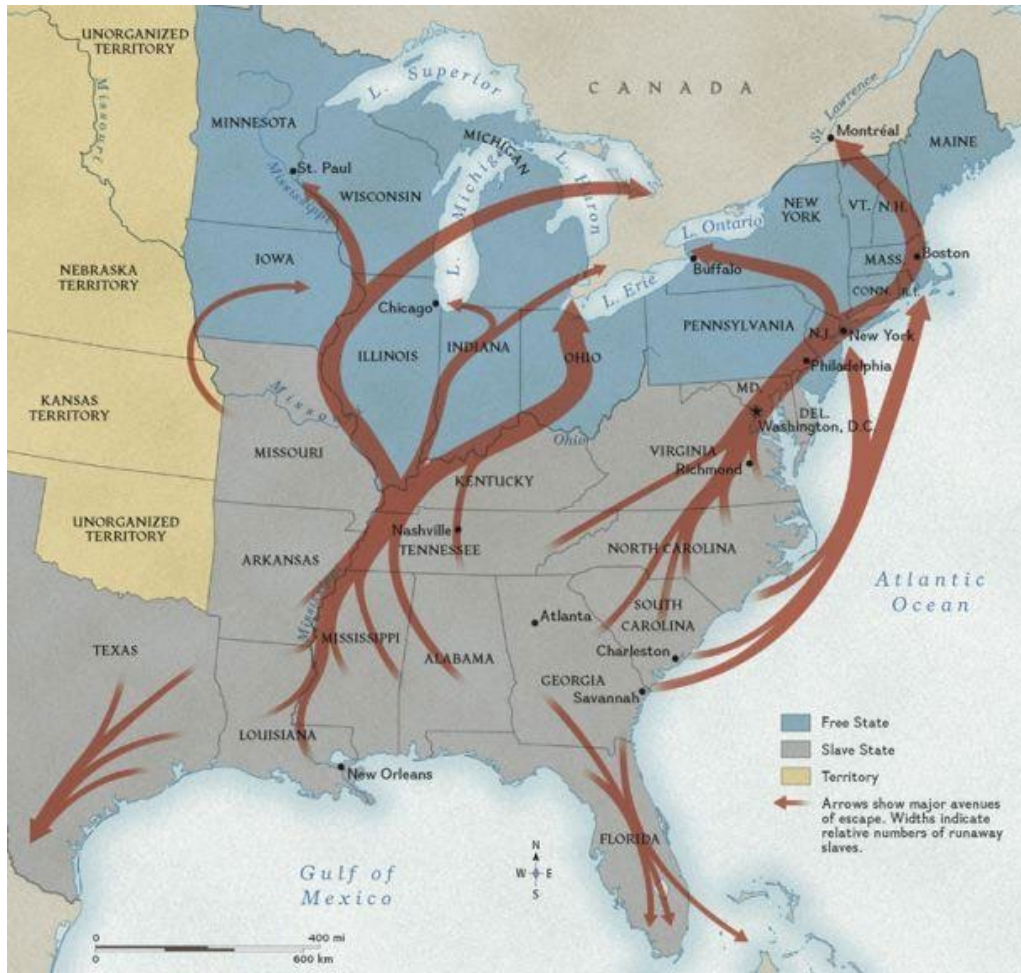
Ms. St. Armant's own ancestors were enslaved in Vacherie, Louisiana, and her research for this project led her down many paths where she discovered incredible connections to her own family and experiences. Many of those findings influenced the final story, including characters like "Tham The Brave", a real-life leader in a Maroons community who had been enslaved on the same plantation as St. Armant's family members in the 1780's. The set design and the song "Oh What These Trees Have Seen" come from her personal experience visiting the area where this plantation had been located. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maroons>

Section 5.

Lessons and Activities

Pre Performance Activity - Underground Railroad Locations

1. Using the map below, have the students imagine that they are freedom seekers. Have your students plot out a route to Canada – where they will be free citizens. 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.



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?

Section 5.

