

DIGITAL LESSON GUIDE

COURAGE – HARRIET TUBMAN



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Courage means showing up for yourself or others despite feeling fear, doubt or vulnerability. It can be hard to do sometimes. However, it is an important lesson to learn early on in life. This lesson gives a real-life example of a woman who stepped into her courage and freed herself and others. It helps girls understand the importance of bravery and how to incorporate the character trait into their lives and relationships.



SECTION 1: PREPARATORY READING

I. INTRODUCTION FROM HEATHER STARK: WHY HARRIET TUBMAN?

Harriet Tubman is the enslaved woman most of us remember learning about in childhood. I remember reading about her in the fourth grade in “Harriet Tubman and The Underground Railroad.” I remember the description of her escape and her journey to freedom. I recall reading how the only thing she had to eat was “waterlogged bread.” I reread that sentence several times, and as a 10-year-old girl, I remember tearing up in fear because I didn’t want her to get caught. I wanted her to make it to safety, which to my child self meant she needed to become small and hide forever.

But Harriet didn’t hide nor did she stay small. In fact, she kept going back into danger to free more enslaved people, risking her life for the lives of others again and again. The story of her life is one long walk filled with many empowerment opportunities for girls to learn about. Her story has everything to offer today’s girls. Every lesson they need to learn can be found in Harriet’s story. It’s almost doing her a disservice by choosing to highlight only her courage.

Now let me offer a disclaimer here by saying the following thoughts are my theory on Harriet Tubman: After researching her, I have come to the conclusion that Harriet was all-encompassing: a confident leader, a clear communicator, a servant and, above all, brave beyond measure.

There was something innate in Harriet that made her a valiant servant. Perhaps that comes when you are born into a world where you are not seen as a person. Maybe that situation makes you empathetic to others, so you strive to make sure they know their value. After all, Harriet freed at least 70 enslaved people before the Civil War and another 700 during it! I imagine every time she started back into slavery territory, she must have been

scared. Perhaps she wondered if this would be the time she would be caught. But she faced those fears with determination. She believed in her mission of freeing others from oppression.

Think about this: Following the North Star, Harriet traveled with other fugitive enslaved people at night; she had to trust that her instincts would tell her which way to go. How many of us really understand what it means to “follow the North Star?” She had to believe in herself and trust in her ability to lead the freedom-seekers north. Not only that, but she had to be able to calm herself and others if emotions ran high, if there was a tense situation or if disagreements emerged while they crept through forests, boarded ships and trains and walked along open roads. She was the leader on that long journey to freedom.

Lastly, her communication as she led her group had to be precise. She would have to be quiet when talking with them, and her actions had to be swift and clear. There could be no confusion while trying to escape from slavery. To free that many people from oppression, you had to know what to say and when to say it: a quality that only the wisest seem to grasp.

Furthermore, Harriet became a spy during the Civil War and a voice for women in the arena of equal rights. She was invited to speak at conventions held for women's suffrage. No, she didn't stay small and safe. She just didn't stop pushing at the limits society tried to use to cage her in. She fought hard to be empowered and to empower others.

Valuing Harriet Tubman's story gives our leaders of tomorrow a head start to developing a well-rounded personality, an advantage in gaining empowerment. Harriet was the real deal—and it all started with a long walk to freedom, leaving us with an even longer list of reasons to learn about her.

SECTION 1: PREPARATORY READING

II. THE JOURNEY OF HARRIET TUBMAN'S LIFE

Harriet's life is well-documented. Her story is so inspiring that it seems as though researchers, journalists and historians want every detail recorded to clearly understand Harriet's life and her motivations. She was more than a slave, more than an activist; she was a life lived in full view— a powerful lesson in courage and in dedicating oneself to serving others.

1820–22: Harriet Tubman was born during this time to enslaved parents. Her birth name was Araminta "Minty" Ross.

1833: An accident left Harriet with seizures and vivid dreams.

1849: Harriets decided to escape to freedom via the Underground Railroad.

1850: Harriet made her first journey back to the South to free enslaved people.

1851: Harriet moved the Underground Railroad's base to the city of St. Catharines in Ontario, Canada, where it would remain for the next six years.

