Parents and teachers are encouraged to talk to their children and students about the material presented in this booklet about the history covered at Boston African American National Historic Site.

After reading carefully through the information presented here and visiting the sites on Beacon Hill, show your knowledge of the history discussed at this unique site by doing the activities throughout the book. When you are finished, think about what you have learned here and why you think it is important that we remember this history. Be sure to share this information with your friends and family.

Junior Rangers 5 to 6 years old complete at least 4 activities.

Junior Rangers 7 to 10 years old complete at least 8 activities.

Junior Rangers 10 and older complete all activities.

To receive your Junior Ranger Badge, complete the activities and find a Ranger on site or send the booklet to our office. A Ranger will go over your answers and then return your booklet along with an official Junior Ranger Badge for your efforts.

Send to:

Boston African American National Historic Site
14 Beacon Street, Suite 401
Boston, MA 02108

For additional information on Boston African American National Historic Site, please visit our website at: www.nps.gov/boaf

Welcome to Boston African American National Historic Site where we explore the rich history of the African American community that lived on Beacon Hill in the 1800s. This community fought for freedom and equality during a time when many African Americans were still held in slavery throughout the country. The people and places that you will learn about played an important role in shaping the history of the 1800s in Boston and across the country.

Activity 1

What are some of the special places in the community where you live?

_____

_____

_____

Who are some of the people that live in your community?

_____

_____

_____

Just like you have people and places that are special, or unique, to your community, there were many special people and places on Beacon Hill in the 1800s.

Let's learn about them.

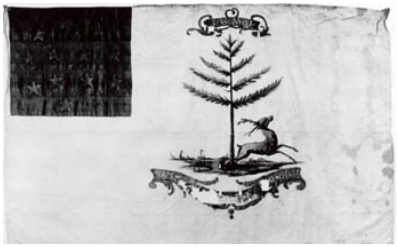
Join us as we discover Boston African American National Historic Site!

Did You Know?

Fugitive slave Ellen Craft disguised herself as a white male slave owner and escaped from slavery aboard a train bound for the North. She and her husband were protected by Beacon Hill abolitionist Lewis Hayden.

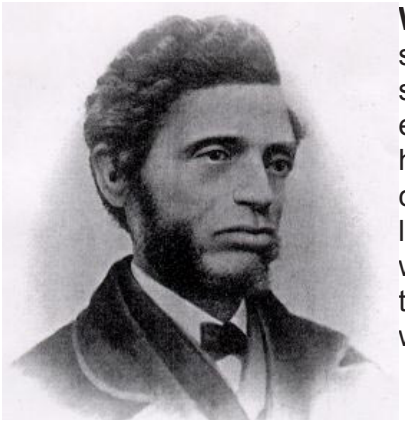
Abolitionist Leaders and Heroes of Boston

The free African American community of Boston led the struggle against slavery and for equal rights in this city. Together with their white allies, these men and women, adults and children, were outspoken abolitionists and freedom fighters. Many were involved on the Underground Railroad, the secret system that helped enslaved people get from slavery to freedom.

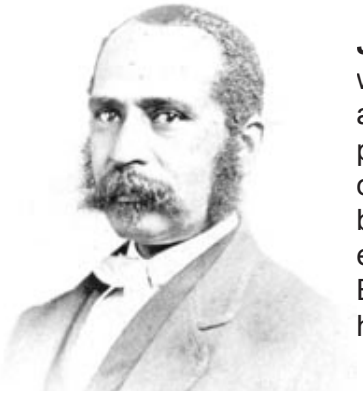


George Middleton lived at 5 Pinckney Street on Beacon Hill. During the Revolutionary War, Middleton led an African American militia known as the Bucks of America who helped in the fight against the British. After the war, he helped lead his community in the struggle for freedom and equal rights as a member of the Prince Hall Masons. This organization was started in Boston by Prince Hall, an early leader in the fight against slavery and injustice.

