**The Underground Railroad Code**

*Underground to Canada – chapter 14*

Using the code words mentioned in chapter 14, as well as information from Martin Luther King Jr.’s message included in the “Note to the Reader” at the beginning of the book, rewrite the sentence below, changing the actual words (the ones underlined) to their Underground Railroad “code” words. You can change some words in the sentence to make it make sense. Circle the coded words in the new version.

**Original Passage**:

Two slaves followed the path along the Mississippi River to reach Jeb Brown’s house on the way to Canada. One slave was male and the other was female.

**Coded Passage**: (6 x .5 = /3)

There is a very famous song that slaves would sing, which included coded instructions designed to help them reach freedom in the north, called *Follow the Drinking Gourd*.

*Chorus*

Follow the drinking gourd,

Follow the drinking gourd,

For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom,

Follow the drinking gourd.

When the sun comes back and the first quail calls,

Follow the drinking gourd.

The old man is a waiting for to carry you to freedom,

Follow the drinking gourd.

*Chorus*

Now the river bank makes a mighty good road,

The dead trees will show you the way.

Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,

Follow the drinking gourd.

*Chorus*

Now the river ends between two hills,

Follow the drinking gourd.

There's another river on the other side,

Follow the drinking gourd.

*Chorus*

**Creating a Coded Song**:

Using your knowledge of the events in Underground to Canada and code words that slaves used to help them escape, write your own verse to a song detailing Julilly and Liza’s journey to freedom. Your verse should have at least 8 lines (/1) and should include AT LEAST 5 code words. (/5)

Try to have it resemble a poem/song lyrics/rap (/1)

*BONUS*: Anyone who can create an actual song, with a melody/beat, will get bonus marks.

Code words you can use include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Code Word** | **Actual Meaning (what does it represent)** |
| Drinking gourd |  |
| Heaven |  |
| The whippoorwill call |  |
| Friends with a friend |  |
| Railway station |  |
| Tracks |  |
| Freight |  |
| Dry goods |  |
| Hardware |  |

Song Title:

Lyrics:

Race to Freedom by Mr. Kavadas

Julilly was told about a place she can go

It was called Heaven, where freedom she’d know

To get to freedom, she’d have to work hard

And keep her eyes high on the drinking gourd

They’ll lose the bounty hunters following the tracks

Complete in disguise, wearing boys’ slacks

Two dry goods against a whole nation

Trying to seek refuge at a railway station

Only with wit and courage they’ll succeed

And being “friends with a friend,” they’ll be freed