Lessons and Activities

Underground Railroad Locations Activities (continued)

2. There were four main routes that the freedom seeker could follow: North along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers to the northern United States and Canada; South to Florida and refuge with the Seminole Indians and to the Bahamas; West along the Gulf of Mexico and into Mexico; and East along the seaboard into Canada. The routes were often not in straight lines; they zigzagged in open spaces to mix their scent and throw off the bloodhounds.

Sometimes they would even double back on their routes to confuse the slave catchers.

Have the students work in groups, using the blank map below (**doc 5 in Drive**). After a brief overview of plotting routes, have the students draw their escape route. So that they differ somewhat, provide these routes.

Start in **Alabama**; go through Pennsylvania, stopping in Canada.

Miles: Car: Foot:

Start in **Virginia**; go through Pennsylvania, stopping in Canada.

Miles: Car: Foot:

Start in **Georgia**; go through Pennsylvania, stopping in Canada.

Miles: Car: Foot:

Start in **Louisiana**; Mississippi; go through Michigan, stopping in Canada.

Miles: Car: Foot:

Discuss approximately 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.

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

Section 5.

Lessons and Activities

Primary Sources

TOPIC: Underground Railroad/Primary Sources

LENGTH: One hour

Grade: 4th or 5th

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will compare and contrast two different historical perspectives of the same story.
2. Students will deduce what a primary source is.
3. Students will evaluate potential historical sources.

MATERIALS:

1. [His Promised Land: The Autobiography of John P. Parker, Former Slave and Conductor on the Underground Railroad.](#) Edited by Stuart Seely Sprague.
2. [Freedom River](#) by Doreen Rappaport.
3. Several different historical sources as deemed appropriate by the teacher.

PROCEDURE:

Have the students answer the following two questions in their notebooks:

- What is history?
- How do historians know they are accurately telling the story?

Discuss the students' answers to the above questions.

Let your students know that you are going to read to them the same story as told by two different people. Read aloud [Freedom River](#) by Doreen Rappaport and then read pages 105-117 from [His Promised Land](#).

Now, make a large Venn Diagram on the board. Compare and contrast the two different versions of the story. Discuss.

Ask students what story they think is more historically accurate and give reasons.

Discuss with students why historians use **primary sources** to recreate historical stories. Assist students to explore the meaning of a primary source.

ASSESSMENT:

Share with students several sources of historical information. Through class discussions, help them to evaluate which sources would be considered primary sources.

RESOURCES:

The Autobiography of John Parker – Duke University Special Collections Library
www.duke.edu/~njb2/history391/parker/parker.html

John P. Parker House – National Park Service, Underground Railroad.
<https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/oh2.htm>

Lessons and Activities

3rd–5th Grade Lesson

Compelling Question: What drove Harriet Tubman to do what she did?

Background: Harriet Tubman is best remembered as one of America’s most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad. Born into slavery in early 1822 in Dorchester County, Maryland. Tubman gained international acclaim during her lifetime as an Underground Railroad agent, abolitionist, Civil War spy and nurse, suffragist, and humanitarian. Disabled by a near fatal head injury while enslaved, Tubman rose above horrific childhood adversity to emerge with a will of steel. Owing her success to unique survival techniques honed in the forests, fields and marshes of Maryland’s Eastern Shore, Tubman transcended victimization to achieve personal and physical freedom from her oppressors.



Teacher Autonomy: This lesson was created by local school teachers and is organized so that teachers can make their own instructional decisions. This lesson offers ideas and resources in a student-centered approach.

Resources for Instruction: A timeline of Harriet Tubman trips, Harriet Tubman quotes and narratives, maps, images, videos, songs, poems drawings, comic sketch, runaway slave narratives, primary and secondary informational text, read aloud from books, descriptive essay, and access to WGN America’s Underground (02.43).

Technology Integration: Do you have access to in-class technology like Internet connection and mobile devices? Consider integrating additional video clips, webpages, E-books, and much more!