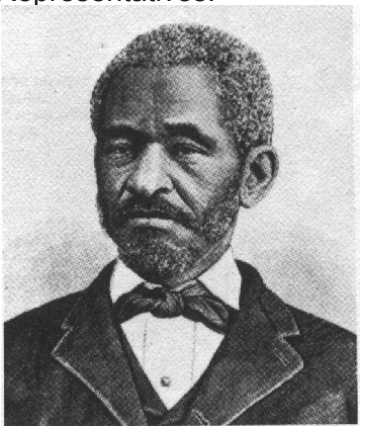
Sarah Roberts was a young African American girl who was forced to walk past five white schools on her way to the Abiel Smith School at 46 Joy Street, Boston's school for black children. Knowing this was unfair, Sarah and her father, Benjamin, took the City of Boston to court to sue for their rights and freedom in 1848. Though they lost their case, Boston schools were integrated in 1855 when Massachusetts passed a law ending public school segregation in the state.



William Cooper Nell lived at 3 Smith Court. As a young student, he was denied a scholarship medal he had earned simply because he was African American. Because of this experience, he vowed to fight against the unfair education he and other young African American students received. His childhood vow became his life's work. As an adult, he led a long and successful struggle to integrate Boston's schools which happened in 1855. He also helped people escape on the Underground Railroad, was a well known abolitionist, and was the nation's first published African American historian.



John J. Smith lived at 86 Pinckney Street on Beacon Hill. He was a barber and leader in his community. Abolitionists gathered at his barbershop to hold meetings. One of the most famous people who met at his barbershop was Charles Sumner, the outspoken abolitionist Senator from Massachusetts. John Smith's barbershop was also considered a rendezvous spot for people escaping on the Underground Railroad. After the Civil War, Bostonians rewarded Smith's courage and leadership by electing him to the Massachusetts House of Representatives.



Lewis Hayden escaped from slavery in Kentucky and moved with his family to 66 Phillips Street on Beacon Hill. Hayden turned his home into an important safe house on the Underground Railroad, where he and his wife Harriet sheltered many people hiding from the slave catchers. He reportedly kept kegs of gunpowder in his home that he threatened to ignite if slave catchers dared to enter his property in search of fugitives.

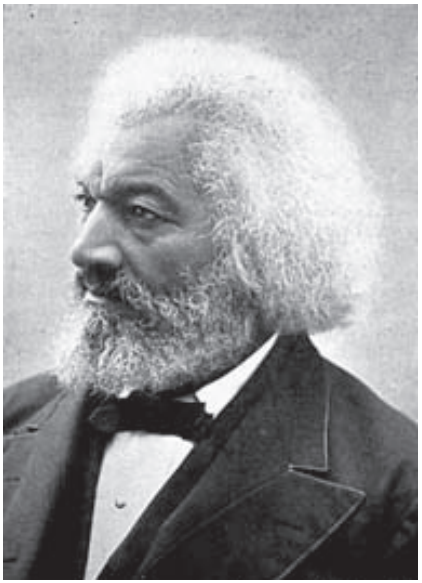
Ellen and William Craft escaped from slavery in Georgia in a courageous and unique way. Ellen, who was light skinned, disguised herself as a white male slave owner. Her husband, William, pretended he was her attentive slave. Together in this disguise, they traveled by train and made their way north to freedom. In Boston, they were sheltered and protected by the Haydens at their Phillips Street home.

John S. Rock lived at 83 Phillips Street. He was a dentist, a doctor, a teacher, and a lawyer. He was the first African American to be admitted to argue before the United States Supreme Court and to address the United States Congress. In addition, John Rock was a major leader and orator in the Abolition Movement and one of the most forceful spokespersons for permitting African Americans to serve as soldiers in the Civil War.

Maria Stewart lived at what is now 81 Joy Street. Stewart was a famous African American who spoke out against slavery, injustice, and for equal rights for women. She spoke at the African Meeting House, which was an important religious and political center on Beacon Hill. She is considered to be the first American born woman of any race to speak in public on political issues.

Robert Gould Shaw's family owned a home at 44 Beacon Street. As the son of prominent abolitionists, Robert Gould Shaw was chosen by Governor John Andrew to lead the 54th Regiment. The 54th Regiment was the first African American regiment recruited in the North to fight in the Civil War.

