

Harriet Tubman was a star gazer and navigator.

Growing up, Harriet's family did have some privileges. One of these was that they were able to hunt and fish on the land surrounding the plantation.

Harriet and her siblings became adept at catching food enough for all eleven of them. Harriet, however, went out most often with her father because after having been a house servant she especially loved the outdoors. Her siblings had no problem allowing her to do all the "work" of finding their dinner.

This was a special time for Harriet and she loved being with her father. During this "quality time" she often pretended she was a free person and, although they weren't actually free, they did have this one freedom to be outside together and out of the direct reach of the harsh Overseers.

Harriet's father taught her all about the rivers and how to catch fish while standing amongst them; the constellations of the night sky, the most important of which became the North Star; and how to find her way home from wherever she was. As well as being able to sneak up on her prey, Harriet learned the woods surrounding her home very well. Her father taught her how to navigate the wilderness so well that she never got lost -- even after dark.

The North Star became Harriet's guiding light because when on the run with her "passengers" she used the North Star to guide her away from slavery and to freedom. As we all know, there are many nights that the stars are not visible so you may be asking what would happen then? Harriet's father taught her that moss grows on the northern side of tree trunks, and on these pitch black nights Harriet would find her way by going from tree to tree and feeling for the mossy side.