

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

## Writing Prompts

### Part 3: Free and Not Free

#### MISSION 2: "Flight to Freedom"

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#### 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 for response. You might 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 themselves. For these reasons, you might decide to use some of those prompts before students encounter the history, because thinking about them sets the students up to understand it and to relate to it.*

*Since students vary in their degree of comfort and skill in writing, you should decide when students write and how much students should write. We do suggest, though, that since students need to share their writing with each other to make personal and historical connections, you 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 more formally (such as on a bulletin board or newsletter).*

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Read through all the topics. Then choose one of them 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.

**HARBORING A FUGITIVE.** Abigail and Morgan Wright put themselves at great personal risk by letting Lucy stay in their home. According to the law, she is a fugitive and criminal. If Lucy is exposed, Abigail and Morgan could face severe consequences. If you were a free person in the 1840s, would you allow an escaped slave to stay in your home? Why or why not? If a friend or family member of yours today broke the law, would you assist in hiding them? Why or why not? How might the circumstances change your decision?

**ASSUMING ANOTHER IDENTITY.** Lucy must act as if she is the niece of Abigail and Morgan Wright. Her freedom and safety in this part of the game depends on her willingness and ability to become someone else. She says that this is difficult and that she misses her real family. Imagine what it might be like if you had to become someone else at this point in your life. What might make you or your family decide to do this? What do you imagine might be the advantages of continuing your life as another person? What would be the difficulties?

**FREEDOM IN A FOREIGN LAND.** Abigail explains to Lucy that the money she and other abolitionists raise from selling embroidered handkerchiefs at anti-slavery fundraisers often goes to assisting formerly enslaved people who have run away to Canada. Why would fugitives run all the way to Canada when slavery was banned in the northern United States? Do you think most former slaves would have a particularly patriotic or sentimental attachment to the United States? Why or why not? Putting yourself in their place, would you have preferred to risk capture in order to stay in the northern states, or would you have wanted of security of freedom in Canada?

**THE MANY WAYS TO FIGHT SLAVERY.** Miss Hatcher says that abolishing slavery will require everyone to "fight the best way we can," which in her case means using her command of language to speak out against slavery, and which for Lucy has already meant running away from her master. In what ways are other characters prepared to fight against slavery? Historically, we know that the issue was only finally decided by a bloody civil war, but do you think there may have been alternate ways to end slavery based on what you've learned in this game? What might have been the pros and cons of such an alternate history?

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**WOULD YOU BUY YOURSELF?** John Parker was an enslaved person who bought his own freedom. Historically, there were many cases where freedmen bought the freedom of a family member. From the slaveholder's perspective, he got what he considered the dollar value of his property, whether he sold that property to a stranger or *to the property him/herself!* But there were enslaved people who, when confronted with that opportunity, refused to do it, even if a friend would pay the price and even if it meant remaining enslaved. Can you think about why that might have been the case? What might you have done in that situation? Would you buy your own freedom? Explain.

**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, what you learned from them. Think about the choices you made in Part 3 and the consequences of those choices. Now write a journal entry from Lucy's point-of-view summarizing what happened to you in Part 3. You may choose to illustrate one aspect of your entry.