William Lloyd Garrison was one of the most famous abolitionists. He is best known for being the outspoken editor of *The Liberator*, a weekly abolitionist newspaper that ran for 35 years. In 1832, Garrison and others founded the New England Antislavery Society at the African Meeting House at 8 Smith Court on Beacon Hill.



Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Maryland. After escaping North to freedom, Douglass lived in Massachusetts for a few years and became one of the most famous orators who spoke out against slavery and for equal rights for all. Douglass gave numerous speeches at the African Meeting House. During the Civil War, he recruited African Americans to serve in the 54th Regiment. Two of Douglass's sons served in this regiment.

Make sure to visit the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial on Beacon Street, across from the Massachusetts State House, which honors Colonel Shaw and the brave men of the 54th.

Activity 2

Important Words and People to Know

By doing this activity, you will learn some important words and people that will help you better understand this unique history.

Answer Key *Match the number with the appropriate letter to find out the answers.*

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

1. A person who wants to abolish, or destroy, slavery is called an …

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
1 2 15 12 9 20 9 15 14 9 19 20

2. This building was a church, a school, and an important political center and gathering place for the African American community and their white allies in Boston during the 1800s.

___ ___
1 6 18 9 3 1 14 13 5 5 20 9 14 7 8 15 21 19 5

3. A person who is a powerful public speaker is an ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
15 18 1 20 15 18

4. The secret system that helped people escape from slavery to the free states.

___ ___
21 14 4 5 18 7 18 15 21 14 4 18 1 9 12 18 15 1 4

5. In Boston, in the early 1800s, black and white students were forced to go to separate schools. This is an example of ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
19 5 7 18 5 7 1 20 9 15 14

6. After 1855, black and white children were able to go to school together. This is an example of ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___
9 14 20 5 7 18 1 20 9 15 14

7. Many African Americans lived on the North Slope of this Boston neighborhood.

2	5	1	3	15	14	8	9	12	12

8. The Colonel of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment, the first black regiment from the North to fight in the Civil War, was this Bostonian.

18	15	2	5	18	20	7	15	21	12	4	19	8	1	23

9. This famous orator escaped from slavery, and spoke many times at the African Meeting House.

6	18	5	4	5	18	9	3	11	4	15	21	7	12	1	19	19

10. This famous leader escaped from slavery and operated an Underground Railroad safe house on Beacon Hill.

12	5	23	9	19	8	1	25	4	5	14

Did You Know?

Lewis Hayden allegedly kept kegs of gunpowder in his house that he threatened to ignite if slave catchers tried to enter in search of runaways.

Timeline of Important Dates

1638 The first enslaved Africans were brought to Boston aboard the slave ship, *The Desire.*

1783 Slavery was abolished in Massachusetts.

1806 The African Meeting House was built. The African Meeting House was the center of the free African American community of Boston.

1831 William Lloyd Garrison began publication of *The Liberator*. This weekly abolitionist newspaper ran until slavery was abolished in the nation in 1865.

1835 The Abiel Smith School, the first public school house solely built for the education of African Americans, opened on Joy Street.

1850 The Fugitive Slave Law was passed in Congress.

1851 Fugitive Slave Shadrach Minkins was arrested by slave catchers then rescued from the Courthouse by Bostonians on February 15th.

