



Frederick Douglass

1818-1895



ORATOR, ABOLITIONIST



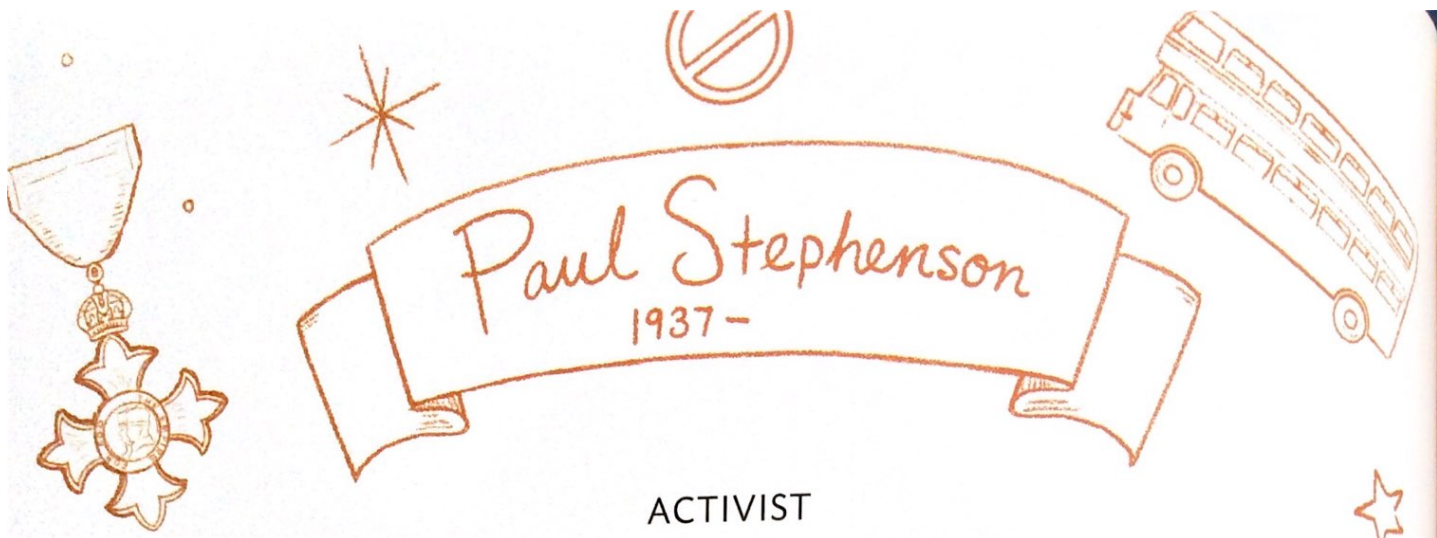
Born enslaved on a plantation in Maryland, Frederick was separated from his mother as an infant. He understood that he was seen and treated as property. When he was eight years old, he was sent to work for Hugh Auld, whose wife taught Frederick how to read. It was illegal for a black person to read and write, a tactic used to keep the enslaved from advancing. When Hugh found out, he put a stop to their lessons, but Frederick had learned enough to be able to teach himself. One of the first books he owned was a collection of historical speeches. So as he learned to read, he was also learning how to give speeches and form an argument, something he would become famous for.

As a devout Christian, Frederick didn't understand how slave owners could co-opt the Gospel to reinforce ideas of slavery. He tried to escape many times and even tried to forge travel papers. He was found out, labelled a troublemaker, and tortured for it. In 1838 he finally made his escape north.

While free, he fought to abolish slavery. In 1841 he spoke at an anti-slavery convention. People were riveted by his eloquence. Northerners didn't understand the experiences of the enslaved, so Frederick published his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. It became a bestseller. Some didn't believe he wrote it or experienced it, so he wrote a second one, this time naming his slave owners. It was a risky move, and he had to go to the United Kingdom to avoid recapture. There, he gave speeches, and two of his supporters negotiated to purchase his freedom back in the United States.

He published several anti-slavery newspapers, including the *North Star*. He took his words of abolition to President Lincoln, advocating for the rights of black Union soldiers in the Civil War. He also supported women's suffrage. Frederick's lifelong efforts led to the ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, and he is remembered as one of the most important people in world history.