Success Criteria:

- Question clearly answered
- Multiple pieces of evidence to support conclusion
- Clear explanation of Harriet Tubman’s historical impact

Instructions

1. Introduce students to lesson by sharing three resources:
 - a) Image of Harriet Tubman
 - b) Read Aloud – A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman by David A. Adler illustrated by Samuel Byrd
 - c) Video Clip – movie “Harriett” (2:41) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqoEs4cG6Uw>
2. Quick Share to students of all available resources from Resources for Instruction.
3. Explain purpose and task – Students must determine what drove Harriet Tubman what she did using evidence to support their assertion. Their task is to take a “deep dive” in the many primary and secondary sources to clearly answer this question by using multiple pieces of evidence by showing her historical impact.
4. Go over Success Criteria
5. Go over worktime (groups, pairs, individual)
6. Do not forget to check-in with students based on the time period allowed for student work.
7. Ideas for Sharing – Gallery Walk with feedback, conference with students, display in a location that is visible by all students, visitors, or guest.

Lessons and Activities

Post-Performance Activity

MORE TO THINK ABOUT

The Underground Railroad occurred during one of the most challenging eras in the history of the United States of America. It is presented as a dramatic event involving freedom seekers migrating toward the northern United States into Canada. While the experiences of both freedom seekers and members of the Underground Railroad are noted – the impact of the Underground Railroad beyond the Emancipation Proclamation are seldom presented.

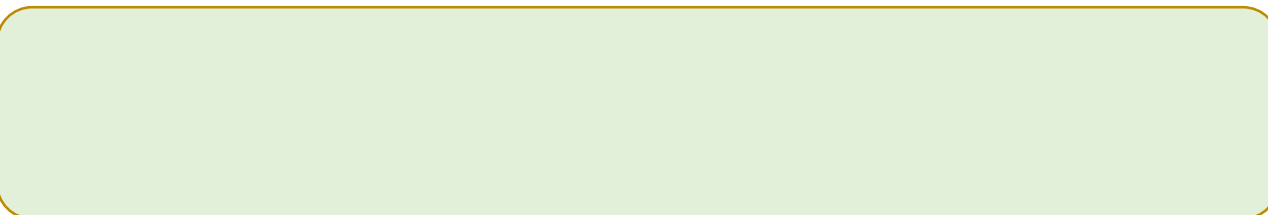
The Emancipation Proclamation is the proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862, that freed the people held as slaves in those territories still in rebellion against the Union from January 1, 1863 forward.

There are several reasons why the Underground Railroad was important and should be studied.

- It was one of the most multicultural collaborative events and protests in United States history as ordinary men and women of many races, religions, and beliefs worked together for social justice.
- It is a demonstration of how African Americans could organize on their own, dispelling the myth that they did not resist enslavement.
- It provided an opportunity for sympathetic Americans to assist in the abolition of slavery.
- It demonstrates the creativity and innovation of communication systems and planned escapes.

One question your students may ask is, **“Why do we need to study the Underground Railroad today? What does it have to do with anything today?”**

OTHER HISTORICAL EVENTS TO THINK ABOUT: (example – WW II)



Being able to see the Underground Railroad through a more holistic lens leads to a better understanding of not only why this event is so historically significant, but how it continues to be significant in modern times. Have students think about some ways individuals and groups worked across the racial divide for greater good

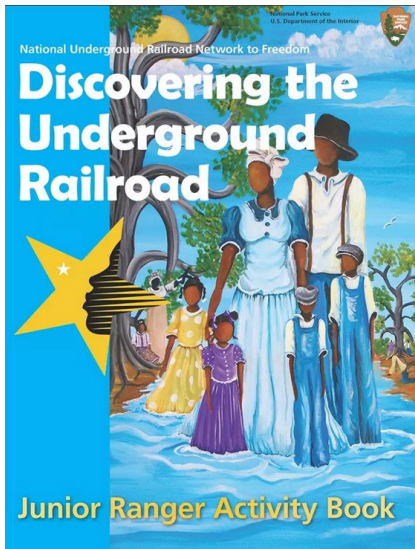
Section 6.

Resource

NPS Kid's Guide

National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom kids guide is an excellent resource.

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/undergroundrailroad/kids-and-education.htm>



Discover numerous, excellent, resources for curriculum based experiences, lesson plans and primary materials about the Underground Railroad.

