



FREEDOM BOUND

TEACHER GUIDE

Kupferberg Center Performances @ Queens College

The Teacher Guide is a convenient source of background information, mini-lessons, and pre- and post-concert activities that coordinate with the performance and Student Guide to encourage learning across the curriculum. Most activities can be easily adapted to suit different age groups. This Guide supports the "Blueprint for Teaching & Learning in the Arts," and includes City and State Learning Standards. Click on the URL's to link directly to suggested websites. Feel free to reproduce these materials, as well as Student Activity Pages that may be posted on this website.

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Please send documentation (photographs, compositions, etc.) of class activities based on this guide so we can share your successes with other schools attending Revelations performances. Thanks!

About the Performance

Mad River Theater Works is a professional touring ensemble based in rural Ohio. *Freedom Bound* and Mad River's other plays are all original creations, and combine original music, storytelling, and drama. Crafting plays from authentic historical documents, stories from real people, and their imagination, Mad River recreates historical events and sheds new light on the characters and people of the time. Within this context, they also address contemporary issues such as racism and women's changing roles and other issues relevant to the communities for whom they perform. In an increasingly complex world, Mad River's exploration of ideas such as tolerance, act as a catalyst for change and not merely a reflection of community life in the back roads of America.

Curriculum Focus: Social Studies

Activity 1: Research the culture and geography of America with mini-lessons using the *Five Themes of Geography*

NYC Social Studies Standard: 3

NYC Language Arts Standard: 2a

Grades: 4-8

Coordinate with Student Guide: "Where in the World Was the Underground Railroad?"

Mini-Lesson 1: Location

Whole Group: Demonstrate the use of a compass rose to determine North, South, East and West on a world map.

- *Absolute location:* Locate Southern and Northern American States and Canada on a map of North America.
- *Relative location:* Where are the Southern States in relation to the Northern States? Where are both in relation to Canada?

Small Groups: Find escape routes of the Underground Railroad, both land and water, on the map of the United States in the Student Guide. Measure the distance to freedom from various points in the south to various destinations in the north and Canada. What was the average mileage people had to travel to reach freedom and safety? (Remember, even the 'free states' were not safe, because the law allowed recapture

tantamount to kidnapping, so only Canada – or Mexico – were safe.) Predict how long it would take to cover that kind of mileage on foot. Estimate: 30 minutes per mile plus time for rest.

Mini-lesson 2: Place

Research the physical features, vegetation and animals along the escape routes.

- *Whole Group:* Demonstrate how students can use resources in the library and search engines on the Internet to find the information they require.
- *Small Groups:* What challenges would a person escaping from slavery face? (Negotiating rivers, swampland, hills, woods, wild animals, suffering from a scarcity of winter food sources; predict what food sources would be available in various seasons and how they could obtain these). A follow-up mini-lesson will demonstrate how to present the information in report form.

Mini-lesson 3: Movement

Using the research techniques learned, students will research the movement of people who escaped slavery into the north. Where did their routes take them? Where did they settle? Is there evidence of their relocation in these areas today?

Mini-lesson 4: Human-Environment Interaction

Slaves who came from Africa were accustomed to a very warm climate. The Southern States also have a warmer climate than the Northern States. Winters in the North were harsh and snowbound. What adjustments would freedom-bound people have to make to survive the new environment?

Mini-lesson 5: Region

Explain how the physical features of the land –its rivers, swamplands, coastline, and anti-slavery settlers such as the Quakers– influenced the location of the Underground Railroad routes and the communities where free people eventually settled.

- *Research:* What was *The Fugitive Slave Act*? *Questions:* How did this bill change the participation of civilians in the Underground Railroad? Where could the runaways go to be safe from capture?
- *Problem Solver:* Have students practice their research skills by answering this question: Why was Addison White’s last name the same as plantation and slave owner Daniel White? (Slaves were given the last names of their “masters.”)
- *Critical Thinking:* What would happen to a person’s name when he or she was sold to another “master?” (They would take on that man’s last name). How would this make it difficult for families who were separated to keep track of one another?

Note: The issue of quilts holding secret codes and messages for escapees has been hotly debated. The general consensus is that the idea of “Freedom Quilts” is based in legend, not fact, but there are strong opinions on both sides.

