

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

The Connection Between Fluency and Reader’s Theater . . . . .	4
A Note to Teachers from a Working Teacher . . . . .	6
Differentiation . . . . .	7
How to Use This Book . . . . .	8
Standards Correlations . . . . .	10
Standards Correlations Chart . . . . .	11
Tips on Reader’s Theater . . . . .	13

## Leaders in the Ancient World

Socrates . . . . .	14
Archimedes . . . . .	21
Hannibal . . . . .	29
Alexander the Great . . . . .	36

## People from Around the World

Leonardo da Vinci . . . . .	43
Louis Braille . . . . .	50
Elizabeth Blackwell . . . . .	57
Gandhi . . . . .	64

## Famous Americans

Edgar Allan Poe . . . . .	70
Harriet Tubman . . . . .	78
Emily Dickinson . . . . .	86
Mark Twain . . . . .	93

<b>References Cited . . . . .</b>	<b>100</b>
-----------------------------------	------------

<b>Recommended Children’s Literature . . . . .</b>	<b>101</b>
--	------------

<b>Contents of the Teacher Resource CD . . . . .</b>	<b>102</b>
--	------------

# Harriet Tubman

## CONNECTIONS

### Literature Connection—*Who Was Harriet Tubman?* by Yona Zeldis McDonough

Harriet Tubman was born of slave parents around 1820. After running away to the North and gaining her freedom from slavery, Tubman went on to help about 300 other slaves escape to freedom. Additionally, Tubman went on to work as a spy and nurse for the Union Army during the Civil War and worked to help women gain the right to vote.

### Content Connections—Social Studies, Women’s History, Black History

This script is a nice connection to both Women’s History Month and Black History Month.

## OBJECTIVE

Students will use reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts (e.g., textbooks; biographical sketches; essays).

## VOCABULARY

1. Introduce the key vocabulary words from the script. Write each word on the board.
2. Describe the meaning of each word and point out its use in the script. Show pictures that represent the meaning of each word if you have them.
3. Help students deepen their understanding of the vocabulary words by creating charts of related words and pictures. For the word *disguise*, examples of disguises might include costume, mask, hide, or pretend. Post these charts in the room for students to refer to throughout the lesson.
  - **plantation**—a large farm
  - **potion**—a drink of medicine or poison
  - **disguise**—to change one’s appearance
  - **fracture**—to break or crack
  - **extend**—to reach out or stretch
  - **conductor**—a leader or guide

## BEFORE THE READER’S THEATER

1. Read the title of the script and ask the class what they know about Harriet Tubman. What was the Underground Railroad? Show a map of the United States and have students name the states that allowed slavery and discuss the Civil War.
2. Display the Attributes Diagram graphic organizer (page 80 or [attributesdiagram.pdf](#)). Tell students that the organizer is used to record details about a particular person.

# Harriet Tubman (cont.)

## BEFORE THE READER'S THEATER (cont.)

3. Read the script aloud, modeling appropriate reading strategies while you read. To help build fluency and comprehension, it is important for students to hear the script read aloud before practicing on their own.

## DURING THE READER'S THEATER

1. Divide the class into groups of 10 to read and practice the script.
2. Students need to decide which character they will play and then highlight their parts in the script (Tubman 1–3, Host, and Panelists 1–6). They should also mark with a star any places where they need to pause while reading.
3. Give students a few minutes to practice reading with expression in their voices. Additionally, students may decide on a few props or materials to use during their reading. They need to use materials that can be easily acquired or assembled in the classroom.
4. After they have finished practicing, have each group perform the reader's theater for the rest of the class. You may also want them to perform for another class.
5. Ask students if they know the answer to the question “Who is the REAL Harriet Tubman?”  
(**Note:** The REAL Harriet Tubman is Tubman 1.)
6. Discuss the following questions with students:
  - Could you have hidden in a manure pile if it meant escaping to freedom?
  - What actions by Tubman might have frightened you if you were part of her group of slaves?
  - Why do you think Harriet's husband, John, decided not to go with her? Could you have left your loved ones to get your freedom?

## AFTER THE READER'S THEATER

1. Demonstrate how to use the Attributes Diagram graphic organizer by writing Harriet Tubman in the center circle. Then write the following attributes in the circles: *courageous*, *determined*, *loyal*, and *adventurous*.
2. Have students work with a partner to find examples from the script to support each attribute. Instruct them to write their responses on the lines under the circles.