1860: Harriet's last journey south was an effort to emancipate her sister. Upon arriving and learning her sister had died, Harriet instead took another family to freedom.

1861: During the Civil War, Harriet worked as a cook and a nurse in the South while spying and recruiting slaves to fight for the North.

1863: Harriet was the first woman to lead an armed military attack, freeing 700 enslaved people before the Emancipation Proclamation later that year.

1868: Harriet delivered speeches for the Woman Suffrage Movement. That same year, she underwent brain surgery without anesthesia.

1903: Harriet donated her property as a home for "aged and indigent colored people."

1913: Harriet died at age 93 from pneumonia. She was buried at Fort Hill Cemetery in New York with full military honors.

There is not one ounce of Harriet's story that isn't dripping with courage and activism for others. She was tough and loving. Courageous and confident. Grace and grit.

Harriet Tubman Historical Society. (2017). The Timeline of the Life of Harriet Tubman. Retrieved from <http://www.harriet-tubman.org/timeline/>

SECTION 1: PREPARATORY READING

III. CHARACTER TRAIT: COURAGE

Courage requires confidence, grit and maybe even a little sass. It doesn't happen in the absence of fear but, rather, in spite of it. Courage is the shield allowing one to face her fears head-on, whatever they may be. Courage is important to today's girls because it empowers them to be their authentic selves. There always is pressure to conform to others' views, and courage is the road that bypasses peer pressure.

Growing up is full of fearful situations: making mistakes in front of others, not belonging, being ridiculed. Courage equips girls to stand up to bullying behaviors and also to take on extracurricular activities and leadership positions in school. Courage is the tool a girl will use when times are unstable at home, when she learns to drive, advances from elementary school to middle school, graduates high school and steps into adulthood. The list goes on and on. While parents, teachers and important role models in a girl's life can't remove those fears, they can help girls become courageous in their pursuit of an empowered life. Courage is the push all girls need to keep moving forward in life.

While Harriet Tubman's courage was loud, it is vital for girls to remember that small acts of courage are just as important as the bigger ones. Trying out for the school musical when you are nervous or sharing opinions you know to be different from others' views may not be the same thing as risking your life to emancipate others, but these things still require courage. These small acts are important because they allow girls to empower themselves—and, in the process, to empower other girls by letting them know it is okay to stand up for a belief, sing out for a purpose or reach out to help someone in need.

Courage is self-fulfilling empowerment. When a girl is courageous in her life, she starts to understand that she is in charge and she must own her life and her choices. This is an emotional-development milestone and an act of maturity—an important lesson that every girl must learn as she grows from childhood to teen years to adulthood.

SECTION 1: PREPARATORY READING**IV. LESSON CONTENTS**

Below are descriptions of each item we offer as part of the Courage Theme. Depending on your purchase, some of these may not be applicable.

ILLUSTRATED PORTRAIT

Harriet's portrait is the epitome of the theme "light versus dark." She is dressed in calming blue, her face is relaxed and she holds a lantern. One can almost imagine her appearing out of the trees, revealing her presence to the enslaved whom she will lead to freedom. Her calm demeanor must help to take the edge off their anxiety during the harrowing journey.

ACTIVITY BOOKLET

This condensed version of Harriet's story, questions and/or activities pulled from the workbook will be useful for small groups with a limited amount of time. The questions/or activities will deepen the reader's understanding of Harriet's life and why she was given the character trait of Courage.

BIOGRAPHY

From her birth as an enslaved woman to her courageous flight to freedom. We retell the harrowing story of how one woman pursued freedom and managed to free others along the way. This story empowers girls to conquer their fears and live a life full of integrity and freedom.

BIOGRAPHY WORKBOOK

This is where the reader breaks down the lessons Harriet's legacy teaches us and applies them to her life. The questions and/or activities will not only deepen the reader's understanding of our hero but also why she was given the character trait of Courage. They ask girls to reflect on both Harriet's and their own lives and find the space where they intersect. In the workbook, the girls will understand what is required in order to live a courageous life.

TIMELINE POSTER

The timeline is an easy introduction to the life of each of our historical women. It is meant to be an overview of her accomplishments and impact on the world.