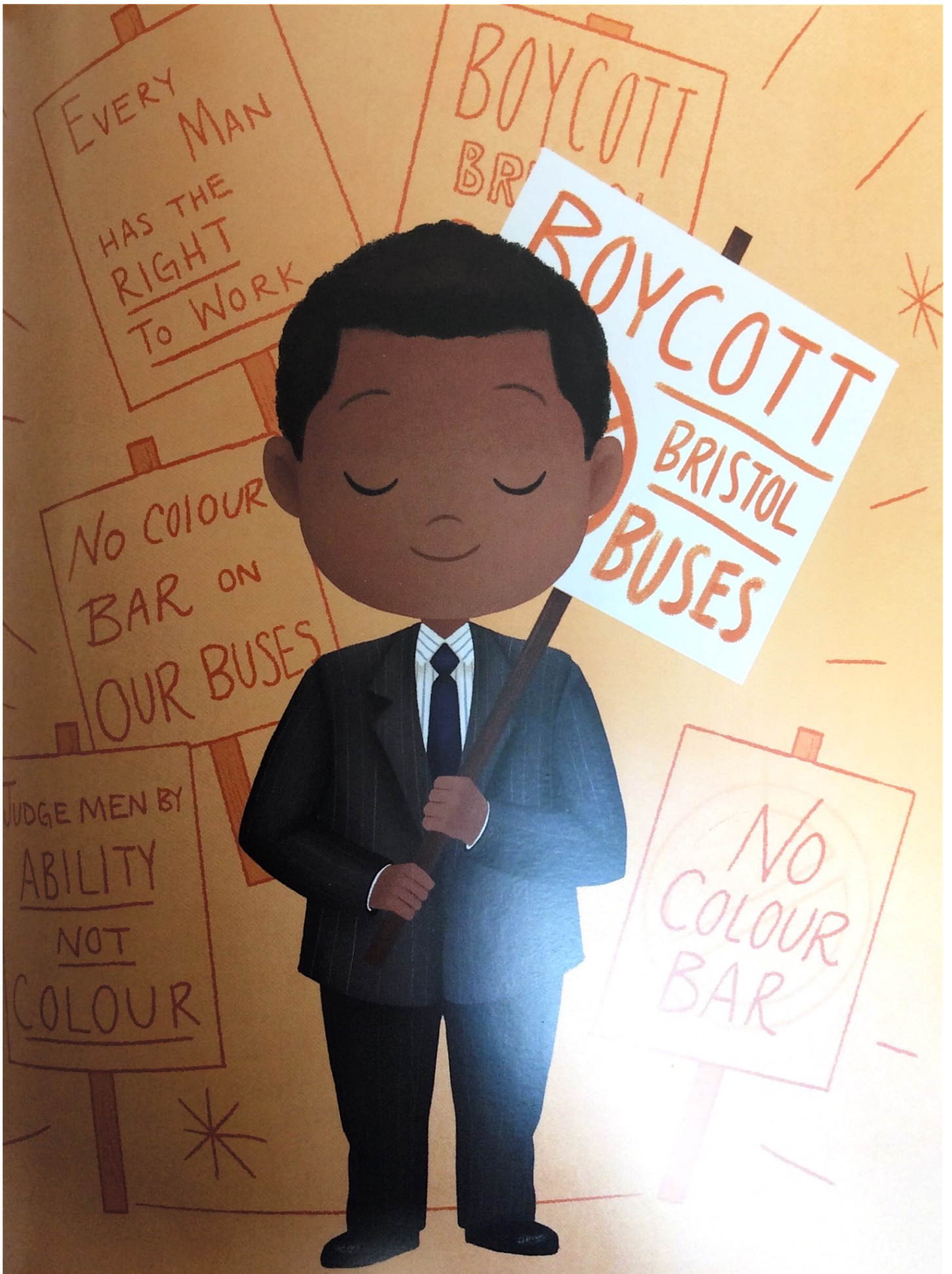
ACTIVIST

3 Despite growing up in the shadow of the Second World War, Paul had a happy childhood. He was two years old when the war began, and he was evacuated from London to the countryside. Since his mother was in the military and his father had returned to West Africa, he grew up in a children's home. The only black person in town, Paul was treated kindly, but sometimes as a curiosity. Being singled out made him particularly observant about the behaviours of the adults around him, a trait that served him well later in life.

