

A Wayne Scott • *LifeHouse Theater-On-The-Air* Production

Hiding in Plain Sight

An Original Adaptation by
Matthew Wines

Adapted from the 1860 William Craft Novel "Running a Thousand Miles to Freedom"

Curriculum Guide

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SLAVERY IN AMERICAN HISTORY

- **1619** - The first African slaves arrive in Virginia.
- **1787** - Slavery is made illegal in the Northwest Territory.
- **1793** - Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin greatly increases the demand for slave labor.
- **1793** - A federal fugitive slave law is enacted, providing for the return slaves who had escaped and crossed state lines.
- **1820** - The Missouri Compromise bans slavery north of the southern boundary of Missouri.
- **1849** - Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery and becomes one of the most effective and celebrated leaders of the Underground Railroad.
- **1850** - In the Compromise of 1850, California is admitted as a free state, Utah and New Mexico territories are left to be decided by popular sovereignty, and the slave trade in Washington, DC is prohibited.
- **1852** - Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin is published.
- **1854** - Congress passes the Kansas-Nebraska Act.
- **1857** - The Dred Scott case holds that Congress does not have the right to ban slavery in states and, furthermore, that slaves are not citizens.
- **1861** - Civil War begins and the Confederacy is founded when the South secedes.
- **1863** - President Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring "that all persons held as slaves" within the Confederate state "are, and henceforward shall be free."
- **1865** - The Civil War ends. Lincoln is assassinated. The Thirteenth Amendment abolishes slavery throughout the United States and slavery effectively ended when 250,000 slaves in Texas finally received the news that the Civil War had ended.
- **1870** - The 15th Amendment is passed permitting black men the right to vote.
- **1875** - The U.S. Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1875.
- **1936** - Thurgood Marshall becomes the first black appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- **1955** - Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on the bus.
- **1964** - Congress authorizes the Civil Rights Act.
- **2008** - Barack Obama is elected President of the United States of America.

Hiding in Plain Sight
CONTENT AND REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what state does this story begin?

2. Why did Howard get punished in the town square?

3. Why was Mrs. Wilkerson hopeful that Ellen would have a child?

4. What physical characteristic stood out about Ellen?

5. What was the problem with Ellen's original plan of pretending to be a white woman?

6. To what city were Ellen and William traveling?

7. What challenge did Ellen and William face on the last leg of their journey?

8. Who is Compton?

9. Did Ellen and William find final freedom in Philadelphia?

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CONTENT AND REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what state does this story begin?

A: Georgia.

2. Why did Howard get punished in the town square?

A: He tried to run away from his owner.

3. Why was Mrs. Wilkerson hopeful that Ellen would have a child?

A: So that Mrs. Wilkerson could send the child to be a slave at her mother's home.

4. What physical characteristic stood out about Ellen?

A: She was very fair skinned.

5. What was the problem with Ellen's original plan of pretending to be a white woman?

A: It was not proper for white women to travel alone with black men.

6. To what city were Ellen and William traveling?

A: Philadelphia.

7. What challenge did Ellen and William face on the last leg of their journey?

A: It was required that William have a special pass, proving that Ellen was his rightful owner.

8. Who is Compton?

A: An abolitionist who helps slaves to freedom.

9. Did Ellen and William find final freedom in Philadelphia?

A: No. In order to escape the slave catchers, they eventually settled in England.

QUOTES

Whenever I hear any one arguing for slavery I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally.

– *Abraham Lincoln*

Be strong and have courage for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

– *Joshua 1:9*

I look to a day when people will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

– *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

1. What is the Mason-Dixon line? What did it represent - geographically and symbolically?

2. The U.S. Congress passed a Civil Rights Act in 1875 and again in 1964, trying to eliminate discrimination. Do you think everyone is treated equally today? In what ways do you see people being treated unfairly? How can you help?

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