

Women of Courage: Sojourner Truth & Harriet Tubman

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Grade Level: 4 (could be done in 3-5 with adaptations)

National Standards:

Culture
People, Places, and Environments
Power, Authority, and Governance

PA Standards:

8.3.4.B: Locate historical documents, artifacts, and places critical to United States history.

8.3.4.C: Explain how continuity and change in U.S. history have influenced personal development and identity.

8.3.4.D: Distinguish between conflict and cooperation among groups and organization that impacted the history and development of the United States.

Overview:

This lesson will be part of a larger unit on slavery in the United States. This lesson focuses specifically on comparing and contrasting the lives and experiences of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman.

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify significant experiences in the lives of Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman.

Students will be able to compare and contrast the lives and experiences of the two women.

Students will be able to communicate their feelings and thoughts about the courage and bravery that these two women showed.

Time Required:

3 hours; 1 for each segment of the lesson

Instructional Materials & Resources:

Please see Appendix I (Vocabulary List)

Please see Appendix II (Book Backdrop)

Please see Appendix III (Sojourner Truth Timeline)

Please see Appendix IV (Harriet Tubman Timeline)

Lesson Procedure:

Part I: Introduction

The teacher will provide the students with a list of relevant vocabulary words which they will encounter during the lesson. The teacher will guide the children to define the words as a class, based on the students' prior knowledge and supplementary information provided by the teacher. (Appendix I)

Part II (A): Sojourner Truth

The teacher will show the painting of Sojourner Truth and Abraham Lincoln to the entire class and ask the students to take a minute or so to examine the painting.

The teacher will ask each student to jot down answers to the following prompts in their notebooks:

Who are the man and woman in this painting?

Why do you think they were painted together?

The teacher will then ask all of the students to get out of their seats to conduct a Line Up response activity.

The students will be instructed to stand in two parallel lines of equal length, facing each other. The teacher will direct the students to discuss the first prompt with each other.

The teacher will then ask only one line to shift down two spaces so that everyone is facing a new person. The teacher will then direct the students to discuss the second prompt. As the students are interacting, the teacher will walk around and listen to the various comments to assess levels of understanding.

The class will return to their seats and the teacher will facilitate a class discussion surrounding the two prompts. He or she will explain that it is a painting of a former slave named Sojourner Truth and President Abraham Lincoln. It was painted after the meeting, so the artist did not actually see their meeting first-hand. During this discussion, the teacher will show the photograph of Sojourner Truth to the entire class.

The teacher will conduct a read-aloud of the book, *Only Passing Through: The Story of Sojourner Truth*. The teacher will be sure to discuss the additional facts about Sojourner Truth's life which are included at the end of the book.

After reading the book, the teacher will play the audio of *There Is a Balm In Gilead*, sung by Deborah Liv Johnson and explain to the students that Sojourner Truth would have likely sung African American spirituals much like this one.

The teacher will show the image of the Sojourner Truth Lecture Poster to the entire class and point out that this was used to advertise her speeches and raise awareness about the anti-slavery movement.

As a concluding activity to this part of the lesson, the teacher will ask the students to create a 3-2-1 exit slip, indicating three things they learned during this lesson, two things they would like to learn more about, and one question they have about Sojourner Truth that

wasn't answered during the lesson. The teacher will collect these as an informal assessment.

Part II (B): Harriet Tubman

The teacher will conduct a read-aloud of the book, *Harriet Tubman: Hero of the Underground Railroad*. The teacher will be sure to discuss the additional facts about Harriet Tubman's life which are included at the end of the book.

The teacher will ask each student to conduct a Chalkboard Splash about one WOW moment they had while listening to the book.

Students will take several minutes to jot down their thoughts.

They will then go to various areas of the board and write their thoughts large enough for others to read them.

Once everyone is done writing, the teacher will instruct the students to walk around and read everyone else's posts. While reading them, they will be asked to take notes on similarities, differences and surprises that they notice in reading each other's WOW moments.

The class will then return to their seats and the teacher will facilitate a class discussion about their WOW moments and the similarities, differences and surprises they saw in their peers' responses.

The teacher will show the photograph of Harriet Tubman to the class so they can see her image since the book was illustrated.

The teacher will provide copies of the *TIME* for Kids nonfiction book, *Harriet Tubman: A Woman of Courage*, to small groups of students for them to examine and explore. As the groups review the book, they will be asked to jot down relevant words, ideas, concepts that they gain from their exploration. Each group will then visit www.wordle.net to create a word cloud. They will print their word clouds and turn them in to the teacher as an informal assessment.

Part III: Compare and Contrast

The teacher will play several minutes of the audio recording of *Interview with Mrs. Laura Smalley, Hempstead, Texas, 1941* part 1 of 5.

The teacher will ask students to consider the following prompts after they listen to the recording.

Who do you think this woman is?

When do you think this recording was created?

How did the woman's comments make you feel?

The teacher will ask for students to share their responses first with a partner and then with the entire class. The teacher will then explain the details of the recording and explain that this was a female slave who might have had similar experiences to Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman.

