

Harriet Tubman, Part I

1
A

Note: Introducing the Read-Aloud may have activity options that exceed the time allocated for this part of the lesson. To remain within the time periods allocated for this portion of the lesson, you will need to make conscious choices about which activities to include based on the needs of your students.

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Do We Know?

10+ minutes

Reference Notes:

Students who participated in the CKLA program Grade 1 learned about the Declaration of Independence, the writing of the U.S. Constitution, and the practice of slavery from *A New Nation* domain.

Students have learned about steamboats, the Pony Express, and the transcontinental railroad from the *Westward Expansion* domain.

Remind students that they recently learned about westward expansion in the United States. Ask students what they remember about the *Westward Expansion* domain and what they remember about the history of the United States prior to the time period of this domain. Remind students that after the Lewis and Clark expedition, the United States continued to grow, and more and more people decided to move westward looking for open land and new opportunities. Remind students of the exciting innovations, or new ideas, they learned about, including the invention of steamboats, the operation of the Pony Express, and the building of the transcontinental railroad. Remind students that they also learned about the hardships westward expansion caused for both pioneers and Native Americans. You may wish to use the timeline created in the *Westward Expansion* domain introduction as a review.

Note: Students who participated in the Core Knowledge Language Arts program in Grade 1 should remember discussing the Declaration of Independence, the writing of the U.S. Constitution, and slavery from the *A New Nation: American Independence* domain. The words *liberty* and *justice* were also core vocabulary words within that domain.

Have students recite *The Pledge of Allegiance*, adding a focus on the meaning of the last part, “with liberty and justice for all.” Ask

students if they know what the words *liberty* and *justice* mean. Explain that *liberty* means freedom and *justice* means fairness. Remind students that when the colonists decided to fight for their freedom from Great Britain, they themselves were keeping freedom from a large number of enslaved African people. Slaves are people forced to do difficult work for no wages or pay, and they are not allowed to make their own decisions about where to live or what to do with their lives. Ask: “If a person is not allowed to decide what he or she can do in life, and is forced to work for no money, is he or she free?” (Pause for students’ responses.) Explain that many people realized that slavery was wrong, yet many of the colonies, especially in the South, forced many people into slavery.

Domain Introduction

5 minutes

Tell students that for the next few weeks, they will learn that people in different parts of the country strongly disagreed about slavery as the United States grew and spread westward. Slavery was allowed in some states but not in others. Having different parts of the United States disagree about whether or not slavery should be allowed eventually led to a war. Explain that this war was called the U.S. Civil War or the War Between the States. Explain that a civil war is a war between two different groups within the same country. Tell students that they will learn about important events and important people related to the U.S. Civil War.

Personal Connections

5 minutes

Tell students that today’s read-aloud is about a woman named Harriet Tubman, who was called Minty as a child. Explain that “Minty” was Harriet Tubman’s nickname as a child. Ask students if they know what a nickname is. Ask if any of them have nicknames, and have students share with the class—if they wish—what their nicknames are. Explain that in the read-aloud they are about to hear, they will hear the nickname Minty. You may wish to reinforce that Harriet Tubman is Minty by writing the following on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard so students have a visual reference: Harriet Tubman = Minty.



Slavery

← Show image 1A-3: Slaves at work

1. In today's read-aloud, you will hear about an awful and unfair practice called *slavery*.
2. Say *slavery* with me three times.
3. Slavery is the practice of forcing people to work without pay and denying them or not letting them have freedom to make decisions on their own.
4. Slavery is wrong. Enslaved people were not paid for their work and were not free to decide where they should live or work.
5. Look at the image and tell your partner about the kind of work you see the enslaved people doing. Were they paid for their work? Could they decide what kind of job they wanted to do?



Plantations

← Show image 1A-4: Plantation scene

1. In today's read-aloud you will learn that *plantations* relied on and used slavery.
2. Say the word *plantations* with me three times.
3. Plantations are large farms used to grow crops to sell. A plantation includes a "big house" and large fields for growing crops.
4. [Show Image Card 2 (Cotton Plant).] There were many plantations in the South that grew cotton.
[Show Image Cards 3 (Sugar Cane) and 4 (Tobacco Plant).] Plantations in the South also grew sugar and tobacco.
5. Where is the "big house" in this image? Where are the fields?
[If available, show additional images of plantations and have students identify the "big house" and the fields.]

Purpose for Listening

Explain that Harriet Tubman was alive before, during, and after the time of the Civil War. Tell students the title of today's read-aloud, "Harriet Tubman, Part I." Explain that there are two parts to Harriet Tubman's story; today they will hear the first part. Ask students to listen carefully about what Harriet Tubman's life was like as a child.



