

from **Harriet Tubman: Conductor
on the Underground Railroad**

Biography by Ann Petry

When is a **RISK** worth taking?

COMMON CORE

RI 1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly. **RI 3** Analyze how a text makes connections between individuals, ideas, or events.

Some people risk their lives needlessly looking for a thrill. Others hold themselves back from accomplishment because they are afraid to take a chance. How can you be sure when it's right to put your safety or reputation on the line? In the biography you are about to read, you will meet a woman who took enormous risks to help others because she believed all people have the right to freedom.

QUICKWRITE Think about a time when you took a risk. In a brief paragraph, describe the risk and why you took it. What were the results? Looking back, was the risk worth taking?



● TEXT ANALYSIS: CHARACTERIZATION

Whether they are describing fictional characters or real people, skillful writers can make you feel as if you've met the person you're reading about. To bring figures to life in this way, writers use the following methods of **characterization**:

- describing the person's physical appearance
- presenting the person's own thoughts, speech, and actions
- revealing other people's reactions to the person
- directly commenting on the person

As you read, pay attention to the methods Ann Petry uses to create a portrait of the biography's subject, Harriet Tubman.

● READING STRATEGY: ASK QUESTIONS

Have you ever found yourself reading without fully understanding the words in front of you? If so, pause and ask yourself **questions** about confusing parts. When you read to find the answers, you will probably find that more information stays with you.

As you read this biography, take time to note places where you become confused or lose track of ideas. Use a chart like the one shown to record your questions and their answers.

<i>My Questions</i>	<i>Answers</i>
<i>How does Harriet Tubman avoid getting caught?</i>	

▲ VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

The boldfaced words help Ann Petry tell about one of Harriet Tubman's journeys for freedom. Try to figure out what each word means in the context of its sentence.

1. After days of wear, his shirt was wrinkled and **disheveled**.
2. A good leader can **instill** a feeling of confidence in others.
3. Music can often **evoke** a pleasant memory.
4. Days on their feet made them long to **linger** at each stop.
5. She used clever stories to **cajole** them to take risks.
6. His **sullen** attitude discouraged others in the group.
7. Her positive attitude helped **dispel** their fears.
8. Her **eloquence** helped convince them to follow her.

Ann Petry

1908–1997

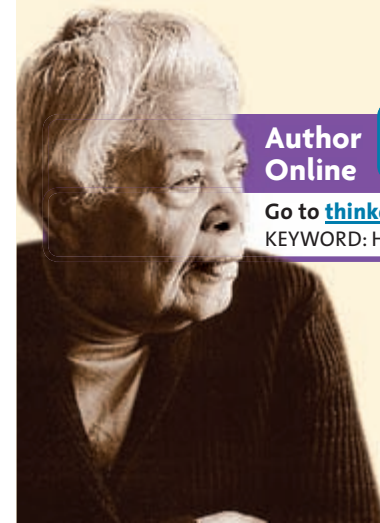
Making History Speak

The descendant of a runaway slave from Virginia, Ann Petry grew up in a comfortable middle-class household in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Hers was the only African-American family in town. Despite her father's respected position as the town's pharmacist, Petry experienced racism growing up. Much of her writing describes the struggles of African Americans against prejudice in New England and in Harlem, where she moved in the 1930s. After Petry had a daughter of her own, she became interested in writing for young readers. In addition to her biography of Harriet Tubman, Petry wrote four other books for young people and four books for adults. She said that writing about the lives of real people helped her "make history speak across the centuries." She wanted to remind readers of the important contributions that African-American men and women have made to American history.

BACKGROUND TO THE BIOGRAPHY

The Underground Railroad

In the period before and during the Civil War, many people enslaved in the South fled north to freedom using a secret network of escape routes known as the Underground Railroad. The "conductors" on the Underground Railroad were brave men and women who provided the escaping people with food, hiding places, and guidance to the next "station." Harriet Tubman was one of the most famous of these conductors.