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/undergroundrailroad/what-is-the-underground-railroad.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M2FAEM3blQ>

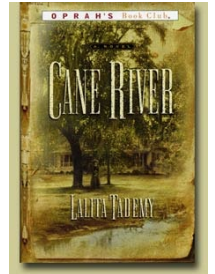
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U109jwM9F98>

Books That Inspired the Show

Adults

[Cane River by Lalita Tademy](#) | lalityademy.com/caneriver

Beginning with her great-great-great-great grandmother, a slave owned by a Creole family, Lalita Tademy chronicles four generations of strong, determined black women as they battle injustice to unite their family and forge success on their own terms. They are women whose lives begin in slavery, who weather the Civil War, and who grapple with contradictions of emancipation, Jim Crow, and the pre-Civil Rights South. As she peels back layers of racial and cultural attitudes, Tademy paints a remarkable picture of rural Louisiana and the resilient spirit of one unforgettable family.

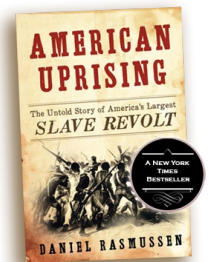


There is Elisabeth, who bears both a proud legacy and the yoke of bondage... her youngest daughter, Suzette, who is the first to discover the promise-and heartbreak-of freedom... Suzette's strong-willed daughter Philomene, who uses a determination born of tragedy to reunite her family and gain unheard-of economic independence... and Emily, Philomene's spirited daughter, who fights to secure her children's just due and preserve their dignity and future.

Meticulously researched and beautifully written, *Cane River* presents a slice of American history never before seen in such piercing and personal detail.

[American Uprising by Daniel Rasmussen](#) | danrasmussen.net

In January 1811, a group of around 500 enslaved men, dressed in military uniforms and armed with guns, cane knives, and axes, rose up from the slave plantations around New Orleans and set out to conquer the city. They decided that they would die before they would work another day of back—breaking labor in the hot Louisiana sun. Ethnically diverse, politically astute, and highly organized, this slave army challenged not only the economic system of plantation agriculture but also American expansion. Their march represented the largest act of armed resistance against slavery in the history of the United States—and one of the defining moments in the history of New Orleans and the nation.



American Uprising is the riveting and long—neglected story of this elaborate plot, the rebel army's dramatic march on the city and its shocking conclusion. No North American slave revolt—not Gabriel Prosser, not Denmark Vesey, not Nat Turner—has rivaled the scale of this rebellion either in terms of the number of the slaves involved or in terms of the number who were killed. Over 100 slaves were slaughtered by federal troops and French planters, who then sought to write the event out of history and prevent the spread of the slaves' revolutionary philosophy. With the Haitian Revolution a recent memory and the War of 1812 looming on the horizon, the revolt had epic consequences for America. Through groundbreaking original research, Daniel Rasmussen offers a window into the young expansionist country, illuminating the early history of New Orleans and providing new insight into the path to the Civil War, and the slave revolutionaries who fought and died while standing up against injustice. This book represents a significant contribution to African American history and the struggle for civil rights in this country.

[The Underground Railroad: Authentic Narratives and First-Hand Accounts by William Still](#) | en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Underground_Railroad (book)

The *Underground Railroad Records* is an 1872 book by William Still, who is known as the Father of the Underground Railroad. It is subtitled *A record of facts, authentic narratives, letters, &c., narrating the hardships, hair-breadth escapes and death struggles of the slaves in their efforts for freedom, as related by themselves and others, or witnessed by the author; together with sketches of some of the largest stockholders, and most liberal aiders and advisers, of the road.*

The book chronicles the stories and methods of some 649 slaves who escaped to freedom via the Underground Railroad. Still[1] assembled his carefully compiled and detailed documentation about those that he had helped escape into the pages of *The Underground Railroad Records*.

Section 7.

Books That Inspired the Show

Adults (continued)

[Gateway to Freedom by Eric Foner | www.norton.com/books/gateway-to-freedom](http://www.norton.com/books/gateway-to-freedom)

More than any other scholar, Eric Foner has influenced our understanding of America's history. Now, making brilliant use of extraordinary evidence, the Pulitzer Prize–winning historian once again reconfigures the national saga of American slavery and freedom.

