

# Extraordinary Women from U.S. History



*Readers Theatre for Grades 4-8*

Chari R. Smith

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# Introduction

“Readers theatre is a presentation by two or more participants who read from scripts and interpret a literary work in such a way that the audience imaginatively sense characterization, setting, and action. Voice and body tension rather than movement are involved, thus eliminating the need for the many practice sessions that timing and action techniques require in the presentation of a play” (Laughlin and Latrobe, 1990, 3).

Traditionally, the primary focus of readers theatre is on an effective reading of the script, not on a dramatic more memorized presentation. Generally, there are minimal props and movement on the stage.

The scripts in this collection were developed from historical events. Elements have been added for the purpose of illustrating the time period in which the women lived. Some of the characters are fictitious and represent people these famous women were likely to have met.

Students are not expected to memorize lines in readers theatre. Instead, they read from the scripts during the presentation. The focus is on learning about the historical events of the women’s lives and bringing those events to life in the classroom. Although students are not creating a dramatic production of the script, the nature of the presentation encourages the development of important skills. The students who read are building their oral presentation skills while the students in the audience build their listening skills.

Students are able to explore historical events through a new medium and gain an appreciation for the experiences these women endured. Readers theatre is easy to prepare, thus making it a perfect choice for presenting to parents and other classes for special days when a program is expected.

## GETTING STARTED

For the first read through, a script takes approximately 30–45 minutes to complete. With rehearsals, a script may take 20 minutes. Once you have chosen which script to present, make enough copies for everyone in your class. Next, assign the parts to those students who volunteer. There is no need to have formal auditions for the characters. Students should then read through the script on their own and may highlight their lines. This preparation will allow them to become familiar with the script. You can also choose to do two scripts at the same time and divide the students into two groups. Each group can then present their script to the other group.

For the presentation, you will need to make sure you have a large enough space. If your classroom doesn’t have a large open area, you may want to consider reserving a larger space for that time period. Having enough space for the presenters to stand and for the audience to sit is an important consideration to have a successful presentation.

The preparation time is minimal and allows the scripts to be easily incorporated into your lesson plans. The chapters are organized into sections. These sections include background, presentation suggestions, list of characters, props, the script, and follow-up activities.

## Background

Each chapter contains a background. This provides an easy reference for you when determining which script is best appropriate for your lesson plans. This summary provides basic information about the woman's life depicted in the script, as well as other pertinent facts about her.

## Presentation Suggestions

Presentation Suggestions follows the Background information. Generally, there are a few presentation suggestions for each play. Recommendations for staging and backdrops may be included in this section.

For the staging in readers theatre, readers traditionally stand—or sit on stools, chairs, or the floor—in a formal presentation style. The narrators may stand with the script placed on a music stand slightly off to one side, with one on each side.

The position of the reader indicates the importance of the role. For example, in *Harriet's Road to Freedom*, Harriet should be positioned front and center through most of the reading. When there are several characters that have brief parts, the characters may enter for their reading and then leave the stage. You may also choose to simply have all students sit in a circle and read through the script. Students may also have additional ideas on arrangements. Their suggestions should be encouraged to include them in the process of creating a presentation.

If you choose a script to present for parents or another class, you may want to consider creating a simple backdrop. This is easily accomplished by using large cardboard boxes. Students can draw, paint, or use another medium to create a backdrop. A simple backdrop may be a field and sky setting the tone for the presentation or a mural depicting the life the woman lived. You may also want to consider collaborating with the art teacher if you are preparing a formal presentation. Students can create the backdrop in art class with the guidance of the art teacher.

## Props

Props are used sparingly in readers theatre. Each chapter contains a list of props that are optional for each script. Props may include a handkerchief, purse, or a book. Anything hand-held is considered a prop.

If you choose to use props, you may also want to consider assigning a student to be propmaster. The propmaster would be responsible for handing the reader the necessary prop that the script calls for. The props may be kept in a box off to one side of the stage and the propmaster would then deliver the prop to the character that needs it.

## List of Characters

Each script has a varying number of parts. Each script has two narrators, but if you have a large class, you may divide the narrator role into three or four parts. If the number of characters in a script is greater than the number of students in your class, assign students multiple parts.

Most of the scripts have two to three parts that are flexible. For example, in *Anthony's Fight for Women's Rights* the list of characters calls for "women at the registrar's office." This may mean one student or five students play this role.