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Complete the activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

Harriet

Tubman:

CONDUCTOR ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Ann Petry

The Railroad Runs to Canada

A long the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in Dorchester County, in Caroline County, the masters kept hearing whispers about the man named Moses, who was running off slaves. At first they did not believe in his existence. The stories about him were fantastic, unbelievable. Yet they watched for him. They offered rewards for his capture. **A**

They never saw him. Now and then they heard whispered rumors to the effect that he was in the neighborhood. The woods were searched. The roads were watched. There was never anything to indicate his whereabouts. But a few days afterward, a goodly number of slaves would be gone from the plantation. Neither the master nor the overseer had heard or seen anything
10 unusual in the quarter.¹ Sometimes one or the other would vaguely remember having heard a whippoorwill call somewhere in the woods, close by, late at night. Though it was the wrong season for whippoorwills. **B**

Sometimes the masters thought they had heard the cry of a hoot owl, repeated, and would remember having thought that the intervals between the low moaning cry were wrong, that it had been repeated four times in succession instead of three. There was never anything more than that to suggest that all was not well in the quarter. Yet when morning came, they invariably discovered that a group of the finest slaves had taken to their heels.

20 Unfortunately, the discovery was almost always made on a Sunday. Thus a whole day was lost before the machinery of pursuit could be set in motion. The posters offering rewards for the fugitives could not be printed until Monday.

Analyze Visuals ▶

What **symbols** do you notice in this painting?

A ASK QUESTIONS

What are you wondering about Moses?

B CHARACTERIZATION

Reread lines 6–13. What does the author tell you about Moses' actions?

1. **quarter**: the area in which enslaved people lived.



The men who made a living hunting for runaway slaves were out of reach, off in the woods with their dogs and their guns, in pursuit of four-footed game, or they were in camp meetings saying their prayers with their wives and families beside them. **C**

Harriet Tubman could have told them that there was far more involved in this matter of running off slaves than signaling the would-be runaways by imitating the call of a whippoorwill, or a hoot owl, far more involved than a matter of waiting for a clear night when the North Star was visible.

In December, 1851, when she started out with the band of fugitives that she planned to take to Canada, she had been in the vicinity of the plantation for days, planning the trip, carefully selecting the slaves that she would take with her.

She had announced her arrival in the quarter by singing the forbidden spiritual—“Go down, Moses, ’way down to Egypt Land”²—singing it softly outside the door of a slave cabin, late at night. The husky voice was beautiful even when it was barely more than a murmur borne³ on the wind. **D**

Once she had made her presence known, word of her coming spread from cabin to cabin. The slaves whispered to each other, ear to mouth, mouth to ear,

C ASK QUESTIONS

Why does Moses choose Saturday night to help enslaved people escape?

D ASK QUESTIONS

What is Harriet Tubman’s relationship to Moses?

▼ Analyze Visuals

Consider the colors, shapes, and figures in this painting. What **mood** do they convey?

-
2. “Go down, Moses, ’way down to Egypt Land”: a line from an African-American folk song.
 3. borne: carried.



Through Forest, Through Rivers, Up Mountains (1967), Jacob Lawrence. Tempera, gouache and pencil on paper, 15¹¹/₁₆” × 26⁷/₈”. Smithsonian Institution, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. © 2007 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

“Moses is here.” “Moses has come.” “Get ready. Moses is back again.” The ones who had agreed to go North with her put ashcake and salt herring in an old bandanna, hastily tied it into a bundle, and then waited patiently for the signal that meant it was time to start.

There were eleven in this party, including one of her brothers and his wife. It was the largest group that she had ever conducted, but she was determined that more and more slaves should know what freedom was like.

She had to take them all the way to Canada. The Fugitive Slave Law⁴ was no longer a great many incomprehensible words written down on the country’s
50 lawbooks. The new law had become a reality. It was Thomas Sims, a boy, picked up on the streets of Boston at night and shipped back to Georgia. It was Jerry and Shadrach, arrested and jailed with no warning.