PLAY-IT-FORWARD CARDS

The Play-It-Forward Cards in the Courage box are all designed to inspire girls to look for courage in the community. Whether it is thanking a member of the military for her or his service, appreciating another girl for being courageous or simply letting someone know you noticed their courage, these cards are designed to recognize and celebrate this important character trait. Courage is empowerment and confidence.

NECKLACE

Harriet's accessory is a necklace with a lantern on it. It is a reminder to be the light when things get dark. Light always conquers the dark; it doesn't pause or act timid. When it is time to dispel the darkness—to find the courage needed to accomplish something—girls need to let their lights shine.

CHARM

Harriet's charm is the North Star and a disc that reads "Be Courageous," reminding today's girls to keep reaching forward, keep moving, keep being brave.

SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE**I. INSTRUCTIONS**

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Hand out the materials to the girls, allowing them to spend some time going through them independently. If you purchased the charm or accessory, invite them to try it on or talk about how they can use it or add the charm to a bracelet. Give them time to satisfy their curiosity so they can focus on the lesson once you begin. After a few minutes, bring their attention back to you and start the lesson.

The following sections provide you with guidance to get the girls thinking and discussing the topics related to the theme and lesson contents. Use the discussion questions to the extent time allows.

Consider using a whiteboard to note responses, comments and ideas from the group as you go along.

SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

II. TIMELINE POSTER

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

Direct the girls to the timeline. Take turns having the girls read each event on the poster.

QUESTIONS:

- What do you know about slavery?
- After reading the timeline, what do you think is Harriet Tubman's greatest accomplishment?

Great Eight

The Journey OF **HARRIET TUBMAN**

1820-22
ALTHOUGH THE EXACT YEAR OF HER BIRTH IS UNCLEAR, HARRIET TUBMAN WAS BORN DURING THIS TIME ON A PLANTATION IN MARYLAND TO ENSLAVED PARENTS. SHE WAS NAMED ARAMINTA "MINTY" BROS.

EIGHTEEN THIRTY-THREE
AN ACCIDENT LEFT HARRIET WITH SCARES AND VIB CRAMPS.

1849
HARRIET DECIDED TO ESCAPE TO FREEDOM VIA THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.

1850
HARRIET MADE HER FIRST JOURNEY TO FREE SLAVES UPON LEARNING THAT HER BROTHER WAS ABOUT TO BE SOLD.

1851
HARRIET MOVED THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD'S BASE TO CANADA. SHE NEVER LOST ONE SLAVE.

1860
HARRIET'S LAST JOURNEY SOUTH WAS AN EFFORT TO FREE HER SISTERS. WHEN SHE LEARNED HER BROTHER HAD BEEN HARRIET INSTEAD TOOK HER OTHER FAMILY TO FREEDOM.

1863
HARRIET WAS THE FIRST WOMAN EVER TO LEAD AN ARMED MILITARY EXPEDITION, LEADING 700 SLAVES BEFORE THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION LATER THAT YEAR.

EIGHTEEN SIXTY-ONE
DURING THE CIVIL WAR, HARRIET WORKED AS A COOK AND NURSE IN THE SOUTH WHILE SPYING AND RECRUITING SLAVES TO FIGHT FOR THE NORTH.

1863
HARRIET WAS THE FIRST WOMAN EVER TO LEAD AN ARMED MILITARY EXPEDITION, LEADING 700 SLAVES BEFORE THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION LATER THAT YEAR.

1903
HARRIET DONATED HER PROPERTY AS A SCHOOL FOR "AGED AND INFIRM COLORED PEOPLE."

1913
HARRIET DIED AT AGE 88 OF PROSTATE. SHE WAS BURIED AT FORT MEADE CEMETERY IN FREE STATE, MISSOURI, NEAR HER MILITARY HONORS.

SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE**III. ILLUSTRATED PORTRAIT****STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:**

Direct the girls to the portrait.

QUESTIONS:

- What do you already know about Harriet?
- What is the significance of the lantern?
- What do you think Harriet is looking at?
- Describe the look on Harriet's face (calm, wise, caring, etc.).



SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

IV. BIOGRAPHY

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

NOTE: If time is limited, group leaders may consider assigning the reading to be done independently before the group meets.

