

The Underground Railroad Code

Underground to Canada – chapter 14

Using the code words mentioned in chapter 14, as well as information from Martin Luther King Jr.'s message included in the "Note to the Reader" at the beginning of the book, rewrite the sentence below, changing the actual words (the ones underlined) to their Underground Railroad "code" words. You can change some words in the sentence to make it make sense. Circle the coded words in the new version.

Original Passage:

Two slaves followed the path along the Mississippi River to reach Jeb Brown's house on the way to Canada. One slave was male and the other was female.

Coded Passage:

There is a very famous song that slaves would sing, which included coded instructions designed to help them reach freedom in the north, called *Follow the Drinking Gourd*.

Chorus

Follow the drinking gourd,

Follow the drinking gourd,

For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom,

Follow the drinking gourd.

When the sun comes back and the first quail calls,

Follow the drinking gourd.

The old man is a waiting for to carry you to freedom,

Follow the drinking gourd.

Chorus

Now the river bank makes a mighty good road,

The dead trees will show you the way.

Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,

Follow the drinking gourd.

Chorus

Now the river ends between two hills,

Follow the drinking gourd.

There's another river on the other side,

Follow the drinking gourd.

Chorus

Creating a Coded Song:

Using your knowledge of the events in Underground to Canada and code words that slaves used to help them escape, write your own verse to a song detailing Julilly and Liza's journey to freedom. Your verse should have at least 8 lines and should include AT LEAST 5 code words.

Try to have it resemble a poem/song lyrics/rap

BONUS: Anyone who can create an actual song, with a melody/beat, will get bonus marks.

Code words you can use include:

<u>Code Word</u>	<u>Actual Meaning (what does it represent)</u>
Drinking gourd	
Heaven	
The whippoorwill call	
Friends with a friend	
Railway station	
Tracks	
Freight	
Dry goods	
Hardware	

Song Title: _____

Lyrics: _____

Race to Freedom by Mr. Kavadas

Julilly was told about a place she can go
It was called Heaven, where freedom she'd know
To get to freedom, she'd have to work hard
And keep her eyes high on the drinking gourd
They'll lose the bounty hunters following the tracks
Complete in disguise, wearing boys' slacks
Two dry goods against a whole nation
Trying to seek refuge at a railway station
Only with wit and courage they'll succeed
And being "friends with a friend," they'll be freed