

History

The Underground Railroad

Have you heard or read about the Underground Railroad? You might know that a railroad is a train track. Railroads can help us get from place to place.

A lot of people used the Underground Railroad to move from the United States to Canada. In this module you are going to learn about the Underground Railroad. It played a very important part in the history of the United States and Canada. Canada was the destination that many people hoped to get to. Many books have been written about the Underground Railroad and the people who worked on the Underground Railroad.

Here is a list of activities you will work on:

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening

KWL CHART

Let's start by completing the KWL chart below. Think about what you know about the Underground Railroad or what you think you know. It's ok if you have never heard of it and you do not know anything. Then think about what you want to know about the Underground Railroad.

K What I know about the Underground Railroad	W What I want to know about the Underground Railroad	L What I learned about the Underground Railroad

Reading Activity

Many people have written stories about the Underground Railroad. It was not really a railroad with train tracks going underground. It was a series of people who helped African slaves escape from slavery in the United States.

Slaves are owned by another person and are forced to obey them. They do not get paid and they do not have freedom. In the 1800s, the Underground Railroad helped slaves to escape to freedom. The Underground Railroad was a group of people (helpers) who worked together to help enslaved Africans run away from slave states to get to free states and to Canada.

The helpers on the Underground Railroad used their own special words. For example, people who guided the slaves from one place to the next were called **conductors**. The places where runaway slaves could find food or could sleep during the night were called **stations** or **safe houses**. The people who hid enslaved Africans in their homes, in churches, or in their barns were called **station masters**.

Those who were running away from slavery had to make long and dangerous journeys to get to freedom. They had to be careful not to get caught trying to escape. They had to rely on help from other people along the way, especially in places they did not know.

People like Reverend Josiah Henson played a very important role helping slaves in the southern United States to come to the northern states where they could be free. The Underground Railroad did not stop in the northern states of the USA. It went even farther north to Canada. Many people moved from the United States to Canada using the Underground Railroad. Many of those running away wanted to get to Canada.

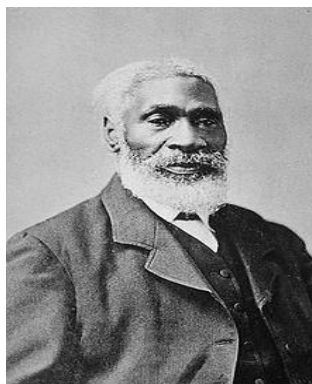
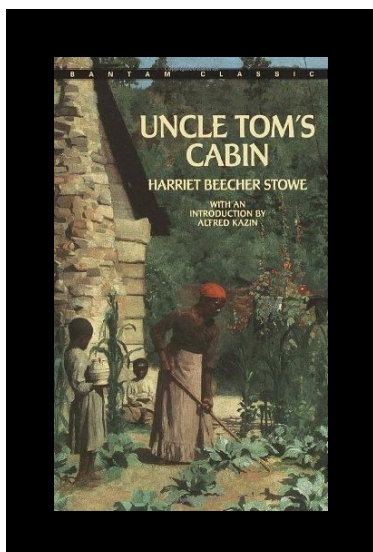


Figure 1: Josiah Henson. Wikipedia. Retrieved 16 Dec 2017 from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah_Henson

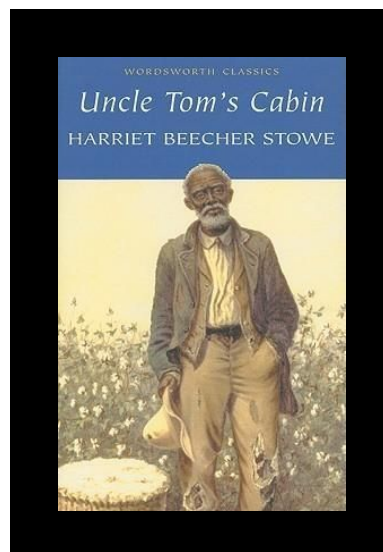
Reverend Josiah Henson played a very important role in the Underground Railroad in Canada.

Josiah Henson was born in the United States, and he worked there as an enslaved African for 41 years. He managed to escape to Canada in 1830 using the Underground Railroad. When he got to Canada, he built a settlement and a school for other slaves who had run away and come to Canada. Reverend Josiah Henson wrote an autobiography, a book about his life, in 1849. Another famous book that uses some information about his life, called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Today you can visit Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site in Dresden, Ontario.

Here are some book cover images of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. See if you can find these in your local library.



<http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51iF2FQ6KYL.jpg>



<http://d.gr-assets.com/books/1348092796/46787.jpg>

Listening Activity

Watch a video about the Underground Railway. The video is of Henry Cole reading his picture book called "Unspoken: A story from the Underground Railroad". On the internet you can search for "Henry Cole and Unspoken" to find the video. Or you can follow this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voL_dToHjUU

Question:

What happened in the story, "Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad"?

KWL Chart

What have you learned about the Underground Railroad? Complete the last column of the KWL chart on page 2.

References

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman
2. <http://www.mapsofworld.com/metro-maps/underground-railroad-facts.html>
3. <http://katishistoricalwebpage.weebly.com/john-fairfield.html>
4. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=F000006>
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Douglass
6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah_Henson

7. <http://www.biography.com/people/harriet-tubman-9511430>
8. <http://www.biography.com/people/frederick-douglass-9278324>