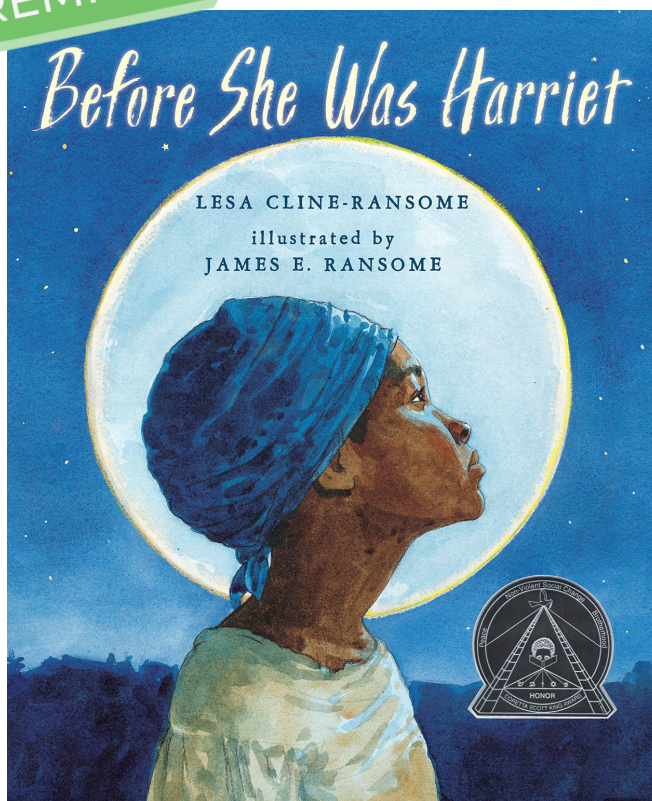


READ-ALoud  
*Revival*

PREMIUM



*family book club guide*

BEFORE SHE  
WAS HARRIET



# How to use this guide

**T**his guide is intended to spread a feast for your family. You don't need to attempt to do everything listed here. Pick and choose what appeals to you, and remember that the goal is to fall more in love with books, and more in love with each other.

The ideas you'll find in this guide can be used with kids of all ages. Use the guide as a key piece of your literature curriculum, or as an enjoyable supplement.

Remember, any time you spend reading and connecting with your kids is worthwhile!

---

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHEDULING YOUR FAMILY BOOK CLUB

### *a quick dip*

Short on time? Do your Family Book Club in a single sitting by combining it with mealtime.

1. Choose whichever activity in the SHARE AN EXPERIENCE section most suits you. The cookie activity works well for this.
2. While you eat, watch the [LOOKING CLOSELY video together](#), then read the book aloud.
3. Choose one question from the LET'S TALK ABOUT IT section to discuss. If your kids have questions for the author/illustrator, make sure to submit them in advance (you'll find the link on p. 3 of this guide).

### *a longer linger*

If you'd like to spread your Family Book Club out over the month, try this schedule.

Week 1: [Watch the LOOKING CLOSELY video together](#), and begin reading aloud.

Week 2: Keep reading!

Week 3: Choose something to do from the SHARE AN EXPERIENCE section. Also choose a few questions from the LET'S TALK ABOUT IT section to discuss. If your kids have questions for the author, submit them in advance (you'll find the link on p. 3 of this guide).

Week 4: Plan to meet both James Ransome and Lesa Cline-Ransome on February 17th, or watch the replay afterward.

If your kids want more, get ideas from the RELATED READING & EXPLORING section.

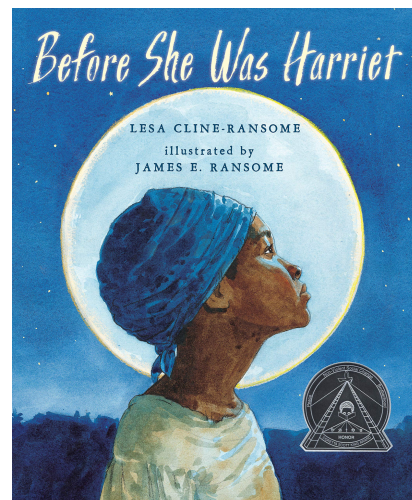


## About the Book

TITLE:	<u>Before She Was Harriet</u>
AUTHOR	Lesa Cline-Ransome
ILLUSTRATOR:	James Ransome
RECOMMENDED FOR:	all ages

We know her today as Harriet Tubman, but in her lifetime she was called by many names.

This lush, lyrical biography in verse begins with a glimpse of Harriet Tubman as an old woman, and travels back in time through the many roles she played through her life. Winner of a Coretta Scott King Honor and the Christopher Award.



## Looking closely

 [WATCH SARAH INTRODUCE THIS BOOK ON VIDEO\\_ \(6 MIN\)](#)

- The book opens with an image of a train—even before we get to the title page. Do you think this might be an example of **foreshadowing**?
- The author compares the Combahee River to the River Jordan in an **allusion**. An allusion is a brief reference to a person, place, thing, event, or literary work the reader may be familiar with. They let an author pack a lot of meaning into a single word or phrase! What might the author have been getting at with this allusion?
- Consider how the **illustrations alternate** between scenes of daylight and scenes of darkness. Why do you think the illustrator chose to do that?
- This story was written as a **poem**, rather than **prose**. Compare it to a book written in prose (like *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson) and notice that prose is told in paragraphs, while poetry is written in short lines. What effect does that have on the story?
- One thing poets do when thinking about line breaks is read down the right hand margin. If you do this, you get a **hidden poem** within the larger poem. Read down the right margin of *Before She Was Harriet* to discover the bones of this poem.