1855 Massachusetts integrated the public schools.

1861 The Civil War began.

1863 The Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln and the Massachusetts 54th Regiment was formed.

1865 The Civil War ended and slavery was abolished nationwide.

Activity 3

Timeline

Match the fact in Column 2 with the correct year in Column 1

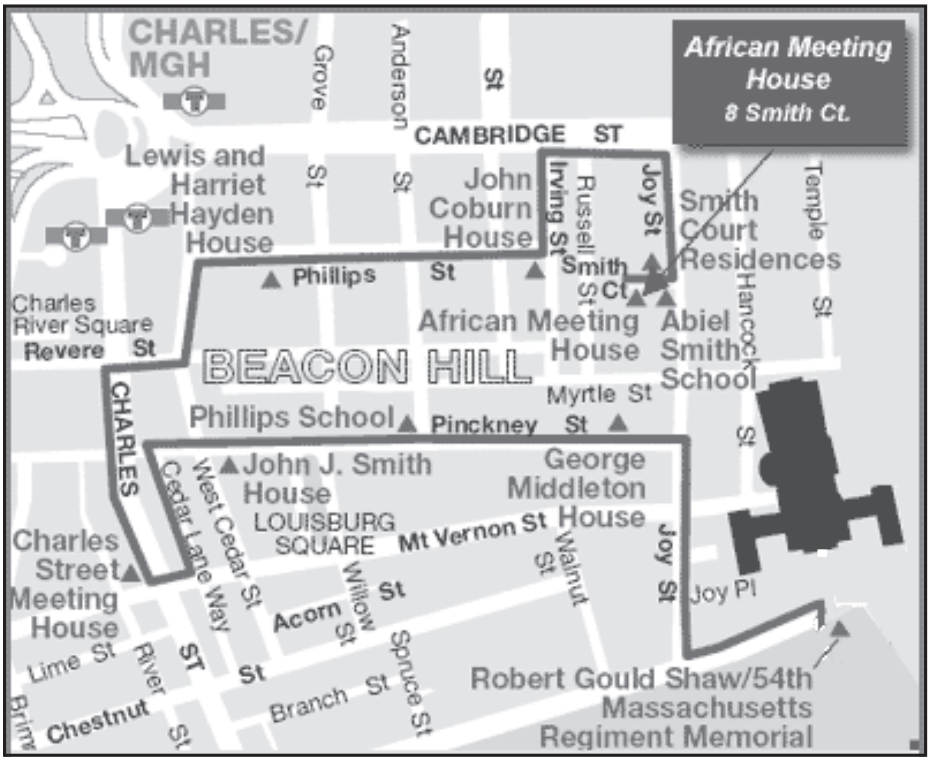
Column 1	Column 2
____1638	A. Emancipation Proclamation issued, 54th Regiment formed
____1783	B. Shadrach Minkins arrested and rescued
____1806	C. Slavery abolished in Massachusetts
____1831	D. Fugitive Slave Law passed in Congress
____1835	E. Civil War began
____1850	F. African Meeting House built
____1851	G. William Lloyd Garrison began publication of *The Liberator*
____1855	H. First enslaved Africans brought to Boston
____1861	I. Civil War ended, slavery abolished nationwide
____1863	J. Abiel Smith School opened at 46 Joy Street
____1865	K. Schools integrated in Massachusetts

Did You Know?

Alleyways such as this throughout Beacon Hill may have been used by fugitive slaves as escape routes fleeing from the slave catchers.

Activity 4

Where Did These Folks Live?



Using the information on people's addresses in the *Abolitionist Leaders and Heroes of Boston* section of this booklet, draw a line connecting the address on the left with the person on the right.

86 Pinckney Street	**Maria Stewart**
81 Joy Street	**Lewis Hayden**
3 Smith Court	**George Middleton**
66 Phillips Street	**John Smith**
83 Phillips Street	**John Rock**
5 Pinckney Street	**William Cooper Nell**

As you can see by the map, many of the abolitionists lived very close together.

