**Name and School:** Dawn BarbouRoske, Longfellow and Lucas Elementary, ICCSD

**Lesson grade level:** Extended Learning Program, 5th grade

**Lesson Title:** Underground Railroad through Iowa: Connecting U.S. History to Us

**Essential Questions:**
What influence did slavery and then the Underground Railroad have on the U.S. and Iowa? How does learning about these events influence your view/perspective of that time in Iowa history?

**Lesson abstract:**
A series of lessons that build upon one another; an introduction into slavery, the Underground Railroad, selected abolitionists and conductors, which leads into Iowa’s connection within the UR and John Brown. It outlines historic markers across Iowa and concludes with voices of former slaves from national projects to collect their narratives. Link to Storify project: [https://storify.com/ELPwithMsB/underground-railroad-in-iowa](https://storify.com/ELPwithMsB/underground-railroad-in-iowa)

**Learning Objectives:**
- to understand what slavery was and the role it played in our developing country
- to understand the magnitude of Africans that were taken and shipped to the Americas
- interpret multiple digital sources and authentic archives
- build an appreciation for what enslaved people were subject to as they were forced to work for their owners.
- consider the ramifications of: slavery, aiding a runaway, abolitionists
- realize Iowa’s connection to these historic events

**Iowa Core Standards:**
Social Studies Core Standards 5th grade:

**SS.3–5.BS.1** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand the changing nature of society.

**SS.3–5.BS.2** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand the influences on individual and group behavior and group decision making.

**SS.3–5.BS.3** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand how personality and socialization impact the individual.

**SS.3–5.BS.4** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand the process of how humans develop, learn, adapt to their environment, and internalize their culture.

**SS.3–5.BS.5** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand current social issues to determine how the individual formulates opinions and responds to issues.

**SS.3–5.BS.6** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand how to evaluate social research and information.

**SS.3–5.H.1** Essential Concept and/or Skill: Understand historical patterns, periods of time and the relationships among these elements.
SS.3–5.H.2 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how and why people create, maintain, or change systems of power, authority, and governance.*

SS.3–5.H.3 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of culture and cultural diffusion on the development and maintenance of societies.*

SS.3–5.H.4 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the role of individuals and groups within a society as promoters of change or the status quo.*

SS.3–5.H.6 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the effects of geographic factors on historical events.*

SS.3–5.H.8 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand cause and effect relationships and other historical thinking skills in order to interpret events and issues.*

SS.3–5.G.1 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the use of geographic tools to locate and analyze information about people, places, and environments.*

SS.3–5.G.3 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how human factors and the distribution of resources affect the development of society and the movement of populations.*

SS.3–5.PSCL.2 Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand how the government established by the Constitution embodies the enduring values and principles of democracy and republicanism.*

**Literacy Core Standards 5th grade:**

RI.5.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

RI.5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

L.5.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**Materials/Equipment/Websites:**

All websites used are also compiled on my published Storify page:

https://storify.com/ELPwithMsB/underground-railroad-in-iowa

**Detailed Procedures/Questions/Activities:**

Access Storify link on SmartBoard to view as a class.

View, visit links and discuss at appropriate instructional pace for learners.

**Slavery:**


What was slavery? A legal and economic system that endorsed ownership of people with overbearing control of their lives.

Timeline of Slavery:

Slave trade voyages began in 1525, but steadily grew from 1650 until 1776 (Revolutionary War). It rose again from the 1780's until British and U.S. slave trade is
abolished in 1808. Despite the decline, voyages still continued until the final trans-Atlantic journey in 1867.

2. Examine the data provided on the Voyages linked timeline. Discuss trends noted on bar graph. Note questions that arise for future learning or extension opportunities. [http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces;jsessionid=FA52D58F04B6A86E2CC38975F6A52AA9](http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces;jsessionid=FA52D58F04B6A86E2CC38975F6A52AA9)

EXTENSION Opportunity: This site had a wealth of information and data that could be used for extension research on interpreting graphs, compiling statistics on the numbers of sent versus numbers that arrived alive.

3. Discuss Slave ship transport conditions.

4. Review digital archive receipt from African American Museum of Iowa for care of slave and interpret what script says. [http://blackiowa.pastperfect-online.com/34282cgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=4BB34146-C3A7-4681-8814-364924953975;type=102](http://blackiowa.pastperfect-online.com/34282cgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=4BB34146-C3A7-4681-8814-364924953975;type=102)

Interpretation of handwriting states:
July 27th 1853 Received of James Field administrator of (Sam) Updike _____ thirty-two dollars & eightyeight cents the balance in full for keeping the old negro man Shadrack belonging to the estate of Samuel Updike ___ ___ William Updike

**Underground Railroad:**

1. Discuss the concept of The Underground Railroad, that it was neither underground nor a railway. Instead, it was a secret and illegal term for moving slaves who ran away from a life of being owned and treated harshly to be free. The Underground Railroad consisted of a series of safe houses to receive shelter and sometimes food, supplies and advice along the way to a freedom state. This took place throughout the majority of the 1800’s. It is believed to have been an escape for over 100,000 slaves during 1810 - 1860.

It was a scary decision and experience to run away, but freedom was worth it. Travel in the footsteps of a 12-year-old girl seeking freedom in this scenario. Pathways to Freedom: Maryland's Underground Railroad interactive journey. [http://pathways.thinkport.org/flash/ftf_1_0.html](http://pathways.thinkport.org/flash/ftf_1_0.html)

What were some consequences of running away from an owner?

