



# The Drinking Gourd: A Story of the Underground Railroad

*F.N. Monjo , Fred Brenner (Illustrations)*

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## **The Drinking Gourd: A Story of the Underground Railroad** F.N. Monjo , Fred Brenner (Illustrations)

The stars of the Big Dipper have led a runaway slave family to Deacon Fuller's house, a stop on the Underground Railroad. Will Tommy Fuller be able to hide the runaways from a search party—or will the secret passengers be discovered and their hope for freedom destroyed?

This Level 3 I Can Read book is a captivating first-person historical fiction account of the Underground Railroad, narrated by Tommy, a ten year-old Quaker boy,. With beautiful, simple prose that folds in historical facts about slavery and the Civil War, this book makes this important period of American history accessible to beginning readers. Includes an afterword from the author F.N. Monjo that explains the historical context of the Fugitive Slave Law.

Supports the Common Core Learning Standards

## **The Drinking Gourd: A Story of the Underground Railroad Details**

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Author : F.N. Monjo , Fred Brenner (Illustrations)

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## **From Reader Review The Drinking Gourd: A Story of the Underground Railroad for online ebook**

### **Amy Meyers says**

I feel a little silly adding this to my record of books this year. It only takes 10 minutes to read, being a book for 2-3rd graders on the Underground Railroad. I didn't realize when I put it in a stack of books I'm reading ahead to know what to assign my kids next year that it was such a young level. I didn't like the boy's lie, but I did like the portrayal of Northerners who hated being caught between their consciences and breaking the law. I think it is a fair portrayal of one of the reasons for the war: that even though not all Northerners were abolitionists, they didn't like being forced in 1850 to have to turn in runaway slaves.

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### **Etta Mcquade says**

This nicely illustrative and well-written book for Grades 2 to 4 should help the younger child realize the importance of the Underground Railroad and how individuals took risks to help the slaves escape to Canada.

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### **Andy Hickman says**

Wonderful short story about assisting runaway slaves.

The injustice of slavery and therefore all forms of inequality should be a narrative we continue to remind ourselves about.

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### **ABC says**

DS read this in conjunction with a Harriet Tubman book. This is about a kid who discovers that there are runaway slaves hiding in his barn. It turns out his dad is part of the Underground Railroad, and the boy has stumbled on to the secret.

There is one part where the boy has to lie to keep the runaway slaves safe and hidden, so this may be confusing for really little kids. But it makes for good conversation.

If you are Canadian, you may like this book because it emphasizes that the runaway slaves are headed to Canada, not merely to the north part of the United States.

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### **Cathy says**

A young boy is sent home early for disrupting church and accidentally finds a runaway slave with his family hiding in the barn hayloft. That night his father takes his son and the family to the next station along the underground railroad explaining along the way why he helps slaves escape to freedom. While the father is out looking for the boat to deliver them, the authorities appear and want to search the hay wagon for a

runaway slave and his family. Thinking quickly the young boy then "confesses" that he is running away to escape punishment for his misdeed in church.

This is written in easy reader form - 2nd -3rd grade level - so is rather simplistic in the writing style but the story has heart and the message comes across well.

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### **Tori Williford says**

After getting in trouble and being sent home from church, Tommy discovers a slave family hiding inside the barn. Tommy's father is a conductor of the Underground Railroad and is helping this family move to the next station. Tommy accompanies his father to take the slaves and learns a lot in just one night. This historical fiction is great for beginning readers. It provides facts about slavery and this time period through an engaging and interesting story. The text is easy to read so it would make a great book for a lesson on slavery and the Underground Railroad with younger students. It could potentially bring up conversation about laws and breaking the laws. This will give the students an understanding of how awful slavery was and why it was necessary for some people to break the law to help the slaves. It provides a glimpse of slavery without the horrifying details that young children would not yet understand. There are great illustrations to go with the story as well. They are colorful and detailed and the students will find them fascinating. This book can be used in grades K-2 to introduce the concept of slavery and the Underground Railroad.

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### **Dolly says**

This is a dramatic account of one family being transported up north to Canada along the Underground Railroad. It is fictional, but tells about the danger the runaways and abolitionists faced as well as the support they received along the way north. We followed along with the book as we listened to the narration on CD. It was narrated much better than I ever could and we loved the song at the beginning of the story - we listened to it several times.

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### **Carrie says**

The Big Dipper constellation led slaves North, where they hoped to escape into Canada. When a family of slaves arrives at Deacon Fuller's house (which is a stop on the Underground Railroad) can young Tommy Fuller hide the family from people looking to capture them and take them back? Or will the family's journey to freedom stop short? Read this book for the answers to these and other questions!

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### **Stephanie says**

great choice for every bookshelf

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## **Jaclyn Sibley says**

Awards: No awards received

Grade: 2nd

Summary: Tommy Fuller is a ten year old boy who finds himself sent home after getting in trouble. He goes to his barn and finds a slave family living there. He then found out his family's secret: they were helping this slave family escape to freedom. Tommy soon starts to help out.

Review: I think this is a very interesting book that touches on the start of the Civil War. I like how the perspective is from Tommy, making it easier to read and relate to. This book shows the kindness and bravery that this family had to help the slaves, knowing the risks were very high.

Class uses: 1. Create a class freedom quilt to hang up to represent how the students should help each other. 2. Create lanterns that can be hung up around the classroom.

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## **Tahni says**

I read this book with my second graders. It was a wonderful way to introduce my students to this part of American history and I'm using it to open an on-going reading section on African American history. Really wonderful teaching tool.

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## **Jordan Chisholm says**

This book has won no awards

Appropriate grade level(s) are 3rd-4th

This books tells a story about the underground railroad. The story is told by a 10 year old boy fighting for freedom and equality. The boy helps escaped slaves on the underground railroad make their way to freedom.

I thought this book was pretty good. I am not a huge fan of historical fiction, but I have always loved stories like the drinking gourd. This is one of the stories I remember reading in elementary school and that really stuck with me. It's not my favorite, but it's definitely worth the read.

I would use this book for a lesson during black history month. I would read it to all the students in my class then have them each do a group project about the underground railroad. They could make a diorama or poster, really anything they wanted to use to share what they learned.

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## **Mandy says**

This book was recommended to me by my 7 year old daughter!

It's actually a very moving and inspiring historical piece for young readers on the subject of slavery and helping other human beings seek safety and justice.

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**Joshua Lawson says**

Great story to help teach kids about the evil of slavery and the moral courage of the men and women who opposed it. I read it to my children, ages 5-8, and they were genuinely engaged by it.

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**Lauren says**

A great way to introduce children to the history of the Underground Railroad!

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