When he moved back to London, Paul experienced racist hostility for the first time. Despite this, Paul was proud to be British and wanted justice for everyone. At fifteen, he joined the Royal Air Force. After seven years of service, he moved to Bristol, where he was the city's first black social worker.

When Paul arrived in Bristol, he witnessed the racism that many Caribbean immigrants were experiencing. The Bristol Omnibus Company, for example, refused to employ black or Asian drivers. Inspired by the work of civil rights activists in the United States like Martin Luther King Jr and Rosa Parks, Paul called for a bus boycott, which lasted sixty days. On 28 August 1963, the same day Dr King gave his 'I Have a Dream' speech, the bus company announced it would hire black and Asian drivers!

Paul didn't stop there. In 1964 he was refused service at a pub because he was black. In protest, he decided to stay until he was served. He was arrested, and the trial received media attention, forcing Britain to confront its racism. Paul was found innocent, and Britain's prime minister promised him that the laws would change. In 1965 the Race Relations Act was passed, making racial discrimination illegal in public places, and Paul's work helped pave the way for it. Paul showed that it's important to stand up for what is right, no matter how big or small the fight. He shined a light on Britain's racism and helped illuminate a path to a better country.



EVERY
MAN
HAS THE
RIGHT
TO WORK


BOYCOTT
BRISTOL

BOYCOTT
BRISTOL
BUSES

NO COLOUR
BAR ON
OUR BUSES

JUDGE MEN BY
ABILITY
NOT
COLOUR

NO
COLOUR
BAR



Sojourner Truth

Circa 1797-1883

ABOLITIONIST, WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATE

Sojourner was born a slave in New York state under the name Isabella Baumfree. Following the state's Gradual Emancipation Act, she was due her freedom in 1827. When she realized that her owner was planning to keep her enslaved, Sojourner ran away with her infant daughter in tow. But this came at a huge cost. She had to leave behind her five-year-old son.

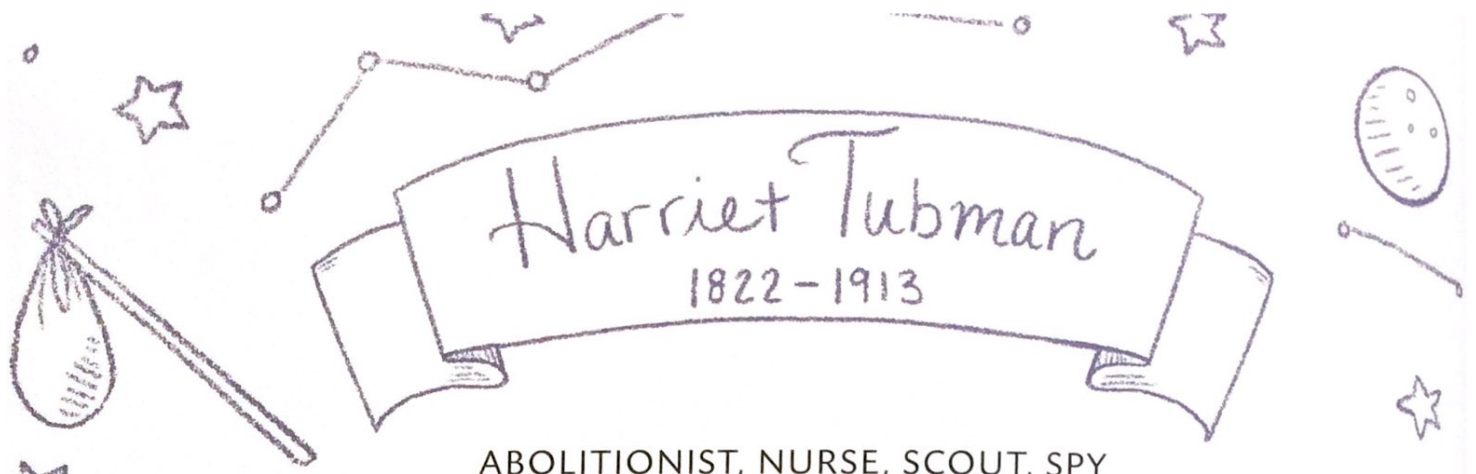
The slave owner sold Sojourner's son to a plantation a thousand miles away in Alabama. Meanwhile Sojourner remained in hiding in New York until her freedom was official. When the coast was clear, she brought a court case, saying that her son had been sold illegally. She was one of the first black women to bring a court case in America, and even though it seemed impossible, she won. She got her son back!

