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Targeted Grade Level: Grades 4-12 (with modifications).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Question: Why might there be different interpretations of the past?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formative Assessment Prompts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Chunk #1: How did the Underground Railroad Quilt Code work according to the authors of <em>Hidden in Plain View</em>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Chunk #2: What counts as evidence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Chunk #3: Is the UGRR quilt code claim credible?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Addressed (with adaptations):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Interpretation [Grades 4-5]: Students will explain why historical accounts of the same event sometimes differ and relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point-of-view of the author.</td>
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<td>• Interpretation [Grades 6-8]: Students will compare different historians’ descriptions of the same societies in order to examine how the choice of questions and use of sources may affect their conclusions.</td>
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<td>• Interpretation [Grades 9-12]: Students will compare competing historical narratives, by contrasting different historians' choice of questions, use and choice of sources, perspectives, beliefs, and points of view, in order to demonstrate how these factors contribute to different interpretations.</td>
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<th>Problematic Prior Knowledge (PPL) Addressed</th>
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<td>• Historical data is to be taken at face value.</td>
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### Activating Strategy:

**Whisper Down the Lane** – Place teachers in groups of five. Distribute a copy of one of the slave population of Delaware 1790-1860 graphs. Ask the first person to review the numbers then quietly pass them on by decade to the person to his or her left. See how accuracy diminishes over time.

### Key Vocabulary

- **Evidence** [gr. 4-5] – a thing or things that are helpful in forming a conclusion or judgment; or that are used to “prove” something.
- **Credibility** [gr. 6-8]
- **Interpretation** [gr. 9-12]

### Teaching Strategies:

- Whisper down the lane.
- Data analysis.

### Graphic Organizer(s) Used:

- Frayer Model

### Materials Needed:

- A copy or classroom set of the book entitled *Hidden in Plain View: A Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad*,
- Crayons & yarn or string.
- Resource #1: Data Recorder for Whisper Down the Lane Activity
- Resource #2 - Slave Population of Delaware 1790-1860.
- Resource #3 - the UGRR Quilt Code.
- Resource #4 – Sampler...Quilt Pattern Templates.
- Resource #5 – Quilt Pattern Templates (Full Page Versions).

### Differentiation Strategies:

- Art – quilt making.
- Group assessment.

### Instructional Plan:

**Instructional Chunk #1**: How did the Underground Railroad Quilt Code work according to the authors of *Hidden in Plain View*?
1. Procedures

**Activating Strategy:** Whisper Down the Lane – Place teachers in groups of five. Tell the students that they are going to play Whisper Down the Lane and the challenge is to pass on information as accurately as possible. You may want to set up a challenge i.e. the group that passes on the information most accurately wins (something ;)

Assign one person in each group to be a lane leader. Then have each person in each group take a number from 2-5. Distribute a copy of Resource 2 - Slave Population of Delaware 1790-1860 to the lane leader or Person #1 in each group.

Ask the lane leader (Person #1) to read each slave population statistic by decade to Person 2 in the group. Resource 2 (the handout) should not pass to the other 4 people in the group. Person 2 should pass what he or she recalls on to Person 3 and so on until Person 4 passes the information onto Person 5.

Ask the lane leader (Person #1) to use Resource #1 to record data for his or her group. How many population statistics did each person in their group pass accurately? Share out when all the groups are finished. Declare a winner.

Tell the students that they will return to this activity later in this lesson.

**Literature Connection [optional]:** lead into the next activity by reading *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Debora Hopkinson to the students.

1. Describe the UGRR Quilt Code research of Jacqueline Tobin and Raymond Dobard to the students in a whole class setting (see overview on the back cover of *Hidden in Plain View*).

2. Project images of the UGRR Quilt Code (Resources #3 and 4) to the students on a projector and review the code with the students. *Note - I developed the Quilt Code chart using the information presented in *Hidden in Plain View*. Students will need the illustrations & explanations to design their own construction paper quilts.

3. Divide the class up into groups of 3-4 student teams.

4. Distribute copies of Resources #3, 4, & 5 the Quilt code, Sampler and blank templates (hole punched on two sides, crayons, & yarn or string to each group) to each group.

5. Tell students that their group’s task is to create a UGRR Quilt out of the templates using crayons & yarn. The symbols and signals suggested by Tobin and Dobard and found on Resources 3 & 4 should guide construction of the “quilts.”
Instructional Chunk #2: What counts as evidence?

1. After the students have completed their quilts, invite a few volunteers to share & explain their quilts messages.

2. Frayer Model: Distribute or project copies of Resource 6: Frayer Model. Have students work in small or whole groups to complete a Frayer Model for the concept of evidence. Recall a definition: a thing or things that are helpful in forming a conclusion or judgment; or that are used to “prove” something.

3. Then, stop and ask them a series of questions that challenge them to think about evidence and the things that must be considered for determining the credibility of a claim. For example, you may want to ask them,
   a. Do you believe that the earth has been visited by aliens from outer space?
   b. If someone told you that aliens have visited earth, would that be enough to convince you of alien visitations?
   c. Why do you (or do you not) believe that aliens have visited?
   d. What evidence do we have that aliens have visited?
   e. What evidence would you require as proof of alien visitations (e.g. seeing the aliens themselves, viewing pictures of the aliens, reading articles in the newspaper, observing the president on TV telling the American people about aliens, gathering multiple pieces of evidence, concluding from popular consensus, etc.)?

