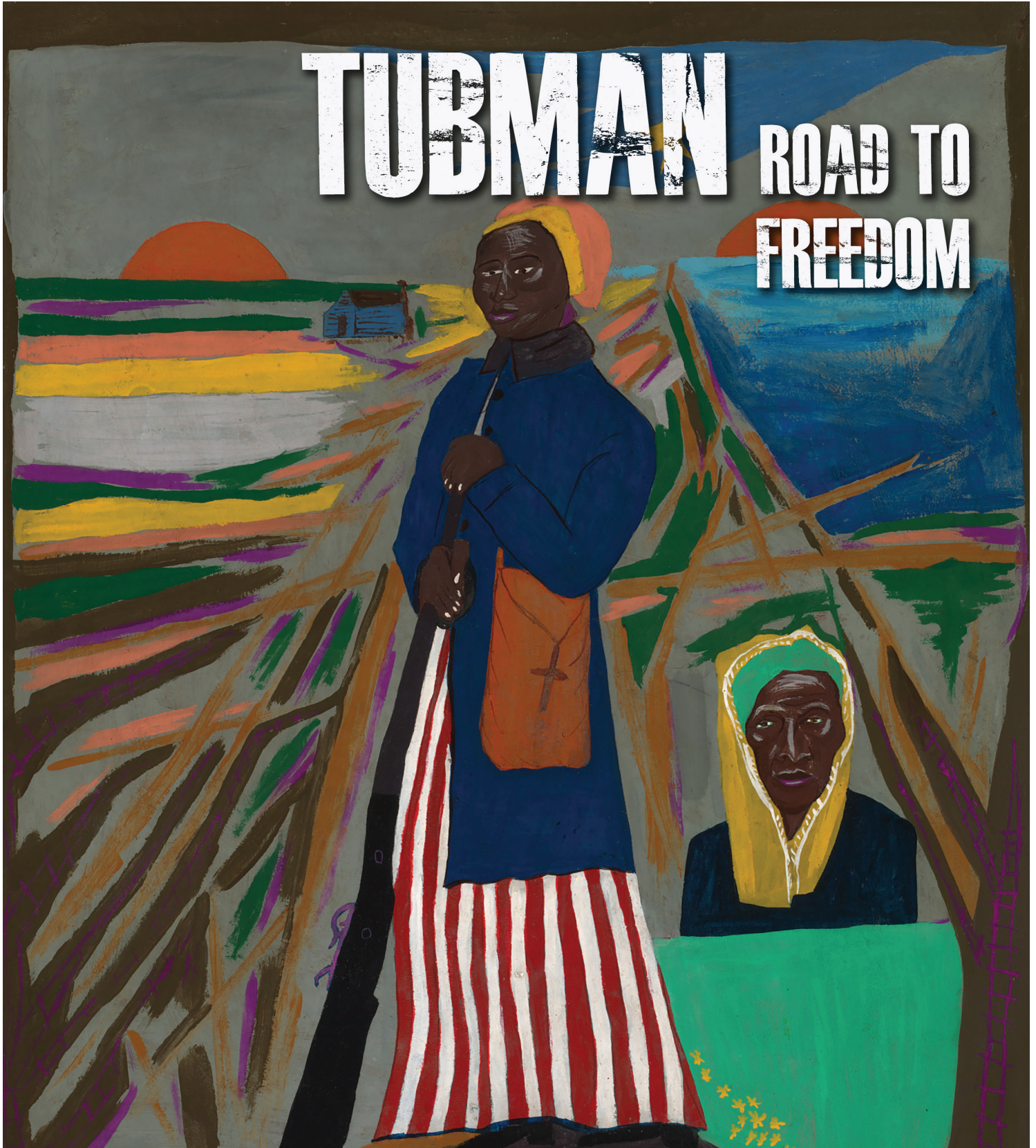




THE REIF

STUDY GUIDE



ABOUT THE REIF

The Reif Center is more than a building.

With two auditoriums, four studio classrooms, an art gallery, and multiple practice rooms, it provides access for people of all ages to explore and exhibit their artistic talents.

The Reif Arts Council proudly produces Reif Education programming including Reif Dance and Theatre Education.

The Reif Center is home to the Grand Rapids Players and the Itasca Orchestra and Strings program. It is the venue for concerts of school bands and choirs.

The lobby gallery is curated by MacRostie Art Center and exhibits professional artists' work as well as multiple student showcases from area schools each year.

In addition to supporting all of these regional programs, the Reif presents a series of events each year, bringing theatre, dance, and music from around the world to our community.