## RESPONSE QUESTIONS

### Group Discussion Questions

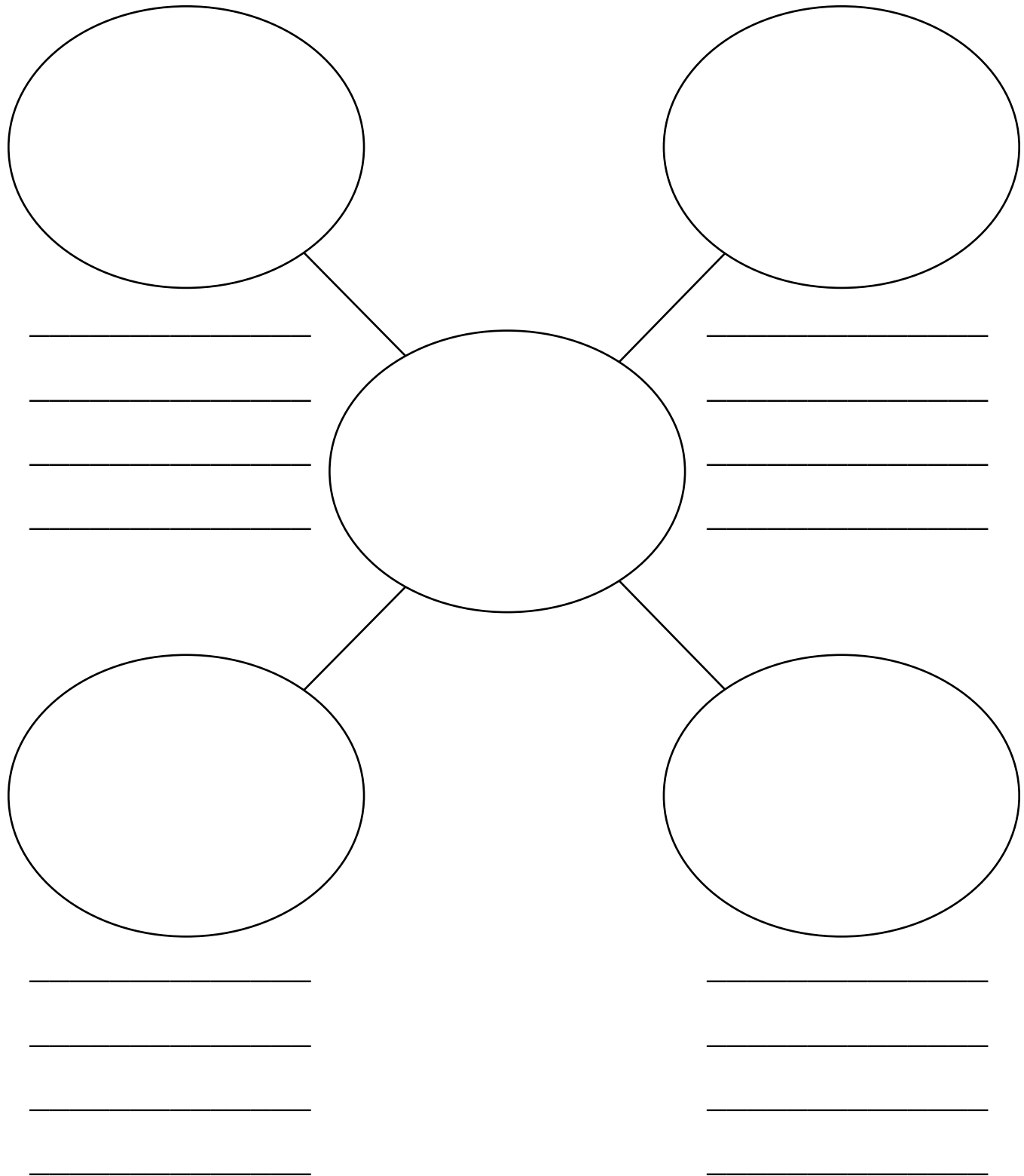
- Find two examples of how Harriet showed “cunning” in her escape efforts.
- Harriet used nature to help her go north. Do you know any other ways to predict things?

