

# STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:  
**DRAMA**

ARTIST:  
**LESLIE MCCURDY**

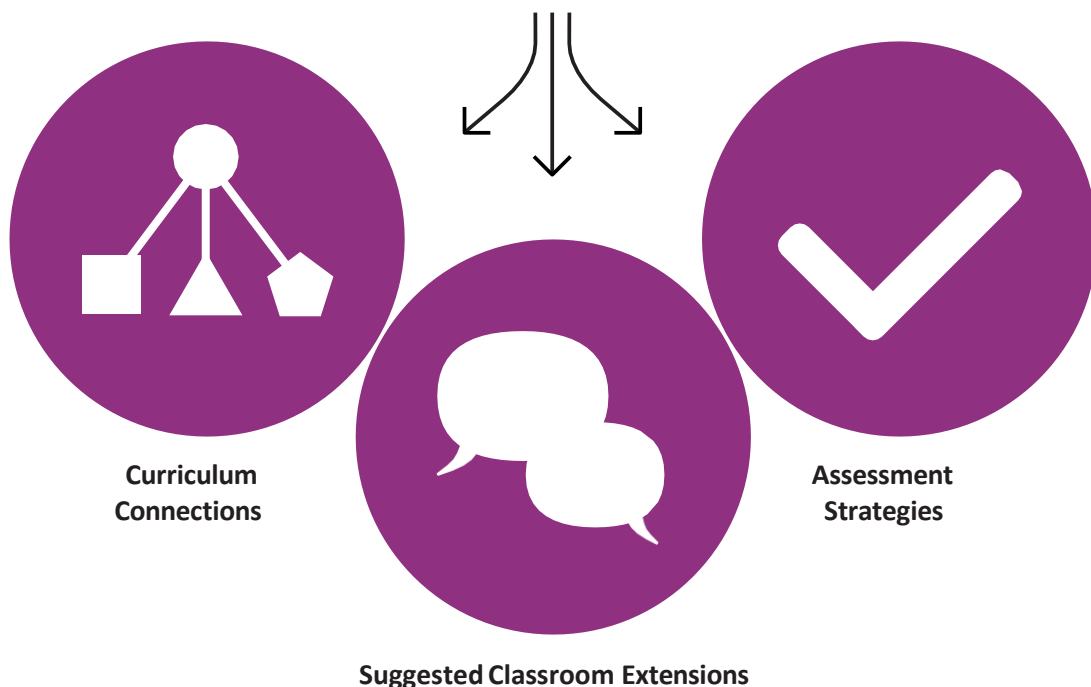


**The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.**

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

## THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:



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# STUDY GUIDE: DRAMA

## THE SPIRIT OF HARRIET TUBMAN

### Program Overview

**Artist Name:** Leslie McCurdy

**Artist Bio:** Leslie McCurdy is an award-winning actor, dancer, singer, and playwright with over 30 years of international experience. A recipient of multiple honours, including the Platinum Jubilee Pin, she trained in dance and shifted to acting after an injury. Known for her one-woman plays like *The Spirit of Harriet Tubman*, Leslie's work combines artistry with social consciousness. She also mentors young performers in her hometown.

**Program Description:** A powerful one-woman show explores the life of Harriet Tubman, a hero of the underground railway and a tireless worker for social justice. Issues examined include racism, gender, personal integrity and the importance of social commitment.

**Artistic Discipline:** Theatre Drama

**Recommended Grade Levels:** 5 – 12

**Session Logistics:** In person or online

**Cultural Context:** Black Legacy, North American History

**Vocab bank/glossary:** [Click here](#)



# THE SPIRIT OF HARRIET TUBMAN

## Curriculum Connections

### Learning Themes:

- Strand A – Creating and Presenting
  - Retell stories about Harriet Tubman using visual arts, voice and movement.
  - Present stories in groups or individually to convey meaning effectively.
- Strand B – Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing
  - Discuss the courage, resilience, and impact of Harriet Tubman.
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of different methods for sharing her story (oral, visual, dramatic).
- Strand C – Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts
  - Explore the historical and cultural context of Harriet Tubman, the Underground Railroad.
  - Compare her story with other historical figures who fought for freedom and equality.

# THE SPIRIT OF HARRIET TUBMAN

## Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

**GRADES**  
**5-6**

### **Pre**

- What do you think made Harriet a leader?
- What does freedom mean to you?
- Why might someone risk their life for others?

### **During**

- What emotions is Harriet experiencing in this scene?
- How are others depending on her?
- What strategies did she use to stay safe?

### **Post**

- What risks did Harriet take, and why?
- What can we learn from Harriet's actions?
- What would you do to help others today?

**GRADES**  
**7-8**

**Pre**

- What are important leadership qualities?
- What do you know about the context in which Harriet lived?
- What would it mean to resist injustice in her time?

**During**

- How does Harriet make decisions under pressure?
- What leadership traits is she showing?
- What risks are involved in her actions?

**Post**

- How do you think Harriet found the strength to keep going?
- What would you have done in her situation?
- What did you learn about resilience and resistance?

**GRADES**  
**9-12**

**Pre**

- What historical forces shaped Harriet's actions?
- What role do individuals play in changing systems?
- What modern leaders remind you of Harriet and why?

**During**

- How is power shown or challenged in her story?
- What symbols or actions carry the most meaning?
- How do her actions reflect deeper values?

**Post**

- How is Harriet Tubman's legacy connected to modern social justice movements?
- What can we learn from Harriet's courage when facing injustice today?
- How did this experience challenge your thinking?

# DRAMA OVERVIEW

Drama is an art form that reflects and shapes culture while promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation. Through storytelling and performance, it fosters empathy and deepens understanding of diverse experiences. Drama education builds essential skills like communication, collaboration, creativity, and problem solving, while supporting student well-being by offering a safe space to explore identity and self-expression.

The **creative and critical analysis process** guide students in imagining, planning, interpreting, and reflecting on artistic work and can complement artist-led sessions. These frameworks empower students to become thoughtful creators, reflective learners, and active participants in building a more just and connected world.

Drama is inherently an interdisciplinary art form and serves as a powerful tool for cross-curricular learning. The discussion prompts and suggested activities in this guide are designed to help bridge connections across subjects, deepen engagement, and extend the learning in relevant, authentic, and transformative ways.



# APPENDIX

## Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Spirit:** The essence, character, or inspiration of a person.
- **Heroism:** Courageous and noble actions, often to help others.
- **Freedom fighter:** Someone who works to free people from oppression or injustice.
- **Underground Railroad:** The secret network that helped enslaved people escape to freedom.
- **Courage:** The ability to face danger, fear, or challenges bravely.
- **Resilience:** The ability to recover quickly from difficulties or setbacks.
- **Perseverance:** Continued effort to achieve a goal despite obstacles or difficulties.
- **Empathy:** The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
- **Equality:** The state of being treated fairly and with the same rights as others.
- **Advocacy:** Publicly supporting or promoting a cause or policy.
- **Resistance:** The act of opposing oppression or injustice.
- **Legacy:** Something handed down from the past, such as achievements or values.
- **Inspiration:** Something or someone that motivates or influences positive action.
- **Social justice:** The pursuit of fairness and equality in society.
- **Storytelling:** Sharing stories to convey messages, history, or lessons.

# Student Health and Well-Being

## How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

## Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
  - Share it with a partner or small group
  - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
  - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

## Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning