



TeachersFirst READING TREKS

Keep On! The Story of Matthew Henson Co-Discoverer of the North Pole

Teacher Guide

Grade Level & Content Areas

Access Reading
Trek Map

Ages: 6–10

Grades: 1–4 (read-aloud), 5
(independent reading)

Reading Level: 5th grade

Lexile Measure: AD1080L

Guided Reading Level: S

Developmental Reading

Assessment (DRA): 40

Content Areas: Reading, literature, social studies, including history and geography.

Synopsis of Book

Shortly after the American Civil War, opportunities for African Americans were extremely limited. But Matthew Henson dreamed of adventure, and a chance meeting with Admiral Robert Peary led to the adventure of a lifetime: an expedition to the North Pole as Peary's assistant. Cultural prejudices of the era kept Henson's name and accomplishments out of the media and history books, but Deborah Hopkinson brings his story to life.

Standards

Common Core State Standards for K–5

Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Reading: Informational Text

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Common Core State Standards for 6–12

Reading: Literature

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Reading: Informational Text

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure

Writing

- Text Types and Purposes
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

- Theme 1: CULTURE
- Theme 2: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE
- Theme 3: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND ENVIRONMENTS

National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts

- RESPONDING

Using a TeachersFirst® Reading Trek to Explore This Book

TeachersFirst Reading Treks create a virtual field trip of resources about a piece of literature or a text using the My Maps feature of Google Maps. To motivate and enrich student reading, teachers and students can reference this visual collection of web resources and images as they relate to the contents of a book.

TeachersFirst has done the hard work for you! Use the activities in this teacher guide and the accompanying [Reading Trek map](#) as you and your students explore this book. And, if you feel inspired, you (or your students) can create your own Reading Trek about this or another book!

Using This Reading Trek in Class

Below is a list of ideas for how to use this Reading Trek in your educational setting.

Working with the Map:

1. Introduce the book to the whole class on an interactive whiteboard using the Reading Trek map highlighting the websites and layers for author Deborah Hopkinson and illustrator Stephen Alcorn.
2. View "[Henson and Peary | PBS World Explorers](#)" (5 minutes).
3. View "The Sled Dogs of the Arctic Circle" (7 minutes) ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
4. Construct a virtual timeline using Sutori [TeachersFirst review](#). Read the review for more ideas for using the tool.
5. Research and create a Then and Now chart/Venn diagram to compare and contrast



<https://teachersfirst.com/reading-treks/content/keep-story-matthew-henson-co-discoverer-north-pole>

sea travel for merchant ships. If you would like your students to develop the chart or Venn diagram online, Draw.io ([TeachersFirst review](#)) is a good chart-making tool that doesn't require registration. If you're working with young

students, you may want to use this interactive two or three-circle Venn diagram from ClassTools ([TeachersFirst review](#)).

Extension Activities:

1. Use the Reading Trek to stimulate discussion, ask questions, or inspire writing prompts about traveling across the United States.
2. Create a packing list of the personal items needed or wanted for a transatlantic sail during the late 1800s, as well as a packing list of everyday items for a cabin boy or girl.
3. Visit [Ducksters Native Americans](#) to learn more about the Inuit peoples. There is also a ten-question quiz on the site.
4. Create a book trailer using Adobe Spark Video Maker ([TeachersFirst review](#)) or Animoto ([TeachersFirst review](#)).
5. Create a collection of short stories of personal perseverance.

Helpful Resources

From TeachersFirst:

- [TeachersFirst CurriConnects Book List - Maps](#)
- [TeachersFirst Review of Google My Maps](#)
- [OK2Ask: Engage & Inspire with Reading Treks](#)

Other Resources:

- [Deborah Hopkinson—Author and Speaker](#) and [The Alcorn Studio and Gallery](#).
- Book Trailer Examples found at [Kid Lit TV's Book Trailer Archives](#) or [Slime Kids](#).