

**Lesson Plan -- *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

**Concept: Slavery - Past and Present**

**July 14-18, 2008 - Hannibal, Missouri**

**Developed by:** Traci Mosby, Tracy Marold, and Joanna O'Brien

**School District:** Lewis County C-1 Ewing, Missouri

**Suggested Grade Level:** Grades 3-5 (can be adapted for older grades)

**Time Frame for Lesson:** This is a unit that can be taught over the course of two to three weeks.

**Objective:** The students will gain a better understanding of slavery by researching and identifying four characteristics of slavery during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and 21<sup>st</sup> century including living conditions, social acceptance, jobs, and treatment.

**State Standards:**

Missouri – *Communication Arts* 1- speaking and writing

4- writing formally

6- participating in formal and informal presentations

-*Social Studies*

2- continuity and change

4- economic concepts

5- geographical study

**Assessment/Evaluation:** The students will write an expository paper describing slavery in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The students will create a PowerPoint presentation or a poster board display describing slavery in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Vocabulary:**

These are examples of words that students may be unfamiliar with and should be discussed as they are encountered:

Abolitionist, Ole Missus, slave trader, skift, big house and quarters

**Integrated Curriculum:**

The living conditions, treatment, jobs, and social acceptance of slavery, along with current world slavery issues will be examined. History, social studies, and geography will be integrated into this unit. Students will use a variety of computer programs for research and presentations, also integrating technology into this unit. Art is included through the creation of replica slave quarters and student freedom quilts.

**Background Information:** This unit was prepared with an emphasis on slavery. Lessons can be expanded or modified based on your needs. Students may have read about the Civil War, Underground Railroad, or slavery during Social Studies. Due to the nature of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, we have chosen to include both an unabridged version and a children's edited version. Students should have background with expository writing, PowerPoint, and using computers to research. Because images of slavery are so powerful, and because of the sensitive nature of this important concept, teachers are

encouraged to provide adequate and appropriate background knowledge to students. Visuals are especially effective, and thousands of images can be located using online resources, etc., but all should be selected and utilized with great care and careful discussion.

**Materials:**

- Copy of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* University of California Press (ISBN#978-0-520-22838-2) or Dover Children's Thrift Classics (ISBN# 0-486-403-49-1)
- Copy of *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson
- Construction paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Popsicle sticks
- Twine
- Dirt
- Twigs
- Graphic organizer sheets
- What Would You Do page
- Rubric and project description for multimedia presentation
- Self check-list for expository paper
- Slave quarters paper
- Freedom quilt paper
- Student expository writing page

**Technology Support:**

- <http://www.freetheslaves.net>
- <http://educ.queensu.ca/~fmc/may2004/Underground.html>
- <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/wpa/index.html>
- <http://www.unitedstreaming.com> (Slavery Video)

**Related Twain Quotes/Other Readings:**

“The skin of every human being contains a slave.”  
- Notebook, 1904

“The blunting effects of slavery upon the slaveholder's moral perceptions are known and conceded the world over; and a privileged class, an aristocracy, is but a band of slaveholders under another name.”  
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

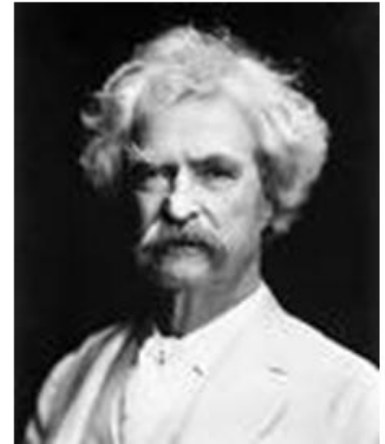
“Our Civil War was a blot on our history, but not as great a blot as the buying and selling of Negro souls.” - quoted by Clara Clemens Gabilowitsch in letter to *New York Herald Tribune*, November 19, 1941

## Lesson Plan Format –

**A. Introduction:** Do you think people should own other people? Why or why not? Should people be treated like animals? What is slavery? What do you know about it? Share Mark Twain quote on slavery with students. Share with students a wanted poster from a newspaper printed in the 1800s. Discuss how they feel about the poster. (See below)

During this mini-unit, several activities will be utilized to introduce the concept of slavery. A cluster diagram will be used to record information about living conditions, social acceptance, jobs, and treatment.

