

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Quote Accurately

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Underground Railroad: A Path to Freedom

The Underground Railroad wasn't an actual railroad, and it didn't run underground. It was a secret system of routes and safe houses used to help enslaved people escape to freedom in the 1800s.

"Conductors" were people who guided the escapees, often traveling at night and using hidden signs, like lanterns in windows or songs with coded messages. One famous conductor, **Harriet Tubman**, risked her life many times to lead others to freedom.

The journey was dangerous. Those who escaped often had little food, no maps, and traveled for hundreds of miles on foot. Many escaped to Northern states or to Canada, where slavery was illegal.

Helpers along the way included farmers, ministers, and shopkeepers. These people provided food, shelter, and directions—all while risking arrest or fines.

Because the Underground Railroad was illegal, almost everything was done in secret. Most conductors and safe houses used fake names, and records were rarely kept. Despite this, historians have pieced together its story using letters, oral histories, and old newspaper accounts.

The Underground Railroad didn't just help people escape—it became a powerful symbol of courage, justice, and hope.



Name: _____

The Underground Railroad: A Path to Freedom

1. What was the Underground Railroad?

- A. A secret system of routes and helpers that led enslaved people to freedom
- B. A railroad built by the government during the Civil War
- C. A path for trains carrying farm goods in the 1800s
- D. An underground tunnel beneath state lines

2. How did people know which homes were safe on the Underground Railroad?

- A. They were marked with lanterns, songs, or other coded signs
- B. They had green roofs and flags
- C. They had government symbols on the door
- D. They were listed on maps for travelers

3. Fill in the blank:

Harriet Tubman was one of the most famous _____ on the Underground Railroad.

4. What is one detail from the passage that shows how dangerous the journey was?

5. What can you infer about the kind of people who risked helping others escape, even when it was illegal?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: V

Lexile Level: 950L–1100L

Grade Level: 5th Grade, End of the Year

Genre: Informational – History

Introducing the Text

“This passage explains the history and importance of the Underground Railroad. As students read, encourage them to highlight facts that are stated clearly, as well as information that can be inferred through context. They’ll practice using direct quotes from the text to support their ideas.”

Vocabulary: conductor, enslaved, safe house, coded, oral history

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about how enslaved people escaped in the 1800s?
 2. Why might someone risk helping others if it meant facing jail or punishment?
 3. What do you think the word “conductor” might mean in this context?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. How does the author explain how the Underground Railroad worked?
 2. What clues help you understand how people communicated in secret?
 3. Why was keeping records dangerous for the people involved?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. What details from the text show that this was more than just a path—it was a movement?
 2. How can we infer the emotional strength of those who escaped and those who helped?
 3. Why do you think the Underground Railroad is still remembered today?
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Activity Idea

Have students create a historical storyboard showing one part of a journey on the Underground Railroad. Each panel should include a quote from the text and a short reflection that includes an inference or insight about the experience of that moment.

