

Write A Letter From Harriet Tubman To Another Person We Have Learned About This Unit (Lincoln, Stowe,

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In this article, we will explore the hypothetical yet insightful exercise of writing a letter from Harriet Tubman to another prominent figure from the same historical period, such as President Abraham Lincoln or author Harriet Beecher Stowe. These letters serve as a creative way to deepen our understanding of their relationships, shared goals, and the profound impact they had on the fight for justice and equality in 19th-century America. By imagining what Harriet Tubman might have communicated to these influential figures, we gain a richer perspective on their contributions and interconnected efforts in ending slavery and advocating for human rights.

The Significance of Correspondence in History

Understanding Historical Relationships

Letters between key historical figures provide valuable insights into their personal thoughts, strategies, and mutual respect. They reveal:

- The challenges faced during the fight against slavery
- The collaborative efforts to promote abolition
- Personal sentiments that shaped their public actions

The Power of Hypothetical Letters

Creating a fictional letter allows us to:

- Connect emotionally with historical figures
- Envision their priorities and concerns
- Appreciate the complexity of their relationships

Background on Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman (c. 1822–1913) was an escaped slave who became a leading abolitionist and conductor of the Underground Railroad. Her unwavering dedication helped hundreds of enslaved people attain freedom. Beyond her work on the Underground Railroad, she was also a nurse, spy, and advocate for women's rights.

Key accomplishments of Harriet Tubman:

- Leading over 300 enslaved people to freedom
- Serving as a spy for the Union Army during the Civil War
- Campaigning for women's suffrage later in her life

Harriet Tubman and President Abraham Lincoln

The Relationship Between Tubman and Lincoln

Although Harriet Tubman and Abraham Lincoln did not have a personal friendship, their efforts were interconnected in the struggle to end slavery. Tubman's role as a conductor on the Underground Railroad and her work during the Civil War complemented Lincoln's political leadership and emancipation policies.

Key points about their connection:

- Tubman's direct actions helped undermine the institution of slavery

- Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 was a turning point in abolishing slavery
- Both sought to achieve the same goal—freedom and equality for African Americans

Imagining a Letter from Harriet Tubman to Abraham Lincoln

If Harriet Tubman were to write a letter to President Lincoln, it might include the following themes:

- Appreciation for his leadership and the Emancipation Proclamation
- Urgency for continued efforts to ensure freedom and justice
- Personal reflections on the struggles faced by enslaved people and freedmen

Sample points she might include:

- Thanking Lincoln for his commitment to ending slavery
- Encouraging him to consider the importance of Reconstruction
- Sharing stories from her work guiding enslaved people to freedom

Harriet Tubman and Harriet Beecher Stowe

The Connection Through Literature and Activism

Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852, was instrumental in shaping public opinion against slavery. Tubman and Stowe shared a common goal of abolition but approached it through different means—Stowe through literature and Tubman through direct action.

Shared objectives of Tubman and Stowe:

- Raise awareness about the brutality of slavery
- Mobilize public opinion against the slave trade
- Inspire action for abolition and justice

Imagining a Letter from Harriet Tubman to Harriet Beecher Stowe

A letter from Tubman to Stowe might revolve around appreciation and shared resolve:

- Gratitude for the powerful narrative of Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Encouragement to continue the fight through activism and storytelling
- Personal reflections on the importance of moral courage

Sample points she might include:

- How Stowe's book inspired enslaved people and abolitionists
- The importance of continued advocacy in changing hearts and minds
- Her own experiences aligning with the messages conveyed in Stowe's work

Common Themes in the Hypothetical Letters

Writing these letters, whether from Tubman to Lincoln or Stowe, reveals several recurring themes:

- The importance of unity in the abolition movement
- Recognition of various methods—military, political, literary, and direct action—in fighting slavery
- Personal sacrifices made by each individual for justice
- Hope for a future where freedom and equality are universal rights

The Impact of These Figures on American History

Harriet Tubman's Legacy

As a fearless conductor and activist, Tubman's contributions transcend her lifetime, inspiring generations to continue the fight for justice.

Key impacts:

- Symbol of bravery and resilience
- Role model for civil rights activism

- Advocate for women's suffrage and social reform

Abraham Lincoln's Role

Lincoln's leadership during the Civil War and his issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation fundamentally changed the course of American history.

Key impacts:

- Preservation of the Union
- Ending slavery through legislative action
- Setting the stage for civil rights movements

Harriet Beecher Stowe's Cultural Influence

Stowe's novel stirred moral outrage against slavery and helped galvanize public support for abolition.

Key impacts:

- Shaping public opinion
- Influencing policy debates
- Inspiring abolitionist activism

Conclusion: The Power of Imagined Correspondence

Writing letters from Harriet Tubman to Lincoln and Stowe offers a creative exploration of their interconnected efforts. These hypothetical communications deepen our appreciation for their dedication and highlight the multifaceted approach taken in the struggle for freedom. Their stories remind us that change often requires courage, perseverance, and collaboration across different spheres—whether through direct action, political leadership, or storytelling.