Check for Understanding/Summarizing Activity:
Working in their groups, have students construct lists of things that serve as reasonably strong evidence that something happened [teachers may have to provide an example such as a photograph].

Instructional Chunk #2:

1. Procedures:
   1. Have students share out their list of things that can be used as evidence that something happened.
   2. Read aloud or distribute copies of the Cuesta Benberry’s Foreword to Hidden in Plain View entitled “The Heritage of an Oral Tradition: The Transmission of Secrets in African American Culture” (1999, p. 1-3). Have the students summarize the main points made by
Benberry. Then, ask the students to explain the evidence that the authors of Hidden in Plain View use to support the idea that there was an Underground Railroad Quilt Code.

3. Draw students’ attentions back to the Activating Strategy i.e. Whisper Down the Lane. Tell students that they were placed in groups of 5 to mirror the approximately 5 generations that have passed since 1850. Ozella Williams reported the Quilt code to Jacqueline Tobin in 1994, approximately 5 generations after slavery was legal. Review how accurately they passed on the data on the number of slaves in Delaware from 1790-1860. Ask students:
   - How accurately was the information transmitted orally?
   - Would the data on the number of slaves in Delaware from 1790-1860 have been more or less accurate if information had been passed down via the document e.g. Resource 2 rather than orally?
   - Should information passed down orally through generations be counted as evidence by historians? Why or why not?
   - Are documents flawless sources of evidence about the past? Explain.

2. **Debrief: ask the students...**
   - How does the evidence provided by the authors of Hidden in Plain View explain why there are different interpretations of the UGRR Quilt Code? [grades 4-5]
   - Are the claims of a UGRR Quilt Code credible? [grades 6-8]
   - Is the UGRR Quilt Code fact or interpretation? [grades 9-12]

3. **Check for Understanding/Summarizing Activity:**
   
   **Extension:** you may want the students to design a research plan (History Standard Two) that focuses on trying to uncover evidence to support or refute the theory of the UGRR Quilt Code

**Summarizing Strategy:** Have students compose a statement that can be placed under their quilts (illustration below) that explains the quilt code theory and why it should or should not be considered historically accurate. Museums refer to these statements as “label, label copy, or captions.” See template on page 24 of this lesson.

**Addressing Problematic Prior Learning through “Refutational Text.”**
You may want to conclude the lesson (after students complete their “Museum Captions”) by presenting them with a “refutational text” passage aimed at conceptual change. For example,

“Some people believe that slaves and others who assisted with the Underground Railroad used a quilt code to communicate messages to escaping slaves. Perhaps you were one of them. Though the idea of a quilt code is very interesting, most historians have concluded that there is not enough evidence to support the claim.”
Resource #1

Whisper Down the Lane Data Collection

Directions: Line leader - record how many population statistics did each person pass on accurately?

Person 2 to Person 3: _____
Person 3 to Person 4: _____
Person 4 to Person 5: _____

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Whisper Down the Lane Data Collection

Directions: Line leader - record how many population statistics did each person pass on accurately?

Person 2 to Person 3: _____
Person 3 to Person 4: _____
Person 4 to Person 5: _____
Slave Population of Delaware 1790-1860

Year

1790  1800  1810  1820  1830  1840  1850  1860

# of Slaves

0  1,800  3,600  5,400  7,200  9,000

8,887

6,153

4,177

4,509

3,292

2,605

2,290

1,798
## The Underground Railroad Quilt Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quilt Pattern Name</th>
<th>Message, Code or Signal</th>
<th>Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monkey’s Wrench</td>
<td>Gather all the tools needed on the journey to freedom.</td>
<td>p. 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear’s Paw</td>
<td>Reminded slaves to follow the actual trail of bear footprints because it would lead to food and water.</td>
<td>p. 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossroads</td>
<td>City of Cleveland, Ohio – a major terminal on the Underground Railroad.</td>
<td>p. 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Cabin</td>
<td>Draw a log cabin on the ground – a symbol to recognize persons with whom it was safe to communicate.</td>
<td>p. 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoofly</td>
<td>Dress up in “cotton and bows (get rid of slave clothes &amp; get a disguise). Go to the cathedral church (place to hide), get married, and exchange double wedding rings (remove chains).</td>
<td>p. 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow Ties</td>
<td>Make the best use of time (bow ties turned sideways look like an hourglass.</td>
<td>p. 107-108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Geese</td>
<td>Symbolizes the fleeing of slaves and indicated directions in which they should travel.</td>
<td>p. 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunkard’s Path</td>
<td>Encouraged fleeing slaves to follow a zigzag path similar to the staggering gait of a drunkard. Double back occasionally in order to elude slave hunters.</td>
<td>p. 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Follow the North Star.</td>
<td>p. 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagon Wheel</td>
<td>Pack all of the things (fit in a wagon) that would be needed for the journey.</td>
<td>p. 70 &amp; 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumbling Boxes</td>
<td>Time to escape.</td>
<td>p. 70</td>
</tr>
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Resource 4: UGRR Quilt Pattern Templates

Sampler Quilt*₁


Drunkards’ path.                                     Crossroads                                    Monkey wrench.


Stars.                                                Tumbling boxes.

*₁ Hidden in Plain View: See p. 70 for “sampler” explanation.
Resource # 5: UGRR Quilt Pattern Templates
Full Page Versions
Resource #6

Frayer Model Diagram

Name: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Definitions

Characteristics

Evidence

Examples

Non-Examples
The Underground Railroad Quilt Code
Museum Caption

Developed by ______________________________