If the group is reading the biography together, consider doing so during silent reading time, out loud by the facilitator, or by taking turns, each girl reading a paragraph or page.

GUIDED QUESTIONS TO DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIOGRAPHY:

- Did you know Harriet was born Araminta Ross?
- Can you imagine what it would be like to have to take care of a baby at five years old?
- What was Harriet's first act of courage?
- Do you think you could walk 90 miles on foot by yourself for freedom?
- Do you think Harriet ever got scared?
- What do you think she said to herself to keep calm when she did get scared?
- Besides courage, what other character traits do you think Harriet had?



SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

V. ACTIVITY BOOKLET READING SECTION

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

ASK THE GIRLS:

What do you think the quote on the cover of the booklet means?

Have the girls open up the activity booklets and invite them each to take turns reading a paragraph.

OPTIONS:

1. Read parts of the booklet and use the suggested questions below to deepen the discussion and check for understanding.
2. Read the booklets (up to the activity questions) and then use the suggested questions below to deepen the discussion and check for understanding.

GUIDED QUESTIONS TO DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ACTIVITY BOOKLET READING:

- Did you know Harriet was born Araminta Ross?
- Can you imagine what it would be like to have to take care of a baby at five years old?
- What was Harriet's first act of courage?
- Do you think you could walk 90 miles on foot by yourself for freedom?
- Do you think Harriet ever got scared?
- What do you think she said to herself to keep calm when she did get scared?
- Besides courage, what other character traits do you think Harriet had?



SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

VI. ACTIVITY BOOKLET QUESTION SECTION OR BIOGRAPHY WORKBOOK

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

Invite the girls to complete the activities in the back of the booklet and discuss their answers. This is the heart of the lesson. While some girls may not want to share their answers, please allow time for discussion and processing their answers. The objective is for the girls (when applicable) to apply lessons about the woman's life and character trait to their own lives.

The following are the questions found in the Activity Booklet or Biography Workbook. They are meant to be answered independently by the girls in the booklet, but may be referenced as needed in the lesson.

ACTIVITY 1:

- "Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." — Harriet Tubman
- Harriet Tubman believed slavery was wrong. She believed everyone had a right to liberty.
- What is something you feel passionate about and want to help with? It could be aiding an endangered species, helping to end world hunger or doing something to support your town or school. Write it down below.
- Now that you've listed your passions, how can you help?

ACTIVITY 2:

- "Lord, I'm going to hold steady on to You and you've got to see me through." — Harriet Tubman
- Courage comes from fear. There were times that Harriet must have been very fearful and had to calm herself

down to keep going. Harriet did this by praying.

- How does your body feel when you are scared?
- Does your heart race, or do your palms get sweaty? Describe the feeling below.
- What do you do to calm yourself when you are scared?

ACTIVITY 3:

- "I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger." — Harriet Tubman
- Harriet was very proud of the fact she never lost anyone she helped lead to freedom. This was a sign of her courage and service.
- Be courageous this week. Can you stand up for someone being treated unfairly or perhaps conquer a fear you have? Write down your experience.
- How did you feel while you were being courageous?
- Did you feel fear right before you acted?
- What happened to the feeling of fear as you continued to be brave?
- How did your courage make life better?
- Would you do it again?



ACTIVITY 4:

- When Harriet realized she had made it to freedom, she said, “When I found I had crossed that line, I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person. There was such a glory over everything; the sun came like gold through the trees, and over the fields, and I felt like I was in Heaven.”
- Once Harriet realized she was free, she felt like a changed person. Courage has the power to make you feel different, bigger, stronger and even wiser.
- In what ways does courage change a person?
- What happens when people decide to stay in fear?
- How does courage lead to success in life?

ACTIVITY 5:

- No matter what you accomplish in life, people are there to help and support you. Harriet had a network of people in the Underground Railroad network to help her find freedom. She never forgot that and worked to pay the help forward by rescuing other enslaved people.
- You have a network of people ready and willing to help you too. Think of the people that help you when times are tough. Who are they, and why do you think they want to help you?
- Have you ever told them how much you appreciate their support? Write a letter thanking them for always being there for you.

