

Harriet Tubman

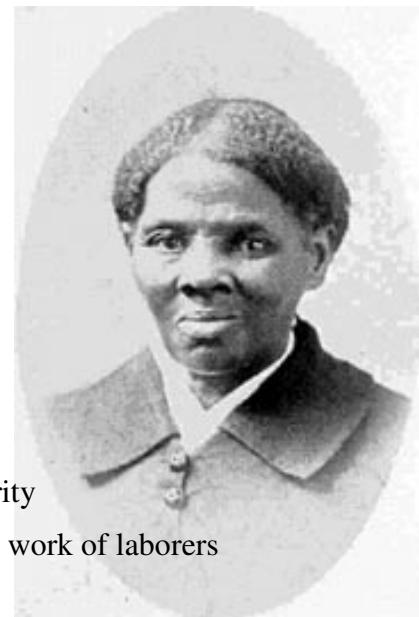
Pre-reading

Questions:

- Who was Harriet Tubman?
- What do you know about her?

Definitions:

- Apt – right for the situation
- Rebellious – disobeying rules or going against authority
- Overseer – one who keeps watch over and directs the work of laborers
- Seizure – a sudden loss of control of the body



Reading

17 They called her Moses. It was an apt nickname. In the years before the Civil War, Harriet
31 Tubman led more than 300 slaves, including her parents, to freedom along the Underground
32 Railroad.
32 She was born into slavery in Maryland. The year was 1820. She was one of eleven
48 children of Harriet and Benjamin Ross. At an early age she showed a rebellious spirit and dreamed
65 of freedom.
67 When she was fifteen, she blocked a doorway to **prevent** an overseer from catching a
82 fleeing slave. **Enraged**, the overseer picked up a heavy metal weight and threw it at the runaway.
98 Instead, he hit Harriet in the head. She was unconscious for days. For the rest of her life, she had a
119 rough scar on her forehead and suffered from seizures.
128 In 1844 she married John Tubman. She began to plan an escape to the North to freedom,
145 but John would have no part of it. She fled without him in 1850. She traveled by night through
164 swamps and streams so dogs could not track her scent.
174 She had heard of safe houses where runaway slaves would be fed and sheltered. They were
190 part of a movement called the Underground Railroad. With the help of this system, Harriet made it
205 to Philadelphia. A year later she made the first of many trips back to Maryland. During each trip,
224 she guided other slaves along the Underground Railroad.
232 During the Civil War, Harriet Tubman worked as a spy, a cook, and a nurse. She did
249 anything she could to help the Union cause. After the war she settled in New York. She founded a
268 home for sick, poor, and homeless blacks. She lived there until her death in 1913.
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Understanding

1. What was the Underground Railroad? _____

2. At what age did Harriet Tubman escape slavery? _____

3. What does the word **prevent** mean? _____

4. What was Harriet's nickname? Why? _____

5. Why was she said to have a "rebellious spirit"? _____

6. How many slaves did she lead to freedom? _____

7. What was the "Union cause"? _____

8. What does **enraged** mean? _____

Writing

Write about Harriet Tubman. What did you already know about her? What new things did you discover?
