



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1985 Volume V: Odysseys: Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century African-American History Through Personal Narrative

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## **Black Emancipators of the Nineteenth Century**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.05.01  
by Beryl Irene Bailey and Marcella Flake

We have chosen for our topic, “Black Emancipators of the 19th Century. While we understand that our topic is broad and has several meanings, i.e. emancipation of the mind, body and spirit, we have narrowed our meaning to emancipation of the mind and body. Our topic will adhere to three basic themes, emancipators who spoke about abolishing slavery, emancipators who staged rebellions, and emancipators who escaped slavery. We will discuss emancipators such as Nat Turner, Sojourner Truth, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and William Still.

Our purpose for doing research in this area is threefold. One, there is little information in the Social Studies textbooks about the African-American’s role in liberating himself/herself from slavery. Most social studies text credit Abraham Lincoln with this historical event. Two, we sense a prevalent feeling from classes we’ve taught, that Black children are ashamed of their heritage. We feel this is partly due to misinformation that has trickled down to the children today. Three, we believe that in order for other ethnic groups to respect and appreciate another’s culture, they must be taught it within the context of American history.

(Recommended for English and Social Studies classes, grades 6 through 12)

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