GOING TO THE THEATER

Please encourage your children to visit the rest rooms before the show begins. It is disruptive to visit the rest rooms during a live performance.

We recommend that you provide your children with some guidelines of things to look at and listen for during the performance.

“Going to the Theatre Watching a live performance is very different than watching television or going to the movies. When you see a live performance you play a part too! Your role is an audience member. As an audience member you should obey the following instructions. . . (You may also want to encourage your children to add to this list.)”

Children should be encouraged to:

- A. Watch the performers.
- B. Listen to the music.
- C. Look at the costumes and set designs.
- D. Laugh when they see the performers do something funny.
- E. Clap to show the performers that they are enjoying the performance when the performance has finished. It is customary to applaud when the performers take a bow.

Children should be encouraged NOT to:

- A. Talk or make noise because they might miss something important.
- B. Chew gum or eat because it is disruptive to others and makes a mess at the theater.
- C. Leave their seats before the lights go on because this is very distracting to their neighbors.
- D. Bring phones in the theater because this is disruptive to the dancers and other members of the audience.

WHOSE PORTRAIT IS HANGING IN THE LOBBY?



MYLES REIF

Myles Reif, for whom the center is named, was a former president of Blandin Paper Company who believed in investing in the arts and education. Thanks to his contributions, there is a place for generations of artists to develop and share their craft.



LOIS GILDEMEISTER

The first director of the Reif Center was Lois Gildemeister, who was the greatest champion for the creation of a performing arts center in Grand Rapids. It was Lois' determination and vision that lead the community to come together and realize this dream.

HARRIET TUBMAN

The Moses of her People

Harriet Tubman was born Araminta Ross to Ben and Araminta Ross, a slave couple, sometime around 1820 (the exact date isn't known, as records were not always kept of slave births and deaths). She was hired out at very young ages to neighbors of her master and was often treated especially harshly at these places because of her headstrong nature. As an adolescent, she was hit in the head with a lead weight, when she stepped between an angry master and another slave. She suffered from visions and debilitating periods throughout her life due to that head injury.

She married John Tubman, a free Black man, but in 1849, Araminta escaped to freedom in the North with the help of the Underground Railroad, a network of people who helped slaves to freedom. John refused to go with her, which ended their marriage. She settled in Philadelphia and took the name Harriet Tubman. Soon after she escaped, new laws were passed making it easier for slave catchers to pursue escaped slaves in the North, so she had to be very careful to avoid detection.

Within a year of her escape, returned south to help several family members escape before they were sold to another plantation. Her abilities to avoid detection and her success in helping others escape soon became legendary, and she was soon known as "the Moses of her people", referencing the Biblical character of Moses who led the Children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt.

When the Civil War began in 1861, with the slave-owning states fighting against the Northern states, Tubman volunteered to work as a nurse, cook, and laundress with the United States Army. In 1863, Tubman was asked to organize scouts to infiltrate and map the interior. Her spy ring was responsible for the famed Combahee River Raid in June 1863, which freed over 300 slaves.

After the war ended, she returned to Auburn, NY, where she had a house and where her parents now lived. She became involved in women's suffrage, trying to win women the right to vote, and continued to speak on the lecture circuit on the subject of equal rights for Black Americans.

She died in March, 1913





Follow the Drinking Gourd

When Harriet's Mother hears that she's planning on escaping, she tells Harriet to "follow the drinking gourd" - a common name for the constellation also known as "The Big Dipper."

The Big Dipper has been used by sailors and others to locate north for thousands of years, since if you follow the line from the two stars at the very front of the ladle, it draws a line to the star named "**Polaris**", otherwise known as "the North Star." Polaris is ALWAYS to the north of anyone in the northern hemisphere on earth, and is one of the quickest and easiest to locate stars in the sky, thanks to the Drinking Gourd!

FREEDOM QUILTS

It's a popular legend that quilts were used to aid runaways on the Underground Railroad. While it may not be true, it's absolutely true that Harriet and others would need ways to communicate secretly.

Come up with some ways YOU would let other freedom fighters know how to avoid capture!

*Follow the drinkin' gourd
Follow the drinkin' gourd
For the old man is comin' just to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*When the sun comes back, and the first quail calls
Follow the drinkin' gourd
For the old man is waiting just to carry you to freedom
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*Well the river bank makes a mighty good road
Dead trees will show you the way
Left foot, peg foot, travelin' on
Follow the drinkin' gourd*

*Well the river ends, between two hills
Follow the drinkin' gourd
There's another river on the other side
Follow the drinkin' gourd*



\$150 REWARD



RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he

make his escape to a free state, (in haps he may try to get employment is handy in any capacity as a hoassinett conf

The Underground Railroad was a secret method to help escaped men and women find freedom in the north. Prior to being given a name, The Underground Railroad existed through efforts made by Quakers to aid escaped individuals in the seventeenth century.

