Find the Evidence

Directions: Read the questions below carefully. Some will ask you to select pieces of text evidence—or details in the story—to support a statement. Others will ask you to respond in your own words, supporting your ideas with text. This activity will help you prepare to respond to the writing prompt on page 19.

1. The author of “Freedom or Death” writes that “as a slave, he [Robert Smalls] would never have any say over his own life.” Circle the letters of the TWO pieces of text evidence that best demonstrate why this was so:
   a. “Compared with the vast majority of slaves, Robert and his mother were fortunate; the McKees treated them with kindness.”
   b. “According to U.S. law, he wasn’t even a person. He was a piece of property, like the cows in the McKees’ barn or Mr. McKee’s favorite chair.”
   c. “So Robert tried to make the most of his life, pursuing whatever opportunities he could find.”
   d. “Robert and several other black crew members were forced to fight against the U.S. government, against President Lincoln, and against those who wanted to end slavery.”
   e. “He took care of his former owner until she died.”
   f. “Northern commanders, impressed with Robert’s skill, hired him to lead secret naval missions.”

2. In your own words, explain what caused the Civil War. Use details from the text.
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. Circle the letters of the THREE pieces of text evidence that best demonstrate how slavery weakened and destroyed slave families.
   a. “Lydia was a ‘house slave’ who helped care for the McKee children.”
   b. “It was common for slaveholders to hire out their slaves; any salary Robert earned legally belonged to McKee.”
   c. “Slaves could not legally marry . . .”
   d. “By law, their children did not belong to Robert and Hannah, but to Hannah’s owner.”
   e. “When Mr. McKee died, Robert invited Mrs. McKee—then an old woman—to live with him.”
   f. “Nearby, the boy’s mother stood weeping; once he was sold, she would never see him again.”

Continued on next page >
Find the Evidence, p. 2

4. In your own words, explain why Robert was more fortunate than some other slaves.
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. You can infer that Robert Smalls was smart, courageous, and hard-working. Circle the letters of the FOUR pieces of text evidence from “Freedom or Death” that best support these inferences:

a. “Robert was leading a mission of extraordinary daring. Within moments, he and his family would be free—or they would be dead.”

b. “Robert also fell in love with a vivacious woman named Hannah Jones . . .”

c. “Robert worked constantly, eventually landing a job on the Planter . . . He impressed the owner and was taught to pilot the ship.”

d. “He longed for freedom for himself and his family.”

e. “Northern commanders, impressed with Robert’s skills hired him to lead secret naval missions.”

f. “Robert ran successful businesses and was elected to the U.S. Congress.”

6. Using text evidence and inferences, explain why Robert and Hannah thought gaining freedom was worth risking their lives and the lives of their children.
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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Exploring Text Features

**Directions:** Read the nonfiction article “Freedom or Death.” Then answer the questions below to help you explore the photos, captions, illustrations, and other text features in the article.

1. Describe the different images you see in the picture on page 14. How does each image relate to the story?
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

2. How does the photo on the bottom of page 16 help show the difficult conditions for slaves that Robert’s mother described to her son in the paragraph that starts “But Robert’s mother made sure . . .”?
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. Look at the picture of Abraham Lincoln on page 17, and read the caption. What does Lincoln mean by his quote in the caption?
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

4. Read the section headers in red on pages 16-19. Choose any two and write new section headers for those sections.
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

5. Look at the photo and the caption titled “A Respected Leader” on page 19. What can you infer from them about Robert Smalls’s life after his escape?
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

**Storyworks S-T-R-E-T-C-H** A map was not included with this article. Explain what a map might have shown and why it might have been useful.

____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
Writing a Summary

A summary is a short retelling of the most important parts of a story. It should include the information that someone would need to know to understand the story, without minor details or your own opinion.

Directions: Complete the summary below, based on your reading of “Freedom or Death.” Think about what was most important in the article.

Summary of “Freedom or Death”

“Freedom or Death” is about ____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.

At that time, millions of enslaved black men, women, and children suffered from cruel treatment, including

________________________________________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________________________________________.

Although Robert and his mother were treated well compared with other slaves, he was haunted by the memory of ____________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________________________________________.

In 1861, the Civil War started because ____________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________________________________________.

Robert was forced to ____________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________________________________________.

He could not tolerate this, so he ____________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.

________________________________________________________________________________________.

Robert was an instant hero, and after his escape, he ____________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________.
The main idea of a section or a whole article is an important idea that the author wants you to know about the topic. Looking at the details can help you figure out what the main idea is. What do the details mainly describe? You can also use the titles of sections as clues.

**Directions:** Complete the chart below. Use the prompts to help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Main idea</th>
<th>How do you know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First section, starting at the beginning of the article</td>
<td>In a daring escape from slavery, Robert Smalls took over a ship and sailed it past Southern troops.</td>
<td>Give two details from this section that describe what Robert Smalls did:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Life of Slavery”</td>
<td>Write the main idea:</td>
<td>The main idea is supported by the details below. Think about what they tell you about slavery:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Slaves on plantations worked from dawn until dusk without rest and were “brutally whipped” for asking for a drink of water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Under U.S. law, a slave was not a person but a piece of property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Slave families were broken up when children were ripped away from their parents and sold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Haunted by Memories”</td>
<td>Write the main idea. Think about the details on the right and the section header:</td>
<td>Give three details from this section that tell what was happening in Robert’s life:</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued on next page*
# Finding the Main Ideas, p. 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Main idea</th>
<th>How do you know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A Bloody War”</td>
<td>Write the main idea. Think about the section header and what the section explains:</td>
<td>We’ve given you one detail that supports the main idea on the left. Write two more details:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Many people believed that President Abraham Lincoln wanted to abolish slavery in the U.S.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Bold Plan”</td>
<td>Write the main idea. Think about what the section mainly describes:</td>
<td>Give three details that support the main idea:</td>
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<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The End of Slavery”</td>
<td>Write the main idea:</td>
<td>Give three details that support the main idea:</td>
</tr>
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