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TAH Unit Plan

Title: A Trip on the Underground Railroad

Possible Subject Area(s); Third Grade Social Studies

Overview: Many students have misconception about what the Underground Railroad really was. That in fact it was not a train but a route that slaves traveled to reach safety and freedom. There are many books and websites that offer information to this topic. This unit specifically relates to the role of women during the time of the Underground Railroad. The focus of these lessons show the obstacles women had to overcome in order to protect their families. This is only a small section of a larger unit on the Underground Railroad.

Essential Understanding: What is the Underground Railroad?

Essential Questions: How were women important to the success of the Underground Railroad?

CT Standards:

Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking

- Write short narratives and statements of historical ideas and create other appropriate presentations from investigations of source materials
- Identify ways different cultures record their histories, compare past and present situations and events, and present findings in appropriate oral, written and visual ways.

Content Standard 2: Local, United States, and World History

- Locate the events, peoples, and places they have studied in time and place relative to their own location

Content Standard 3: Historical Themes

- Recognize that people develop traditions that transmit their beliefs and ideals
- Describe and explain some of the reasons people have moved and relate these reasons to some historic movements of large groups of people.

Day 1

Objectives:

- The students will be able to tell who Harriet Tubman was and how she helped slaves escape to freedom by listening to the story, "Minty."
- The students will use a Venn Diagram to compare themselves to Minty.
- The student will create a map of Harriet Tubman's route to freedom.

Materials needed: paper, markers, crayons, Book: Minty: A Story of a Young Harriet Tubman, chart paper, maps of the United States

Procedure:

- Teachers will lead students in a discussion to review who slaves were, where they came from, what the Underground Railroad was, and who Harriet Tubman was. Teacher will show students the cover of the book and have them make predictions about what the book is about.
- The teacher will guide a discussion based on they work Minty did in comparison to the chores they have to do. The class will create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the lives of students to the life of Minty.
- Students will work in groups of four using a U.S. map to create a map of Harriet Tubman's journey. They will use books within the classroom and the use of the internet to plot the map.

Assessment/ Homework: The students will be assessed on the maps they created of Tubman's Journey, their participation in discussions, and a comprehension worksheet for homework.

Day 2

Objectives:

- The students will learn the importance of quilts during the Underground Railroad by completing a KWL chart,
- The students will discuss how quilts were made, who made them, and why they were made.
- The students will create their own quilt squares with a secret message.

Materials Needed: Book-Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt, fabric strips, pictures of quilt patterns, scissors, 9x9 felt squares, glue, and magazines

Procedure:

- The teacher will create a KWL chart with the students to generate information about what they know and want to know about quilts.
- The teacher will explain to the class at the time of the Underground Railroad women would make quilts to show thanks to people, to keep their families warm, and to use as a sign for runaway slaves.
- The teacher will read Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt. the class will discuss how the quilt was used in the story and recognize different features Clara used in her quilt.
- The teacher will continue to explain that different patterns and colors were used to send secret messages that only slaves and friends of the Underground Railroad could understand.
- The students will each receive a 9x9 felt square, a pair of scissors, glue, a magazine, and fabric strips. The student will be given time to create their own mini quilt by gluing fabric strips and cutouts from the magazines to create their own secret messages.

- Students will explain their messages. The squares will be displayed together as a class quilt on a bulletin board.
- As a class, KWL chart will be completed.

Assessment- The students will be assessed on their presentation of their quilt square and the explanation of how they used certain colors or clippings to show a secret message. For homework, students will answer the following questions. Do you think it was easy for women to make these quilts? What other ways do you think people on the Underground Railroad could have used to communicate?

Day 3

Objectives:

- The students will learn about Sojourner Truth by listening to the book Only Passing Through: The Story of Sojourner Truth.
- Students will create a character sketch of Sojourner Truth.
- The students will create and present a dramatization of a part of her life.
- The students will make a banner with an important message about slavery or equal rights.