## Follow-up Activities

These activities are designed for further exploration of the women's life. They may include research projects, writing assignments and/or improvisational theatre games discussed in Chapter Two. You may choose to use improvisational theatre to further explore the time period discussed. Improvisational theatre is an excellent tool to encourage creativity, build teamwork, and develop oral presentation skills.

## CONCLUSION


The chapters are designed to make it easy for you to use readers theatre in your classroom. These scripts may be used several times. You may also consider preparing these presentations for assemblies, parent's day, or other performance opportunities.

Once students have presented the scripts, they may choose to develop the script further into a production. This activity offers students the opportunity to work together to create a dramatic production. They may choose to eliminate the narrators and implement stage direction, as well as additional characters.

They also may choose another event in the woman's life and create their own play about that portion of the person's life. For example, *Eleanor* depicts the early portion of Eleanor Roosevelt's life. Students may create a script based on the latter part of Eleanor's life when she was the first lady, or on other events that occurred during her lifetime.

## REFERENCE

Laughlin, Mildred Knight, and Kathy Howard Latrobe. *Readers Theatre for Children: Scripts and Script Development*. Englewood, CO: Teacher Ideas Press, 1990.

Chapter Four  
  
**Harriet Tubman**  
(1820–1913)

Harriet's Road to Freedom

**BACKGROUND**

Harriet Tubman was known as Minty as a child. She grew up to become one of the most renowned conductors on the Underground Railroad. Born a slave on a Maryland plantation, Harriet was frequently rented out to other plantation owners. She took the Underground Railroad to freedom and after that became conductor for the railroad herself. Fiercely dedicated to the freedom of slaves, she put her own life at risk many times to save others. She was known later in life as General Tubman and Moses because of her rescues of more than three hundred slaves.

This play depicts the early portion of her life and follows her road to freedom.

**PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS**

Consider having Harriet put on a red bandanna at the point when she goes from being called Minty to Harriet. You may also want to have Francis and Harriet using real scrub brushes and buckets when scrubbing the floor. Jim and Harriet may use real hoes when hoeing the weeds in the field.

For a backdrop, cardboard can be used. Consider painting fields on the backdrop to give the feeling of being on a plantation. For staging, it may be more effective to have the narrators on opposite sides of the stage. Harriet may be center stage. As other characters move in and out of the play, Harriet may move stage left to make room for the additional characters.

**PROPS (OPTIONAL)**

1. Red bandanna
2. Pretend baby in a blanket, to be Miss Susan's baby
3. Two hoes
4. Bucket with scrub brushes
5. Muskrat trap
6. Washcloth
7. Bowl and spoon for cornmeal mush
8. Small piece of paper for the Quaker woman
9. Purse with coins in it for Mrs. Cook
10. Blanket

## LIST OF CHARACTERS

1. Narrator 1
2. Narrator 2
3. Harriet Tubman, *a young girl who was a slave*
4. Mama Rit, *Harriet's mother*
5. Daddy Ben, *Harriet's father*
6. Edward Brodas, *Master on the plantation*
7. Mrs. James Cook, *a weaver*
8. Mr. James Cook, *a muskrat hunter*
9. Miss Susan, *Plantation owner*
10. Quaker woman, *part of the Underground Railroad*
11. Francis, *a house slave*
12. Jim, *a field slave*
13. Mama pig
14. Overseer, *watches over the slaves in the fields*

***Optional:***

Other slaves in the fields  
piglets

## ||| HARRIET'S ROAD TO FREEDOM |||

### *Scene One*

*Setting: A plantation in Bucktown, Maryland.*

**Narrator 1:** AraMinty Ross was born a slave on a plantation in Maryland in 1820. She was one of eleven children born to Ben and Rit Ross.

**Narrator 2:** Back then, young girls had a pet name.

**Narrator 1:** Hers was Minty.

**Narrator 2:** When girls became young women, they adopted their Christian name.

**Narrator 1:** Hers was Harriet.

**Narrator 2:** Minty slowly made her way back home from the fields. She had been carrying water to the slaves since sunrise. She talked to herself as she walked.

**Harriet:** Red leaves. Yellow leaves. It's harvest time. Harvest time again.

**Narrator 1:** Harriet approached her home, a small, windowless, one-room cabin. She heard Master Brodas shouting at her mother.

**Master Brodas:** Enough! She is my slave and I will rent her out if need be.

**Mama Rit:** Please Master Brodas, she's so young. You have already taken away so many of our children. Please don't take my Minty.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet froze in her steps. Master Brodas saw her and shouted.

