

Grades 2–8

# Units of Instruction

for gifted learners

In-depth Units to Engage  
All Gifted Learners



Units for the Core  
Disciplines



Lessons Developed  
by Seasoned Gifted  
Education Teachers

A **Prufrock Press** Book

by diana brigham, jessica fell,  
constance simons, kathy strunk, & anthony yodice  
illustrated by mike eustis



# ★ Units of ★ Instruction

for gifted learners



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>



# ★ Units of ★ Instruction★ for gifted learners

by diana brigham, jessica fell,  
constance simons, kathy strunk,  
& anthony yodice

 **Routledge**  
Taylor & Francis Group  
NEW YORK AND LONDON

First published in 2006 by Prufrock.Press Inc.

Published in 2021 by Routledge

605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business.*

© 2006 by Taylor & Francis Group

Illustrations by Mike Eustis

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

ISBN: 9781032142821 (hbk)

ISBN: 9781593631963 (pbk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003239369

# Contents

## Social Studies Units:

Crossing the Land to Freedom, Grade Levels 3–5,  
by Kathy Strunk 1

Media Blitz, Grade Levels 5–8,  
by Anthony Yodice 31

## Science Unit:

Magnificent Mascots!, Grade Level 4,  
by Jessica Fell 59

## Math Units:

Sir Face: A Look at the Surface of Shapes, Grade Levels 2–4,  
by Diana Brigham 87

The Geometry Box Project, Grade Levels 4–5,  
by Connie Simons 137

About the Authors 167



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

# Crossing the Land to Freedom

-Developed by Kathy Strunk

**Unit Overview:** This is an interdisciplinary unit that uses literature and reading activities to teach students about how slaves lived and found freedom. Students will complete a Web quest in which they learn about the Underground Railroad, activists and abolitionists, and research laws and people that contributed to the abolition of slavery. Students will write and present reports from their research. Students will consider the wants and needs of slaves when they made their journey to freedom.

## Resources Needed:

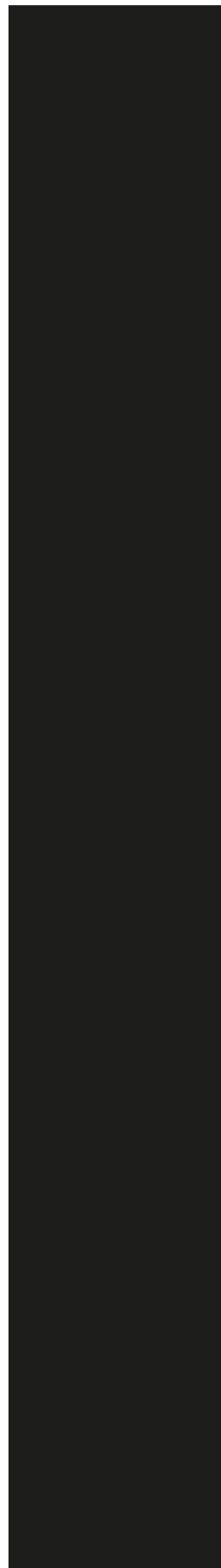
- Multiple copies of the book *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Debra Hopkinson, 1995, ISBN# 0-67987-472-0
- paper
- U.S. map
- pens/pencils
- computers with Internet access
- encyclopedia/reference books
- the book *Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Jeanette Winter, 1999, ISBN# 0-83358-047-7
- overhead projector/smartboard
- colored construction paper
- markers
- camera

## Helpful Resources:

- *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky* by Faith Ringgold, 1999, ISBN# 0-78578-483-7
- *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles, 1995, ISBN# 0-59057-281-4
- *Frederick Douglass Fights For Freedom* by Margaret Davidson, 1988, ISBN# 0-59042-218-9
- *The Quilt-Block History of Pioneer Days* by Mary Cobb, 1995, ISBN# 1-56294-692-7



- *Portraits of African-American Heroes* by Tonya Bolden, 2003, ISBN# 0-52457-043-3
- [http://www.gale.com/free\\_resources/index.htm](http://www.gale.com/free_resources/index.htm)
- <http://www2.lhric.org/pocantico/tubman/gourd.htm>





**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

# Lesson 1

**Grade Level:** 3–5

**Approximate Length of Time:** 1–2 hours

## Prerequisite Knowledge:

- slavery
- making predictions about a story
- using contextual clues to identify new vocabulary words

**Rationale:** Through studying literature and discussion, students will learn how the institution of slavery affected the personal lives of African Americans, as well as other ethnic groups worldwide. Rereading for contextual vocabulary words will further develop comprehension of the text.