She had never been in Canada. The route beyond Philadelphia was strange to her. But she could not let the runaways who accompanied her know this. As they walked along she told them stories of her own first flight, she kept painting vivid word pictures of what it would be like to be free. **E**

But there were so many of them this time. She knew moments of doubt when she was half-afraid, and kept looking back over her shoulder, imagining that she heard the sound of pursuit. They would certainly be pursued. Eleven
60 of them. Eleven thousand dollars’ worth of flesh and bone and muscle that belonged to Maryland planters. If they were caught, the eleven runaways would be whipped and sold South, but she—she would probably be hanged. **D**

They tried to sleep during the day but they never could wholly relax into sleep. She could tell by the positions they assumed, by their restless movements. And they walked at night. Their progress was slow. It took them three nights of walking to reach the first stop. She had told them about the place where they would stay, promising warmth and good food, holding these things out to them as an incentive to keep going. **F**

When she knocked on the door of a farmhouse, a place where she and her
70 parties of runaways had always been welcome, always been given shelter and plenty to eat, there was no answer. She knocked again, softly. A voice from within said, “Who is it?” There was fear in the voice.

She knew instantly from the sound of the voice that there was something wrong. She said, “A friend with friends,” the password on the Underground Railroad.

The door opened, slowly. The man who stood in the doorway looked at her coldly, looked with unconcealed astonishment and fear at the eleven
disheveled runaways who were standing near her. Then he shouted, “Too many, too many. It’s not safe. My place was searched last week. It’s not safe!”
80 and slammed the door in her face.

She turned away from the house, frowning. She had promised her passengers food and rest and warmth, and instead of that, there would be

E CHARACTERIZATION

What do Tubman’s words to the runaways tell you about her?

D GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT

Notice in line 61 that the author begins a sentence with the **dependent clause** “If they were caught.”

F ASK QUESTIONS

What questions do you have about the journey?

disheveled (dī-shev’əld)
adj. messy; untidy

4. **Fugitive Slave Law:** a law by which enslaved people who escaped could be recovered by their owners.

hunger and cold and more walking over the frozen ground. Somehow she would have to **instill** courage into these eleven people, most of them strangers, would have to feed them on hope and bright dreams of freedom instead of the fried pork and corn bread and milk she had promised them.

They stumbled along behind her, half-dead for sleep, and she urged them on, though she was as tired and as discouraged as they were. She had never been in Canada but she kept painting wondrous word pictures of what it would be like. She managed to **dispel** their fear of pursuit, so that they would not become hysterical, panic-stricken. Then she had to bring some of the fear back, so that they would stay awake and keep walking though they drooped with sleep.

Yet during the day, when they lay down deep in a thicket, they never really slept, because if a twig snapped or the wind sighed in the branches of a pine tree, they jumped to their feet, afraid of their own shadows, shivering and shaking. It was very cold, but they dared not make fires because someone would see the smoke and wonder about it.

She kept thinking, eleven of them. Eleven thousand dollars' worth of slaves. And she had to take them all the way to Canada. Sometimes she told them about Thomas Garrett, in Wilmington. She said he was their friend even though he did not know them. He was the friend of all fugitives. He called them God's poor. He was a Quaker⁵ and his speech was a little different from that of other people. His clothing was different, too. He wore the wide-brimmed hat that the Quakers wear.

She said that he had thick white hair, soft, almost like a baby's, and the kindest eyes she had ever seen. He was a big man and strong, but he had never used his strength to harm anyone, always to help people. He would give all of them a new pair of shoes. Everybody. He always did. Once they reached his house in Wilmington, they would be safe. He would see to it that they were.

She described the house where he lived, told them about the store where he sold shoes. She said he kept a pail of milk and a loaf of bread in the drawer of his desk so that he would have food ready at hand for any of God's poor who should suddenly appear before him, fainting with hunger. There was a hidden room in the store. A whole wall swung open, and behind it was a room where he could hide fugitives. On the wall there were shelves filled with small boxes—boxes of shoes—so that you would never guess that the wall actually opened.

While she talked, she kept watching them. They did not believe her. She could tell by their expressions. They were thinking, New shoes, Thomas Garrett, Quaker, Wilmington—what foolishness was this? Who knew if she told the truth? Where was she taking them anyway?