In 1843 she changed her name to Sojourner (which means traveller) and became a preacher. She travelled the country, sharing her messages for women's rights and the abolition of slavery everywhere. Although Sojourner could neither read nor write, her voice carried far. In December 1851 she gave a speech that she made up on the spot. In it she spoke up on behalf of black women who faced the double discrimination of racism and sexism and had often been left out of the fight for equality. The speech is known by its most famous refrain: 'Ain't I a Woman?'

She went on to encourage African Americans to fight on behalf of the Union in the American Civil War, for former slaves to be given places to live, and for desegregation of streetcars (trams). She was an agitator and a fierce activist for equality.



"Ain't I a
Woman?"



ABOLITIONIST, NURSE, SCOUT, SPY

One of nine children, Harriet was born into slavery under the name Araminta Harriet Ross. Both her parents were West Africans, from the Ashanti warrior people. While many of her siblings were sold and traded to distant plantations, one good fortune Harriet managed was to remain with her parents throughout her youth. When she was fifteen, Harriet was accidentally hit in the head with an iron weight, and fell into a coma for three days. Her brain injury resulted in narcolepsy – a permanent disorder that caused her to fall asleep at random times. Fearing her slave owner would eventually discover her injury, she decided to run away to avoid the risk of being sold or traded.

After escaping from the Confederate South in 1849, Harriet could have stayed in the North (where slavery was outlawed). But knowing it was possible to escape, she wanted to return for her family and anyone else she could rescue. Over eleven years she returned to the South thirteen times and led more than seventy men, women, and children to freedom and safety via the secret system called the Underground Railroad. Known as a 'conductor', she 'never lost a passenger' on her journeys. Even though it was dangerous, she continually put her life at risk for others. Later, during the American Civil War she served as an army nurse and went undercover as a spy for the North.

Harriet was always looking to help other people. What very little she had she gave away to others. She lived in poverty for most of her life and donated her time, money and property to those in need.

In 2016 the US Treasury announced a historic proposal to change the \$20 bill: it would replace the face of President Andrew Jackson with Harriet, making her the first woman on the front of any American paper currency.




WANTED!
 RUNAWAY SLAVE AND UNDERGROUND RAILROAD CONDUCTOR

HARRIET TUBMAN

BORN ARAMINTA ROSS, AROUND 1820 IN THE 'SLAVE STATE' OF MARYLAND, USA. CHANGED HER IDENTITY TO HARRIET TUBMAN WHEN SHE ESCAPED.

HAS SHAMELESSLY MADE REPEATED TRIPS TO MARYLAND BETWEEN 1850 AND 1860 TO HELP MANY MORE SLAVES RUN AWAY. REPORT SIGHTINGS TO YOUR NEAREST SLAVE CATCHER.

You'll NEVER catch me!



Like many other African Americans in the south of the USA in the 1800s, Harriet Tubman and her family were slaves. This meant they were the property of a rich white household. To make money for themselves, owners forced slaves to work long hours, on land and in their homes, with no payment.

Harriet dreamed of a better life. After hearing stories of slaves escaping north, to 'free states' where slavery was outlawed, Harriet tried to persuade her family to run away with her. But they were too scared of being caught and punished. Even though Harriet was scared too, in 1849 she decided that freedom was worth the risk...

Runaway slaves, like Harriet, were helped to freedom by the '**UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**'. Although this sounds like a railway, it was actually a network of safe routes north. 'Underground' meant that it was top secret. It was set up by people, white and black, who wanted to put an end to slavery. They were called '**ABOLITIONISTS**'.

