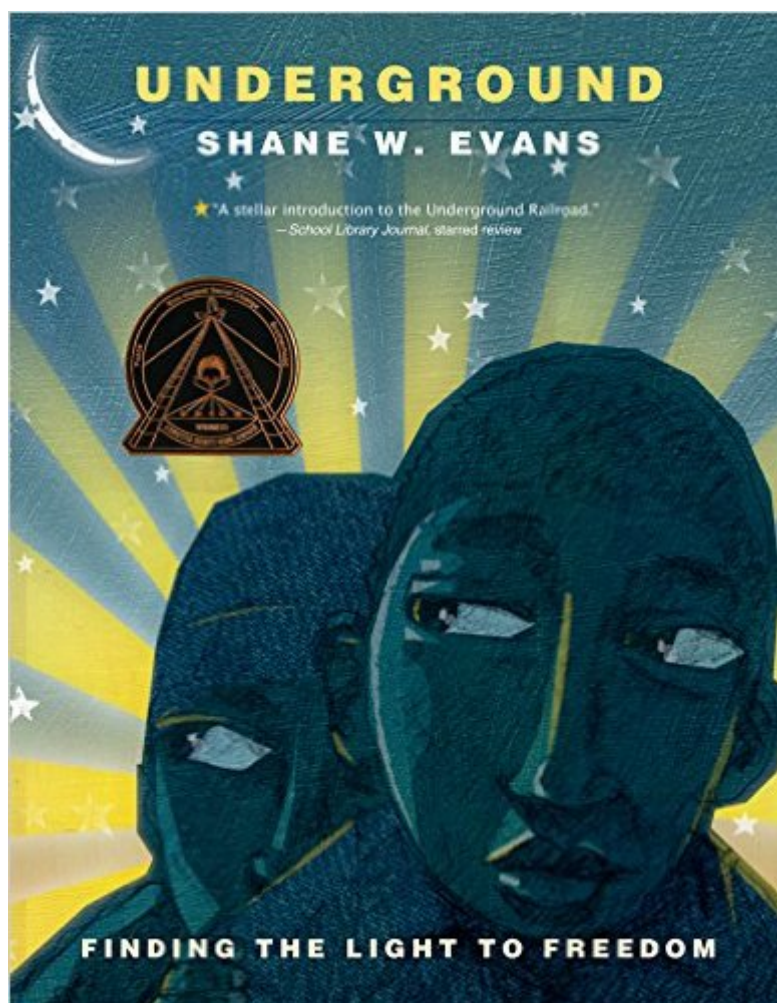


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# Underground: Finding The Light To Freedom



## Synopsis

One of School Library Journal's Best Nonfiction Books of 2011 A family silently crawls along the ground. They run barefoot through unlit woods, sleep beneath bushes, take shelter in a kind stranger's home. Where are they heading? They are heading for freedom by way of the Underground Railroad.

## Book Information

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (January 13, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250056756

ISBN-13: 978-1250056757

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.1 x 10.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (16 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,220,187 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #180 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > Civil War Era](#) #1500 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American](#) #1567 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

A family living in the bonds of slavery decides to make the dangerous attempt to find freedom. Along the way they find safe havens and friends of the Underground Railroad. The family members experience fear and fatigue along the way, but they keep going until they can wake up free to decide their own destinies. With its sparse text, this picture book relies more on striking images to communicate to young readers the risks that enslaved people took to escape from bondage, and the joys they experienced upon first reaching a free state. A brief author's note provides more information about the Underground Railroad, which parents and teachers can use to talk with young learners about the history of slavery in the United States.

Underground by Shane W. Evans is a picture book about the underground railroad. With very few words and powerful imagery Evans does a beautiful job portraying the fear of a family as they sneak

through the night in search for freedom. The reader is taken through the night with this family as they make their journey. The illustrations throughout the book are very dark until the family reach freedom and see the sun rise again. This book is ideal for children from pre-k to third grade.

The emotional impact that this book has is incredible. The author/illustrator, Shane E. Evans, does a fantastic job with capturing the intensity of the life of families as they go on a journey to escape slavery. This is illuminated with the close-up images of the emotions on the families' faces, which appear on most of the pages. The darkness and saturated colors "convey a mood to the readers" (Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2011, p. 36) and maintain the seriousness of the situation with each turn of the page. The use of picture clues would help children with predicting word patterns and create a confidence as they read along with the story. The nature of this book takes on a serious tone because it is a serious subject, but I feel that it is light enough that it would appeal to a younger group of children and give them a starting foundation to the history of the Underground Railroad. References: Evans, S. E. (2011). *Underground: Finding the light to freedom*. New York, NY: Roaring Book Press. Temple, C., Martinez, M., & Yokota, J. (2011). *Children's books in children's hands: An introduction to their literature*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

*Underground* is one family's story of their quest to seek a better life -- a life of "freedom". The story paints a vivid picture, with very few words, about the fear and exhaustion the family faced as they tried to escape from slavery, as well as the kindness of some who helped them along the way. This would be a great book to introduce young children to the subject of "slavery". The illustrations are very dark in color, as the family begins their escape at night. As the family progresses along their journey toward freedom, the illustrations become brighter in color until the family and the reader can finally see the sun, lifting a baby in the process toward the sky in celebration. Recommended for Pre-school - grade 3 - (5/5 stars)

*Underground* is a very moving picture book with minimal words. The few words that are in the book have strong meaning which hold a deeper connection with the given illustrations. It shows how many people of color suffered during slavery just to have some kind of freedom. This book should be used in classroom when history and slavery is introduced. Since there are minimal words teachers can have discussions of how some of these people may have felt when searching for freedom. The book *Underground* can be used to help young children understand the concept of the Underground Railroad that was developed to help slaves make their freedom journey a little easier.

Author Shane W. Evans did a wonderful job creating and illustrating this book about historical events that are still learned about today.

This book can be used as an introduction of the unit Underground Railroad and slavery.

Underground is a picture book with minimal text which adds value to the illustrations. Practically through the whole book the illustrator, Evans, uses all the dark colors to represent the dark journey one family portrayed. It was important for each page to illustrate the characters' actions and emotion to understand what is happening in the story. I do not recommend this book to early readers because it is important for readers to know the insight of this unfortunate historical happening.

The text is poetically spartan, "The escape. / We are quiet. / We run. / We crawl." It lends itself to teaching English and Social Studies to even the earliest level of ELL. They can understand it and are able to demonstrate their understanding through reenacting the sequential scenes and reciting the book. I would use it with beginner ELLs of any age.

Even though this book is so basic in its text and pictures, it truly conveys a powerful story that should be in every classroom. This book gives us a first hand perspective of so many men, women, and children who risked their life escaping to freedom. The use of dark blues and black depict the fright and fear the slaves felt as they started their road to freedom. This book is great for social study classes in elementary school when talking about slavery and the Underground Railroad. From the emotions shown on the characters's faces to the silent moments that the lack of text force, there is no question whether or not this book will strike a chord for each reader.

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