In those old slave-holding days the whole community was agreed as to one thing--the awful sacredness of slave property. To help steal a horse or a cow was a low crime, but to help a hunted slave, or feed him or shelter him, or hide him, or comfort him, in his troubles, his terrors, his despair, or hesitate to promptly to betray him to the slave-catcher when opportunity offered was a much baser crime, & carried with it a stain, a moral smirch which nothing could wipe away. That this sentiment should exist among slave-owners is comprehensible--there were good commercial reasons for it--but that it should exist & did exist among the paupers, the loafers the tag-rag & bobtail of the community, & in a passionate & uncompromising form, is not in our remote day realizable.



- *Notebook #35 (reprinted in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Univ. of California Press, 2003)*

# **\$500, REWARD.**

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**Ran away from the undersigned, on Sunday the 9th inst., a negro boy named**

## **AARON OR APE.**

**He is about 20 years old, six feet high, with rather unusually large legs and arms; walks bent forward with one foot turned out more than the other. I will give \$150.00 reward for him if taken in the county; \$100.00 reward if taken in the counties south of this and \$200.00 if taken in any of the Mississippi counties or \$500 if taken out of the State.**

**O. M. HARRIS,  
Three miles south of Middle Grove  
Monroe County, Missouri.**

REGISTER PRINT—JACON CITY, MO.

## B. Lesson Activities:

**NOTE:** The following activities are designed to support a unit on slavery and should be completed in several class periods depending on the amount of time necessary to fully explore the topic.

### Activity #1 (Living Conditions)

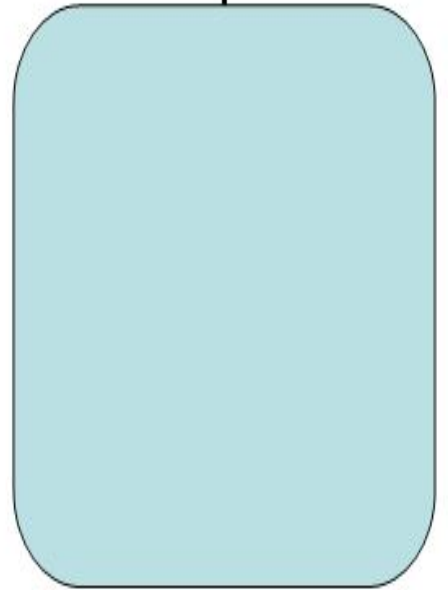
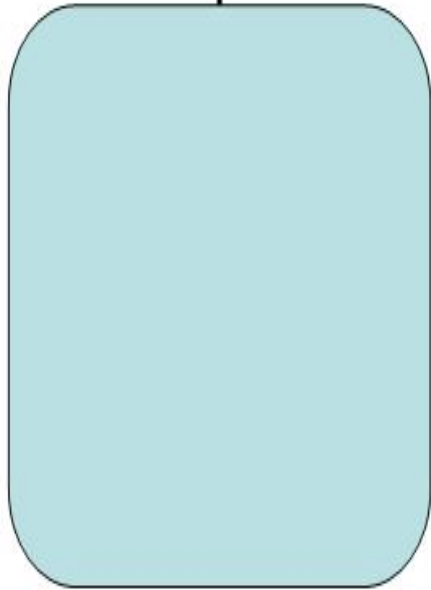
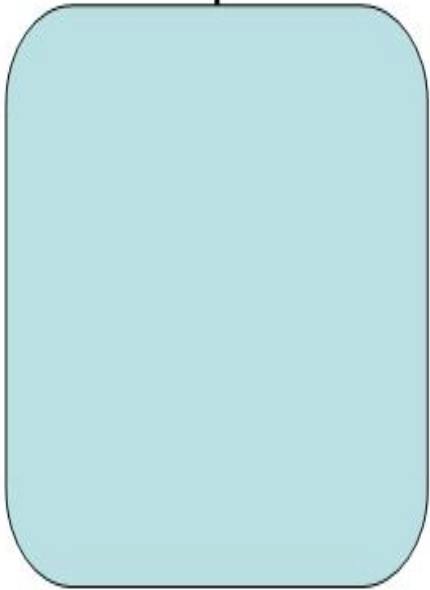
Read excerpt from *Huckleberry Finn*, page 48 Dover edition. Use information from the reading and the classroom discussion to complete the living conditions graphic organizer with the class.

