

Globe Lesson 14 - The Underground Railroad - Grade 4-5

Skills used Latitude & Longitude
Using scale to measure distance
Using directions
Tracing routes on a map

Vocabulary Underground Railroad, abolitionist

Materials Needed Globe in Horizon Ring Mounting

Lesson

Before slavery was abolished in the United States a network of routes called the ***Underground Railroad*** was used by slaves to escape to freedom. Most of these routes ran north to free states such as Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania and even to Canada. Not all escape routes for slaves ran north, however.

On your globe, circle the city of Nassau, Bahamas at 25°N/77°W. The Bahamas are a group of islands near the southeast coast of Florida. In the mid 1800s they were part of the British Empire and slavery was illegal there.

Draw a line on your globe from Nassau to the Straits of Florida at 24°N/81°W. From this location, continue your line to the westernmost part of Florida at 30°N/87°W. This location is the site of Pensacola, Florida.

In 1844 a Massachusetts ***abolitionist*** by the name of Jonathan Walker tried to smuggle seven slaves from Pensacola to the Bahamas. In this case his attempt was unsuccessful. Walker's boat was captured just off the southern tip of Florida and the slaves were returned to their owners. Use your globe's mileage ring to determine how close the slaves came to gaining their freedom.

(1.) _____ Walker himself was imprisoned and branded

with the letters "SS" which stood for "slave stealer".

Other escape routes led south from Texas into Mexico, where slavery had been abolished, and some slaves even fled south into the swamps of south Florida where they were taken in by Seminole Indians who were still at war with the United States.

Because of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, many routes of the Underground Railroad continued through the free states into Canada. About how far would someone fleeing slavery have to travel if traveling from Memphis, Tennessee, at 35°N/90°W, to the nearest part of Canada, which is just across a river from Detroit, Michigan at 42°N/83°W? (2.) _____