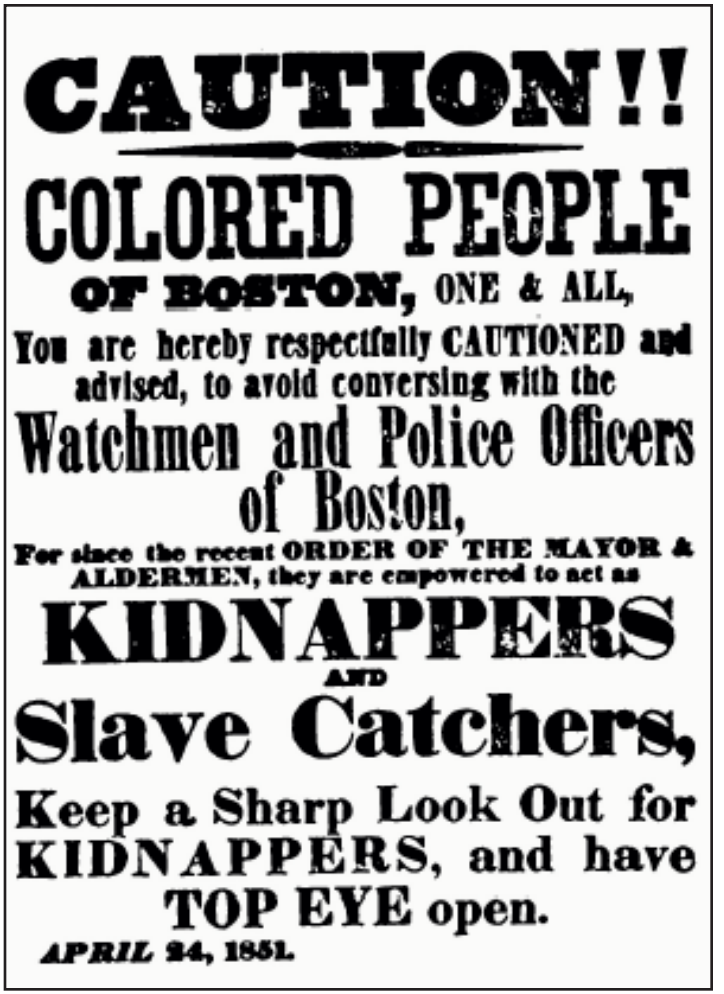
How might this have been helpful to this community? _____

_____

Activity 5

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850

In 1850, the government passed the Fugitive Slave Law. This law was hated by abolitionists throughout the country. This law allowed slave catchers to come up to the northern free states, such as Massachusetts, and capture people that ran away from slavery. The law also made it illegal to help people escaping slavery. If you were caught helping runaways, the fine was $1,000 and six months in prison. Because no proof was needed by the slave catchers and people that were caught could not defend themselves in court, even free African Americans ran the risk of being captured and brought into slavery. Because of these risks, the abolitionists of Boston posted this sign throughout the city.



CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the

Watchmen and Police Officers of Boston,

For since the recent ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS AND Slave Catchers,

Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Carefully look at the sign then answer the following questions.

1. If you lived in 1850s Boston, how do you think you may have felt if you saw this sign hanging up around your neighborhood? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. The last line of the poster says “have TOP EYE open.” What do you think this expression means?