Students will be given a pile of dirt, a few twigs, 20 Popsicle sticks, glue, and twine. Their task is to create a house using only these items. Show students how to create a frame for the house, and then they can work in a small group to complete the house. They cannot use any other materials. This will allow students to “see” the poor living conditions of slaves. Show students the slave quarters slide. (See below)

# Living Conditions



Living Conditions



# Slave Cabin Project



1. Using your Popsicle sticks, create a frame for your slave quarters.
2. Mix a small amount of soil and glue to create your “clay” to seal your walls.



3. Use twigs, twine, and soil to create walls around the frame of your quarters.
4. Seal the walls and roof with your with your “clay.”

You may help one another build your quarters, but you may not get extra materials from others.



## Activity #2 (Social Acceptance)

Read chapter three from *Huckleberry Finn* (Dover Children's Classics). View the slave "wanted" poster. Use information from the reading and the classroom discussion to complete the social acceptance graphic organizer with the class. Students will complete the following question in a constructed response format. What would you have done if you had been in Huck's shoes and found Jim? Think about how your decision would have impacted you, your family and Jim. (Teachers will need to provide background information regarding society's acceptance of the institution of slavery.)

## Social Acceptance of Slavery





# **\$200 Reward.**

RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of Thursday, the 30th of September,

## **FIVE NEGRO SLAVES,**

To-wit: one Negro man, his wife, and three children.

The man is a black negro, full height, very erect, his face a little thin. He is about forty years of age, and calls himself *Washington Reed*, and is known by the name of Washington. He is probably well dressed, possibly takes with him an ivory headed cane, and is of good address. Several of his teeth are gone.

*Mary*, his wife, is about thirty years of age, a bright mulatto woman, and quite stout and strong.

The oldest of the children is a boy, of the name of FIELDING, twelve years of age, a dark mulatto, with heavy eyelids. He probably wore a new cloth cap.

MATILDA, the second child, is a girl, six years of age, rather a dark mulatto, but a bright and smart looking child.

MALCOLM, the youngest, is a boy, four years old, a lighter mulatto than the last, and about equally as bright. He probably also wore a cloth cap. If examined, he will be found to have a swelling at the navel.

Washington and Mary have lived at or near St. Louis, with the subscriber, for about 15 years.

