



Slavery and the Civil War Resource List for Grades K through 4

The Resources in this document can be used with the Slavery and Civil War Curriculum Packet for grades K through 4.

Books

Non-fiction and Biography

- Abraham Lincoln, 2002 by Amy L. Cohn (Author), Suzy Schmidt (Author), David A. Johnson (Author).
A simple biography of the Illinois lawyer, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), who served the country as president through the difficulties of the Civil War.
- Before She was Harriet , 2017 by Lesa Cline-Ransome (Author), James E. Ransome (Illustrator).
We know her today as Harriet Tubman, but in her lifetime she was called by many names. As General Tubman she was a Union spy. As Moses she led hundreds to freedom on the Underground Railroad. As Minty she was a slave whose spirit could not be broken. As Araminta she was a young girl whose father showed her the stars and the first steps on the path to freedom.
- The Daring Escape of Ellen Craft, 2002 by Cathy Moore (Author), Mary O'Keefe Young (Illustrator).
Based on the real-life 1848 escape from slavery of a husband and wife, William and Ellen. She disguised as a young man, he as her slave, the two fled to Philadelphia, then England.
- The Escape of Oney Judge: Martha Washington's Slave Finds Freedom, 2007 by Emily Arnold McCully (Author, Illustrator).
When General George Washington is elected the first President of the United States, his wife chooses young Oney Judge, a house slave who works as a seamstress at Mount Vernon, to travel with her to the nation's capital in New York City as her personal maid. When the capital is moved to Philadelphia, the Washingtons and Oney move, too, and there Oney meets free blacks for the first time.
- Frederick's Journey: The Life of Frederick Douglass, 2018 by Doreen Rappaport (Author), London Ladd (Illustrator).
Traces Frederick Douglass's 1818-1895 life from slavery to international renown as writer and lecturer.
- If You Lived At The Time Of The Civil War, 1994 by Kay Moore (Author), Anni Matsick (Illustrator).
This book tells you what it was like to live at the time of the Civil War from 1861 to 1865.

- Lift Your Light a Little Higher: The Story of Stephen Bishop: Slave-Explorer, 2016 by Heather Henson (Author), Bryan Collier (Illustrator).
Grab your lantern and follow the remarkable and world-famous Mammoth Cave explorer, and slave, Stephen Bishop as he guides you through the world's largest cave system in this remarkable homage to the resilience of human nature.
- Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride, 2009 by Andrea Davis Pinkney (Author), Brian Pinkney (Illustrator).
Born into slavery, Belle had to endure the cruelty of several masters before she escaped to freedom. But she knew she wouldn't really be free unless she was helping to end injustice. That's when she changed her name to Sojourner and began traveling across the country, demanding equal rights for black people and for women.

Fiction

- Alec's Primer, 2005 by Mildred Pitts Walter (Author), Larry Johnson (Illustrator).
A young slave's journey to freedom begins when a plantation owner's granddaughter teaches him how to read. Based on the childhood of Alec Turner (1845-1923) who escaped from slavery by joining the Union Army during the Civil War.
- Ellen's Broom, 2012 by Kelly Starling Lyons (Author), Daniel Minter (Illustrator).
Ellen has always known that the broom hanging on her family's cabin wall is a special symbol of her parents' wedding during slave days, so she proudly carries it to the courthouse when the marriage becomes legal.
- Follow the Drinking Gourd, 1992 by Jeanette Winter (Author).
While working for plantation owners, Peg Leg Joe teaches the slaves a song about the drinking gourd (the Big Dipper). A couple, their son, and two others make their escape by following the song's directions
- Freedom in Congo Square, 2016 by Carole Boston Weatherford (Author), R. Gregory Christie (Illustrator).
Six days a week, slaves labor from sunup to sundown and beyond, but on Sunday afternoons, they gather with free blacks at Congo Square outside New Orleans, free from oppression.
- Freedom River, 2000 by Doreen Rappaport (Author), Bryan Collier (Illustrator).
Describes an incident in the life of John Parker, an ex-slave who became a successful businessman in Ripley, Ohio, and who repeatedly risked his life to help other slaves escape to freedom.
- Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad, 2007 by Ellen Levine (Author), Kadir Nelson (Illustrator).
A fictionalized account of how in 1849 a Virginia slave, Henry "Box" Brown, escapes to freedom by shipping himself in a wooden crate from Richmond to Philadelphia.
- Hush Harbor: Praying in Secret, 2008 by Freddi Williams Evans (Author), Erin Bennett Banks (Illustrator).
In the early nineteenth century, enslaved Africans are not allowed to gather together in groups. For Simmy and his family, that means they must worship in secret. If they are caught, the punishment will be terrible. Simmy's job is to watch for danger while the others pray and sing as the Spirit moves them.