ACTIVITY 6:

- Harriet never stopped learning about the people in her world. She was always talking, listening and observing others. She knew building a strong network of people would help her accomplish her goals in life.
- Invite a trusted adult woman to read Harriet’s story and interview her about it. Perhaps you can learn something from one another about Harriet and her courage! Ask her the following questions and write down her answers.

- What did she learn from Harriet’s story?
- What did she think of Harriet’s journey into courage?
- How does she remind herself to be courageous?

**QUESTIONS TO DEEPEN DISCUSSION
(IF TIME ALLOWS):**

- In your own words, describe what it means to be courageous.
- Who do you know that is courageous?
- Can you be courageous and scared at the same time?
- Read the quote about fear on the very last page. What does that mean to you?

SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

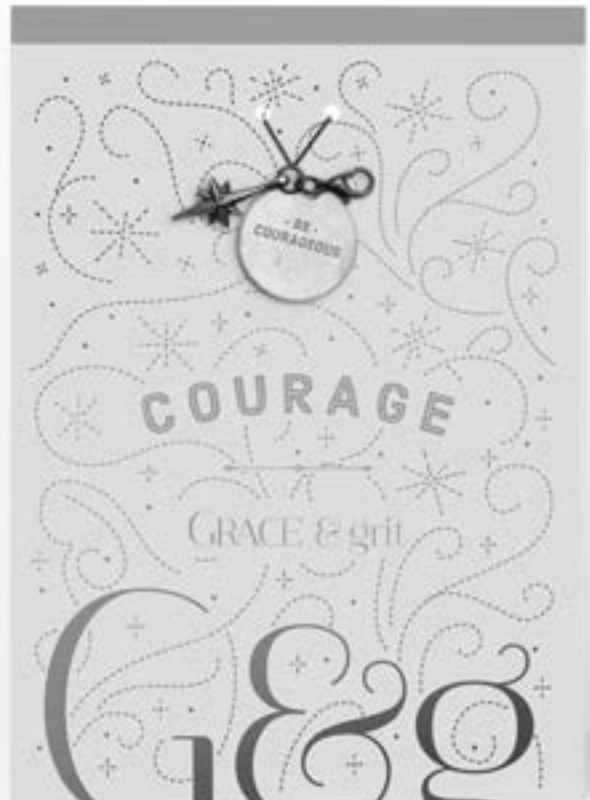
VII. CONTENT DISCOVERY

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

Have the girls take the necklace and the G&G Charm from the box. Use each item as you discuss the following questions.

QUESTIONS:

- What other symbolic meanings could the lantern have besides being used for light at night? (Lighting the path to freedom, or light as a beacon of hope in a dark situation.)
- What is the significance of the North Star on the charm? (Harriet followed the North Star when she was leading slaves through the Underground Railroad.)
- What does the charm say?
- Why do you think it says that?



SECTION 2: GROUP ACTIVITY GUIDE

VIII. PLAY-IT-FORWARD CARDS

STATEMENT OR INSTRUCTIONS:

Tell the girls what the Play-It-Forward Cards are and how they are intended to be used with other girls in their daily lives. Have the girls take the Play-It-Forward Cards from the box and browse through them for a moment.

- Have the girls take the Play-It-Forward Cards and browse through them for a moment.
- Go around the group and have them read the front and back of one card aloud. Ask the girls what that card means to them and how they could use it in everyday life. (Depending on time, you may want to limit this exercise to a few cards.)
- Remind them that, over time, as they choose to pass out a card to another girl with positive intent, their name will go into a drawing to get the tote bag.



SECTION 3

CLOSING DISCUSSION GUIDE

As you close the lesson, you are looking to spark a conversation among the girls about how they plan to use Harriet's inspiration to improve their lives while also helping and supporting one another. The goal is to help them recognize how topics from the lesson apply to their own lives in a positive way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Optional: Use the Timeline Poster as a focal point for open discussion.

- What impresses you most about Harriet?
- What did you find most interesting?
- What are some ways in which you can practice courage in your life?
- How can you help someone else practice courage?
- How do you think this will help you become a courageous person?
- What ideas do you have for using the Play-It-Forward Cards?
- How did this lesson help you?