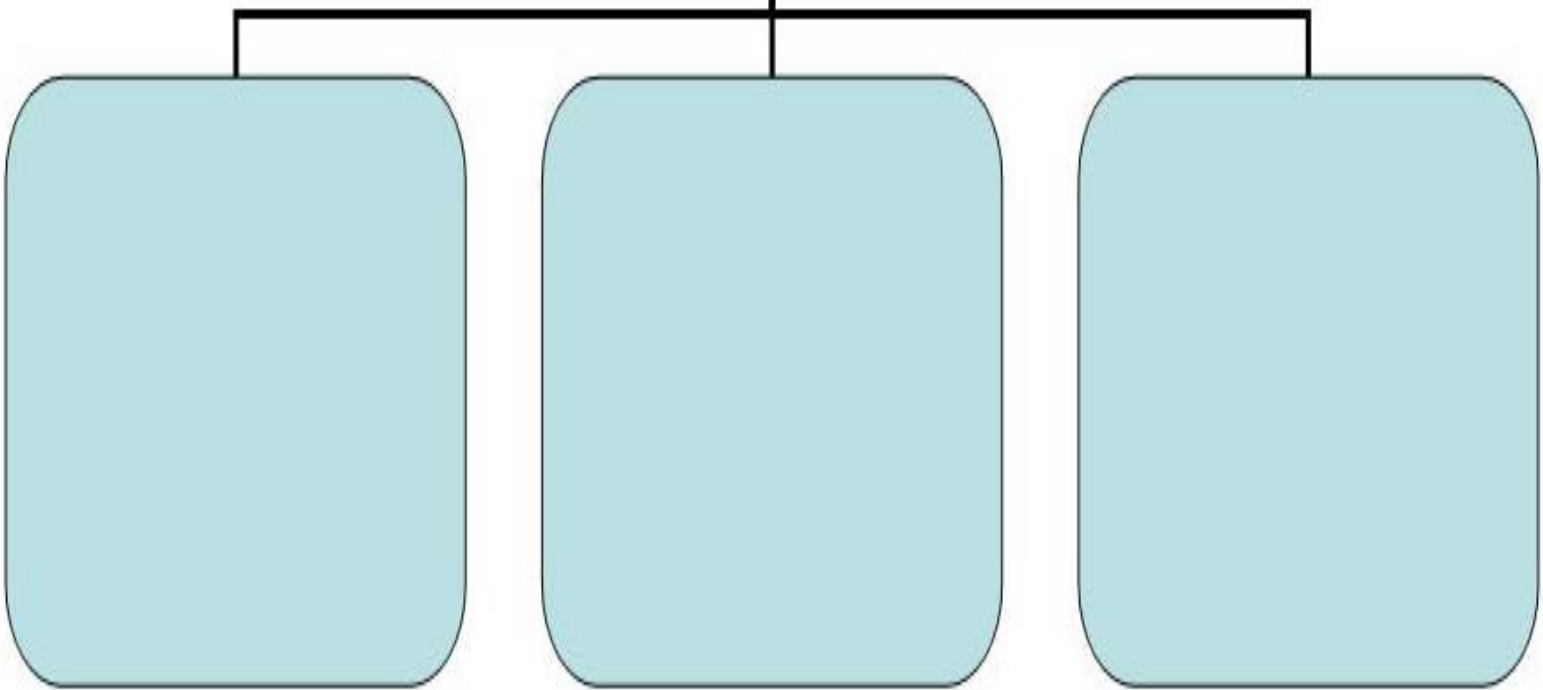
It is supposed that they are making their way to Chicago, and that a white man accompanies them, that they will travel chiefly at night, and most probably in a covered wagon.

A reward of \$150 will be paid for their apprehension, so that I can get them, if taken within one hundred miles of St. Louis, and \$200 if taken beyond that, and secured so that I can get them, and other reasonable additional charges, if delivered to the subscriber, or to THOMAS ALLEN, Esq., at St. Louis, Mo. The above negroes, for the last few years, have been in possession of Thomas Allen, Esq., of St. Louis.

### **WM. RUSSELL.**

ST. LOUIS, Oct. 1, 1847.

Social Acceptance



# What Would You Do?

Put yourself in Huck's place when he has just discovered Jim, a runaway slave. If you were in that situation, what would you have done? Would you have turned Jim in or helped him run for freedom? Why? Think about how your decision would impact you, your family, and Jim.

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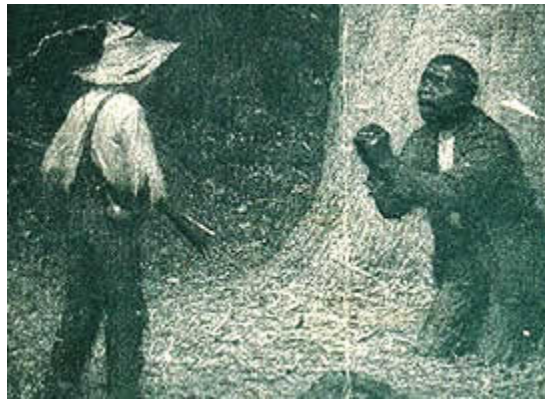
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## Scoring