MARYLAND

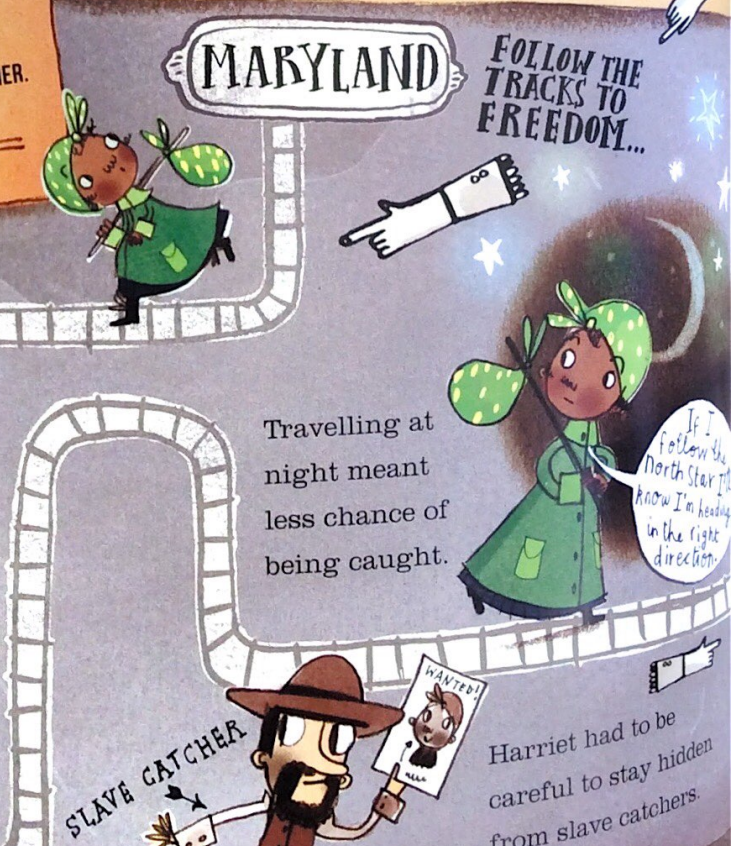
FOLLOW THE TRACKS TO FREEDOM...

Travelling at night meant less chance of being caught.

If I follow the North Star I know I'm heading in the right direction.

SLAVE CATCHER

Harriet had to be careful to stay hidden from slave catchers.



Almost there!

Freedom is close!

CANADA

In **1850** the **FUGITIVE SLAVE ACT** was introduced in order to make it harder for slaves to find freedom in the USA, even in 'free states'. But this didn't stop Harriet. She guided her passengers further - into Canada - to find safety.

HURRY!

Shhhh! You can hide here!

Shhhh! This way.

Directions were given by **CONDUCTORS**, and hiding places known as **STOPS** were offered in safe houses run by **STATION MASTERS**.

"I was a **STRANGER** in a **STRANGE** land."

When Harriet reached the free state of Pennsylvania, she was, for the first time in her life, a free woman. But without her friends and family Harriet felt very lonely. She decided to use her freedom to help other slaves to freedom, and became an Underground Railroad Conductor.

