

ordinary PEOPLE
extraordinary
COURAGE

MEN AND WOMEN OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Lesson 1: Introduction to The Underground Railroad

The Objective:

The objective of this lesson is to introduce students to the background of the Underground Railroad using the acclaimed documentary, *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage*.

The Overview:

Students will declare their understandings of the UGRR prior to viewing the film and then clear up misconceptions that they had prior to the viewing of the content after watching the six chapters of the documentary.

Standards:

- Indiana Standards: 3rd grade: 3.1.5,3.1.6, 3.1.7, 3.3.3 4th grade: 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.15 5th grade: 5.1.20 8th grade: 8.1.24,8.1.25 U.S. History: USH 1.3
- Kentucky Standards (2018*) 5th grade: SS-05-5.1.1, 5.2.4, 2.3.1,2.3.2 8th grade: SS-08-2.1.1, 2.3.1, 4.1.1, 4.2.3, 4.3.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.4 U.S. History

Materials:

- *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage: Men and Women of the Underground Railroad in the Indiana and Kentucky Borderland*, 15 minute elementary version or 60 minute middle/high version
- Post it Notes/Paper
- Documentary Note-Taking **Graphic Organizer** (page 3)
- **Reflection Sheet** (page 4)

Timing:

- (2) 45- minute sessions- breaking up the documentary into two sessions with notetaking and introduction/reflection or
- (1) 1.5- hour session to view the documentary in entirety. The entire documentary is 60 minutes.



LESSON PROGRESSION:

Lesson 1. Begin by projecting the words Underground Railroad. Give students time to stop and think about what they know about The Underground Railroad, and have them record on post it notes/ a list on lined paper.

Lesson 2. After a few minutes of collecting ideas, create a class compilation of pre-instruction thinking. This will be something that you want to save, and then refer back to as the lesson series progresses. In an upper-elementary or middle school setting- an anchor chart would be an ideal place to store student thinking.

Lesson 3. Introduce students to the documentary Ordinary People, Extraordinary Courage: Men and Women of the Underground Railroad in the Indiana and Kentucky Borderland. Students will be viewing the documentary as a way to gain understanding of the topic, and begin to see how the geographical location of Southern Indiana and Northern Kentucky impacted the connection to the Underground Railroad.

Lesson 4. If viewing the 15 minute version, watch in entirety. If viewing the 60 minute version, have students view each "Chapter" of the documentary and take notes in the **Graphic Organizer**. (Two Day Plan: Day 1- Chapters 1,2,3 Day 2- Chapters 4,5,6)

Lesson 5. Once the viewing of the documentary is complete, have students go back to their original thinking about the Underground Railroad that they documented. Have students select one big idea from their list. For example, a student could have recorded that they thought, "the Underground Railroad actually required runaway slaves to travel underground." They would select this idea- right or wrong- and use it as the basis of their reflection.

Lesson 6. Once their one big idea is selected, have students transfer it to the **Reflection Sheet**.

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

1. Students will complete the Reflection document that asks them to compare their original thinking, to what they know now after watching the documentary.
2. The reflection has questions asks students to specifically define their original thinking as truth or misconception and then support their thinking with evidence supported from the documentary.
3. Students may share their thinking if time allows, or it can be turned in for a graded writing to demonstrate learning assignment.



Graphic Organizer

**Chapter 1:
Desperate for Freedom**

**Chapter 2:
At the River's Edge**

**Chapter 3:
Crossing to New Albany**

**Chapter 4:
The Black Community in
New Albany**

**Chapter 5:
Conductors and Friends**

**Chapter 6:
Long Road to Freedom**



Reflection

Big Idea:

Was your idea a misconception or a fact?

What evidence from the documentary helped you to classify your original thinking that way? Use your notes as a guide and give specific examples from the documentary to support your thinking.