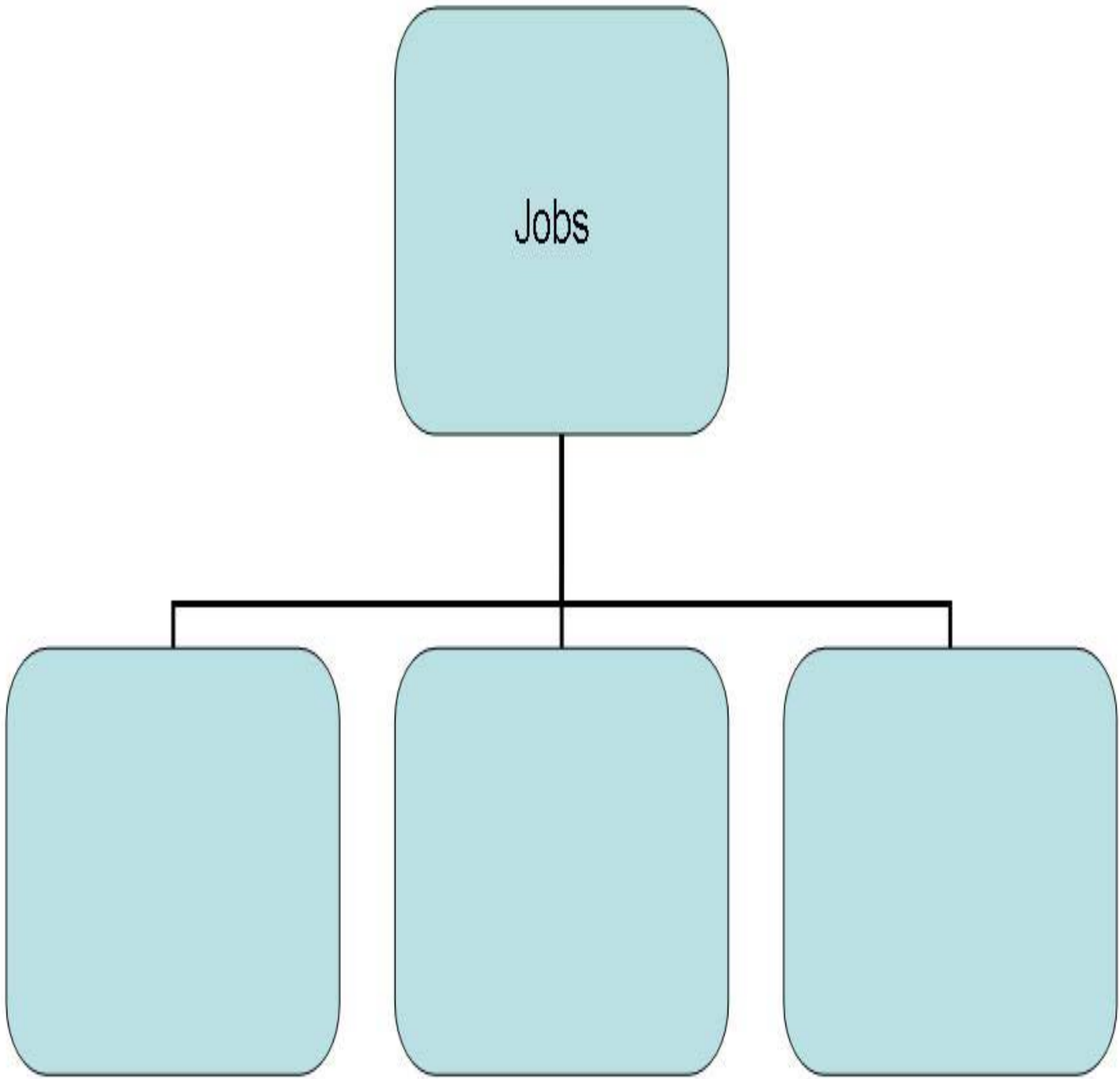
2 Complete and appropriate answer	1 Incomplete answer	0 Inappropriate answer
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### Activity #3 (Jobs)

Go to [http://www.historyonthenet.com/Slave\\_Trade/work.htm](http://www.historyonthenet.com/Slave_Trade/work.htm) and read article about the work that the slaves had to do together. Complete the quiz on the website as a group. If time, students can also complete the word search. Have students complete the Jobs graphic organizer using information from today's activity on their own.