**Master Brodas:** I'm sending you off to work for someone else. Come with me.

**Mama Rit:** No, please. She's just six years old.

**Harriet:** I don't want to go away!

**Narrator 1:** She ran past Master Brodas and into her mother's arms. Master Brodas was furious. He pulled Harriet from her mother.

**Master Brodas:** Enough of this nonsense. You are to come with me NOW.

**Narrator 2:** Master Brodas began to pull his whip out from his belt. Harriet reluctantly let go of her mother and followed Master Brodas. She sadly looked back at her mother.

**Mama Rit:** Be strong, my Minty, be strong.

**Narrator 1:** Harriet worried that she would never see her family again like her brothers and sisters. She bit her lower lip to keep from crying. Her mother went back into the small cabin as Master Brodas took Harriet away.

**Narrator 2:** The master brought Harriet to Mrs. Cook. She was a weaver. Although she made beautiful cloth, she was not a pleasant woman.

**Master Brodas:** Mrs. Cook, here is the girl I told you about. She will be able to help you with any of the tasks you need completed.

**Narrator 1:** Mrs. Cook glared at Harriet. She took money from her purse and handed it to Master Brodas.

**Mrs. Cook:** She'll do, I suppose. This is the payment we agreed upon.

**Narrator 2:** Master Brodas took the money and left.

**Master Brodas:** Good day, Mrs. Cook.

**Narrator 2:** Beautiful cloth lay all around the room. Mrs. Cook picked up a small piece of cornbread from the table and handed it to Harriet.

**Mrs. Cook:** Here is your supper. I don't want to hear anything from you. You will sleep on the floor in this room. I expect you to be ready to work in the morning.

**Narrator 1:** Mrs. Cook left Harriet in the cold dark room. She didn't even have a blanket or pillow.

**Narrator 2:** Outside the wind whistled through the trees. Harriet curled up on the cold hard floor and whispered to herself.

**Harriet:** I just want to be with my family again. Please.

**Narrator 1:** The next morning, Mrs. Cook woke Harriet with a sharp holler.

**Mrs. Cook:** Get up. You have work to do girl. Up now!

**Harriet:** Yes ma'am.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet slowly rose to her feet and rubbed her eyes. She felt her stomach growl with hunger.

**Mrs. Cook:** You will help me make cloth. Stand right over there. Here is your yarn. Take the yarn and wind it carefully. Don't pull too hard or it will break. I don't take to mistakes, so make sure you do it right the first time.

**Harriet:** Yes, ma'am.

**Narrator 1:** Mrs. Cook sat at her loom while Harriet held the yarn. Harriet worked day after day in that room. Winding yarn, she was careful not to break it for fear of being whipped. She watched the leaves on the trees from the window and quietly said to herself.

**Harriet:** Red leaves. Yellow leaves. I just want to be outside, be with my family again.

**Narrator 2:** Mrs. Cook didn't think Harriet worked fast enough.

**Mrs. Cook:** Stupid girl. You're no good to me in here. Let's see how you like working for the master.

**Narrator 1:** So, Harriet was put to work for Mr. James Cook. Her job was to check the muskrat traps to see if they were full. It was freezing and she didn't even have a coat or shoes to keep her warm.

**Mr. Cook:** You need to check the traps on the other side of the stream. Any full traps, bring them back to me.

**Harriet:** Yes sir.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet crossed the freezing water barefoot while Mr. Cook stood and watched. She found one full trap and brought it back to him.

**Mr. Cook:** I need someone who can move quickly. I can do the work faster myself.

**Narrator 1:** After many days of working in the freezing weather, Harriet became sick. She could hardly stand because she felt so weak.

**Mr. Cook:** You move slower and slower every day.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet coughed as a fever swelled inside her. She continued to work for Mr. Cook until finally her fever consumed her and she could no longer work. Mr. Cook decided he was done with her.

**Mr. Cook:** You're no good to me here. Back to Brodas you go.

## *Scene Two*

*Setting: In Rit and Ben Ross's cabin.*

**Narrator 1:** Harriet was back home, in the small windowless cabin. She lay asleep on the hard floor as Mama Rit pressed a cloth onto Harriet's forehead. Daddy Ben shook out a blanket and placed it over Harriet to keep her warm.

**Mama Rit:** My Minty. So sick.

**Daddy Ben:** She looks like she is waking up. You're home now, Minty. With us again.

**Harriet:** Am I home?

**Daddy Ben:** Yes, you are. Just rest now.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet was relieved to be home again. Mama Rit cared for Harriet as much as she could.

