

# Four Beginnings to a Life

Below are four beginnings to the life of Harriet Tubman, the famous leader of the Underground Railroad, from four different biographies. Notice how each biographer finds a different place to start a life. Try writing your own lead to Harriet's life. Where would you begin? Remember you don't have to start at the beginning. You can begin anywhere you find interesting. Try writing several leads to the biography of a friend or a person whose life you have researched.

Harriet Tubman was a runaway slave who worked most of her life to eliminate slavery in the United States. She grew up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, born into one of the cruelest systems of slavery ever created by human beings.

*Harriet Tubman and the Fight Against Slavery* Bree Burns

Two small black children drew with sticks in the dirt in front of a ramshackle cabin. Their older sister, Minty, whose real name was Harriet Ross, watched them. She wished that she could play, too. But she had work to do. It was a warm fall day. The field hands who picked crops for Edward Borodas would be thirsty. She must carry water to them. Minty picked up the heavy buckets. She had no time for play.

*The Story of Harriet Tubman, Conductor of the Underground Railroad*  
Kate McMullan

Chesapeake Bay forms the western boundary of the section of Maryland which is sometimes called Tidewater Maryland, sometimes called the Eastern Shore. Here there are so many coves and creeks, rivers and small streams, that the land areas are little more than heads or necks of land, almost surrounded by water.

*Harriet Tubman: Conductor of the Underground Railroad*  
Ann Petry

Harriet was running.

*Freedom Train: The Story of Harriet Tubman*