

The Underground Railroad

Today, it may seem obvious that everyone should be treated equally. **Discrimination** based on race is a crime. But at one time, African Americans were held as slaves. Under the **bondage** of slavery, they were forced to work but they were not paid for their work. Enslaved people were considered the property of their masters, and they were often treated with extreme cruelty.

Many people tried to escape from slavery, but it was very difficult. Laws **prohibited** African Americans from traveling freely in Southern states. They would be chased by ruthless slave catchers. In Northern states, things were not much better. Even when slavery ended there, laws required Northern leaders to capture and return escaped slaves. Northern **authorities** had to return captured slaves to their masters in the South.

By the middle of the 1800s, many people **summoned** others to join together to end slavery. Some answered this call by helping enslaved people escape. They set up a system called the Underground Railroad. This was not a train that ran under the ground; it was a network of people cooperating to **conduct** escaped slaves north, to the country of Canada. There, slavery was illegal and slave catchers had no power.

Although people escaping slavery would sometimes travel on real railroads, they usually went on foot or in wagons. It was very dangerous. They traveled at night and were **dependent** on others to hide them. During the day, they would hide in barns or houses called "stations." Railroad terms were used as a code to keep the system secret. Secrecy was important not only for those escaping, but also for the **operators** of the railroad. If they were caught, they could be arrested. All different kinds of people worked on the Underground Railroad, including those who had escaped from slavery themselves. A famous woman named Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery in 1849. But she returned to the South, again and again, to bravely risk her life freeing hundreds of others.

By the time the government **granted** all African Americans freedom from slavery in 1865, tens of thousands had already safely reached Canada. Many remained there, but some returned to their families in the United States. All of them remembered the kindness and courage of those who helped them find freedom.

COMPREHENSION Why did people travel on the Underground Railroad? What were slaves prohibited from doing?

Days 1 and 2

"The Underground Railroad," Vol. 2, pp. 38–39

Race to the Bottom of the Earth

In the early 1900s, two men decided to travel to the South Pole. But they were not going together. No one had ever been to the South Pole before, and both Roald Amundsen and Robert Scott wanted to be first. Amundsen and Scott were going to race each other to the Earth's most southern point.

Both men knew that their journeys would be very dangerous because of the **unpredictability** of the weather. And the land around the South Pole, called Antarctica, was an enormous area where no one lived. If the men were hurt during the journey, no one would see their signal for help; any brightly lit **beacon** they might use would be useless.

Because of these dangers, both men knew that planning carefully for the trip was **critical** to its success. They chose teams of men to help them. Beyond this, Amundsen decided to use sled dogs and skis. Scott decided to use Siberian ponies. Amundsen and Scott both felt a **pressing** desire to get started. They knew it was **crucial** to avoid the harsh Antarctic winter. But in order to do this, they had to start in the spring when the weather was still quite cold.

Amundsen was able to leave before Scott because his dogs could travel in colder weather. His team made quick progress across the snow and ice, moving toward the South Pole. Then his men reached a range of mountains that seemed too difficult to climb. They made a decision to try another route, one they had not planned on taking. It turned out to be a shortcut. Finally, they made it to the South Pole. They were the first ones to get there! Amundsen and his team returned home exhausted, but safe.

Scott's team had a much harder journey. Their ponies struggled in the cold weather. The journey to the South Pole went well, but the men arrived to find that Amundsen had been there already. Scott and his team were disappointed, but they knew it was **urgent** for them to get home quickly, before they ran out of supplies.

Scott's team soon faced some **random** bad luck. They experienced terrible weather. The cold was unbearable. The team realized that the danger was **mounting**. They were running low on food, and they had lost some of their fuel for warmth because of a **mishap**.

Unfortunately, Scott and his team never made it home. But both he and Amundsen will be remembered as heroes who dared to explore new land.

COMPREHENSION Why do you think Amundsen and Scott left home to explore new land? Which words help you understand the danger the men faced?

Days 3 and 4

"Race to the Bottom of the Earth," Vol. 2, pp. 40–41

Assessment

Pretest/Posttest Administration p. 86

Pretest/Posttest Blackline Masters pp. 140–141

Day 1

Introduce Meanings

Assess To assess what word meanings children already know, copy and distribute the **Pretest/Posttest** on pages 140–141. Use page 86 to administer the test.

Explain Write each word below on the board. Read it aloud. Offer an explanation and a brief example for each word.

Words About Power Over Others

authorities *n.* people in power
You should report any crimes to the authorities.

bondage *n.* being under the control of another
The slave was freed from bondage.

conduct *v.* to lead or guide
He will conduct us to class.

dependent *adj.* needing the help of another
Children are dependent on their parents.

discrimination *n.* unfair treatment
Discrimination based on a person's race is illegal.

granted *v.* gave
Carla's mom granted her extra allowance money.

operator *n.* a person who runs or works something
He works as the operator of a steamroller.

prohibit *v.* to not allow
The new law will prohibit littering.

summons *v.* calls
Her dad summons her to dinner.