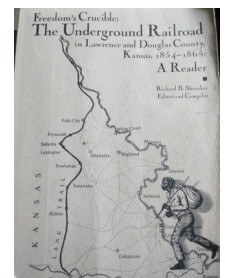
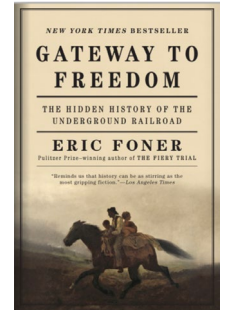
A deeply entrenched institution, slavery lived on legally and commercially even in the northern states that had abolished it after the American Revolution. Slaves could be found in the streets of New York well after abolition, traveling with owners doing business with the city's major banks, merchants, and manufacturers. New York was also home to the North's largest free black community, making it a magnet for fugitive slaves seeking refuge. Slave catchers and gangs of kidnappers roamed the city, seizing free blacks, often children, and sending them south to slavery.

To protect fugitives and fight kidnappings, the city's free blacks worked with white abolitionists to organize the New York Vigilance Committee in 1835. In the 1840s vigilance committees proliferated throughout the North and began collaborating to dispatch fugitive slaves from the upper South, Washington, and Baltimore, through Philadelphia and New York, to Albany, Syracuse, and Canada. These networks of antislavery resistance, centered on New York City, became known as the underground railroad. Forced to operate in secrecy by hostile laws, courts, and politicians, the city's underground-railroad agents helped more than 3,000 fugitive slaves reach freedom between 1830 and 1860. Until now, their stories have remained largely unknown, their significance little understood.

Building on fresh evidence—including a detailed record of slave escapes secretly kept by Sydney Howard Gay, one of the key organizers in New York—Foner elevates the underground railroad from folklore to sweeping history. The story is inspiring—full of memorable characters making their first appearance on the historical stage—and significant—the controversy over fugitive slaves inflamed the sectional crisis of the 1850s. It eventually took a civil war to destroy American slavery, but here at last is the story of the courageous effort to fight slavery by "practical abolition," person by person, family by family.

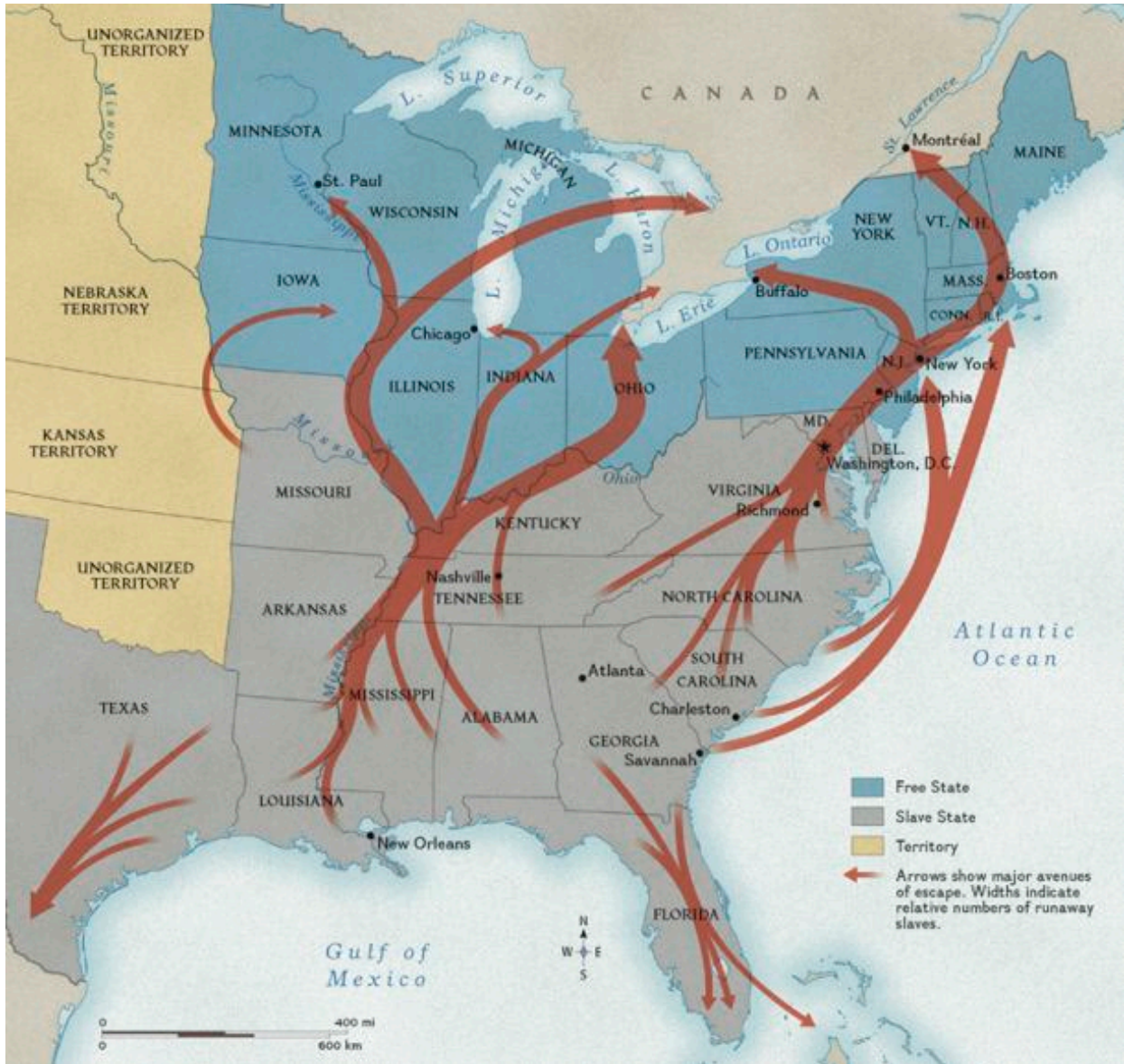
[Freedom's Crucible: The Underground Railroad in Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, 1854-1864 | kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/20901](http://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/20901)