The teacher will show life timelines for Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman to the class (Appendix III). They will be asked to take several minutes to review the timelines

individually and make notes, as appropriate. The teacher will then ask them to draw a Venn Diagram on a separate piece of paper with Sojourner Truth over one circle and Harriet Tubman over the other. In the middle they will write similarities between the two women. In their individual circles they will write information which is unique to that woman. The teacher will encourage them to consider all of the information from both books, the primary sources and the timelines when they complete their diagrams.

The teacher will collect the Venn Diagrams as a formal assessment of the students' understanding of the women and the similarities and differences in their lives.

Extensions:

The teacher could use this lesson as a segue into a lesson or unit on the Women's Rights Movement since both women were not only advocates of abolishing slavery but also of gaining gender equality.

Assessment:

The teacher will use the 3-2-1 activity and the word cloud activity to conduct informal assessments of the students' understanding after Days One and Two. The teacher will use the Venn Diagrams as formal assessments of the students understanding and connections made between the two women. The teacher will also include questions about both women on a unit test on slavery, checking both their knowledge of facts about the women and also asking open-ending questions about their synthesis of the information about the women standing up for what they believe and being courageous enough to risk their lives to speak out against slavery and bring other slaves to safety.

Appendix I



Vocabulary List

abolitionists	master
bondage	mistress
compassionate	plantation
conductors	proclaim
eavesdropped	scythe
decreeing	silhouetting
dignified	sojourner
dread	torpedoes
grieving	Underground Railroad
lecture	vivid
liberty	whims

Appendix II

Book Backdrop

	<p>Title: Only Passing Through: The Story of Sojourner Truth Author: Anne Rockwell; Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie Grade Level(s): 3-5</p> <p>Topic/Theme: slavery in America; standing up for freedom Setting and Time Period: Various places in New York state in the mid- to late 1800's</p> <p>Summary: This book chronicles the life of Isabella Baumfree, who was born to two slave parents around 1797. She was sold and separated from her parents when she was about nine years old. She worked as a slave until she was around 30 years old. She was “bought” by an abolitionist who promptly freed her. She then changed her name to Sojourner Truth and traveled around the U.S. speaking out against the unjust treatment of slaves and women in our country. Key Vocabulary: eavesdropped, grieving, dread, decreeing, scythe, swelling, vivid, bondage, sojourner, abolitionists, lecture, compassionate, silhouetting, dignified, whims, proclaim, liberty</p>
	<p>Title: A. Lincoln showing Sojourner Truth the Bible presented by colored people of Baltimore, Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C., October 29, 1864 Creator(s): Painted by Franklin C. Courter Date Created/Published: 1893 Collection: Miscellaneous Items in High Demand URL: www.loc.gov/pictures/item/96522312/ Book Notes: Sojourner Truth met Abraham Lincoln and he showed her a Bible which had been presented to him by the colored people of Baltimore.</p>
	<p>Title: Sojourner Truth Other Title: I sell the shadow to support the substance Creator(s): Unknown Date Created/Published: 1864 Collection: Gladstone Collection of African American Photographs URL: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/98501244/ Book Notes: Sojourner Truth is the main character of the book.</p>
<p>Audio File</p>	<p>Title: There Is a Balm In Gilead, sung by Deborah Liv Johnson Creator(s): Unknown Date Created/Published: Unknown URL: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BN9JALQRMb0 Book Notes: Sojourner Truth likely sang African American spiritual songs such as this one. I would likely minimize the screen since the YouTube video just has random images so the children could focus on the music.</p>
	<p>This poster circulated to advertise Truth's lectures. Creator(s): Unknown Date Created/Published: The actual date and time were filled in for each event. URL: http://www.sojournertruth.org/ Photos/011.htm Book Notes: This poster was put up to advertise Sojourner Truth's lecture about her experiences as a slave.</p>

	<p>Title: Harriet Tubman: Hero of the Underground Railroad Author: Lori Mortensen, Illustrated by Frances Moore Grade Level(s): 3-5</p> <p>Topic/Theme: slavery in America; standing up for freedom; Underground Railroad Setting and Time Period: Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York, mid-1800's to mid-1900's Summary: This book chronicles the life of Harriet Tubman. It describes her escape from slavery using the Underground Railroad and her return trips to rescue many more slaves. It also tells of her involvement in the Civil War. Key Vocabulary: plantation, Underground Railroad, conductors, torpedoes, mistress, master</p>
	<p>Title: Harriet Tubman, full-length portrait, standing with hands on back of a chair Creator(s): <u>Lindsley, H. B.</u>, photographer Date Created/Published: between ca. 1860 and 1875 Collection: <u>Miscellaneous Items in High Demand</u> URL: www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003674596/ Book Notes: Harriet Tubman is the main subject of the book.</p>
<p>Audio File</p>	<p>Title: Interview with Mrs. Laura Smalley, Hempstead, Texas, 1941 part 1 of 5 Creator(s): Unknown Date Created/Published: 1941 Collection: <u>Voices from the Days of Slavery: Former Slaves Tell Their Stories</u> URL: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/afc:9999001.5496a Book Notes: As a female slave, Mrs. Smalley likely had similar experiences to Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman.</p>

Appendix III

Sojourner Truth Timeline - page 32

Rockwell, A. (2000). *Only Passing Through: The story of Sojourner Truth*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Harriet Tubman Timeline - page 22

Mortensen, L. (2007). *Harriet Tubman: Hero of the Underground Railroad*. Minneapolis, MN: Picture Window Books.