Discuss Guide children to see the relationship between each word and the category.

Read Aloud Explain that you will read aloud a story about the Underground Railroad. Then read "The Underground Railroad." Discuss the questions.

Day 2

Categorize and Classify

Reread and Explain Reread "The Underground Railroad." At the end of each sentence that includes an oral vocabulary word, stop and repeat the explanation of the word. Then reread the sentence.

Use a Graphic Organizer Use the graphic organizer and the questions below to reinforce understanding of the relationship between each word and the category.



1. If someone is the operator of a business, that means he or she _____. (runs it)
2. What is something that the rules in your school prohibit? (Sample answers: wearing a hat; chewing gum)



Day 3

Introduce Meanings

Explain Write each word below on the board. Read it aloud. Offer an explanation and a brief example for each word.

Words About Dangerous Situations

beacon *n.* a guiding or warning light *A lighthouse is a beacon for ships at sea.*

critical *adj.* very important *It is critical to get a good night's sleep before a school day.*

crucial *adj.* very important *Getting a good education is crucial for your success.*

mishap *n.* an accident *We lost our bags because of a mishap.*

mounting *v.* growing *She could feel her excitement mounting.*

pressing *adj.* needing to be dealt with right away *They had a pressing need for water.*

random *adj.* without pattern or order; by chance *He pulled random numbers out of a hat.*

unpredictability *n.* not able to know what is going to happen *The unpredictability of earthquakes makes them more dangerous.*

urgent *adj.* needing to be dealt with right away *It is urgent that we find a doctor.*

Discuss Guide children to see the relationship between each word and the category.

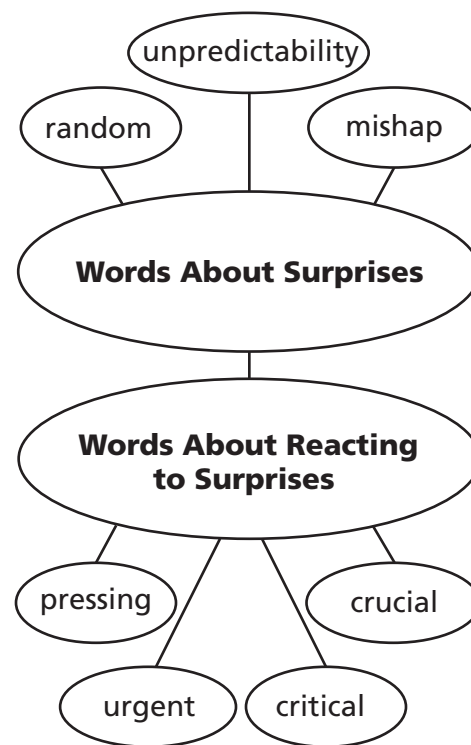
Read Aloud Explain that you will read aloud a story about a race to the South Pole. Then read aloud "Race to the Bottom of the Earth." Discuss the questions.

Day 4

Categorize and Classify

Reread and Explain Reread "Race to the Bottom of the Earth." At the end of each sentence that includes an oral vocabulary word, stop and repeat the explanation of the word. Then reread the sentence.

Use a Graphic Organizer Use the graphic organizer and the questions below to reinforce understanding of the relationship between each word and the category.



1. The shipwrecked sailors lit a fire as a _____. (**beacon**)
2. As he got closer to the lion's den, he could feel his fear _____. (**mounting**)

Day 5

Deepen Understanding

Review Review word meanings for all oral vocabulary words. Use the definitions and examples from Day 1 and Day 3.

Guide Partner Activities Have partners work together to complete each of the activities below. Circulate and listen to partners as they work. Provide corrective feedback.

Compare If you face **bondage** or **discrimination**, you are not being treated fairly. Compare being treated this way to having freedom. Why is it **crucial** that all people be **granted** freedom?

Examples What are three things your parents **prohibit** you from doing? What are three things they think it is **critical** to do?

Word Parts The suffix **-or**, when added to a verb, means "person who." The word **operator** means "a person who runs or works something." Use a dictionary or glossary. Work with a partner to find three other verbs that make new words when you add the suffix **-or**.

Write Write an adventure story with your partner. Use these words: **unpredictability, beacon, random, urgent, pressing, mounting, mishap, dependent**.

Draw Draw a picture of police authorities **summoning** a car to pull over. Then draw a picture of them **conducting** the person to the police station.

Assess To assess what word meanings children have learned, copy and distribute the **Pretest/Posttest** on pages 140–141. Use page 86 to administer the test. Compare scores with Day 1 assessment.