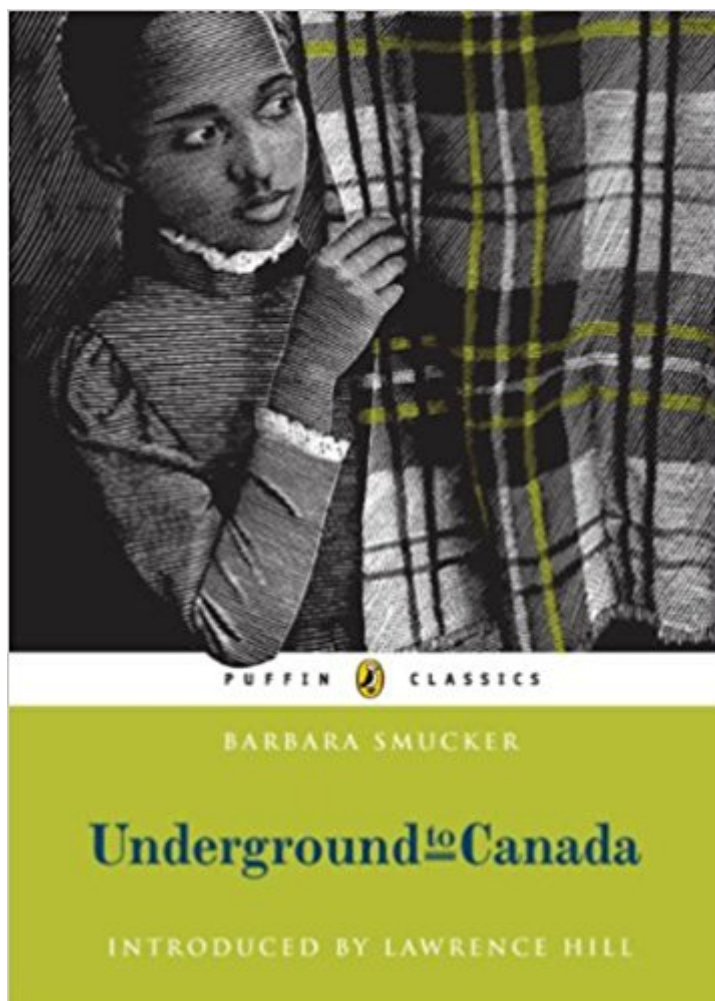


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Underground To Canada: Puffin Classics Edition



Synopsis

There's a place the slaves been whisperin' around called Canada. The law don't allow no slavery there. They say you follow the North Star, and when you step onto this land you are free Taken away from her mother by a ruthless slave trader, all Julilly has left is the dream of freedom. Every day that she spends huddled in the slaver trader's wagon travelling south or working on the brutal new plantation, she thinks about the land where it is possible to be free, a land she and her friend Liza may reach someday. So when workers from the Underground Railroad offer to help the two girls escape, they are ready. But the slave catchers and their dogs will soon be after them

Book Information

Series: Puffin Classic

Paperback: 216 pages

Publisher: Puffin Canada; UK ed. edition (November 5, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0143187899

ISBN-13: 978-0143187899

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 19 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,667,059 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #120 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Canada](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

"A passionate tale of human dignity." - Books in Canada
"Barbara Smucker has created a sensitive and dramatic story about a young girl's flight from slavery, and some three decades after it first appeared in print *Underground to Canada* still serves as a wonderful introduction to a vital and fascinating element of Canadian history." - Lawrence Hill

Barbara Smucker was born in a small prairie town in Kansas in 1915 and attended school there through university. Her careers have been numerous. They include newspaper reporting, high school teacher and librarian. She is the author of numerous award-winning novels, including *Runaway to Freedom*, *Days of Terror* and *Incredible Jumbo*. She lived for many years in Ontario,

Canada, but now lives in the USA.

Yes I enjoyed reading this book. Always good to have a better understanding of how the underground railroad helped folks escape slavery and find safe haven in Canada.

I love this book so much and I think a movie should be made about it. I read this book the day it came in the mail. I have read it at least 5 times. It is easy to read for youngsters; and they will understand what slavery was.

excellent

good book for slavery era studies.

I will admit that I knew about the Underground Railroad but I never really realized that the place where former slaves were trying to escape to was Canada. I didn't know that until I read this book. I was born and raised in Quebec and the Underground Railroad was not part of the history of that province. And as far as I can remember it was never really mentioned in the history of Canada lessons either. But I married a Franco-Ontarian and we live in Ontario. When I started to homeschool, I stumbled here and there on mentions of Underground Railroad but somehow I thought it was about slaves trying to reach the northern states of the US. Imagine my surprise when I read this marvelous novel which introduced me to the adventure of leaving the plantation where a slave was to escape north toward freedom. As I read this book, I was hooked and my oldest son also read it in an incredible short period of time. Both of us enjoyed learning more about the process of the Underground Railroad and discovering how much time it took to reach a destination. Reading this book was an eye opener on something that was part of Canada's history as well as the USA. We learned quite a bit about the Underground Railroad. The book also contains information on the author, a list of the main people involved in the Underground Railroad, things to do and things to think about. It also contains a glossary as well as a bibliography for those of you who would like to read more on the subject.

"Underground to Canada" by Barbra Smucker is a novel about slaves in the United States of America during the late 19th century and early 20th century. The story follows two slaves on their journey to find liberation from slavery via the "Underground Railway" to Canada. Unaware of

what Canada might really hold for them, they persisted based only on the hope that what they had been told about Canada would be true, to fulfill their dream of freedom. This would be a good book for students around the Grade 6 level. For older students, however, this book did not seem to fully describe the genuine difficulty that such an epic journey would have entailed. Many of the obstacles the escaping slaves encountered seemed to be resolved quickly, before any true climax was able to be established. The book did allow for some very in-depth, and enriching class conversations, but only when the ideas were taken outside of the novel and applied to current events. Although there is much criticism in our perspective, this novel could be read to understand the vicious aspect of slavery and the history behind it all, through the rich class discussions it evoked.

I think this book has been exceptionally written. The really best part about the book is the detail that Barbra Smucker put's into it. You feel your in the action yourself. Julilly and Liza are fugitive slaves running off for freedom (Canada). They go through harsh troubles and problems. Liza is crippled so Julilly needs to help her friend seek this dream. They go to plantation to plantation, finding at least an ounce of freedom. Unfortunately, they were mistreated and beaten severely. First, it was the Riley Plantation where they were treated so badly and then they went off to the Sully plantation, right here in Chantilly off of Route 28. At Sully Plantation they were treated with some dignity but were put into severe labor. Julilly and Liza had a plan one day to escape and reach Canada. With the help of Jennifer and Adam they were on there to journey of hard fought battles. They kept their eye on one thing to follow the North Star. I think this book has been written so beautifully and I keep on reading it every year and find something even more interesting about the book.

I had to read this book for a project at school and all I could think was "oh great, another dumb book to read", but after all, it was a great book. It really helps you understand about how the life of a slave was in the early 1800's. The two main characters (Julilly and Liza) never give up their hope on their trip to Canada. Julilly's Mammy Sally is a very strong character in this book about the Underground Railroad. She does age a bit when Julilly finally finds her at the end of the book in "the free land", Canada, but Julilly still loves her just as much as she did when she left her. This book should make Canadians feel proud of the free country that we live in. Overall, I enjoyed this book very much.

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