That night they reached the next stop—a farm that belonged to a German. She made the runaways take shelter behind trees at the edge of the fields before she knocked at the door. She hesitated before she approached the door, thinking, suppose that he, too, should refuse shelter, suppose— Then she

instill (ĭn-stĭl') v.
to supply gradually

dispel (dĭ-spĕl') v.
to drive away

SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTION



In the years leading up to the Civil War, the United States was bitterly divided about slavery. Many enslaved people in the South escaped all the way to Canada to reach freedom.

5. **Quaker:** a member of a religious group called the Society of Friends.

thought, Lord, I'm going to hold steady on to You and You've got to see me through—and knocked softly. **G**

She heard the familiar guttural voice say, "Who's there?"

She answered quickly, "A friend with friends."

He opened the door and greeted her warmly. "How many this time?" he asked.

130 "Eleven," she said and waited, doubting, wondering.

He said, "Good. Bring them in."

He and his wife fed them in the lamplit kitchen, their faces glowing, as they offered food and more food, urging them to eat, saying there was plenty for everybody, have more milk, have more bread, have more meat.

They spent the night in the warm kitchen. They really slept, all that night and until dusk the next day. When they left, it was with reluctance. They had all been warm and safe and well-fed. It was hard to exchange the security offered by that clean warm kitchen for the darkness and the cold of a December night.

"Go On or Die"

140 **H**arriet had found it hard to leave the warmth and friendliness, too.

But she urged them on. For a while, as they walked, they seemed to carry in them a measure of contentment; some of the serenity and the cleanliness of that big warm kitchen **lingered** on inside them. But as they walked farther and farther away from the warmth and the light, the cold and the darkness entered into them. They fell silent, **sullen**, suspicious. She waited for the moment when some one of them would turn mutinous. It did not happen that night.

Two nights later she was aware that the feet behind her were moving slower and slower. She heard the irritability in their voices, knew that soon someone
150 would refuse to go on.

She started talking about William Still and the Philadelphia Vigilance Committee.⁶ No one commented. No one asked any questions. She told them the story of William and Ellen Craft and how they escaped from Georgia. Ellen was so fair that she looked as though she were white, and so she dressed up in a man's clothing and she looked like a wealthy young planter. Her husband, William, who was dark, played the role of her slave. Thus they traveled from Macon, Georgia, to Philadelphia, riding on the trains, staying at the finest hotels. Ellen pretended to be very ill—her right arm was in a sling, and her right hand was bandaged, because she was supposed to have
160 rheumatism. Thus she avoided having to sign the register at the hotels for she could not read or write. They finally arrived safely in Philadelphia, and then went on to Boston. **H**

No one said anything. Not one of them seemed to have heard her.

G CHARACTERIZATION

What do Tubman's thoughts suggest about the way she deals with hardship?

linger (lɪŋg'gər) *v.*
to remain or stay longer

sullen (sʊl'ən) *adj.*
showing silent
resentment; sulky

H ASK QUESTIONS

Why does Tubman tell stories of how other enslaved people escaped?

6. **Philadelphia Vigilance Committee:** fundraising organization that helped people who escaped enslavement.

She told them about Frederick Douglass,⁷ the most famous of the escaped slaves, of his **eloquence**, of his magnificent appearance. Then she told them of her own first vain effort at running away, **evoking** the memory of that miserable life she had led as a child, reliving it for a moment in the telling.

But they had been tired too long, hungry too long, afraid too long, footsore too long. One of them suddenly cried out in despair, “Let me go back. It is
170 better to be a slave than to suffer like this in order to be free.”

She carried a gun with her on these trips. She had never used it—except as a threat. Now as she aimed it, she experienced a feeling of guilt, remembering that time, years ago, when she had prayed for the death of Edward Brodas, the Master, and then not too long afterward had heard that great wailing cry that came from the throats of the field hands, and knew from the sound that the Master was dead.

One of the runaways said, again, “Let me go back. Let me go back,” and stood still, and then turned around and said, over his shoulder, “I am going back.”