Curriculum Focus: Music

Activity: Research and learn songs from slavery period

NYC Arts Standards: 1, 4

NYC Social Studies Standard: 1

Benchmarks for Arts Learning: Music Making, Making Connections

Teaching Point: Find clues in the song that give directions or instructions to aid in an escape

Grades: 4-8

Coordinate with Student Guide: “Singing Our Way To Freedom”

Using Internet and library resources to find other songs from this time period that may have been used to help people get to freedom. Learn one or more and perform them for or with your classmates.

Curriculum Focus: Language Arts

Activity 1: Create an article for the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* urging people to abolish slavery

NYC English Language Arts Standards: 4a & b, 5a & b

Grades: 3-8

Make copies of the following newspaper ad, and distribute to class for discussion. Students can do research for similar articles and locate primary source documents at the library or on the Internet.

\$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.

MALGOLM, 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.

Activity 2: A) Research an ex-slave narrative and write a scene based upon information in the narrative.

B) Write a fictional scene based on the people described in the reward ad above.

NYC English Language Arts Standards: 2c, 5

Blueprint For the Arts: Theater/Theater Making: Acting, Play Writing/Playmaking, Developing Theater Literacy

Teaching Point: Use dialogue to drive the scene forward

Coordinate with Student Guide: "Take It Home Activity"

Grades: 3-8

A) Jeff Hooper, founding director of Mad River Theater Company, crafted the play *Freedom Bound* after finding authentic historic documents that described Addison White’s battle for freedom. There are many ex-slave narratives collected as WPA projects that tell of an incident that occurred in someone’s life during the time of slavery. Ask students to imagine the scene described as though it were a movie, and to imagine what the characters said to each another and how they behaved. Individually, in small groups, or as a take-home project, have them write the scene out in script form.

B) Use imagination and what you know about this period from your reading and research, to envision the journey and fate of the escaped slaves described in the reward ad. Write a script to illustrate your ideas.

Activity 3: Write An Expressive Poem About Freedom.

NYC English Language Arts Standards: 2c, 5b

Teaching Point: Point of View

Coordinate with Student Guide: “Singing Their Way to Freedom” and “Writing From the Heart”

Write from point of view of a person who is enslaved, choosing words that describe the despair and desperation one would feel if their freedom were taken away, and the longing one would feel to get it back – at whatever cost. Use sensory images to make the poem vivid.

Curriculum Focus: Drama

Activity: Act Out The Scenes and Poems Together

NYC Arts Standards: 1

Blueprint For the Arts: Theater: Theater Making: Acting

Grades: 3-8

Coordinate with Teacher Guide: Language Arts Activities 2 and 3.

Alternate dramatic scenes with poems to create a Reader’s Theater piece. Perform for another class and for parents.

TEACHER RESOURCES

Web

Born In Slavery: Slave Narratives from the WPA Writer’s Project 1936-1938

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>

Listen to clips of songs from the performance of *Freedom Bound*:

http://www.madrivertheater.org/Freedom_Bound.html

Bookshelf

Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World by David Brion Davis. Oxford University Press, 2006.

Voices from Slavery: 100 Authentic Slave Narratives by Norman R. Yetman. Dover, 1999.

No Man Can Hinder Me: The Journey from Slavery to Emancipation Through Song by Velma Maia Thomas. Crown, 2001.

The Underground Railroad for Kids: From Slavery to Freedom with 21 Activities by Mary Kay Carson. Chicago Review, 2005.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Web

Interactive website with timeline and more:

<http://www.scholastic.com/dreamincolor/africanamericanheritage/index.htm>

Bookshelf

Grades 3-4

If You Lived When There Was Slavery in America by A. Kamma & P. Johnson. Scholastic, 2004.

If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad by E. Levine & L. Johnson. Scholastic, 1993.

Grades 4-6

Bound for the North Star: True Stories of Fugitive Slaves by Dennis Brindell Fradin. Clarion, 2000.

Lest We Forget: The Passage from Africa to Slavery and Emancipation: A Three-Dimensional Interactive Book with Photographs and Documents from the Black Holocaust Exhibit by Velma Maia. Thomas. Crown, 1997.

Grades 7-8

Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk About Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation (with P3 Audio CD) by Ira Berlin, Marc Favreau, Steven F. Miller, editors. New Press, 2007.

The Sounds of Slavery: Discovering African American history through Songs, Sermons, and Speech by Shane & Graham White. Beacon, 2006. (also with CD).

Dear Friend: Thomas Garrett & William Still: Collaborators on the Underground Railroad by Judith Bentley. Dutton Juvenile, 1997.

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Vivian Charlop, Executive Director
Dedi Firestone, Director of Arts Education
Kathy Devine, Writer

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