By imagining these exchanges, students and history enthusiasts can better grasp the motivations,

struggles, and hopes of these remarkable figures who shaped the course of American history. Their legacy continues to inspire ongoing efforts toward justice, equality, and human dignity.

Further Reading and Resources

- Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People by Eloise Greenfield
- Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin
- Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe
- National Park Service: Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park
- The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum
- The Harriet Beecher Stowe Center

Engage With History

To deepen your understanding, consider writing your own hypothetical letter from one of these figures to another. Reflect on their goals, challenges, and the legacy they left behind. Such exercises foster empathy and a nuanced appreciation of history's heroes.

In summary, imagining a letter from Harriet Tubman to Lincoln or Stowe is a powerful educational tool that highlights the interconnectedness of their efforts. It underscores the importance of diverse approaches—ranging from activism and leadership to literature—in the ongoing pursuit of justice and equality. Their stories continue to inspire current and future generations to stand against injustice and work toward a more equitable society.

Frequently Asked Questions

What might Harriet Tubman say to Abraham Lincoln in a letter about the fight for freedom?

Harriet Tubman could express her gratitude to President Lincoln for his leadership and share her hope that the Union's efforts will end slavery and bring justice and equality for all people.

How would Harriet Tubman describe her experiences leading enslaved people to freedom to Harriet Beecher Stowe?

She might recount her courageous journeys through the Underground Railroad, emphasizing the importance of faith, bravery, and the need to continue fighting against slavery to achieve justice.

What message would Harriet Tubman send to Abraham Lincoln about the importance of abolition?

Tubman would likely stress that ending slavery is essential for true freedom and equality, urging Lincoln to continue his efforts to abolish slavery for the good of all enslaved people.

If Harriet Tubman wrote to Harriet Beecher Stowe, what might she thank her for?

She might thank Harriet Beecher Stowe for writing 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' which helped raise awareness about the cruelties of slavery and inspired many to join the fight for abolition.

What kind of advice might Harriet Tubman give to her fellow abolitionists in a letter?

She would likely encourage perseverance, courage, and faith in the cause, emphasizing that their efforts are vital for achieving freedom and justice for enslaved people.

How would Harriet Tubman describe her feelings about the progress of the abolition movement in a letter?

She might express hope and pride in the progress made but also acknowledge the ongoing struggles and the need for continued determination and unity.

What would Harriet Tubman emphasize about the importance of education and awareness in her letter to her peers?

She would highlight that education is key to empowering enslaved people and advocates, helping them understand their rights and inspiring action toward freedom.

How might Harriet Tubman encourage others to stay committed to the cause of ending slavery in her letter?

She would inspire others by sharing her own experiences of bravery and sacrifice, urging them to remain resolute and hopeful in the pursuit of justice and equality.

Additional Resources

Harriet Tubman's Letter to Abraham Lincoln: An Expert Perspective on a Historic Dialogue

Introduction

The story of Harriet Tubman, the legendary conductor of the Underground Railroad, is replete with acts of courage, strategic ingenuity, and unwavering commitment to justice. Her interactions with prominent figures like President Abraham Lincoln are often examined through the lens of historical achievements, but imagining a direct correspondence offers a compelling way to understand her perspective and

voice. This article explores an imagined letter from Harriet Tubman to Abraham Lincoln, crafted with historical authenticity and emotional depth, offering an insightful analysis into their potential dialogue, motives, and underlying themes.

Setting the Stage: The Context of Their Relationship

Before delving into the content of the letter, it's essential to understand the historical backdrop and the relationship dynamics between Harriet Tubman and Abraham Lincoln.

The Civil War and the Fight for Freedom

The Civil War (1861-1865) was a defining period for the United States, primarily fought over the issues of slavery and states' rights. Lincoln's presidency was marked by efforts to abolish slavery through the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, which declared freedom for enslaved people in Confederate states.

Harriet Tubman's role during this period was equally pivotal. Having escaped slavery herself, she became a conductor on the Underground Railroad, helping hundreds of enslaved individuals find freedom. During the Civil War, she also served as a nurse, spy, and scout for the Union Army.

Shared Goals, Different Approaches

Lincoln's approach was primarily political and military, aiming to preserve the Union and abolish slavery through legislation and executive actions. Tubman, on the other hand, was a direct-action activist, emphasizing grassroots efforts, personal bravery, and strategic planning to liberate enslaved

people.

Despite differing methods, both sought the same ultimate goal: the abolition of slavery and the recognition of Black humanity and rights.

The Significance of Their Imagined Correspondence

While no historical record exists of a personal letter from Tubman to Lincoln, imagining such a communication allows us to explore her voice, concerns, and hopes. It embodies the intersection of activism, leadership, and moral conviction, providing a narrative bridge that humanizes these historic figures.

Imagining the Letter: Structure, Tone, and Content

An effective letter from Harriet Tubman to Lincoln should reflect her passionate commitment, strategic insight, and respect for Lincoln's leadership, while also expressing her concerns and suggestions.