# Let's talk about it

Use any of the following questions with kids of all ages.

Asking open-ended questions is more important than getting compelling answers. We want to help our kids develop the habit of asking questions; this is how we raise discerning readers.

- Why do you think Harriet was called Moses? How are Harriet and Moses alike? How are they different?

---

- Harriet had many different roles throughout her life. How did she stay the same? How did she change?

---

- Harriet took many risks during her life. Do you think she should have done that?

---

- What might have happened if Harriet hadn't taken those risks? (This helps us see the "so what" of this valuable story. [Hear more about why the question "So what?" matters in RAR #151](#))

---

- What's something you don't want to forget about Harriet Tubman?

## *meet the author & illustrator*

LESA CLINE-RANSOME & JAMES RANSOME

Lesa and James are married, and have collaborated on several books. They live in Rhinebeck, New York.



Tuesday, 2/17/21

11am PT / 12pm MT / 1pm CT / 2pm ET

- [Click here for details and to RSVP](#)
- [Submit questions for James & Lesa here by 2/15](#)
- [Afterward, you'll find the video replay right here](#)





# Share an experience

CHOOSE FROM THESE IDEAS TO MAKE A MEMORY AROUND THE BOOK

## follow the drinking gourd

The song, Follow the Drinking Gourd, was written about following the Big Dipper and the North Star to freedom. Listen to the song.

Then use an app like Skyview, SkySafari, or Google Sky to look for the Big Dipper and the North Star.



## make star cookies

Make star cookies to enjoy during your read-aloud. Need a recipe? Here's one from Taste of Home.

(Photo: Taste of Home)

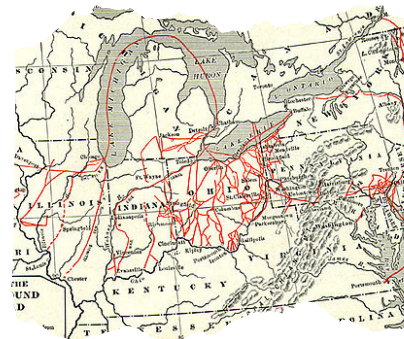


## the Underground Railroad

Is there an Underground Railroad site near you?

Check here, and visit if you're able:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Underground\\_Railroad\\_sites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Underground_Railroad_sites)



# Drawing with Ralph Masiello

In the book, the author says that Harriet "was a wisp of a woman with the courage of a lion." Ralph Masiello will guide you through drawing a lion.

Grab paper and a pencil, and [head here to start watching](#).

Use the white arrows to get to the drawing video. The timestamps at the bottom of the video will help you choose the best drawing lesson(s) for your kids' ages and skill levels.



## *meet* RALPH MASIELLO

Ralph Masiello is the illustrator of several books for children, including a popular drawing series.

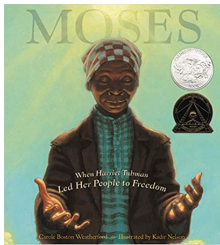


To watch more drawing videos with Ralph in RAR Premium, go to the ["For Kids" library](#).





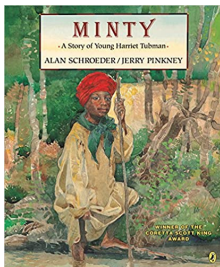
# Related reading



## MOSES: WHEN HARRIET TUBMAN LED HER PEOPLE TO FREEDOM

BY CAROLE BOSTON WEATHERFORD, ILLUSTRATED BY KADIR NELSON

"I set the North Star in the heavens and I mean for you to be free..." Harriet Tubman hears these words from God one summer night and decides to escape. This book highlights Tubman's resilient faith. Highly recommended.



## MINTY: A STORY OF YOUNG HARRIET TUBMAN

BY ALAN SCHROEDER, ILLUSTRATED BY JERRY PINKNEY

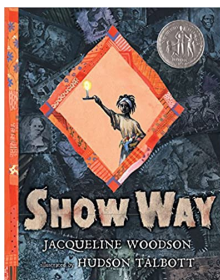
This story of Harriet Tubman focuses on her childhood. She was a girl who told stories to her doll, released animals from traps, and above all, dreamed of being free. Illustrated richly by Jerry Pinkney, this is a gorgeous picture book not to miss.



## SWEET CLARA AND THE FREEDOM QUILT

BY DEBORAH HOPKINSON, ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES RANSOME

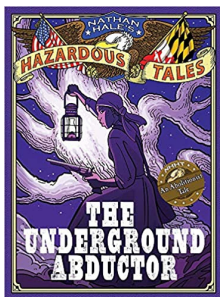
Clara dreams of freedom—not just for herself, but for her family and friends. When she overhears a conversation about the Underground Railroad, she has a flash of inspiration. This book is written in prose, so use it to compare the prose and poetry, as suggested in the "Looking Closely" section of this guide.



## SHOW WAY

BY JACQUELINE WOODSON, ILLUSTRATED BY HUDSON TALBOTT

Soonie's great-grandma was just 7 years old when she was sold to a big plantation without her ma and pa, and with only some fabric and needles to call her own. She pieced together bright patches with names like North Star and Crossroads, patches with secret meanings made into quilts - maps for slaves to follow to freedom. Winner of the Newbery Honor.



## THE UNDERGROUND ABDUCTOR

BY NATHAN HALE

Nathan Hale's historical graphic novels really cannot be beat. This one tells the story of Araminta Ross (Harriet Tubman), who risked her life to help countless enslaved people escape to freedom. Highly recommended. This one is probably best for ages 9+.