Harriet Tubman, Part I

← Show image 1A-1: Minty watching over baby¹

1 What is happening in the picture?

Minty’s eyelids were heavy. Her head bobbed up and down as she faded in and out of sleep. She pinched herself to try to stay awake, but the house was so quiet and calm. Even the tree frogs, crickets, and other creatures of the night had stopped chirping and croaking. It seemed all of Maryland was asleep at this late hour, except young Minty.²

2 What is the setting for this story?
[Point out Maryland on a U.S. map.]

At age six, Minty should have been asleep, too. Her body and mind cried out for sleep, yet she dared not doze off for fear she would not hear the baby crying. This baby was Minty’s responsibility. She watched over the baby day and night—rocked him to sleep, kept him warm in his blanket, and sang songs to keep him happy. Minty would do anything in her power to keep him happy, for she knew that if he cried she would be punished.

3 Do you think it was fair for the baby’s mother to get angry with Minty when her baby cried?

And so, each time the baby stirred in his crib—each time he whimpered or moaned—Minty’s heart raced. As soon as the baby cried out, even if he only cried for a moment, the baby’s mother would get very angry with Minty.³

4 The word *value* means usefulness or importance.

This was the awful, painful reality in which Minty lived, because Minty was an enslaved African person. Even at the tender age of six years old, she was forced to work for no pay all day long, every day. And Minty thought she would be enslaved her entire life until she died. This was the terrible truth of **slavery**: Minty and other enslaved Africans like her had no rights or freedom. Minty would be forced to do the hard work given to her from sunup to sundown, providing great **value** to the plantation owner, almost every day of her entire life.⁴ Very, very little of Minty’s time would ever be her own to do with as she wished. This is what life was like for millions of people in the United States of America when Minty was six. In fact, this is what life had been like for many people for a long time, long before Minty or her parents and grandparents were born.



← **Show image 1A-2: Minty's mother telling the story**

One night Minty asked her mother how and why she and her family had become enslaved.

“Well, your grandmother,” her mother told her, “she came over the ocean on a great big ship. She came from a place called Africa. Many Africans are here now, enslaved in this land they call the United States.”⁵

“Why did Grandmother and other Africans come here?” Minty asked.

“It was not their choice to come here from Africa,” her mother explained. “Africans were captured by men with guns and other weapons who wanted to bring them to America to work in slavery.⁶ They were put on these ships against their will, and then they were brought to this country and sent to places like **plantations**, farms, businesses, or households to work.⁷ That’s why our life is the way it is. We do as we are told, and we do our best to survive.” By this, Minty’s mother meant they worked hard to keep their families as safe and healthy as possible.⁸

5 [Have a student trace a path from Africa to the United States on a world map or globe.]

6 [Students may seek to understand how the Europeans were able to seize so many African people and enslave them. Be prepared to explain that the people who became enslaved did not have weapons powerful enough to fight back against the Europeans’ guns and cannons.]

7 Plantations are very large farms where crops are grown.

8 Slavery is a terrible thing that has been used by many different groups of people throughout history, going back thousands of years ago.



← **Show image 1A-3: Slaves at work**

Minty’s father and mother had nine children, including Minty. But, like most enslaved Africans, the family did not live or work together all in one home. Minty’s mother worked for a man named Edward Brodess. Minty’s father worked for a man named Edward Thompson, whose plantation was down the road from the Brodess home.

Three of Minty’s sisters were sent away to work for plantation owners in Georgia.⁹ Minty never saw any of them again. As her mother said, enslaved people did not have a choice or say in the matter. The plantation owners did whatever they had to do to make as much money as possible from their plantations and slave labor.¹⁰

Because families of enslaved Africans often could not live together or were separated, they depended on the community of

9 [Point to Georgia on a U.S. map, and discuss its location in relation to Maryland.]

10 Were slaves paid for their hard work? Since slaves were not paid for their work, plantation owners, small farmers, business owners, and others who used slaves made more money than they would have, had they paid others to do the work.

11 *Survival* is the condition of continuing to live, especially when conditions are very difficult.

the enslaved Africans on the plantation. Mothers and fathers would take care of children who were not their own. Enslaved Africans helped and supported each other as communities by looking out for each other and working together. In this way, they could be strong together, despite the fact that they were enslaved. Although life was hard for the enslaved people, this working together and helping each other contributed to their **survival** and made it better.¹¹

Where Minty lived, the enslaved Africans worked hard to perform many jobs that added value to the plantation. They took care of the horses and tended crops of tobacco, corn, and hay—plowing, planting, and harvesting. In the winter, they chopped wood, mended fences, and helped clear more land for farming. Many enslaved people were skilled at a trade—some tended to the farm animals and butchers preserved the meat. Weavers, spinners, and seamstresses were involved in the process of making clothing. Their skills were valued—skilled carpenters constructed and repaired buildings and made furniture, and blacksmiths used iron to make and mend important tools for the life and work of the plantation. Many lived in shacks with dirt floors, had one set of tattered clothes and no shoes, and didn't have enough to eat.