### Written Response Question

- Write a diary entry of someone that was on one of Tubman's escape runs and include three specific facts learned from the script.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Attribute Diagram



# To Tell the Truth with Harriet Tubman

BY GAIL SKROBACK HENNESSEY

A reader's theater with ten parts



**Host:** Today's guest is Harriet Tubman. Only one of our three guests is the REAL Harriet Tubman. The other two are imposters. Your job is to listen carefully to the information presented and decide which of the three guests is the REAL Harriet Tubman. Let's begin by meeting our guests.

**Tubman 1:** Good day. I was born Araminta Ross, but I am better known by the name Harriet Tubman.

**Tubman 2:** It is my pleasure to be with you today. My name is Harriet Tubman.

**Tubman 3:** The people I led to freedom called me "Moses," but you can call me Harriet Tubman.

**Host:** Let me read this brief summary on Harriet Tubman. Harriet Tubman was born around the year 1820. Because no one officially recorded her birth and few slaves could read or write, her exact birth date is not known. Her parents were slaves on the plantation of a Maryland planter named Edward Brodas. When she was about 28, she learned that Brodas planned to sell her. A Quaker woman helped her escape to Philadelphia on what was called the Underground Railroad, which was not really a railroad but rather a system of cooperation by people who helped slaves escape to freedom. Once free, Harriet decided to return to the South and help other slaves escape, including most of her family. Between 1850 and 1860, she made 19 trips to the South and helped more than 300 slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad. At one point, authorities offered a \$40,000 reward for her capture, and that was a fortune in those days! During the Civil War, she was a spy and a nurse for the Union army. Later, she worked to help women earn the right to vote and opened a home for sick and elderly African Americans. During the years that she helped slaves escape to freedom, she never lost a passenger!

Let's begin the questioning with Panelist 1.

## To Tell the Truth with Harriet Tubman (cont.)

**Panelist 1:** During your many trips to bring slaves to freedom, you had to worry about slave catchers and their nasty dogs hunting you down. You and your group of escapees would hide in abandoned sheds, drainage ditches, tobacco barns, and potato holes (places where farmers stored their winter vegetables). You even hid in a manure pile one time and breathed through straws until it was safe to continue your journey. Ms. Tubman, tell us about one of these journeys to freedom.

**Tubman 1:** One time, slave catchers were right behind me, so I decided to sit down, calmly hold a book and pretend to read. Since I could not actually read, I prayed that I was holding the book correctly! As the slave catchers walked by, I heard one of them say, "She can't be the woman we're looking for because Tubman can't read."

**Tubman 2:** One time, I stole a slave owner's buggy and my passengers and I rode right by some slave catchers. No one suspected us because it looked like we were on an errand for the owner of the plantation. Besides, no runaway slaves would think to escape with their owner's buggy, would they?

**Tubman 3:** I often wore disguises, especially after the reward posters appeared. One time, I dressed as an old woman and walked down the street with two hens tied around my waist. A plantation owner who once owned me walked right toward me! Fearing he would recognize me, I realized that I could not run away without causing more suspicion. So, I had an idea. I freed the hens and began hollering, pretending to run after them. I was actually running to safety before the man could recognize me!

**Panelist 2:** As a young girl, a supervisor mistakenly hit you in the head with a scale weight he meant to throw at another slave who had tried to run away. The accident fractured your skull and you almost died. For the rest of your life, you experienced blackouts that caused you to fall asleep for extended periods of time. These blackouts occurred suddenly and without warning. Your blackouts must have frightened those you were taking north to freedom. Tell us, Ms. Tubman, what was it like on your trips to freedom.

**To Tell the Truth with Harriet Tubman** (cont.)

**Tubman 1:** I am sure that my blackouts did frighten members of my group, but they knew to hide quietly in the bushes until I woke up. I also had a pistol and was not afraid to use it should a member of my group get scared and try to turn back! I told them, "Live north or die!" You see, any runaway who returned was beaten until he or she told how they had escaped and who had helped them. I could not allow this to happen because it would expose the Underground Railroad.

**Tubman 2:** The largest group I ever took to freedom at one time was 25 escaped slaves. We were constantly afraid and babies especially were a threat to our safety should they begin to cry. I always carried a medicine that would put the babies to sleep until we reached safety.