She lifted the gun, aimed it at the despairing slave. She said, “Go on with us
180 or die.” The husky low-pitched voice was grim. ❶

He hesitated for a moment and then he joined the others. They started walking again. She tried to explain to them why none of them could go back to the plantation. If a runaway returned, he would turn traitor, the master and the overseer would force him to turn traitor. The returned slave would disclose the stopping places, the hiding places, the cornstacks they had used with the full knowledge of the owner of the farm, the name of the German farmer who had fed them and sheltered them. These people who had risked their own security to help runaways would be ruined, fined, imprisoned.

She said, “We got to go free or die. And freedom’s not bought with dust.” ❶
190 This time she told them about the long agony of the Middle Passage⁸ on the old slave ships, about the black horror of the holds, about the chains and the whips. They too knew these stories. But she wanted to remind them of the long hard way they had come, about the long hard way they had yet to go. She told them about Thomas Sims, the boy picked up on the streets of Boston and sent back to Georgia. She said when they got him back to Savannah, got him in prison there, they whipped him until a doctor who was standing by watching said, “You will kill him if you strike him again!” His master said, “Let him die!”

Thus she forced them to go on. Sometimes she thought she had become nothing but a voice speaking in the darkness, **cajoling**, urging, threatening.
200 Sometimes she told them things to make them laugh, sometimes she sang to them, and heard the eleven voices behind her blending softly with hers, and then she knew that for the moment all was well with them.

She gave the impression of being a short, muscular, indomitable woman who could never be defeated. Yet at any moment she was liable to be seized by one of those curious fits of sleep, which might last for a few minutes or for hours.

eloquence
(ě'ə-kwəns) *n.* an ability to speak powerfully and persuasively

evoke (ĭ-vōk') *v.* to call forth; to summon

❶ CHARACTERIZATION

Why does Tubman take such a drastic action? Consider what this tells you about her character.

❶ CHARACTERIZATION

How does Tubman’s statement reflect her attitude about the journey?

cajole (kə-jōl') *v.* to urge gently; to coax

7. **Frederick Douglass:** African-American leader who worked to end slavery.

8. **Middle Passage:** sea route along which enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas.

Even on this trip, she suddenly fell asleep in the woods. The runaways, ragged, dirty, hungry, cold, did not steal the gun as they might have, and set off by themselves, or turn back. They sat on the ground near her and waited patiently until she awakened. They had come to trust her implicitly, totally. They, too, had come to believe her repeated statement, “We got to go free or die.” She was leading them into freedom, and so they waited until she was ready to go on. **K**

Finally, they reached Thomas Garrett’s house in Wilmington, Delaware. Just as Harriet had promised, Garrett gave them all new shoes, and provided carriages to take them on to the next stop.

By slow stages they reached Philadelphia, where William Still hastily recorded their names, and the plantations whence they had come, and something of the life they had led in slavery. Then he carefully hid what he had written, for fear it might be discovered. In 1872 he published this record

K CHARACTERIZATION

What do the runaways’ actions tell you about Tubman?

An Underground Railroad (1967), Jacob Lawrence. Gouache and tempera on paper, 14¼” × 13”. © 2007 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



◀ Analyze Visuals

What can you infer about the people in the painting?

in book form and called it *The Underground Railroad*. In the foreword to his
220 book he said: “While I knew the danger of keeping strict records, and while
I did not then dream that in my day slavery would be blotted out, or that the
time would come when I could publish these records, it used to afford me
great satisfaction to take them down, fresh from the lips of fugitives on the
way to freedom, and to preserve them as they had given them.” **L**

William Still, who was familiar with all the station stops on the
Underground Railroad, supplied Harriet with money and sent her and her
eleven fugitives on to Burlington, New Jersey.

Harriet felt safer now, though there were danger spots ahead. But the biggest
part of her job was over. As they went farther and farther north, it grew colder;
230 she was aware of the wind on the Jersey ferry and aware of the cold damp in
New York. From New York they went on to Syracuse, where the temperature
was even lower.