This book has fifteen narratives, with extensive introduction and commentary on the Underground Railroad and its extension to Kansas Territory, especially to Lawrence and Douglas County. The narratives range from original documents to selections from periodicals and books. The Underground Railroad was a system of receiving, concealing, and forwarding fugitive slaves on their flight from bondage in the American South to freedom in the North and Canada. 190 pages, 41 photographs, maps, and illustrations. The editor and compiler, Dr. Richard B. Sheridan, was a professor at the University of Kansas for 37 years. He was the great-nephew of Levi Coffin, one of the key leaders of the Underground Railroad.



Section 8.

Routes to Freedom



Post-Show Activities

Classroom Activities

WRITE A REVIEW

Ask students to imagine that they are a critic for the school newspaper. They are going to write a review of *NORTH: The Musical* to inform others about what they experienced. They should describe the following with detail:

- What they saw
- What they heard
- How the performance made them feel
- What the performance reminded them of
- What their favorite part was and why

Remind students that they must paint a picture of the experience with their words so that others who did not see the performance can imagine it.

YOUR ARTISTIC IMPRESSION

Students should create their own artistic impression of the performance. Using shapes, lines, colors, patterns, and other artistic elements from their imagination, they should draw or paint a picture that expresses how the performance made them feel.

WRITE TO THE CAST

Once students have seen the performance and have had a chance to discuss what they saw and heard, write to the *NORTH: The Musical* cast.

Letters may be sent to:

NORTH: The Musical

410 Broadway St., Suite 150

Laguna Beach, CA 92618

WRITING PROMPTS

Choose your favorite character from the performance. Write about what you think happens to that character 5, 10 or 20 years later. You can write it in monologue form (from the character's point of view) if you choose. Use evidence from the show to support your ideas.

With a partner, create a short scene between two of the characters from the show 5, 10 or 20 years after the last time we see them.

Many of the characters in the show had difficult decisions to make. Pick one of the characters from the show and write about a different choice he or she could have made than the one you saw and how that would have changed the outcome for the character. The change can be positive or negative.

Write a monologue, scene, poem, or song from the point of view of the character.