## National Standards Addressed:

- Identify reasons people formed communities and describe how individuals, events, and ideas have shaped communities over time.
- Compare ways people in communities meet their needs in the past and present.
- Use geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data.
- Identify examples of organizations that serve the common good.
- Identify the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to the United States.
- Listen to solve problems, gather information, or appreciate stories.
- Read for enjoyment, to solve problems, to gather information, and to extend vocabulary.
- Write to record ideas and reflections for a variety of audiences.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- in pairs, explain the meaning of vocabulary words by using context clues in a story; and
- individually compare his or her feelings to Clara and Jack's and explain what freedom means to him or her in three paragraphs.

## Materials:

- multiple copies of the book *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Debra Hopkinson
- Book Bits
- U.S. map
- Vocabulary List worksheet
- paper, pen, or pencil

## Procedure:

*Opening Review:* In a class discussion, talk about making predictions about a story and how to use contextual clues to discover the meaning of vocabulary words. The teacher will model these procedures by writing the following sen-

tence on the board: *The seamstress will need material, needles, and thread to sew my new dress.* The teacher will show how the word *sew* tells what the seamstress does and the words *material*, *needles*, and *thread* show what the seamstress uses. This sentence also tells the reader that the story might be about a seamstress.

*Motivation or Introductory Approach:* “Today, we are going to read about a special group of people, but before we do, will all the students with blonde hair go to the back of the room and all the other students come to the front. I want all of the students in the back of the room to bring a sharpened pencil to a student in the front of the room. The students in the front of the room can be seated. (Allow time for the students to sit down.) Students in the back of the room can now sit down.”

*Development of Lesson:*

1. The teacher will pass around the envelope of Book Bits and have each student reach inside and remove one slip of paper. Have each student read the quote on the slip of paper to themselves. After reading the quote, students should take out a scrap piece of paper and write what they think the story will be about. After 2 minutes, have each student read their quote and then share his or her story prediction with the class.
2. Show the book *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* to the class, and read the name of the book and the author. Tell students that they should think about the following questions as you are reading the book to them:
  - Was Clara given a choice about working? Why?
  - Would you prefer to work inside or outside? Why?
3. Begin being reading the story. After reading through page 4 of the text, ask for responses to the questions.  
Tell students to think about these questions as you read the next two pages:
  - What was the Underground Railroad?
  - Who was involved in the Underground Railroad?
4. Have a student point out the Ohio River and Canada on the map and estimate the distance between the regions. Tell students to think about this distance, as well as the following question as you read the next three pages to them.
  - What does Clara say about dreaming?
  - Listen for clues that tell where Clara and Jack are going.
5. Tell students to think about the following question as you finish reading the story.
  - What kind of supplies would Clara and Jack need for their journey?

*Closure:* Have students return to their original seats. Ask students why they think you separated them as you did. Explain that you grouped them according to a common characteristic they shared with the rest of their group (i.e., hair color) and that is how people were grouped during the time period in the book—according to race.

## Assessment:

Formative—Have a class discussion using the following questions:

- How did people become slaves? Is the practice of owning another person fair?
- How could you use landmarks to create a map in another way?
- How did the practice of slavery cause conflict between the northern and southern states?
- If the slaves had worked for wages would they still have wanted to be free?
- What reasons did the southern states have to own slaves?
- Were Clara and Jack the only slaves that escaped?

Summative—Students will compare their feelings about being grouped to those of Clara and Jack in a paragraph. A scoring guide will be used as a guideline for the student and as a way to assess his or her writing.