In Syracuse she met the Reverend J. W. Loguen, known as “Jarm” Loguen.
This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. Both Harriet and Jarm Loguen
were to become friends and supporters of Old John Brown.⁹

From Syracuse they went north again, into a colder, snowier city—
Rochester. Here they almost certainly stayed with Frederick Douglass, for he
wrote in his autobiography:

240 On one occasion I had eleven fugitives at the same time under my roof,
and it was necessary for them to remain with me until I could collect
sufficient money to get them to Canada. It was the largest number I ever
had at any one time, and I had some difficulty in providing so many with
food and shelter, but, as may well be imagined, they were not very fastidious
in either direction, and were well content with very plain food, and a strip
of carpet on the floor for a bed, or a place on the straw in the barnloft.

Late in December, 1851, Harriet arrived in St. Catharines, Canada West (now
Ontario), with the eleven fugitives. It had taken almost a month to complete this
journey; most of the time had been spent getting out of Maryland.

That first winter in St. Catharines was a terrible one. Canada was a strange
250 frozen land, snow everywhere, ice everywhere, and a bone-biting cold the like of
which none of them had ever experienced before. Harriet rented a small frame
house in the town and set to work to make a home. The fugitives boarded with
her. They worked in the forests, felling trees, and so did she. Sometimes she took
other jobs, cooking or cleaning house for people in the town. She cheered on
these newly arrived fugitives, working herself, finding work for them, finding
food for them, praying for them, sometimes begging for them. **M**

Often she found herself thinking of the beauty of Maryland, the mellowness
of the soil, the richness of the plant life there. The climate itself made for an
ease of living that could never be duplicated in this bleak, barren countryside.

L ASK QUESTIONS

What do you want to know about the people who help the escapees?

Language Coach

Word Definitions

The word *fastidious* means “difficult to please.” Reread lines 241–245. What were the fugitives not fastidious about?

M CHARACTERIZATION

How does Tubman help the fugitives?

9. **Old John Brown:** anti-slavery leader who was executed.




Harriet and the Promised Land No. 15: Canada Bound (1967), Jacob Lawrence. Gouache and tempera on paper, 16½" × 28¾". The University of Michigan Museum of Art. © 2007 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

260 In spite of the severe cold, the hard work, she came to love St. Catharines, and the other towns and cities in Canada where black men lived. She discovered that freedom meant more than the right to change jobs at will, more than the right to keep the money that one earned. It was the right to vote and to sit on juries. It was the right to be elected to office. In Canada there were black men who were county officials and members of school boards. St. Catharines had a large colony of ex-slaves, and they owned their own homes, kept them neat and clean and in good repair. They lived in whatever part of town they chose and sent their children to the schools.

When spring came she decided that she would make this small Canadian city her home—as much as any place could be said to be home to a woman who traveled from Canada to the Eastern Shore of Maryland as often as she did.

In the spring of 1852, she went back to Cape May, New Jersey. She spent the summer there, cooking in a hotel. That fall she returned, as usual, to Dorchester County, and brought out nine more slaves, conducting them all the way to St. Catharines, in Canada West, to the bone-biting cold, the snow-covered forests—and freedom.

She continued to live in this fashion, spending the winter in Canada, and the spring and summer working in Cape May, New Jersey, or in Philadelphia. She made two trips a year into slave territory, one in the fall and another in the spring. She now had a definite crystallized purpose, and in carrying it out, her life fell into a pattern which remained unchanged for the next six years.  **N**

▲ Analyze Visuals

What **details** do you notice in this painting that portray the escapees' journey?

N CHARACTERIZATION

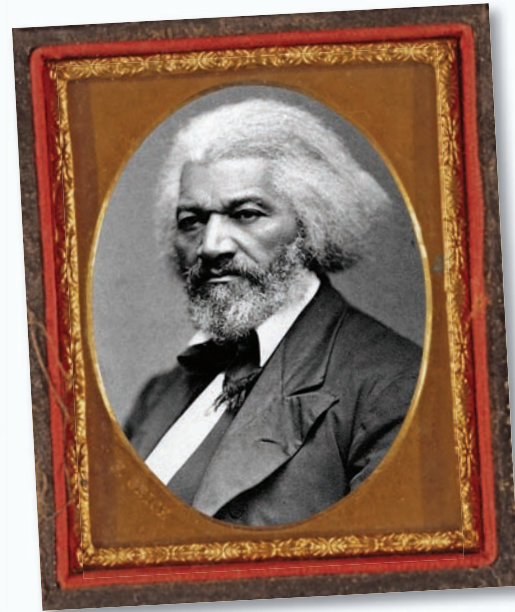
What does the way Tubman lives her life tell you about her?