Materials Needed: Only Passing Through: The Story Of Sojourner Truth by Anne Rockwell, paper, pencils, poster board, markers, crayons, craft supplies, pictures of Sojourner Truth

Procedure:

- The teacher will read the book and ask the following questions: What do you notice about Sojourner? How is she dressed? If you met her, do you think you would like her? Why or why not? The class will create a character sketch outlining what type of person she is/was. It will be put on display.
- The class will work in groups of four and will be assigned part of Sojourner's story. The group will come up with a skit of the scene they are assigned. They have ten minutes to create it.
- Students will create a banner with an important message about slavery or equal rights. This will be modeled after the fact that Sojourner carried a banner that said "Proclaim Liberty."
- Students will be assessed on their ability to work as a group and their ability to portray the scene they were assigned and if gave the right message.

Homework- Students will list two new things they learned from today's lesson.

Day 4

Objectives:

- Students will learn about women and their families who have helped runaway slaves along the Underground Railroad.
- Students will discuss Levi and Catharine Coffin and examine pictures of their house.
- Students will discuss their viewpoints on helping runaway slaves.
- Students will use critical thinking skills to problem solve.

Materials Needed: chart paper, easel, dry erase markers, pictures of the Coffin house, pictures of Levi and Catharine Coffin

Procedure:

- The teacher will explain to the students about how Levi and Catharine Coffin provided a safe house for runaway slaves. The class will discuss how many women, other than those who were conductors on the underground railroad, worked to help runaway slaves find freedom.
- Teacher writes this on the board: Late one night you are home during the time of the Underground Railroad. You hear a knock at the door. You open it and discover a runaway slave who wants you to hide him for the night. What do you do?
- Students will respond for a few minutes.
- Students will form a line. On one end will be those who will help and on the other those who would not. Students will share their opinions with the person next to them.
- The teacher will create groups by pulling four students from different parts of the line to share their opinions with each other. They must decide what they will do.
- As a class, opinions will be discussed. Teacher will point out that just like the students; people during the time of the underground railroad had different opinions as well.

Suggested Assessment/Evaluation

Evaluation for end of unit would be an open ended question asking, “In what ways did women help with the Underground Railroad?” or “Do you think that the Underground Railroad would have been successful without the help of women during that time? Why or Why not?”

A rubric would also be given to evaluate the students’ use of information from the unit. A two point scale would be best. A student receiving a two would need to answer the questions and provided at least two examples of how women helped with the Underground Railroad. A student would receive a one if they provided an answer with limited details from the unit. A zero would be given if the student was unable to answer the question or provided no information from the unit.

Possible Extensions/Resources

- Student can select two different slaves and their journey on the Underground Railroad and compare and contrast using a Venn diagram.
- Students can research diaries of people who were involved in the Underground Railroad.
- Students can explore several internet resources that are listed below.

Resources

Books

- Adler, David A. A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman. New York: Scholastic, 1992.
- Adler, David A. A Picture Book of Sojourner Truth. New York: Scholastic, 1994.
- Freedman, Florence B. Two Tickets to Freedom. New York: Scholastic, 1971.
- Hopkinson, Deborah. Sweat Clara and the Freedom Quilt. New York: Knopf, 1993.
- Monjo, F.N. The Drinking Gourd. USA: Harper Trophy, 1970.
- Roop, Peter and Connie. Who Conducted the Underground Railroad and Other Questions about the Path to Freedom. New York: Scholastic, 2008.
- Schroeder, Alan and Jerry Pinkney. Minty. New York: Dial Books, 1996.

Websites

- Underground Railroad- National Geographic
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/99/railroad/j1.html>
- Levi Coffin House- The “Grand Central Station” of the Underground Railroad
<http://www.waynet.org/levicoffin/default.htm>
www.womenfolk.com/
http://www.ushistory.com/teach_rail.htm
<http://www.freedomcenter.org/underground-railroad/>
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2944.html>
http://www.africanaonline.com/slavery_quilts.htm