**Narrator 1:** It took six weeks for Harriet to get well again. One evening she sat outside with her daddy.

**Harriet:** Daddy Ben, what do you reckon is beyond this farm and the fields?

**Daddy Ben:** I don't know, Minty. I suppose we'll never know.

**Harriet:** Don't you want to know?

**Daddy Ben:** You're awful young to ask such questions, Minty.

**Harriet:** The leaves are coming back onto the trees. It's almost seed time. I wonder if the trees past these farms look the same.

**Daddy Ben:** Maybe one day, if we're lucky, we'll know.

**Harriet:** You really think so?

**Narrator 2:** Daddy Ben stared into his daughter's innocent, pleading eyes.

**Daddy Ben:** You never know what might lie ahead of us, Minty. All we really know is we're here today. Tomorrow is an unknown.

**Narrator 1:** When Harriet turned seven years old, Master Brodas planned to rent out Harriet again. Mama Rit begged him to change his mind.

**Master Brodas:** Rit, I will not argue this with you. She has to go.

**Mama Rit:** Please, last time she got so sick. Let her stay with us, Master Brodas.

**Harriet:** Don't send me away again, Master Brodas. I want to stay here. Please!

**Master Brodas:** It's time. Now, give me that slave.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet held on to Daddy Ben with all her might. Daddy Ben leaned down toward her. Master Brodas tapped his whip.

**Daddy Ben:** Minty, we didn't even get to say good-bye to our other children. At least today, we can say good-bye.

**Harriet:** Daddy Ben, I don't want to go.

**Daddy Ben:** I know, but you have no choice.

**Narrator 1:** Daddy Ben let go of Harriet's hand. He turned his back and walked away. He sighed heavily as he and Rit left their little girl, again.

### *Scene Three*

*Setting: Miss Susan's plantation house. Harriet and Francis, another slave, are scrubbing the floor.*

**Narrator 1:** Harriet's new master was Miss Susan. By day, Harriet was to clean the large plantation house. By night, she held Miss Susan's new baby.

**Francis:** We're lucky to work in this house. It's better than the fields.

**Harriet:** I don't think so. I'd rather be outside, working with Daddy Ben.

**Francis:** Doing man's work? I don't think so. I'd rather be right here, cleaning. It's not so bad really.

**Harriet:** Not so bad? We are not allowed to go outside when we want. I hardly get to sleep.

**Francis:** That would be hard. Up with that baby by night, cleaning by day. Maybe the fields would be kinder to you. But you're too little.

**Harriet:** I'm seven, that's not too little.

**Francis:** No? You look little to me.

**Narrator 2:** Miss Susan came into the room to check on the floor. Harriet and Francis stopped talking immediately. Miss Susan inspected the floor.

**Miss Susan:** This floor is still dirty. Do it again. If it's not clean by the next time I come in here, you'll both get whipped.

**Francis:** Yes, ma'am.

**Harriet:** Sorry, ma'am.

**Narrator 1:** Miss Susan stormed out of the room, leaving Francis and Harriet alone again. Harriet started to snuffle and quietly cry.

**Francis:** Now, don't go and do that. Miss Susan is just about as mean as they can get. We'll just scrub it all down again.

**Harriet:** I just want to go home, Francis. I just wish I could be home.

**Francis:** I know, Minty. We all wish we could be home. I was sold to Miss Susan three years ago. Left my mama and all my brothers and sisters. We all got sold to different masters. I consider myself lucky to be here in this house, where it doesn't get too cold or too hot. The work isn't as bad as others have it.

**Harriet:** I just want to be free.

**Francis:** Keep your voice down. You don't want anyone to hear you talk like that. You'd get the whipping of a lifetime!

**Harriet:** I don't care. I want to be free.

**Narrator 2:** The next day, Harriet was standing in the kitchen waiting for Miss Susan's orders for the day. A bowl of lump sugar sat on the table. Harriet had never had anything sweet before.

**Miss Susan:** You will dust the house today. I expect it to be spotless when we return from our walk.

**Harriet:** Yes, Missus.

**Narrator 1:** Miss Susan turned away from Harriet to put on her coat. Harriet reached for a lump of sugar. At that moment, Miss Susan turned back around.

**Miss Susan:** That's it! You are a useless, stupid slave girl.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet knew she was in for a whipping of a lifetime. She looked at the open door and ran.