LETTER Frederick Douglass, a vocal African-American statesman and journalist, had a very different style of leadership than Harriet Tubman did. Douglass wrote the following letter when the first biography of Tubman was about to be published.

August 29, 1868

Dear Harriet:

I am glad to know that the story of your eventful life has been written by a kind lady, and that the same is soon to be published. You ask for what you do not need when you call upon me for a word of commendation.¹ I need such words from you far more than you can need them from me, especially where your superior labors and devotion to the cause of the lately enslaved of our land are known as I know them. The difference between us is very marked. Most that I have done and suffered in the service of our cause has been in public, and I have received much encouragement at every step of the way. You, on the other hand, have labored in a private way. I have wrought in the day—you in the night. I have had the applause of the crowd and the satisfaction that comes of being approved by the multitude, while the most that you have done has been witnessed by a few trembling, scarred, and footsore bondmen and women, whom you have led out of the house of bondage, and whose heartfelt “God bless you” has been your only reward. The midnight sky and the silent stars have been the witnesses of your devotion to freedom and of your heroism. Excepting John Brown—of sacred memory—I know of no one who has willingly encountered more perils and hardships to serve our enslaved people than you have. Much that you have done would seem improbable to those who do not know you as I know you. It is to me a great pleasure and a great privilege to bear testimony to your character and your works, and to say to those to whom you may come, that I regard you in every way truthful and trustworthy.



Your friend,

Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass

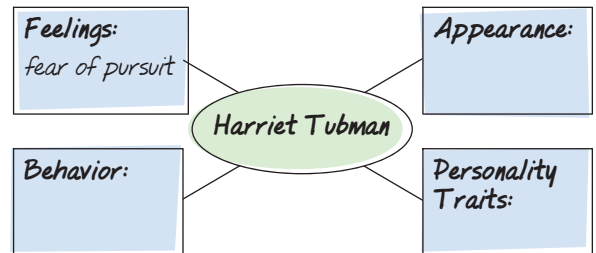
1. **commendation** (kŏm'ən-dā'shən): an expression of praise or recommendation.

Comprehension

- 1. Recall** What is the purpose of Harriet Tubman's trips to Maryland?
- 2. Clarify** Why does the man at the first stop on the Underground Railroad turn away the group of runaways?
- 3. Summarize** How does life for the runaways change in Canada?

Text Analysis

- 4. Examine Questions** Review the chart of questions and answers you made as you read. Which questions added the most to your understanding of the selection? Why?
- 5. Examine Characterization** Review the four methods of **characterization**. Which method of characterization does Petry use the most in her biography? Tell what you learn about Tubman through this method.
- 6. Analyze a Character** Complete a character map for Harriet Tubman like the one shown. Then create a one-sentence description of her.
- 7. Make Judgments** Read the "Letter to Harriet Tubman" by Frederick Douglass. Why does Douglass believe that Harriet Tubman is "superior" to him? Decide why Douglass might have felt this way, and support your opinion with details from the biography and the letter.



COMMON CORE

RI 1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly. **RI 3** Analyze how a text makes connections between individuals, ideas, or events. **W 9** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Extension and Challenge

- 8. Readers' Circle** Based on the information in the selection, would you have been willing to trust Harriet Tubman with your life? Discuss which of Tubman's qualities make her a good leader and why you might be hesitant to follow her.
- 9. SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTION** Because the Fugitive Slave Law allowed slave owners to recover enslaved people who escaped, Harriet Tubman led escapees on Underground Railroad routes to Canada, where they reached freedom. Research more about the approximately 18 other trips to Canada that Tubman led and present your findings to the class. Consider what continued to motivate her to risk her life to help others.



Harriet Tubman's route from Maryland to Canada

When is a **RISK** worth taking?