**Tubman 3:** I am sure that sometimes the people in my group thought my actions were strange. Sometimes, we headed further south in order to get away, because I knew the slave catchers on our trail would never think that we would go in that direction.

**Panelist 3:** It is said that since you were unable to read, you once slept on a park bench unaware that a nearby poster offered a reward for your capture. How were you able to find your way north, not just once, but 19 times if you could not read?

**Tubman 1:** My daddy once told me to follow the direction of the North Star and that is what I did. Sometimes, when the sky was cloudy, I felt tree trunks, searching for the moss because my daddy had told me that moss always grows on the north side of a tree. This tip also guided me north!

**Tubman 2:** To find my way north, I used a compass that I had purchased at the local general store prior to my first escape north. I also bought a pair of purple-colored sunglasses and a sunbonnet to disguise myself.

**Tubman 3:** I did not really need to know which direction was north. All I had to do was get to the Underground Railroad station and hop on a train to take me north. Unfortunately, there was no dining car and I got rather hungry on the long trip!

**Panelist 4:** When you were about 24 years old, you married John Tubman, a free black man who lived near the Brodas plantation. Being married to a free black man did not change your slave status and when you heard you were to be sold "down south," you decided to run for freedom. Tell us, Ms. Tubman, about you and your husband.

## To Tell the Truth with Harriet Tubman (cont.)

**Tubman 1:** Sadly, John did not want to go north with me. In fact, he threatened to tell if I tried to run away! So, I left one night when he was asleep. Years later, when I returned to the area to help him escape, I found that he had remarried and had forgotten me! I still cared for him and that's why I continued to use the name Tubman.

**Tubman 2:** My husband John and I were very much in love. My husband stayed by my side through out my life and became an active member of the Underground Railroad.

**Tubman 3:** John Tubman and I escaped to the North where he enjoyed the colder climate and especially the snow. When I was away on trips to rescue slaves from the South, John ran the family business, a ski shop.

**Panelist 5:** You usually started your group's escape from a plantation on a Saturday night. You chose Saturday night because no newspapers were published on Sundays, and, therefore, no announcements about escaped slaves would be published until Monday. Search parties could not get organized until Monday, giving you and your group a head start between you and the slave catchers. How did you get word to slaves that you were in the area and willing to help them escape?

**Tubman 1:** Well, I loved to sing and would signal that I had come to help by singing, "Oh, go down, Moses, way down into Egypt's land. Tell old Pharaoh, let my people go." This could be why I got the nickname "Moses," because I helped my people to freedom like Moses helped his people in the Bible.

**Tubman 2:** I put up posters of a man sitting in a bathtub. My "Tub Man" signs let everyone know that I was in the area. Kind of clever, don't you think?

**Tubman 3:** I used the telephone and called all the slaves in the area and asked them if they would like to escape. Because of my telephone calls to slaves hoping to escape, the telephone company used my idea, "Reach out and touch someone," in their advertisements.

**Panelist 6:** During the Civil War, you served as a nurse and a spy. You were involved in one particular raid on South Carolina's Combahee River and helped free 750 slaves. What was your life like after the Civil War?

## To Tell the Truth with Harriet Tubman (cont.)

**Tubman 1:** After the war, I learned that although African Americans were free, we were not going to be treated like white people. One day, I boarded a train and the conductor told me to get out of the car. He said that African Americans could only ride in the baggage car. When I said that I was free and had every right to sit in the passenger car, I was pulled from my seat and thrown into the baggage car. I had gone through the Civil War without getting a scratch, but I got bruises when I tried to ride a train car with white people!

**Tubman 2:** John wrote a best-selling book about my adventures and we were both frequent guests on television talk shows. We lived happily ever after and we were quite wealthy.

**Tubman 3:** After the war, I purchased a van and traveled across the United States giving speeches about my activities during the Civil War and as a conductor for the Underground Railroad. I eventually recorded a music video that was really popular and made me a fortune!

**Host:** Panelists and members of the audience, it is time for you to decide which guest is the REAL Harriet Tubman. Is it Tubman 1, Tubman 2, or Tubman 3?

All right, the votes have been cast. Will the REAL Harriet Tubman please stand up?