# Slaves at Work





#### Activity #4 (Treatment)

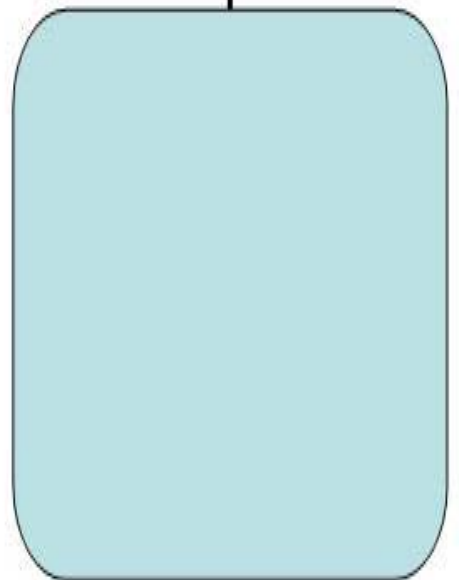
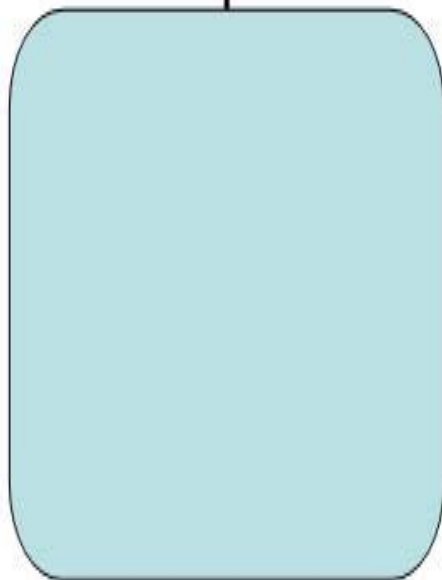
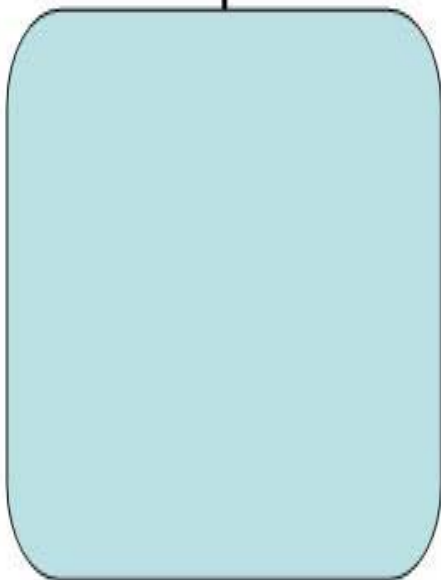
Read excerpt from *Huck Finn* pages 45-47 and 53. Have a short class discussion about what was read. Watch Harriett Tubman video on United Streaming website.

(<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/?ErrMsg=Please%20provide%20a%20Username%20and%20Password>) Pause for discussion during the video, have students record information from discussion on their treatment graphic organizer on their own. If you cannot access this link, choose an appropriate video instead.

## Harriett Tubman Video



Treatment





Activity #5 (Read Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt)

The book and website will provide information about the use of quilts along the Underground Railroad. Visit the following site

<http://educ.queensu.ca/~fmc/may2004/Underground.html>

Students will create a block for a classroom quilt entitled "Escape from the Principal's Office".



Scholars argue as to whether or not African American quilts were used to direct runaway slaves to freedom. Click the following link to read about freedom quilts.

