Reading Objective: Children will examine the life of Harriet Tubman and identify the character traits that made her a hero.

Social Studies Focus: history, American heroes

ELA Skills: key details, use vocabulary

Page 4 Skill: key details

Vocabulary: enslaved, illegal, clever, disguises, inspired

CCSS: RI.2.1, RI.2.4, L.2.6, RI.2.10, SL.2.3

Guided Reading Level: M

Lexile Level: 560L

Editor's Note: In this issue, we made the decision to use the expression “enslaved person” rather than “slave.” The reason for this language choice is to focus on the humanity of the men and women who were enslaved; they were people first, and they were enslaved by others.

3. What is one reason it was dangerous to be a part of the Underground Railroad? (Possible answer: Anyone caught could be punished and sent to jail.)

Preview vocabulary (3 min.)
Next, play the online vocabulary slideshow. This issue’s featured words are enslaved, illegal, clever, disguises, and inspired.

2. Read the Issue
Set a purpose for reading (5 min.)
○ Pass out the issue and discuss the cover. Ask children to study the illustration as you read the text aloud. Then ask them what they think about Harriet so far. Does she seem brave? Does she seem like the kind of person who would give up?

○ Next, read the As You Read prompt on page 2: “Think about why Harriet was a hero.” Encourage children to think about this prompt as they read.

Read together (20 min.)
Pass out the Read and Think printable. Use it to check comprehension as you read the issue together, pausing to ask the questions.
3. Focus on ELA Skills
You can use our printable worksheets to focus on important ELA skills.

ELA Focus: Vocabulary
(15 min.)
Use the Word Work printable to deepen understanding of the words enslaved, illegal, disguises, and inspired.

Editor’s Pick: Character Traits
(15 min.)
(Go to page 2 to see more Editor’s Picks.)
Hand out the What Was Harriet Tubman Like? printables. First, have a class discussion about some of the things Harriet did in her life, such as escape enslavement and return to help others escape.

Ask: “What do these actions say about her? What kind of a person was she?” Have children color in the words that they think describe Harriet. You can also brainstorm and define new words, such as determined.

Last, have them complete part 2 of the activity.

4. Assessment: Reading Checkpoint
Pass out the Reading Checkpoint to review key concepts from the issue and assess students’ proficiency in key nonfiction reading skills.

Go online and download our Assessment Tracker. This handy chart will help you keep track of students’ progress on these key skills through the year.

From the Archive
Here are two past issues you can use to extend your lesson on American historical figures and their character traits:

The Life of Tisquantum from November/December 2018. Tisquantum faced many challenges, including enslavement, but reacted with resilience and strength. This issue and attached lesson plans examine his character traits.

A Hero in the Family from January 2019. In this issue, Martin Luther King Jr.’s granddaughter introduces one of America’s greatest heroes. The issue lists heroic traits and explains how Dr. King embodied each one.

Differentiation Station
You can find a higher-Lexile-level and a lower-Lexile-level version of the article online at www.scholastic.com/sn2.

Higher-Lexile level: 690L
Lower-Lexile level: 540L