# The Abolitionist Movement

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

**David Walker • William Lloyd Garrison • Frederick Douglass**

**John Quincy Adams • Harriet Tubman • William Still • William H. Seward**

## Essential Question

How did abolitionists combine public advocacy, political action, and direct assistance to challenge slavery?

## What You Will Do

Read five daily source sets, examine two maps, discuss evidence, and complete daily Quick Writes. Apply mathematics, science, and world languages to the inquiry. Complete 15 assessment questions, including a final RACE argument.

## Vocabulary

ABOLITION Ending slavery as a legal institution.

MORAL SUASION Persuading people through conscience.

PETITION A formal request for government action.

VIGILANCE COMMITTEE A group coordinating protection and assistance.

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD Networks of people assisting escape from enslavement.

CORROBORATE Check a claim against other evidence.

## RACE

Restate • Answer with a claim • Cite evidence • Explain your reasoning

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# Day 5 Harriet Tubman

## Objective

Explain how Tubman and Still cooperated and compare their work with public advocacy.

## Do Now

How can work done quietly change a person's life?

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## Source E1 Tubman's Freedom Network

1 Harriet Tubman escaped enslavement on Maryland's Eastern Shore in 1849. She then returned repeatedly to guide family members and others toward freedom. Over roughly thirteen rescue journeys, she directly guided about seventy people and gave others instructions. These are approximate research based estimates. Her knowledge of waterways, woods, communities, and danger helped her make decisions, but geography alone did not make a journey safe.

2 Tubman worked with a network of abolitionists and freedom seekers. Thomas Garrett in Wilmington provided shelter, support, and help with her missions. William Still in Philadelphia coordinated assistance and recorded accounts of people who passed through the network. Cooperation did not make Tubman a passive recipient of help. Her planning, leadership, and the decisions of freedom seekers were central.

3 Tubman also knew Frederick Douglass, who later praised her largely unpublicized work. William Lloyd Garrison recognized her work by calling her "Moses." Different kinds of abolitionist action could reinforce one another. A newspaper could challenge public opinion, while a trusted contact could help a person continue a dangerous journey. Evidence of friendship or praise does not prove that the same people planned every rescue.

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# Day 5 William Still

## Source E2 Records, Families, and Cooperation

1 William Still was born free in Burlington County, New Jersey, in 1821. In Philadelphia he became a leading member of the Pennsylvania Anti Slavery Society's Vigilance Committee. He helped arrange assistance for freedom seekers, including people working with Tubman. Coordinating lodging, information, contacts, and resources was direct abolitionist work even when it did not take place in a public speech.

2 Still recorded names, family relationships, experiences of enslavement, and reasons for escape. He understood that slavery had separated families and that information could help reconnect them. Keeping such records also created danger under the Fugitive Slave Act. In 1872, after slavery had ended nationally, he published The Underground Rail Road, preserving narratives and correspondence, including accounts involving Tubman.

3 New Jersey connections show how this network crossed state lines. Still's birthplace links him to Burlington County. Tubman worked in Cape May in the summer of 1852 to support her freedom work. Cape May was also connected to visiting Black abolitionists from Philadelphia. These documented places do not prove a single fixed rescue route. Their significance lies in work, contacts, and movement across a larger region.

4 Compare Still's records with an editor's newspaper. Both preserved and shared information, but records could support particular families and individual journeys, while editorials tried to influence a wider public. Still's book is also a historical source with an author, selection process, and publication date. It cannot tell us the story of every freedom seeker.

## Primary Evidence Garrett Writes to Still

"I have been very anxious for some time past, to hear what has become of Harriet Tubman."

Thomas Garrett to William Still, March 27, 1857. This letter documents communication about Tubman, not a complete account of her journeys. Reprinted in Still's 1872 book.

## Pause and Connect

Mark evidence of Still's assistance and record keeping. Discuss how these roles differ.

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# Day 5 Senator William H. Seward

## Source E3 Antislavery Politics and Personal Support

1 William H. Seward represented New York in the United States Senate before becoming Abraham Lincoln's secretary of state. In his March 11, 1850 speech, he opposed extending slavery into the western territories. He argued that a moral law stood above constitutional compromises protecting slavery. This challenged the claim that national expansion should carry slavery into new places.

2 Seward's political antislavery position differed from Garrison's demand for immediate abolition. Opposing slavery's expansion did not automatically end slavery in the states where it already existed. Compare his use of Senate debate with Adams's defense of petitions in the House. Both worked within national institutions, but they addressed different questions and used different powers.

3 The Seward household in Auburn also supported Harriet Tubman. Frances Seward played an important role in the family's antislavery work, and in 1859 Tubman purchased a seven acre property from Frances. This connection helped Tubman establish a home for herself and others. Credit Frances as well as William; do not reduce Tubman's independent work to a senator's assistance.

4 Seward adds political advocacy and personal support to this inquiry. Tubman led freedom journeys, Still coordinated assistance and preserved records, and Seward argued against slavery's expansion in the Senate. Their actions could support a broader struggle without having identical goals or producing the same immediate results.

## Primary Evidence March 11, 1850

Seward appealed to a "higher law than the Constitution" in his Senate speech about slavery and the territories.

Source: U.S. Senate, Freedom in the New Territories. The phrase expresses his moral argument; it did not itself abolish slavery.

## Compare Political Action

Compare Seward's Senate argument with Adams's petition work. How did political action differ from Tubman's rescue work and Still's assistance? Use a detail from E3.

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