_____

_____

_____

_____

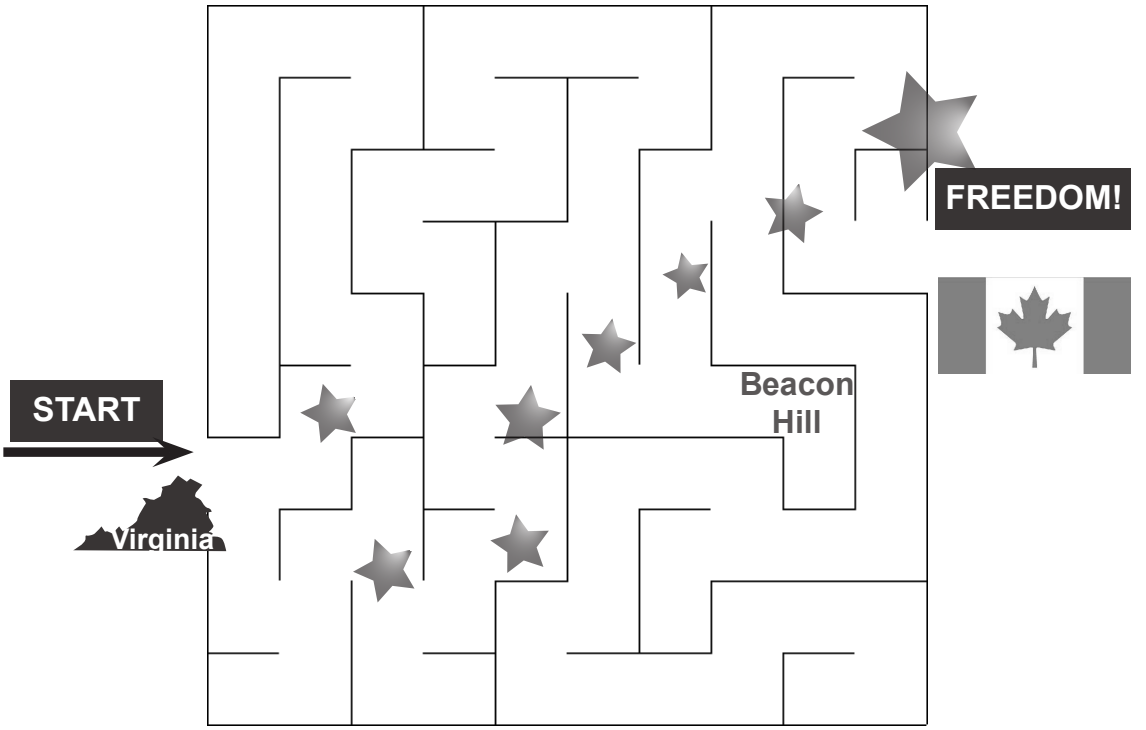
_____

Activity 6

The Story of Shadrach

One test of the Fugitive Slave Law in Boston came on February 15th, 1851. Shadrach Minkins escaped from slavery in Virginia and made his way to Boston. Once in the city, Shadrach got a job working as a waiter at a coffee shop. Empowered by the Fugitive Slave Law, slave catchers arrested Shadrach and held him in the Courthouse located downtown. While being held at the Courthouse, a crowd of abolitionists, led by Lewis Hayden and others, burst into the courtroom, overwhelmed the guards, and rescued Shadrach. He was quickly brought to a safe house on Beacon Hill where he hid the rest of the day. That night he was taken to Concord, Massachusetts where he stayed in another safe house. Making his way on the Underground Railroad, Shadrach finally arrived in Montreal, Canada where he lived free for the rest of his life.

Help a freedom seeker, such as Shadrach, make his way from slavery to Canada.



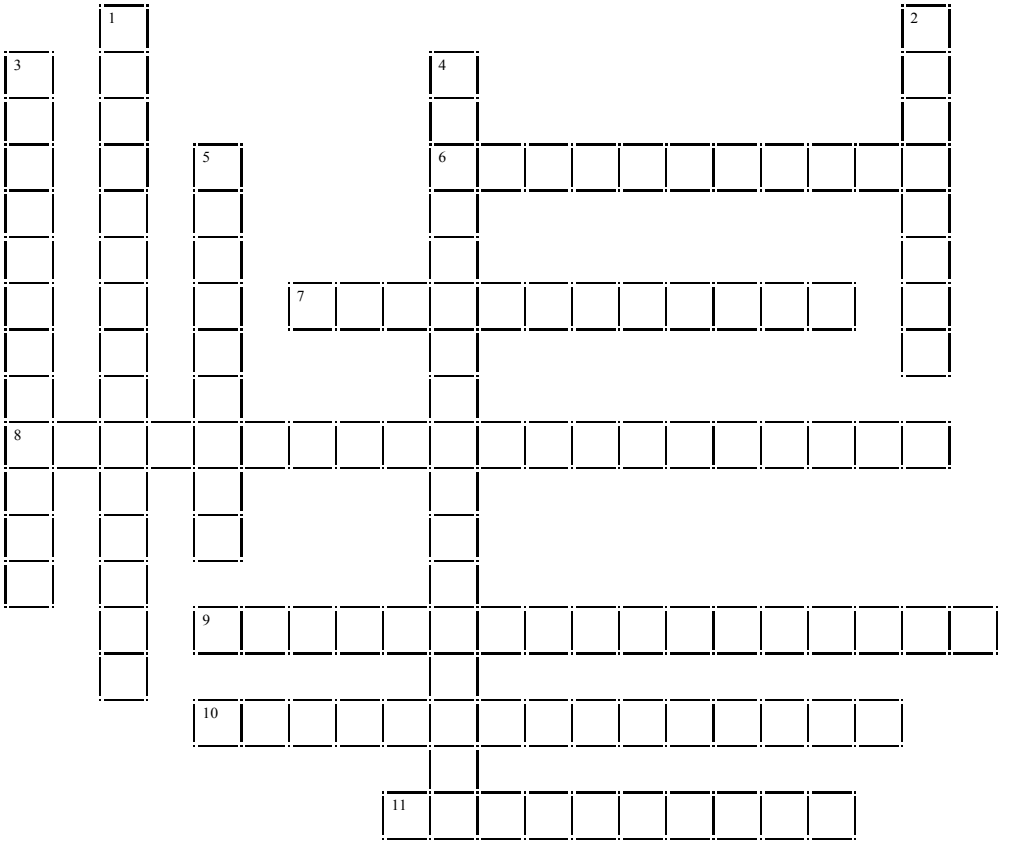
" I feel it my duty to forward you the account of my arrival in this city. I reached here last Friday evening, a journey of four days. The weather was very severe during the time… My health is not so good as when I left, but I hope a few days will restore me. I am at a loss for words to express the gratitude I feel to those kind and dear friends in Boston, and believe me I shall always consider it my duty to pray for their health and happiness…"