**Miss Susan:** Stupid girl!

**Narrator 1:** Harriet knew the trouble she was in, but couldn't stand the thought of one more whipping from Miss Susan. She hid in a pigpen and stole scraps of food from the pigs. She whispered to herself.

**Harriet:** I don't know how much longer I can stay in this pigpen.

**Mama Pig:** (*snort*)

**Narrator 2:** For days, Harriet stayed there until she became so hungry that she returned back to the house. She meekly walked in the back door when Miss Susan saw her.

**Miss Susan:** You're not worth the money I'm paying for you! You're going back.

**Narrator 1:** Miss Susan returned Harriet to Master Brodas.

**Master Brodas:** Miss Susan. Why have you brought the slave girl here?

**Miss Susan:** This girl is not a house slave, she's completely useless. Put her to work in the fields.

**Master Brodas:** I'm so sorry Miss Susan. Maybe we can talk—

**Miss Susan:** I don't want to talk. There's nothing I want to hear from you or that I want to say. Good day to you.

**Narrator 2:** Miss Susan angrily left. Master Brodas stared at Harriet.

**Master Brodas:** I guess the only place left for you is in the fields.

#### *Scene Four*

*Setting: In Mama Rit's and Daddy Ben's cabin.*

**Narrator 2:** Back home again, Mama Rit was stirring a pot of cornmeal mush over a fire. Harriet was so relieved to be out of Miss Susan's house. The sound of that crying baby still rang in her ears.

**Narrator 1:** Mama Rit saw the scars from the beatings Miss Susan gave her.

**Mama Rit:** Minty, you have so many wounds.

**Harriet:** Miss Susan whipped me every time her baby cried. I couldn't stay awake all night to rock the baby, so the baby cried.

**Daddy Ben:** It's not your fault, Minty. It's not.

**Harriet:** I'm just happy to be home. I don't ever want to leave you both again.

**Narrator 1:** Rit brought Harriet a bowl of cornmeal mush. The first bite warmed her tired body.

**Mama Rit:** Pleasing those folks is next to impossible. They can do anything they want with you. Anything. Working in a master's house is better than the fields.

**Harriet:** I want to work in the fields. I want to be outside, breathe the air. It's closer to feeling free than being trapped in someone's house. Outside I can watch the sky, the trees, and even hear birds now and then. I want to work in the fields.

**Daddy Ben:** I think you're too little to work in the fields Minty.

**Harriet:** I'm not too little. I *can* work in the fields.

**Narrator 2:** Master Brodas took Miss Susan's advice and put Harriet to work in the fields. Harriet learned how to plow the ground, hoe the weeds, chop wood, and load the wagons. She tried to work as fast as the other workers, so the overseer wouldn't whip her.

**Narrator 1:** By the time she was eleven years old, she was working in the fields from sunup to sundown. One day, she was hoeing the weeds with the other slaves.

**Jim:** Harriet, you better move faster. The overseer is on his way.

**Narrator 1:** Harriet looked over her shoulder and saw the overseer marching toward her. She began to dig the hoe deep into the ground, pulling the weeds out of the earth.

**Overseer:** Keep it moving, girl. I will take the whip to you.

**Harriet:** Yes sir.

**Narrator 2:** The overseer stopped to watch Jim dig his hoe into the ground. He glared at Jim, so Jim began to work faster. At long last, the overseer left.

**Jim:** I can't stand it when he does that. Stares at us.

**Harriet:** He's not looking now. Stand up for a minute and look up.

**Narrator 1:** Jim kept working. Harriet stretched her back and looked into the sky.

**Harriet:** It's another beautiful day.

**Jim:** Harriet, what are you doin'?

**Harriet:** Breathing. The air outside is fresh and free.

**Narrator 2:** Jim watched Harriet. He looked into the same place in the sky she looked. He continued to work as he spoke.

**Jim:** You hear about that underground road?

**Harriet:** Stop lying Jim.

**Jim:** I'm not lying.

**Harriet:** A road that goes under the ground?

**Jim:** It's underground because it's a secret, and a way to freedom.

**Harriet:** Freedom?

**Jim:** Up North, black women and men are free. The road goes up North.

**Harriet:** How do you find this road?

**Jim:** Don't know.

**Narrator 1:** Harriet was thrilled to hear of an underground road. For years, she dreamed of freedom. She still worked in the fields, day after day, dreaming of the day she would find the underground road.

**Narrator 2:** When she was fourteen years old, an overseer threw a lead weight toward a runaway slave. He missed and hit Harriet by mistake. She was left with a large scar on her forehead and for the rest of her life had "sleeping spells." She continued to work in the fields, despite her spells.