## Independent Activities/Lesson Extension/Adaptations:

- Group students in pairs and give each group a list of vocabulary words with page numbers and a copy of *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*. Explain to the pairs of students that they are a “Mystery Group.” One student will be the detective and find the clues in the section of text that leads to the meaning of the vocabulary word. The other student will be the reporter and write the clues next to the vocabulary word.
- Have students describe in a paragraph how they felt when they were placed in a group because of a common characteristic, and in another paragraph compare their feelings to those of Clara and Jack when they were grouped because of their race.

# lesson 1

## book bits for sweet clara and the freedom quilt

(Teachers: Copy this sheet and cut each Book Bits strip for the activity in Lesson 1)

-----  
We went north, following the trail of the freedom quilt. Mostly we hid during the day and walked at night.  
-----

Me and Jack left Home Plantation in a dark thunderstorm.  
-----

She touched the stitches lightly, her fingers moving slowly over the last piece I'd added—a hidden boat that would carry us across the Ohio River.  
-----

“That swamp next to Home Plantation is a nasty place. But listen up, Clara, and I'll tell you how I thread my way in and out of there as smooth as yo' needle in that cloth.”  
-----

Sometimes I had to wait to get the right kind of cloth—I had blue calico and flowered blue silk for creeks and rivers, and greens and blue-greens for the fields, and white sheeting for roads.  
-----

I drew a little square for Big House, a line of boxes for the cabins of the Quarters, and some bigger squares for the fields east of Big House. I drew as much as I'd pieced together.  
-----

I saw the paterollers and I knew someone had run away.  
-----

Aunt Rachel say, “Sweet Clara, what kind of pattern you makin' in that quilt? Aine no pattern I ever seen.” Then I started piecin' the scraps of cloth with the scraps of things I was learnin'.  
-----

And how could I make a map that wouldn't be washed away by the rain—a map that would show the way to freedom?  
-----

I took a stick and started making a picture in the dirt of all I could see. But how could I make a picture of things far away that I couldn't see?  
-----

# lesson 1

## book bits for sweet clara and the freedom quilt, continued

-----  
“You run away and get caught, you be beaten.”  
-----

One of the men replied in a quiet voice, “It be easy if you could get a map.”  
-----

“The Railroad will get you all the way to Canada. Then you free forever.”  
-----

“Once you get that far, the Underground Railroad will carry you across.”  
-----

“There been too many runaways last summer,” one of the drivers said.  
-----

I was hearing about all kinds of new places and things.  
-----

One day two white men come to see the master.  
-----

So I changed from a field hand to a seamstress.  
-----

Name\_\_\_\_\_

# lesson 1

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## vocabulary list for sweet clara and the freedom quilt

Mystery Group Members \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the section of the story on the page number listed in the second column. Identify clues that lead to the meaning of the vocabulary words, and write them in the third column under “Clues.”

Vocabulary Word	Page	Clues
seamstress	3	
overseer	5	
contrary	7	
paterollers	10	
squirrel	16	
quarters	16	
buzzing	17	



**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

# lesson 1

Date\_\_\_\_\_

# writing assignment for sweet clara and the freedom quilt

Directions: In the space below, compare your feelings about being grouped in class to the way Clara and Jack must have felt when they were grouped because of their skin color.

Suggested length: 2 paragraphs.

[illegible]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# lesson 1

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## writing evaluation

Writing assignment: Comparison paper for *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*

Points available	Criteria	Points Earned
5	Writes 2 or more paragraphs. Sentences are complete. Handwriting is neat, legible, and error free. Followed punctuation and capitalization rules.	
4	Writes 2 paragraphs. Sentences are complete. Handwriting is neat and legible, but contains errors. Followed punctuation and capitalization rules.	
3	Writes less than 2 paragraphs. Sentences are incomplete. Handwriting is legible, but not neat and error free. Followed punctuation and capitalization rules.	
2	Writes less than 2 paragraphs. Sentences are incomplete. Handwriting is messy, contains errors. Did not follow punctuation and capitalization rules.	
1	Did not complete assignment.	

Total \_\_\_\_\_/5

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_