Most enslaved Africans worked out in the fields, performing the many difficult tasks involved in growing and harvesting the crops. They were known as field slaves, and they lived the hardest lives of all. They worked from early morning until late at night, often with no relief from the heat or rest from their hard labor. They always worked under the watchful eye of the overseers, people who kept watch over and directed the enslaved people. The enslaved people always worked under the threat of punishment.

Other enslaved Africans worked in what was known as the “big house,” the beautiful mansion belonging to the plantation owners. They did not have to work in the hot sun, they wore nicer clothes than the field slaves, and they sometimes had access to more food than the field slaves. In addition to daily cooking and

cleaning, house slaves helped make butter, wash the household laundry, and care for the plantation owner's young children. That was Minty's job, which was why she was watching the baby at night. Just like those who worked in the fields, enslaved Africans who worked in the house worked hard. But, also like the people who worked in the fields, they helped each other a lot and this made it less hard and less sad.



← **Show image 1A-4: Plantation scene**

Plantations, like the one where Minty and other enslaved Africans lived and worked, were common throughout Maryland and all of the states in the southern United States, or the South.¹²

The South had rich soil and endless farmland. Those who owned the land could get rich by growing and selling tobacco, cotton, and other crops. Running a large plantation required many workers; there were no tractors or other machines to help in those days. The enslaved Africans working on a plantation contributed valuable skills and labor to the success of the plantation. Without the enslaved Africans, the plantation could not be run. They did many important jobs of all kinds. Even so, rather than hiring workers and paying them, plantation owners, who were white, forced people who were black to work for free in a life of slavery.

As enslaved people, they were not given any **wages** for the work they did on the plantations.¹³ Millions of Africans were taken from their homes and shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to live a life in slavery, and the children of the enslaved Africans, children like Minty and her sisters and brothers, automatically became enslaved the very moment they were born. They would likely remain enslaved until they died.

← **Show image 1A-5: Minty's mother protecting her children**

As Minty's mother explained, enslaved people did not have the choice to be free people. Or did they? Early on, Minty began to wonder whether it was possible to resist, or fight back, as an

12 [Point to the area known as the South on a U.S. map.] What is a plantation?

13 *Wages* means the money earned for doing work. Were enslaved Africans given wages?



enslaved person. She wondered this because she had, in fact, seen her own mother resist the plantation owner's wishes. When Minty was young, Mr. Brodess arranged to send her brother, Moses, to a plantation belonging to another owner. Minty's mother had already seen three of her daughters sent far away to another plantation down south, and she was determined not to lose any more of her children.

When Mr. Brodess came to fetch Moses to send him away with the other plantation owner, Minty's mother stood in the doorway and promised, "I will not allow any more of my children to be taken away!" Something in her eyes must have scared Mr. Brodess that day, because he turned around and he never tried to send Moses or anyone else in Minty's family away again. This event gave Minty a shred of hope that one day she might be able to fight back and possibly win her freedom.¹⁴

14 Do you think Minty will eventually fight back and win her freedom?

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding students' responses using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Literal* What was Harriet Tubman's nickname as a child? (Minty) Minty was an enslaved person. What does that mean? (She did not have rights or freedom. She had to work for no money, and she would rarely be able to make decisions about her own life.)
2. *Literal* What important responsibility did Minty have as a young, enslaved African? (She watched over the mistress of the house's baby.)
3. *Inferential* What types of work did enslaved Africans do in the fields? (They plowed, planted, and harvested the crops.)

What kind of work did the enslaved Africans who worked at the “big house” do? (They cooked, cleaned, did laundry, made butter, and cared for the young children.) What other jobs did enslaved Africans perform on a plantation? (There were carpenters who constructed and repaired buildings and made furniture; blacksmiths who made and mended tools from iron; and weavers, spinners, and seamstresses who made clothing. They chopped wood, mended fences, cleared land for farming, tended the farm animals, and butchered and preserved the meat.)

4. *Inferential* What was life like for enslaved people? (harsh; They were often separated from their families; they weren’t paid wages for their hard work; many had minimal shelter, clothing, and food.)



← **Show image 1A-4: Plantation scene**

5. *Inferential* What do you see in this picture? (a plantation, lots of farmland, enslaved Africans) Why were slaves like Minty and her family important to plantation owners in the South? (Many workers were needed, and enslaved Africans did many types of important and difficult jobs that took a lot of skill. They were forced to work without being paid any wages.)