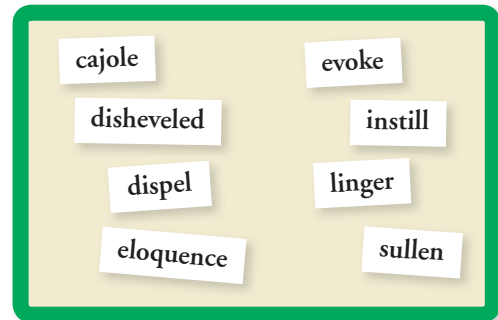
How has reading this selection affected your thoughts about taking risks in life?

Vocabulary in Context

▲ VOCABULARY PRACTICE

Choose the word from the list that makes the most sense in each sentence.

1. Harriet had to make sure that they didn't _____ too long in any one place.
2. She had to work hard to _____ a sense of hope.
3. At times, it was difficult for Harriet to _____ feelings of despair.
4. When she saw the _____ looks on people's faces, she knew it was time for another encouraging story.
5. When they arrived at a destination, they were hungry and their appearance was _____.
6. Harriet often had to _____ the fugitives into moving toward their next stop.
7. Harriet said that Frederick Douglass was a man of great _____.
8. Harriet tried to _____ in the fugitives a sense of responsibility.



ACADEMIC VOCABULARY IN WRITING

- appropriate
- assess
- intelligence
- motive
- role

What responsibilities did Harriet Tubman have in the Underground Railroad? Using at least one of the Academic Vocabulary words, write a paragraph describing her **role**.

VOCABULARY STRATEGY: SYNONYMS AS CONTEXT CLUES

Context clues are often found in the words and sentences that surround an unfamiliar, ambiguous, or novel word. These clues can help you figure out the meaning of the word. A **synonym**, or a word that has a similar definition, can be a context clue. For example, a sentence from the selection refers to “a voice speaking in the darkness, cajoling, urging. . . .” If you know the word *urging*, you can figure out what *cajoling* means because they are synonyms.

PRACTICE Identify the synonyms of each boldfaced word. Then define the word.

1. They had come to trust her **implicitly**, just as they believed in her totally.
2. She was considered **indomitable** because of her undefeatable spirit.
3. Harriet longed for **contentment**. Like most, she wanted to feel ease and happiness. However, she would never be satisfied until the journey ended.
4. The group was not **fastidious** or fussy about what they ate or where they slept.
5. In the end, the lure of freedom was its own **incentive**. It was the reason to endure the hardship.
6. The escape was unimaginable, and the journey almost **incomprehensible**.

COMMON CORE

L 4a Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph) as a clue to the meaning of a word. **L 5b** Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

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Language

◆ GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: Avoid Clauses as Fragments

Review the **Grammar in Context** note on page 271. A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb. An **independent, or main, clause** expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A **dependent, or subordinate, clause** cannot. Dependent clauses begin with words such as *although, before, because, so that, when, while, and that*. To avoid a sentence fragment, join a dependent clause (shown in yellow) to an independent clause, which will be the **main clause** in the combined sentence.

Original: Harriet Tubman was willing to take risks. **Because she wanted everyone to be free.**

Revised: Harriet Tubman was willing to take risks **because she wanted everyone to be free.**

PRACTICE Find four fragments in the following paragraph. Then fix the fragments by combining independent and dependent clauses.

Harriet Tubman would be hanged. If slaveholders caught her. Tubman was willing to kill. So that the Underground Railroad would remain a secret. It made Tubman happy. When former slaves had the right to vote. Although her work was dangerous. She did not ask for any reward.

For more help with clauses, see page R62 in the **Grammar Handbook**.

READING-WRITING CONNECTION



Demonstrate your understanding of “Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad” by responding to this prompt. Then use the **revising tip** to improve your writing.

WRITING PROMPT

Extended Constructed Response: Write a Character Sketch

You learned about Harriet Tubman from the way Ann Pety characterized her. Now it’s your turn to describe this historic figure for an elementary school audience. Write a **two- or three-paragraph character sketch** that uses various methods of characterization to capture the personality of Harriet Tubman.

REVISING TIP

Review your character sketch. Have you included any sentences that combine a dependent clause with an independent clause? If not, revise.

COMMON CORE

L1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing.

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