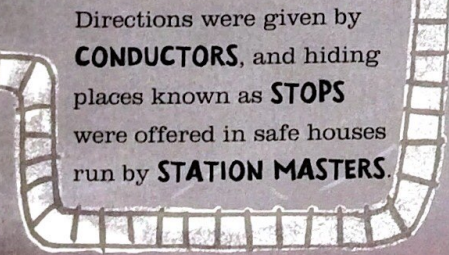
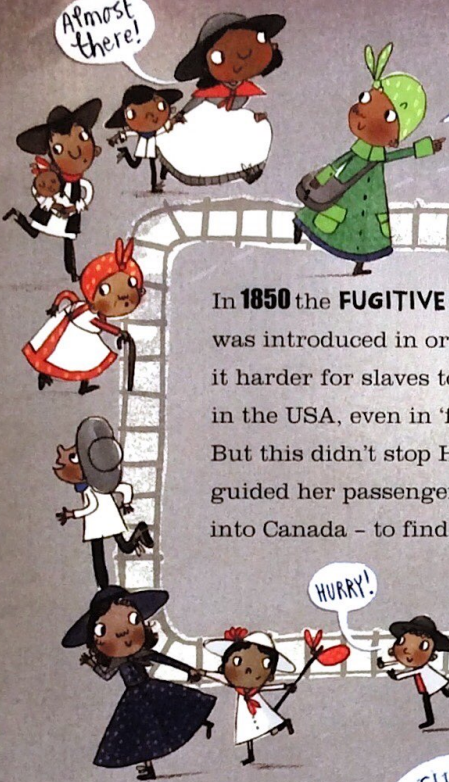
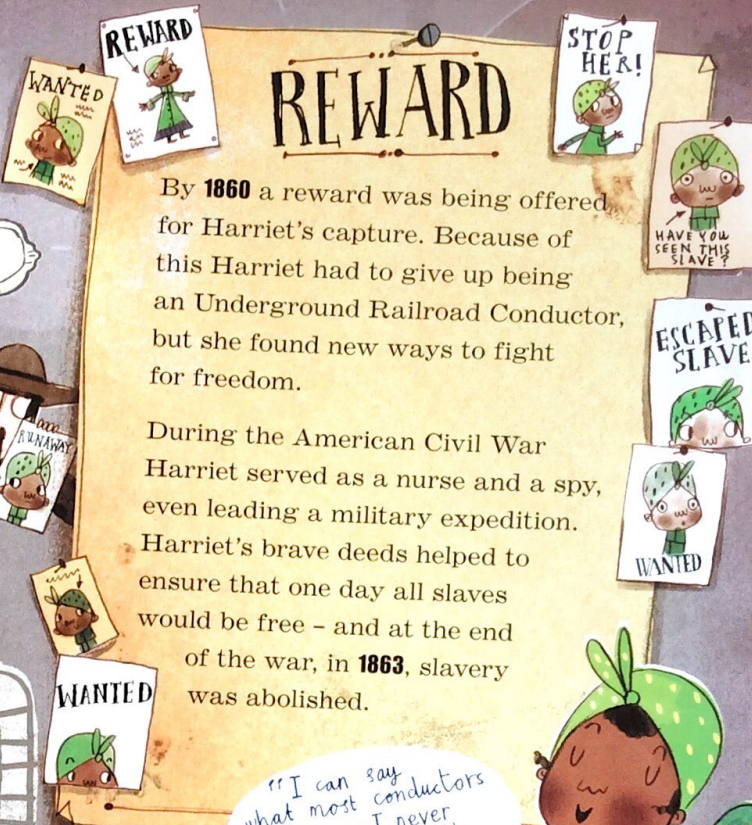
PENNSYLVANIA

REWARD

By **1860** a reward was being offered for Harriet's capture. Because of this Harriet had to give up being an Underground Railroad Conductor, but she found new ways to fight for freedom.

During the American Civil War Harriet served as a nurse and a spy, even leading a military expedition. Harriet's brave deeds helped to ensure that one day all slaves would be free - and at the end of the war, in **1863**, slavery was abolished.

"I can say what most conductors can't say - I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger."





ACTIVIST

Although Bonita spent a happy childhood growing up in a close-knit community of South Sea Islanders near Townsville, she longed to know her native land. Her grandmother was originally from the Aboriginal community on Palm Island and her grandfather from Tanna Island near Vanuatu. Both were kidnapped, taken to Queensland, Australia, and forced to work on the sugar plantations – a practice known as ‘blackbirding’. This is part of a long history of displacement and strife between Australia’s First Peoples and the British colonizers. Bonita spent much of her life campaigning on behalf of indigenous Australians and standing up for the rights of her own people.

She worked alongside her famous activist husband Eddie Mabo. While he was passionate about protecting the land rights of his people, the Torres Straits Islanders, Bonita fought for quality education for the indigenous community. Together they had ten children, but Eddie was often away, and Bonita essentially raised them on her own. Unhappy with the education they were receiving in the school system in Queensland, Bonita took action. In 1973 she and Eddie opened the Black Community School in Townsville – Australia’s first Aboriginal community school.

After her husband’s death in 1992 Bonita began to campaign on behalf of the South Sea Islanders. She wanted them to be recognized as a distinct ethnic group, and their culture to be celebrated. In 2013 she was honoured as Officer in the Order of Australia for her work as an advocate and community leader for the Aboriginals, the Torres Strait Islanders and the South Sea Islanders. She gave her people a voice and dedicated her life to fighting for their rights.