← **Show image 1A-5: Minty’s mother protecting her children**

6. *Inferential* What is happening in this image? (Minty’s mother is not letting Mr. Brodess take Moses away.) What did this event give Minty? (This event gave Minty a shred of hope that one day she might be able to fight back.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

7. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* How would you describe Minty’s life as a young, enslaved person? (harsh, had to work hard, no freedom, etc.) How was Minty’s life different from your life today? (Answers may vary.)

8. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [Students may have many questions about slavery, the life of enslaved people, or other related topics. Please allow time to address these questions, and emphasize that slavery was wrong then as it is wrong today. If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Responsibility

5 minutes

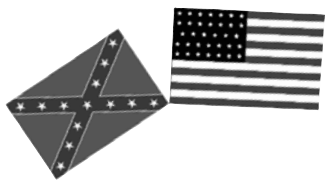
1. In the read-aloud you heard, “This baby was Minty’s *responsibility*.”
2. Say the word *responsibility* with me.
3. A responsibility is something or somebody you are expected to take care of.
4. Making her bed every morning is a responsibility that Janet has at home.
Making sure the classroom lights are turned off when the class goes out for recess is a responsibility that Janet has at school.
5. What is a responsibility you have at home? What is a responsibility you have at school? [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase students’ responses: “A responsibility I have at home/school is . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Making Choices* activity for follow-up. Directions: I am going to name some things. If what I name is your responsibility, say, “That is my responsibility.” If it is not your responsibility, say, “That is not my responsibility.”

1. getting your backpack ready for school
2. preparing your own breakfast
3. driving to school
4. making sure you finish your homework
5. grading your work
6. buying groceries



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



Harriet Tubman, Part I

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B

Note: Extensions may have activity options that exceed the time allocated for this part of the lesson. To remain within the time periods allocated for this portion of the lesson, you will need to make conscious choices about which activities to include based on the needs of your students.

Extensions

20 minutes

Slavery and Freedom T-Chart (Instructional Master 1B-1, optional)

15 minutes

- Create a T-Chart on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Label one side “Slavery” and the other side “Freedom.” Record students’ responses on the T-Chart. Tell students that you are going to write down what they say, but that they are not expected to be able to read all of what you write because they are still mastering the rules for decoding. Emphasize that you are writing what they say so that you don’t forget. Tell them that you will read the words to them. Once the chart has been completed, read it to the class.
- Ask students to think about what they learned from the read-aloud about slavery and the harsh lives the enslaved Africans led. Have students share what they learned about Minty’s life and the lives of other enslaved Africans. (Students’ responses should reflect an understanding that enslaved Africans were forced to work difficult jobs that often required a lot of skill; they were not paid for their work; they were not free to make their own decisions; families were often broken up into different households on different plantations; they helped each other so it made their lives less hard and less sad; etc.)
- Then, ask students to think of people who had freedom back then (e.g., plantation owners) and people who have freedom now. Use yourself, students, and students’ parents as examples. Ask: “Did I get to choose my job? How about your parents? Am I paid for my

work? What are some freedoms you enjoy now? What freedoms do you hope to enjoy as you get older?" Make sure you contrast what is written on the "Slavery" side of the T-Chart.

- ✈ Above and Beyond: For those students who are ready to do so, have them fill in their own charts using Instructional Master 1B-1.

A Picture Gallery of the U.S. Civil War: Minty's Life (Instructional Master 1B-2)

20 minutes

- Tell students that they will be writing about several images related to the U.S. Civil War to help them remember important people and information from this domain.



← Show image 1A-2: Minty's mother telling the story

- Tell students that they will write about Minty's life. [Review Flip Book images of Minty and the plantation. Have students use the information they heard in the read-aloud and the ideas shared in the Slavery and Freedom T-Chart.]
 - First, invite students to look carefully at the image. Ask them who they see; what they think Minty and her mother are talking about; how they think Minty and her mother are feeling.
 - Next, ask students to write about what they they think is happening in the image.
 - Then, students should think of an appropriate title for the image. Tell students that the title will tell others what they think the image is about.
 - Finally, students should share their writing with their partner or home-language peers.

Checking for Understanding

Say: "Asking questions is one way to make sure everyone knows what to do. Think of a question you can ask your partner about the directions I have just given you. For example, you could ask, 'What should I do first before I begin writing?' Turn to your partner and ask your own question now. I will call on several of you to share your questions with the class."

[Be sure that students understand the four-part instructions to this activity.]

Take-Home Material

Family Letter

Send home Instructional Masters 1B-3-5.