Adopting the Tone of a Civil Rights Advocate

Tubman's tone would likely be earnest, assertive, and respectful. She would emphasize her personal experiences, the urgency of emancipation, and her strategic ideas for further action.

Key Elements of the Letter

The letter would include several core themes:

- Acknowledgment of Lincoln's efforts in ending slavery
- Personal accounts of her work and the plight of enslaved people
- Calls for specific actions, such as increased military support or targeted emancipation
- Expressions of hope and resilience, inspiring Lincoln to continue and expand his efforts
- Appeals to moral responsibility, framing emancipation as a divine and patriotic duty

Draft of the Letter: Harriet Tubman to Abraham Lincoln

Dear President Lincoln,

> I hope this letter finds you in good health and unwavering resolve, for the cause we fight for is greater than any one of us alone. I write to you today, not merely as a former slave or a conductor of the Underground Railroad, but as a voice of the thousands yearning for true freedom and dignity.

> My work has taken me across the perilous paths from bondage to liberty, guiding hundreds of men, women, and children through the night's darkness to the promise of dawn. I have seen firsthand the strength of the human spirit and the desperation of those still chained by the oppressor's hand. It is this sight that compels me to speak directly to you, understanding the weight of your office and the burden of your conscience.

The Urgency of Emancipation and Military Action

The time to act decisively is now. The Emancipation Proclamation was a noble step, but I fear it is not enough to reach every soul enslaved. Many remain in the shadows, hidden from the reach of freedom's light. I urge you to consider deploying more troops specifically dedicated to liberating enslaved populations in the frontlines, and to fund efforts that will infiltrate and dismantle the infrastructure of slavery in the border states.

In my travels, I have witnessed the resilience of those yearning to be free. They are ready to fight—not just for their own liberation but for the Union itself. If we can harness this spirit and provide tangible support, victory and justice are within reach.

The Role of Black Soldiers and Spies

The valor of Black men and women in uniform is undeniable. Their participation would not only bolster our armies but also serve as a powerful symbol of equality and human rights. I have seen many willing and eager to serve; their bravery can turn the tide of this war.

Furthermore, the strategic use of Black spies and scouts—many of whom have intimate knowledge of the land and the enemy—can provide critical intelligence that turns the balance in our favor. I stand ready to assist in organizing and training such forces.

Morality, Justice, and the Divine Will

This struggle is not merely political—it is moral and divine. As a people created equal, we have a sacred duty to uphold justice and righteousness. The words of the Declaration of Independence ring true: “all men are created equal.” It is time that the nation lives up to that promise.

I implore you, Mr. President, to see emancipation not just as a policy but as a moral imperative. The Lord has entrusted us with this responsibility—to free the oppressed and to build a nation founded on liberty and justice for all.

Closing with Hope and Determination

I remain hopeful that through steadfast leadership and divine guidance, we will see the day when slavery is abolished entirely, and all people are recognized as free and equal. I am committed to this cause and willing to serve in any capacity to bring about this justice.

May God guide your hand and strengthen your heart in these difficult times.

Respectfully yours,

Harriet Tubman

Analysis of the Imagined Letter

This letter encapsulates the core principles, tone, and strategic insights that Harriet Tubman might have expressed. Let's analyze its key components:

Authenticity and Voice

- The tone is respectful yet assertive, reflecting Tubman's leadership and moral conviction.
- The language emphasizes her personal experiences and moral authority.

- She appeals to Lincoln's sense of justice, patriotism, and divine duty.

Strategic Recommendations

- Increased military support for emancipation efforts.
- Deployment of Black soldiers and spies.
- Intensified efforts in border states and Confederate-held territories.

Emotional and Moral Appeal

- Focuses on the resilience of enslaved people and their readiness to fight.
- Frames emancipation as a divine and moral obligation.
- Inspires Lincoln to view the issue as both a political and spiritual quest.

Conclusion: The Power of Imagined Dialogue

While this letter is a fictional construct, it exemplifies how Harriet Tubman's voice might have expressed her strategic insights, moral convictions, and hope for a just future. Such a correspondence underscores the importance of diverse voices in shaping history's pivotal moments. It reminds us that behind historic policies were passionate individuals advocating tirelessly for justice, often risking everything for the cause of freedom.

Harriet Tubman's imagined letter to Lincoln serves as a testament to her leadership and moral clarity, inspiring future generations to continue the fight for liberty and equality. It highlights the vital role of direct communication and moral persuasion in enacting change—an enduring lesson from history's most courageous figures.

References

- Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People by Sarah H. Bradford
 - Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin
 - Bound for the Promised Land: The Life and Legacy of Harriet Tubman by Kate Clifford Larson
 - Historical accounts of the Civil War, abolition, and Black military participation
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Final Thoughts

The imagined letter from Harriet Tubman to Abraham Lincoln is more than a historical exercise; it's a reflection of the enduring power of moral conviction, strategic activism, and personal courage. It reminds us that history is shaped not only by policies and battles but also by the voices of those who dare to speak truth to power. Tubman's voice, whether real or imagined, continues to inspire the ongoing pursuit of justice and equality.

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