- Juneteenth for Mazie, 2015 by Floyd Cooper (Author, Illustrator).
Mazie is ready to celebrate liberty. She is ready to celebrate freedom. She is ready to celebrate a great day in American history, the day her ancestors were no longer slaves. Mazie remembers the struggles and the triumph, as she gets ready to celebrate Juneteenth.
- The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales, 2009 by Virginia Hamilton (Author), Leo Dillon (Illustrator), Diane Dillon (Illustrator).
The author retells 24 black American folk tales in sure storytelling voice: animal tales, supernatural tales, fanciful and cautionary tales, and slave tales of freedom. All are beautifully readable.
- The Secret to Freedom, 2001 by Marcia Vaughan (Author), Larry Johnson (Illustrator).
A story of the Underground Railroad as told by a former slave to her great niece many years later. After Lucy's parents are sold, her older brother, Albert, tells her about the Underground Railroad. He explains that different patchwork quilt patterns provide secret messages to help escaping slaves and the two of them become involved in helping others find their way to freedom.
- Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt, 1995 by Deborah Hopkinson (Author), James Ransome (Illustrator).
Clara, a slave and seamstress on Home Plantation, dreams of freedom, not just for herself, but for her family and friends. When she overhears a conversation about the Underground Railroad, she has a flash of inspiration. Using scraps of cloth from her work in the Big House and scraps of information gathered from other slaves, she fashions a map that the master would never recognize.
- Underground: Finding the Light to Freedom, 2011 by Shane W. Evans (Author, Illustrator).
A family silently crawls along the ground. They run barefoot through unlit woods, sleep beneath bushes, take shelter in a kind stranger's home. Where are they heading? They are heading for Freedom by way of the Underground Railroad. Sparce text conveys the darkness and fears of escaping slavery through the Underground Railroad to freedom.
- Unspoken: A Story From the Underground Railroad, 2012 by Henry Cole (Author).
In this wordless picture book, a young Southern farm girl discovers a runaway slave hiding behind the corn crib in the barn and decides to help him.

Magazines, Journals, Miscellaneous

- Civil War by Kids Discover
After years of acrimonious disputes, history was made when 11 southern states seceded from the Union, which launched the Civil War. For kids studying this era, this issue brings the battles and heroes of this war to life with vivid descriptions and photos. They'll spend time learning about how the difference of opinion over slavery and states' rights, along with the election of Northerner Abraham Lincoln in 1860, ultimately culminated in what is called the first "modern war."
<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/shop/issues/civil-war-for-kids/d>
- Underground Railroad by Kids Discover
Perfect for studying Civil War history, this issue paints a stark portrait of African American slave life during this period, and chronicles how many slaves risked their lives and the lives of those who helped them, to escape to the free North through these secret "train" routes. Get an

overview of slavery in the U.S., and then get introduced to railroad heroes, like Harriet Tubman and helpers, like Levi Coffin, the “president” of the Underground Railroad.

<https://www.kidsdiscover.com/shop/issues/underground-railroad-for-kids/>

Online Links

- Library of Congress: From Slavery to Civil Rights
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/civil-rights/>
- National Civil War Museum
<https://www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org/>

Background information for the Educator

- Southern Poverty Law Center: Teaching Hard History
<https://www.splcenter.org/20180131/teaching-hard-history>
- Teaching For Change: Building Social Justice in the Classroom
<https://www.teachingforchange.org/>
- Teaching Tolerance: Slavery
<https://www.tolerance.org/search?query=slavery>