Paths and Pages

How escape networks and a novel challenged slavery

8.C.10.3.B "Describe the rise of the Underground Railroad, including the efforts of Harriet Tubman and the impact of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin on the abolitionist movement."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline why the escape network grew, circle actions taken by Harriet Tubman or Harriet Beecher Stowe, and number two ways their efforts strengthened opposition to slavery.

Two Ways to Challenge Slavery

1. The Underground Railroad was not a train or a single route. It was a changing network of secret paths, shelters, and people who helped freedom seekers travel. Enslaved people planned and risked their own escapes, while free Black communities and other allies offered food, directions, or hiding places. As abolitionism grew during the decades before the Civil War, more people joined these efforts. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 increased the danger of capture, even in free states, so some travelers continued to Canada.

2. Harriet Tubman escaped slavery in Maryland in 1849, but she returned to the South to guide others out. She led small groups through dangerous territory, often traveling at night and depending on trusted helpers. Tubman made about 13 rescue trips and helped about 70 enslaved people reach freedom. Her knowledge, courage, and careful planning made the network work in places where capture could mean severe punishment. Stories of her rescues also showed abolitionists that direct action, not only speeches and petitions, could challenge slavery.

3. While Tubman helped people escape, writer Harriet Beecher Stowe fought slavery through a book. Her 1852 novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, described the cruelty of slavery through the lives of fictional characters. Readers across the North discussed its scenes, and many were moved to oppose slavery more strongly. The book sold widely and helped bring new supporters to the abolitionist movement, though some Black critics challenged its portrayal of Black people. It helped make slavery a harder issue for many readers to ignore.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What helped the Underground Railroad grow, and how did the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 affect some travelers?

2. How did Tubman's actions make the Underground Railroad work for people escaping slavery?

3. How did *Uncle Tom's Cabin* affect the abolitionist movement?

4. How did Tubman and Stowe challenge slavery in different ways?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence museum label correcting the claims that the Underground Railroad was a train and that abolitionists only gave speeches. Explain why the network grew, what Tubman did, and how Stowe's book affected abolitionism, with at least one cause-and-effect link.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.10.3.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline why the escape network grew, circle actions taken by Harriet Tubman or Harriet Beecher Stowe, and number two ways their efforts strengthened opposition to slavery. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What helped the Underground Railroad grow, and how did the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 affect some travelers?	**As abolitionism grew, more people joined the escape network. The 1850 law increased the danger of capture even in free states, so some travelers continued to Canada.**
2	How did Tubman's actions make the Underground Railroad work for people escaping slavery?	**She returned to the South, guided small groups through dangerous territory, and relied on trusted helpers.**
3	How did *Uncle Tom's Cabin* affect the abolitionist movement?	**Its portrayal of slavery reached many readers, moved some to oppose slavery more strongly, and helped bring new supporters to abolitionism.**
4	How did Tubman and Stowe challenge slavery in different ways?	**Tubman directly helped enslaved people escape. Stowe wrote a novel that influenced readers and drew support for abolition.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Underground Railroad was a secret network of people and shelters, not a train. As opposition to slavery spread, more helpers joined the network to support people seeking freedom. Harriet Tubman used that network when she returned to the South and guided groups out of slavery. Harriet Beecher Stowe challenged slavery in a different way by writing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Because the novel reached many readers, it helped bring more people into the abolitionist movement.

Accept other accurate descriptions of how the network grew and how each woman's work challenged slavery. The museum label should be five sentences and include a clear cause-and-effect link.