## Underground Railroad Quilt Code

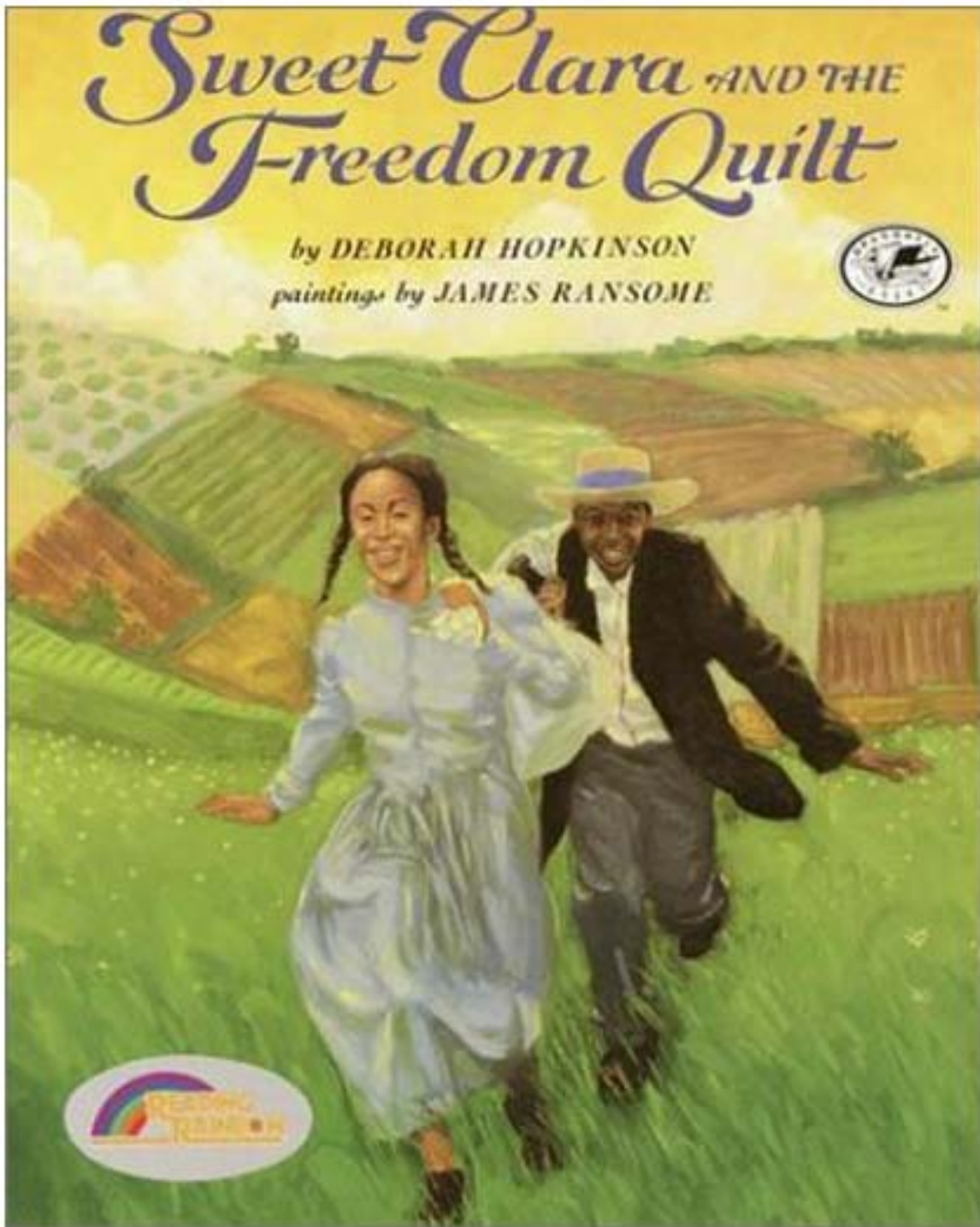
<http://educ.queensu.ca/~fmc/may2004/Underground.html>





# Sweet Clara AND THE Freedom Quilt

by DEBORAH HOPKINSON  
paintings by JAMES RANSOME



## Your Freedom Quilt: Escape from the Principal's Office

As you have learned from the website and the story, *Sweet Clara's Freedom Quilt*, it is believed that African-American slaves used codes sewn into quilt blocks to show the way on the Underground Railroad.

Your task now is to design a code and create a quilt giving students directions to escape from the principal's office to the freedom of the playground.

First, as a class, decide on what pattern blocks you will use and what they stand for.

Then within your small group, build a construction paper quilt that will help fellow students escape to freedom. Be sure to use your landmarks and directions.

Use the space below to sketch out your quilt blocks and what they mean:



## Assessment 1: Expository Writing

Now that you have learned about slavery, your task is to compose an expository writing piece. You will work in your group to write a three paragraph paper explaining one of the **four topics** ([living conditions](#), [social acceptance](#), [jobs](#), and [treatment](#)) studied throughout the unit. Your group will be given two days to conduct any additional research and complete the writing activity.

Your first paragraph should be an introduction about the topic. Paragraph two will explain what you have learned about your topic. The final paragraph will be the closing. Use the following checklist to guide your work.