~ *Shadrach Minkins – February 28th,1851 from Montreal, Canada*

Activity 7

Crossword Puzzle Activity

Using the information in the *Abolitionist Leaders and Heroes of Boston* section of this booklet, see if you can get all of the answers correct in the crossword puzzle activity…



ACROSS

6. Boston Underground Railroad leader

7. She and her father, Benjamin, sued Boston for equal school rights

8. Editor of *The Liberator*

9. Escaped slavery and became a famous abolitionist orator

10. Led the Bucks of America during the American Revolution

11. Escaped slavery disguised as a white male slave owner

DOWN

1. Led the 54th Massachusetts, the first black regiment from the North to fight in the Civil War

2. Doctor, lawyer, dentist, abolitionist

3. First American born woman to speak in public about political issues including abolition and women's rights

4. Historian and abolitionist, champion of equal school rights

5. Abolitionist barber

Activity 8

Visit the Museum of African American History's Abiel Smith School

At 46 Joy Street, you will find the Abiel Smith School. This important building opened in 1835 as the nation's first public schoolhouse for African American children. Now this building houses the exhibits of the Museum of African American History. Carefully look through the exhibition and do the following activities…

1. List three things that you learned from the exhibit:

2. Write a question about the exhibit that you would ask students if you were a teacher.

Activity 9

Visit the African Meeting House

Next door to the Abiel Smith School at 8 Smith Court is the African Meeting House. This important building served as the center of the free African American community in Boston. Built in 1806, this building was used as a church, a schoolhouse, and as a gathering place for the abolitionists. Many significant leaders including Frederick Douglass, Maria Stewart, and William Lloyd Garrison spoke at the African Meeting House. They were speaking out for freedom and equality for everyone.

Pretend you are an abolitionist speaking at the African Meeting House. It is 1851. Slavery is still happening throughout the country, the Boston schools are still segregated, and the Fugitive Slave Law is being enforced here in your home city. You have been asked to speak about freedom.

What Does Freedom Mean To Me?

A Speech by _____

Activity 10

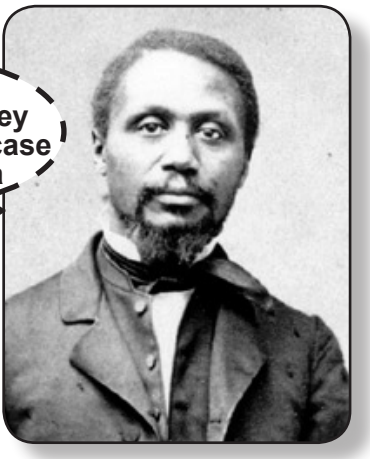
Sarah's Long Walk Against Unfairness

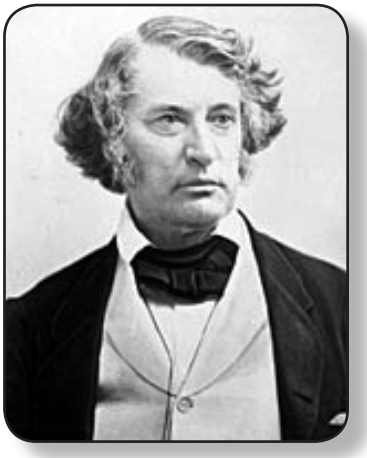
In 1848, a five year old African American girl named Sarah Roberts had to walk past five white public schools on her way to the all black Abiel Smith School. Her father, Benjamin Roberts, felt that this was unfair because it segregated students based on the color of their skin. He believed that schools should be integrated and open to all children.

