

Name _____

Skill: Reading Comprehension

Read the story and answer the questions.

Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman was born a slave on a plantation in Maryland in 1820. When the owner of the plantation died, she was afraid that she would be sold to work on another plantation. Instead of waiting for this possibility, she escaped to the North in 1849. When she arrived at her destination in Philadelphia, she vowed to return to Maryland to help other slaves escape. During the 1850's she returned to Maryland 19 times and helped about 300 slaves to escape. She used homes of friendly people, both black and white, who helped her in her mission. This network of useful homes and people was called the "underground railroad." Tubman was neither ever caught nor did she ever lose a slave during her rescue missions. She was heard to have said, "I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger." Angry slave owners agreed to reward a total of about \$40,000 to anyone who could capture Harriet Tubman, but still, she was never captured.

During the Civil War, Tubman served as a nurse and a spy for the Union Army in South Carolina. After the war, she helped raise money for black schools. Later in her life, she established a home in Auburn for elderly and poor African Americans. This establishment became known as the Harriet Tubman Home.

1. What is the main idea of this story? (Circle the answer.)
 - A. The Underground Railroad was not really a train.
 - B. Harriet Tubman did a lot to free slaves and help African Americans.
 - C. No one could capture Harriet Tubman.

2. Why did Harriet Tubman want to escape from the plantation in Maryland?

3. What was the "underground railroad"?

4. What did Harriet Tubman do for the Union Army?

5. In what ways did Harriet Tubman help African Americans after the Civil War?