### Expository Writing Checklist

- \_\_\_ The paper follows the above format.
- \_\_\_ The paper includes only information about our topic.
- \_\_\_ The paper includes only factual information.
- \_\_\_ Each paragraph has a topic sentence with supporting details.
- \_\_\_ There are no spelling mistakes.
- \_\_\_ Each sentence has appropriate capitalization and punctuation.
- \_\_\_ Sentence beginnings are varied.

## Activity #6 (Free the Slaves)

Carefully introduce the concept of present-day slavery throughout the world (including the United States). Use the website <http://www.freetheslaves.net> as a resource to review and prepare background knowledge to share with students. Under the teacher's supervision, students will work in cooperative groups to research a country and create a multimedia presentation to share what they learn. This activity will take between three and five days. Scoring guide included. (Note: Teachers may want to double the point value for the "content" portion of the scoring guide.)



## Free the Slaves Project Page



**You will be working with a partner to investigate current slave practices. Yes, slavery still exists! You and your partner should decide on a country to research after visiting the “free the slaves” website. While researching record information about the topics of living conditions, social acceptance, jobs, and treatment as well as any additional information you feel is important. Next decide if your group will create a PowerPoint presentation or poster project. You will present your presentation to a group of investors looking to finance a worthy project.**

**Can you persuade these investors to free slaves in another country?**



## Scoring Guide for Multimedia Slavery Presentation

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Content</b>	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1-2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.
<b>Organization</b>	Content is well organized using headings or bulleted lists to group related material.	Uses headings or bulleted lists to organize, but the overall organization of topics appears flawed.	Content is logically organized for the most part.	There was no clear or logical organizational structure, just lots of facts.
<b>Attractiveness</b>	Makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance the presentation.	Makes good use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance to presentation.	Makes use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. but occasionally these detract from the presentation content.	Use of font, color, graphics, effects etc. but these often distract from the presentation content.
<b>Mechanics</b>	No misspellings or grammatical errors.	Very few misspellings or grammatical errors causing no distraction to the reader	Several misspellings or grammatical errors causing little distraction to the reader	Numerous misspellings or grammatical errors causing significant distraction to the reader.

**Comments:**

**C. Closure:** End the unit by providing an opportunity for students to share their work and discuss any questions they may still have. .

**Strategies/accommodations to support students with exceptionalities:**

- Allow extra time
- Cooperative groups
- Show movie clips
- Conference after school if necessary
- Assistance with research
- Option to produce poster board or PowerPoint project

**Possible Follow-up Activities:** Students could start a campaign to inform the community of the existing slave practices in the world. Fundraising can be utilized to raise money to support organizations that fight slavery.

**Possible Guest Speakers/Other Resources:** Visit the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum. Invite a member from the NAACP to speak to the class about the lingering effects of slavery in America. Display slaves quarters.

**Scheduled Use of Time:**

Time	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
10-15 minutes	Teacher should hook the students by providing provocative questions such as whether people should be owned.  Teacher then shares visual with Mark Twain quote on slavery and visual of escaped slave poster.	Listen, view, discuss
1 hour	Read aloud excerpt from page 48 of <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> . Share pictures of slave quarters.	Listen, view, discuss Complete graphic organizer. Create slave quarters replica.
1 hour	Read Chapter 3 of <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> . Share slavery poster.	Listen, view, discuss Complete graphic organizer Complete "What Would You Do" page.
1 hour	Lead discussion and viewing of website.	Listen, view, discuss Complete graphic organizer Take quiz Word search
2 hours	Lead discussion and viewing of website. Read aloud <i>Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt</i> .	Listen, view, discuss Create freedom quilt and code
2-3 hours	Introduce expository writing assignment. Monitor student work, assisting as needed.	Research and compose expository writing piece on slavery.
30 minutes	Introduce concept of existing slave practice in the world using the Free the Slaves website.	Listen, view, discuss
4-5 hours	Monitor student work, assisting as needed.	Create PowerPoint or poster display of current world slave practices.
1-2 hours	View presentations Lead closing discussions	Present PowerPoint or poster Listen, view, discuss

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**Student Diagram Page**