Quaker Isaac T. Hopper organized an arrangement in Philadelphia to accomplish this in the early 1800s. Hopper hid slaves in his home and created safe passages for them to travel by. He later moved to New York City and continued his efforts there.

Another Quaker, Levi Coffin, also gave help to escaped individuals, starting when he was only 15-years-old. Coffin explained that he originally started by finding the fugitives himself and would then provide them with assistance on their journey. As time progressed, escaped slaves began to approach Coffin to seek his help.

The first mentions of the railroad were heard as early as 1831 when a man named Tice Davids managed to escape from his Kentucky owner and made his way to Ohio. Davids's owner claimed that an "underground railroad" gave him assistance in his escape.



AN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

HARRIET THE SPY

Early on in the Civil War (1861-1865), Harriet volunteered as a nurse with US Army units made of of Black soldiers. But soon she would be doing something even more demanding - acting as a spy and a scout for the Army!

In June 1863, she became the first woman to lead an armed military raid when she guided Col. James Montgomery and his 2nd South Carolina black regiment up the Combahee River, destroying Confederate outposts, liberating more than 700 slaves, and destroying stockpiles of cotton, food and weapons.

It was of her service to the U.S. Army that she was most proud. She successfully petitioned to receive a veteran's pension, and at her funeral in 1913, she received semi-military honors.



Thousands of free Black men and escaped slaves fought with the Union Army to help defeat the slave-owning states' rebellion. Harriet volunteered, just as these soldiers did, to do whatever they could to defeat the Southern rebellion against the North and end slavery.

Timeline of Slavery in America

1619 First record of African slaves being sold in Jamestown, Virginia

1664 Maryland requires slaves to be held for life - no freedom allowed.

1793 Invention of the cotton gin increases the market for slave labor in cotton-growing states

1820 The "Missouri Compromise" allows more slave states to join the US, as long as each new slave state is matched with a new free state

1850 The Fugitive Slave Act says that even after escaping, a slave can be captured in the North and returned to their "owner" - that a slave is always property, not a person

1860 Abraham Lincoln is elected President with the support of anti-slavery groups in the Northern states.

1861 Eleven slave-owning states start the Civil War, out of fear that Lincoln and the Northern states will make slavery illegal.

1863 Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all slaves in the Confederacy free (even though the war is still being fought).

1865 The Confederacy is defeated, and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution is passed, ending slavery in the US.



How do you Make a Play?

GreatWorks Theatre produces a lot of shows every school year, but the process of putting together a play is pretty similar, whether it's a play for student audiences or a Broadway production!

at left - The BFG

Step One - Find a Story & Write the Play

We look at lots of different stories every year, and choose ones that we think will be entertaining for audiences. A person who writes plays is called a Playwright. Even though they're "writers", the job title uses the old English word "wright", which means a person who 'makes' something.

Step Two - Hire the Actors

Actors find new plays to be in by "auditioning" for the producers, where they will show the producer how they act and sound when playing the specific character. GreatWorks gets anywhere from 500 to 1000 actors every year for our audition process, and will end up hiring 50 to 60 for a season.

Step Three - Set/Costumes/Props

The 'set' describes the physical pieces on stage to help set the mood for the show. Costumes help the audience figure out who the characters are, and 'props' (short for "properties") are the things actors might pick up or carry on stage. All of them are designed to help the story make sense.

Step Four - Practice, practice, practice

Whether you're in a school play or a professional play, you have to learn your lines, learn your "blocking" (where you move on stage), and figure out how to make each moment the best it can be.

With professional actors, knowing how to learn lines quickly and make smart choices about the character and their performance is part of the job - and for most of them, our show is only one of 10 or 15 shows they might be in every year!

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE PLAY

Attending the theatre is very different from watching TV or going to the movies. For one thing, the actors are real people who are performing right then and there. They can see and hear everything that happens in the audience. Because of this, YOU are an important part of the play and it's important to do your job as an audience member well. Here are some tips before you see the play.

1. Please be quiet and respectful so everyone else around you can hear what's happening and so the actors can do their job.
2. If something is funny, it is okay to laugh!
3. The actors may ask you to participate. Don't be afraid to respond, ask a question or volunteer!
4. Keep your hands to yourself and your eyes up front.
5. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
6. Have fun! Enjoy yourself! And if you like the idea of being on stage, make sure to audition next time your school does a show!

