



African American Railroading Legacy

Pre-Visit Lesson

Grades: 5th Grade

Class Time Needed: 40 minutes

Big Idea Following the Civil War, African Americans, often by way of the railroad, began leaving the Southern United States in what is known as the Great Migration.

Maryland Curriculum Standards

Social Studies Framework

- Essential Question: How did the conclusion of the Civil War affect the United States (North and South) and Maryland?

Materials Needed

- "I AM" Coloring Sheet
- Coloring Utencils
- Overground Railroad by Lesa Cline-Ransome (physical book or video read aloud)

Teacher Resources

- Link to video reading of Overground Railroad by Lesa Cline-Ransome: <https://youtu.be/vOWL-1ICTFk>
- "I AM" Worksheet (found at end of lesson plan)



Lesson Procedure

Introduction:

Read aloud the story Overground Railroad by Lesa Cline-Ransome and discuss how the end of the Civil War caused the Great Migration of African Americans from rural areas of Southern states to urban areas of Northern states. Many of the African American families who moved during this time used the railroad as their mode of transportation.

Preface the read a-loud with a short discussion on the who, what, where, when and why of the Civil War (if needed).

Direct Instruction (Student Activity):

Throughout history, the differences we see in people around the world from appearance to culture have fueled moments of legal discrimination. This activity is meant to teach children that even amongst all the differences, we are all people who share similar likes and dislikes.

Step-by-step, walk through the instructions of coloring the paper with the students. Students will color the "I AM" worksheets based on how they answer the following questions:

Letter I: Would you rather walk, drive or ride a train when travelling?

Walk = color the "I" blue

Drive = color the "I" yellow

Train = color the "I" purple

Letter A: Would you rather play cards or read a book?

Play cards = color the "A" orange

Read a book = color the "A" green

Letter M: Have you ever moved to a new town?

Yes = color the "M" red

No = color the "M" black

Background: Draw or write four things about yourself that are important to your identity. This can be your favorite food, book title, subject in school, place you are from, etc.

Conclusion:

Once finished with the "I AM" worksheet, allow students to see how each person's paper is different even though some of them might share similarities. Discuss how our families and places we grow up help to shape our identities.

If time allows, each student can share one aspect of their paper and explain why they chose a certain color or drawing.

Use this activity to prepare students for topics we will cover during your visit to the museum. Topics include: slavery, the Civil War, segregation, & the Civil Rights Movement.



Name: _____

