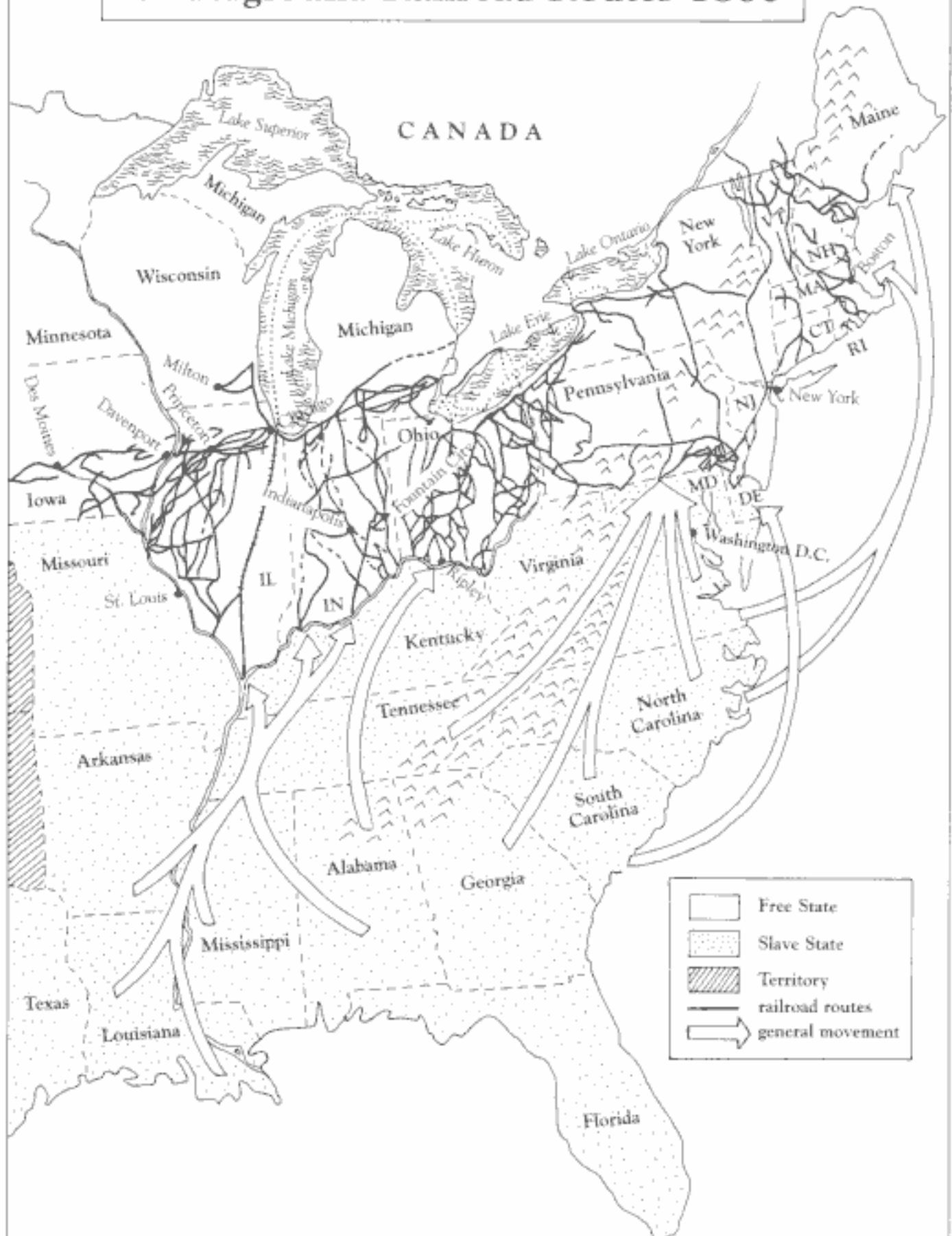


Underground Railroad Routes 1860



Creative writing assignment:

A Letter from the Underground Railroad

Choose one of the characters below and **write a five-paragraph letter** using the language of the Underground Railroad from your character's perspective.

Feel free to incorporate any of the videos we've watched, images from today's slideshow, songs of the era, or local sites that were crucial to the Underground Railroad. You may also do additional research on the Railroad on any of the characters to help develop your letter. Use the map on the back of this sheet to help with geographical context.

Be creative!

Characters:

1. **Kunta Kinte.** You've escaped from John Reynolds' plantation in Spotsylvania County, VA. You are writing home to your daughter, Kizzy, with detailed instructions for her to meet you in Philadelphia. How should she travel? What should she look for along the way?
2. **Thomas Garrett,** Philadelphia businessman. A farmer in Charleston, SC, has written you (in code) to request money to establish a safehouse in his city, and for instructions on how to communicate with fugitive slaves. What do you tell him?
3. **Gideon.** You're an escaped slave known only by your first name. You're most of the way to freedom – you've gone from Mobile, AL, to New Brighton, PA. You're writing to your friend in Canada about your adventures so far along the Underground Railroad.
4. **John Parker,** abolitionist and former slave. You were born into slavery, but bought your own freedom in New Orleans and became a key conductor along the Kentucky/Ohio border. You are writing to an old friend who has become a conductor on the Maryland/Pennsylvania border. He wants some advice on how to help northbound slaves without getting caught.

Code words:

Abolitionist: A person who demanded an end to slavery

Agents: People who helped slaves find the Underground Railroad, plotted their course, etc.

Cargo: Northbound slaves

Conductors: Guides along the railroad

Drinking gourd: The Big Dipper and the North Star

Heaven: Canada, or the free North

Passengers: Northbound slaves

Preachers: Leading agents

Promised Land: Canada, or the free North

Shepherds: Those who escorted slaves

Stations: Safe houses; safe places to hide

Stationmasters: Those who hid slaves in their homes

Stockholders: Donors of money, clothing, or food to Northbound slaves

Ticket: The formal acceptance of a passenger by a stationmaster or conductor

Train (freedom train, or gospel train): The Railroad

Phrases and passwords:

The wind blows from the south today: Slave hunters are nearby

The friend of a friend sent me: Password used by slaves traveling alone to signal that they're traveling the network

I am a friend with friends: A conductor's reply signal to the arriving slaves

Load of Potatoes/Parcel/Bundles of Wood/Frates: Used with a number to signify the fugitives to be expected