



Family Activities

Title: **Follow the Drinking Gourd**

Author: **Jeanette Winter**

Illustrator: **Jeanette Winter**

Runaway slaves journey north along the Underground Railroad by following directions in a song, “Follow the Drinking Gourd.” LeVar celebrates the road to freedom paved by the Underground Railroad, introducing viewers to the history, heroes, stories, and music of the African American culture, which emerged from slavery. Members of an a cappella group, Sweet Honey in the Rock, perform and share their historical knowledge of slavery.

Here are several activities you and your child can do together after watching this episode.

Star Gazing

Plan a family star-gazing party on a clear night when the moon is a small crescent. If you live in a city close to bright lights, find the darkest place you can for gazing. Take along:

- A star chart that is available in books, apps, and online. This chart is a map of the sky and tells which constellations are visible and when.
- A flashlight so you can see where you are going and can read your chart. If possible, cover the flashlight with red cellophane so your eyes won't have to re-adjust every time you look up at the stars.
- A notebook to write down the shape of the constellations you find and their names.
- A blanket for lying on the ground.

A Constellation of Your Own

You will need:

- black construction paper
- self-stick stars
- crayons

Your child will have fun re-creating a constellation they saw in the nighttime sky or creating a constellation of their very own by arranging self-stick stars on black paper. A white crayon can be used to write the name of the constellation.

Remember, constellations can be people, animals, or objects. Encourage your child to make up a story about each constellation they create.



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African Animal Masks

African mask carvers often created masks that looked like animals. Masks would often resemble wild cats found in Africa, such as the lion, leopard or cheetah.

To make animal masks at home, you need:

- paper plates
- colored paper
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue
- craft sticks

Draw the face of an African animal or other animal on a plate. An adult can cut out holes for the eyes and nose. The mask can then be colored and paper scraps added for details. Glue a craft stick to the inside of the mask along the bottom to make a handle. Now your mask is ready to wear!

Visit Your Community Library

Here are some books you can check out on your next trip to the library:

A Picture Book of Harriet Tubman by David A. Adler

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson