

Paths to Freedom

Examine how people worked together on the Underground Railroad.

SS.5.AA.1.2 "Examine the Underground Railroad and how former slaves partnered with other free people and groups in assisting those escaping from slavery."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each person or group that assisted people escaping slavery. Circle the words that tell how that person or group helped, so you can see how partnerships made escape possible.

A Secret Network

- ① The Underground Railroad was not a real railroad. It was a secret network of people, safe places, and travel plans that helped enslaved people seek freedom. Escaping was dangerous because enslavers and law officers could capture fugitives. Many travelers moved at night, rested in hidden places, and followed directions from trusted helpers. Their goal was to reach free states, Canada, or another safer place.
- ② Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in Maryland and later returned to guide other people to freedom. As a conductor, she worked with people who offered shelter, food, money, information, or transportation. Free Black families and communities often gave vital help. Some white abolitionists and Quakers also opened homes or raised money. Each helper took risks, since helping fugitives could bring punishment.
- ③ Formerly enslaved people also shared knowledge from their own escapes. Frederick Douglass spoke and wrote against slavery, and he helped people seeking freedom. In northern cities, vigilance committees, including Black-led groups, collected funds, found temporary shelter, and warned travelers about danger. These partnerships show that the Underground Railroad depended on many people with different skills, resources, and experiences.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did Harriet Tubman do after she escaped from slavery, and why was this work dangerous?

2 Name two types of free people or groups that helped. Give one kind of help they provided.

3 How did vigilance committees assist people seeking freedom?

4 How could the knowledge of a formerly enslaved person strengthen the Underground Railroad?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Create a historically realistic three-sentence partnership plan. Describe how a formerly enslaved conductor and one free person or group could each help a traveler seeking freedom, and explain how their teamwork could help the traveler.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each person or group that assisted people escaping slavery. Circle the words that tell how that person or group helped, so you can see how partnerships made escape possible. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Harriet Tubman do after she escaped from slavery, and why was this work dangerous?	She returned to guide other people to freedom. It was dangerous because helpers could be punished and fugitives could be captured.
2	Name two types of free people or groups that helped. Give one kind of help they provided.	Answers may name free Black families and communities, white abolitionists, Quakers, or vigilance committees. They provided shelter, food, money, information, transportation, or warnings.
3	How did vigilance committees assist people seeking freedom?	They collected funds, found temporary shelter, and warned travelers about danger.
4	How could the knowledge of a formerly enslaved person strengthen the Underground Railroad?	A formerly enslaved person could share knowledge gained during an escape, such as how to make a cautious travel plan or find trusted help.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A formerly enslaved conductor could use knowledge from a past escape to choose a cautious travel plan. A free Black community member could offer food and a safe place to rest. Together, they could help a traveler move toward a safer place while keeping the plan secret.

Accept historically plausible plans that include a formerly enslaved helper, a free person or group, a specific contribution from each, and a clear explanation of teamwork. Accept equivalent assistance named in the passage or reasonable related actions, such as sharing directions or providing transportation.