**Narrator 1:** Her favorite days were the ones when she worked with Daddy Ben chopping the trees.

**Harriet:** I'm old enough now. It's time I wore a bandanna like the other women.

**Daddy Ben:** I agree. That's a nice bright red.

**Harriet:** Thanks. And I'm old enough to be called Harriet, Minty is a child's name.

**Daddy Ben:** Harriet, I have news. Master Brodas died. Our new master is John Stewart.

**Harriet:** I heard already Daddy Ben.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet stopped chopping the wood. She leaned on her ax and faced Daddy Ben.

**Harriet:** Don't worry about me, Daddy Ben. I can't be a slave my whole life. I plan to find that underground road and be free. Can you help me learn how to get along on my own?

**Narrator 1:** From that day forward, Daddy Ben taught Harriet all he knew about the woods, swamps, and rivers of Maryland. For fifteen more years, Harriet worked as a slave. She met and married John Tubman, a free black man. Even though her husband was free, Harriet was still a slave.

**Narrator 2:** One day when Harriet was headed home from the fields, a woman stopped her. She was dressed in a simple dark dress. Harriet recognized she was a Quaker. The woman softly called to Harriet.

**Quaker:** Harriet.

**Harriet:** How do you know my name?

**Woman:** From the scar on your forehead. I wanted to find you today because we Quakers have heard that Mr. Stewart is in need of money. He plans to sell you for a good price to a cotton plantation in the South.

**Narrator 1:** Harriet's eyes widened as she drew a deep breath.

**Woman:** We try to help slaves who want to be free. Harriet, take the underground road. It's not a real road, but it's the way to freedom in the North. In the North, slavery is illegal. So we call this road the Underground Railroad.

**Harriet:** How do I find this road?

**Narrator 2:** The woman handed Harriet a small piece of paper.

**Woman:** Give this paper to the first conductor on the Underground Railroad. The conductors are people who will help you move along the Underground Railroad. Follow the Choptank River forty miles to its beginning. Then follow the road to Camden, and look for the white house with green shutters. A conductor will help you there.

**Harriet:** Thank you, ma'am.

**Narrator 1:** The Quaker woman quietly slipped away. Harriet stared at the piece of paper, then quickly tucked it in her hand. She didn't want anyone to know her plans.

**Harriet:** I wonder if the leaves change color in the North. It won't matter to me if they do or don't. I'll be free. Soon, I'll be free.

### *Epilogue*

**Narrator 1:** Harriet traveled roughly 157 miles on the Underground Railroad from Bucktown, Maryland, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**Narrator 2:** After she arrived in the North, she took a job in the kitchen of a hotel. But her dedication to free slaves never diminished. She became a conductor herself on the Underground Railroad.

**Narrator 1:** From 1850 to 1861, she made nineteen trips to the South. She led more than three hundred slaves to freedom even though there was a reward of \$40,000 for Harriet's capture. That didn't stop her, and she continued her mission to free slaves.

**Narrator 2:** Slaves began to call her Moses because, like Moses, she led people out of captivity.

**Narrator 1:** Conductors on the Underground Railroad led more than 75,000 slaves to the North to freedom.

**Narrator 2:** Harriet Tubman devoted her life to the needs of others. In her lifetime, she was a nurse, spy, and a cook. In 1865, her dream of freedom came true. The Thirteenth Amendment was passed, outlawing slavery in all parts of the United States. Harriet died in Auburn, New York, in 1913 at the age of ninety-three.

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

These follow-up activities are based on the improvisational theatre exercises discussed in Chapter Two. For further explanation of any of the games, please refer to that chapter.

Use the Sculptures Game and have students create sculpture scenes from events that happened during this time period. Examples include scenes from the Civil War, slaves escaping through the forest, or the signing of the Thirteenth Amendment. You may want to discuss other events with students prior to doing the sculpture scenes.

Situation Improv offers the opportunity to further explore this time period. Ask students to write down three situations that could occur during Harriet's lifetime. Students then choose from a hat and improvise that situation.

Examples may include:

Working in the fields

Harriet reaching the North, what did she do first?

The signing of the Thirteenth Amendment

Two slaves preparing to escape

Harriet leading slaves to the Underground Railroad and one slave is afraid and won't continue

Have students create their own situations, and act them out. These activities are a great way for students to continue to use theatre to learn.

## REFERENCES

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