Mr. Roberts had two important lawyers to help him fight against this unfair treatment of his daughter Sarah.

Robert Morris and **Charles Sumner**

First black attorney to win a jury case in America





The Argument for Integration

Mr. Morris and Mr. Sumner brought Sarah's case before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. They argued that….

- The school is the little world in which the child is trained for the larger world of life
- Segregated schools are unfair to both black and white students
- Separate schools are against the State of Massachusetts's promise of equality for all

The Argument for Segregation

The lawyer for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts argued that….

- Sarah had not been kept from public school instruction and had no reason to complain about her walk to school which was only twelve hundred feet
- The Abiel Smith school was "as good as any other school in the city"
- The School Committee had the legal right to create separate schools for black and white children

The Decision

Judge Lemuel Shaw did not agree with Morris and Sumner and declared that as long as there were equal schools then black and white students did not need to go to school together.

Although Mr. Roberts did not win his case, he did not give up! For the next six years, Mr. Roberts continued the fight for black and white students to go to school together.

He worked with leaders from the community such as William Cooper Nell as they organized a boycott of the Abiel Smith School, asking parents to teach their children from home rather than send them to a segregated and unequal school. They also began getting people to sign petitions demanding that the schools be integrated.

Finally after many years of hard work, the petitions to the state lawmakers were successful. In 1855, the State of Massachusetts declared that separate public schools were unfair and that black and white students would go to school together.

Sometimes in life we are not always treated fairly, and we have to stand up for what we believe in just like Sarah did. Please use the space below to write a letter to Sarah describing a time when you had to stand up against something you thought was unfair.

Dear Sarah,

Activity 11

The Robert Gould Shaw Memorial

Across from the State House on Beacon Street sits the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial. This statue helps us remember Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the brave men of the 54th Regiment. After the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln allowed for the recruitment of African American soldiers. The 54th Regiment was the first group of African American soldiers recruited in the North to fight in the Civil War. Because of their bravery in battle, the men of the 54th helped to pave the way for close to 200,000 African Americans to fight in the Union Army. President Lincoln credited these soldiers with helping to tip the balance in the North's favor and winning the war. Once the war was over, slavery was abolished throughout the country.

This Memorial was created by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and dedicated in 1897.

Famous Quote:

"I know not, Mr. Commander, where in all human history, to any given thousand men in arms, there has been committed a work at once so proud, so precious, so full of hope and glory, as the work committed to you."

~ Governor John Andrew speaking to Colonel Shaw

Did You Know?

Sgt. William Carney of the 54th saved the flag from touching the ground at the Battle of Fort Wagner in July, 1863. For this act of bravery, he became the first African American to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Draw your favorite part of the Memorial

Activity 12

Word Search

a f r i c a n m e e t i n g h o u s e
n m m d c i n e b e r c t e c s n s n
l c r i s h m s e a s t e s r t d a r
a n s c a e n s a d n a a o o l e r a
h r l l u l g e c c m u f t o o r a d
n o l r c e a e o m u a l d r e g h a
m r l u r w s e n i l g r f n l r r n
k h s s e i e l h i i a o e l a o o n
b l s l e s f g i l r s r u s i u b o
l a e r a h w i l l i a m c a r n e y
e e s l a a a n l t u r l i s b d r o
a s o u n y m a r i a s t e w a r t e
w i f r e d e r i c k d o u g l a s s
r a r n i e o a b o l i t i o n i s t
m e l l e n c r a f t m w a i i l e s
n f t d e a d d t u i a s c c o r t t
a n a b i e l s m i t h s c h o o l o
h a h b u c k s o f a m e r i c a l i
n l l c r s o n s k c a m i e r d l s

abolitionist
african meeting house
abiel smith school
sarah roberts
lewis hayden
frederick douglass
ellen craft
bucks of america
beacon hill
william carney
underground railroad
maria stewart