

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Writing Prompts

Part 2: Runaway!

MISSION 2: "Flight to Freedom"

A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR:

You will need to decide how best to share these writing prompts with your students. You might share them all and ask students to choose one to respond to. You may assign one or more to the entire group. You might make one or more of the topics the basis for in-class discussions. Make your decisions according to the needs of your group.

You may notice that many of the topics contain some version of the phrase, "Write about a time in your life..." The intention of these prompts is twofold: first, since students remember the content of their own lives, they can more easily respond to the questions and they are more likely to want to express themselves if they feel competent to do so; second, these questions can form a meaningful bridge between what happens in the lives of ordinary people today and the lives of people in history or in historical events. For these reasons, you might decide to use some of the prompts before students encounter the history, because thinking about them sets the students up to understand and to relate to it better.

Since students vary in their degree of comfort and skill in writing, you should decide when and how much students should write. We suggest that since students need to share their writing with each other to make personal and historical connections, you should encourage them to focus on content rather than on mechanical skills. Pieces can be revised and edited later if you decide they should be shared formally (such as on a bulletin board or in a newsletter).

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Read through all the topics first, and then choose one to write about. Write the title of the piece at the top of your page. Write in complete sentences. After you are finished, proofread your work for correctness.

TWO'S COMPANY? One of the decisions Lucy needs to make in Part 2 in connection with her attempt to escape is whether to try her luck on her own or to go off with Henry. What do you imagine are the advantages and disadvantages of going with Henry? What might be the advantages and disadvantages of going off alone?

INDEPENDENCE AND INTERDEPENDENCE. Probably since you were a young child at school, your teachers have reported to your parents periodically about your ability to work independently and also your ability to work cooperatively with others. Both are important. At one time, school meant sitting quietly and working mostly by yourself. Then, in the last decades of the 20th century, researchers discovered that once we leave school and go into the workplace, there are more occupations in which we need to work with others interdependently than ones in which it is important to be able to work alone. Which kind of work is most difficult for you to do? What makes that kind of work so difficult? Write a letter to your parents as if you are your teacher, and describe yourself as an independent or interdependent learner. What would your teacher say about you? What are your strengths? On what do you need to work? Give examples.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE, A SLAVE. If you had been enslaved on a large plantation that was surrounded by other large plantations, you would have known the number of enslaved black people nearby outnumbered the number of free white people considerably. You can safely assume most enslaved people were neither cowardly nor stupid, and there were good reasons why, historically, rebellions or escapes were not often attempted. What were all the forces and controls that kept the enslaved from rebelling or escaping? Try to think of what their beliefs and attitudes might have been as well as all the controls that were in place in the South to keep people from rebelling or running away. Then, imagine you are one of the enslaved people on the King Plantation. Another slave asks you to join him/her in an escape or a rebellion. Write the speech in which you explain to that person all the reasons you think it's a bad and/or dangerous idea. Use what you have learned from the game and other sources as evidence for your decision.

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WHOM DO YOU TRUST? Think about the choices Lucy faces in Part 2. Many of her choices are informed by what other people tell her. While sometimes a good or bad outcome from a decision has to do with your own analysis of what is best or luck, often it's about your decisions about whom to trust. Have *you* ever been in a situation where your decision had to do with whom to trust? How do you decide whether or not to trust a person? Make a list of the things that signal you to trust or not to trust someone. These things may have to do with your relationship to that person (parent, total stranger, etc.), the circumstances (a teacher, a stranger who emails you, etc.), qualities of that person (evidence he/she presents, tone of voice, etc.) If you like, include an instance of a time you decided to trust someone and tell whether you feel you made the right decision. State what, if anything, you learned from that experience.

LUCY'S JOURNAL. Through Lucy's eyes, think about your circumstances from the beginning to the end of this part of "Flight to Freedom." Think about the people with whom you interacted, and what you learned from them. Think about the choices you made and the consequences of those choices. Now write a journal entry from Lucy's point-of-view summarizing what happened to you in Part 2. You may choose to illustrate one aspect of your entry.