2. Introduce the term Abolitionist. Abolitionists were people who demanded an end to slavery. Many abolitionists displayed secret codes to signal safe shelter for fugitive slaves. Sometimes it was a light in a window, a quilt hung out to dry or a symbol on a barn. Many songs also guided their journey. [http://pathways.thinkport.org/secrets/](http://pathways.thinkport.org/secrets/) [http://www.harriet-tubman.org/songs-of-the-underground-railroad/](http://www.harriet-tubman.org/songs-of-the-underground-railroad/)

3. Read and discuss the Kennedy Center compilation of Underground Railroad phrases and their meanings. [https://artsedge.kennedy-](https://artsedge.kennedy-
* Have students create their own series of secret messages using these phrases and share with partner / class.

4. You’re on the run! Slave owners want you back and the way to communicate a message during that time period was to place ads in the newspaper and put up posters in neighboring towns. Here’s an example from the digital archives of The African American Museum of Iowa http://blackiowa.pastperfect-online.com/34282cgi/mweb.exe?request=image&hex=20122297.JPG

**A Few Notable Abolitionists:**

1. Harriet Tubman was one of the most well-known. She was born a slave who escaped north to freedom, yet courageously arranged to return and escort hundreds of other fugitive slaves to freedom and assisted the Union soldiers as a spy during the Civil War. View 3min video from History Channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bdno2YLm4Ms

2. Levi and Catharine Coffin’s home in Indiana was known as Grand Central Station. They helped over 2,000 freedom seekers find food, clothing and shelter. Read and discuss http://www.indianamuseum.org/explore/levi-coffin-house

3. Frederick Douglass was born a slave, escaped at age 20 and became an international anti-slavery activist. He wrote books and edited newspapers about the struggle of slaves and became a driving force toward social justice. View 2+min video from History Channel http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/frederick-douglass

**Iowa Connection:**

John Brown is a controversial figure. He believed strongly in abolishing slavery and conducted numerous Underground Railroad missions. He also developed a plan to arm slaves with weapons to fight for their freedom.


2. Then View 7min video from National Museum of American History It explores the various perspectives of events and people in history. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcoIkUIUS6s&t=15

John Brown was known to travel through Iowa moving fugitive slaves with him from Kansas, up to Chicago and on to Canada. He met with numerous influential Iowans and conducted several Underground Railroad missions through Iowa.

3. Read through the Library of Congress’ digital archive of an Iowa State Bystander article recounting John Brown’s travels through Iowa and with whom he met and collaborated with to create an Underground railroad from Kansas through Iowa toward Chicago and Canada. http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83025186/1906-03-09/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1836&index=1&rows=20&words=Brown+John&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=Iowa&date2=1922&proxtext=John+Brown&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1
4. West Virginia Archives and History also details John Brown’s actions in Jeannette Mather Lord’s John Brown: They Had a Concern. 
http://www.wvculture.org/history/journal_wvh/wvh20-2.html

5. Compare these two accounts with a third article, written years later by The Gazette 
Do they support one another or are there inconsistencies?

Take note of the local Iowan’s names and towns.

6. Now let’s correlate these accounts across Iowa to see where he stopped along the way. Navigate through the State Historical Society’s interactive map of John Brown’s trail through Iowa to aid slaves seeking freedom. http://iowahistory.org/museum/ugrr-ia/john-brown-iowa-1859.html Click on each town for a pop-up window with more information about that location’s accounts. As well as the additional town links of National Historic site links.

Assign each student a town to visit and read about what happened there. Take notes on local Iowan’s names and role in the Underground Railroad. Then have them come together and share what they’ve learned with the group.

EXTENSION opportunity: Research the newly discovered Iowans who were abolitionists and their influence / impact on their local area.

* Civil Bend: http://www.iowahistory.org/museum/ugrr-ia/civil-bend.html


* Josiah B. Grinnell, Grinnell: http://www.iowahistory.org/museum/ugrr-ia/grinnell.html


* William Maxon, West Liberty: http://iowahistory.org/museum/ugrr-ia/west-liberty.html

7. Post an Iowa map and have students highlight the cities known to have been traveled through. Calculate the distance traveled across the state. How long might it take to walk that far?

Oral History: Slave’s Perspective:
8. To weave these experiences together, allow students to choose and listen to a few former slave narratives recorded as a national initiative to save these oral histories.
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/memories/index_flash.html

http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mesn&fileName=060/mesn060.db&recNum=10&itemLink=D?mesnbib:1::temp/~ammem_3lys::

Assessment(s):
1. Write a paragraph for each section, explaining what you have learned about slavery, the Underground Railroad, and Iowa’s connection to these.

2. Describe how learning about the life as a slave, (minimally) experiencing an escape through the Underground Railroad and listening to actual former slave narratives changed you and your perspective on these historic events?

Focus could just be on the Iowa Connection for this assignment, but for my purposes, it is a component in the broader picture of Slavery, Underground Railroad and Civil War. This history will develop the background knowledge to enhance our literature novel units including:
* Avi’s *Iron Thunder* - civil war story set in NY about building the secret Merrimac and its battle with the Monitor.
* Thomas B. Allen & National Geographic’s *Harriet Tubman: Secret Agent*
* The McKissack’s *Clone Codes* Parallels the storyline of the Underground Railroad, but with cyborgs. Numerous connections tie abolitionists with the book’s custodians, the struggle for freedom, the need for escape from ownership, and perspective.