



FREEDOM SEEKERS AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

INTRODUCTION

The Potomac River and accompanying Chesapeake & Ohio Canal was a major route on the Underground Railroad. Freedom Seekers used various methods, including abolitionists who aided escaped slaves at their own peril, to ensure safe passage on their journey to freedom in the north.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson plan middle school students will be able to:

- Analyze maps
- Explain what the Underground Railroad was
- Explain the role of abolitionists in the Underground Railroad

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What was the Underground Railroad?
- In what ways did abolitionists support the Underground Railroad?

LEARNING STANDARDS

This lesson is compatible with:

- *Virginia Standard of Learning USI.8d*—The student will demonstrate knowledge of westward expansion and reform in American from 1801 to 1861 by identifying the main ideas of the abolitionist and women's suffrage movements.
- *Virginia Standard of Learning USI.9a*—The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes, major events, and effects of the Civil War by describing the cultural, economic, and constitutional issues that divided the nation.
- *Virginia Standard of Learning USI9b*—The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes, major events, and effects of the Civil War by explaining how the issues of states' rights and slavery increased sectional tensions.

PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Resources:

- *Freedom Seekers* vodcast from the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Project
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9iF8kBxjIIE&list=PL5A5B25F0BE8890FC&index=2&feature=plpp_video

Equipment and Handouts:

- Equipment to screen vodcast (computer, project, etc.)
- *'Freedom Seekers' Patchwork Quilt* worksheet
- *Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Map* worksheet

VODCAST DESCRIPTIONS

- *Freedom Seekers*: Through research, music and folklore, students interpreted how the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal was used by those seeking freedom from bondage.

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Pretest/Warm up: Students will be formatively assessed on their understanding of the location of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. Teachers should display the map of the C&O Canal and allow students time to study it. Ask students to explain why this location would have been popular for escaped slaves fleeing to the north. The map included with this lesson is a map of the canal in context of the greater United States and can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers/images/10map1.gif>

Activity 2

Vodcast Viewing: *Freedom Seekers*: Students will watch the vodcast *Freedom Seekers*. This vodcast features students describing wayfinding techniques for travelers on the Underground Railroad as well as a reenactment of an escaped slave's perilous journey. Encourage students to take note of the various tools and "signs" that were used on the route.

Activity 3

Underground Railroad Patchwork Quilt: Distribute the '*Freedom Seekers*' Patchwork Quilt worksheet. Explain to students that they are creating a quilt to help them remember important ideas about the Underground Railroad that they learned in the vodcast. Have students use colored pencils to create icons or symbols in each quilt square.

Extending the Lesson

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership's educational program, Of the Student, By the Student, For the Student®, offers additional student-created content on the Civil War at the YouTube channel "Take the Journey." <http://www.youtube.com/user/TakeTheJourney/videos?view=1>

Extended content includes student created vodcasts for:

- Battle of First Manassas
- Battle of Second Manassas
- Battle of Balls Bluff
- Harpers Ferry
- Battle of Antietam
- Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
- Battle of Gettysburg
- Battle of the Wilderness and the start of the Overland Campaign

For additional information on the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership's educational programs and resources, please contact us at:

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Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Map



Freedom Seekers Patchwork Quilt

Directions: Create your own patchwork quilt to remember important ideas about the Underground Railroad. Include pictures or symbols that you learned about while watching the *Freedom Seekers* vodcast.

