

Process Paper

When I heard about this year's theme, *Communication in History: The Key to Understanding*, I instantly thought of slavery and how vast communication was required to abolish it. There were many important people and movements that happened in the process of freeing the slaves, but I chose to focus on the Underground Railroad because it had a different kind of communication involved than most of the other movements. The visual communication that was symbols woven into quilts was not presented in any speech nor any boycott, which made the Underground Railroad seem like the sun with bunches of clouds around it, but never covering it entirely.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was hard to go to the library or any other places to find books and other sources, so my research was mostly online. I found some online pdfs of books, but I had to buy most so I didn't have that many books available to me. Most of the books I did get and a lot of my research came from the Library of Congress. It gave many primary sources in the form of pictures that I put on my website and books that I could read.

The Folsom Public Library was also a really helpful place because it taught me a great lesson. I saw on the internet that *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead was a very popular book and it had many great reviews. I was almost about to buy it for 16 dollars when I found that The Folsom Public Library had an ebook for it. As I was reading it, I realized that the book was not as interesting as it was presented in the amazon reviews. I then learned the lesson of going to many websites to read reviews before actually buying anything. This is probably going to be my biggest takeaway from the county history day.

I had a little bit of trouble navigating the Library of Congress website at first, but my History Day Coach taught me the basics of the website and how to use filters to find a particular source from the vast collection of search results. She also gave me feedback, that I consulted and made changes wherever I felt was needed.

The Underground Railroad is one of the best topics for this year's theme of *Communication in History: The Key to Understanding*. It has a key component of visual communication that was presented in a way that only the slaves could understand. The best way to present this form of communication was a website. The words, pictures, and audio woven together make a great display, like the quilts once did for the passengers of the Underground Railroad. The creativity and boldness of the abolitionists is not ever to be forgotten, but to always be saluted and be served as inspirations for generations to come.