

Reflection Questions Answer Key

Looking back at Toronto’s historic antislavery convention of 1851	Ontarians should know more about the Black history of Oakville
<p>1. What was the Fugitive Slave Act and how did it impact formerly freed slaves?</p> <p>The Fugitive Slave Act was passed on September 18th, 1850 and it permitted people to pursue and retrieve formerly owned enslaved people in any state, including states where slavery had been abolished. Citizens were required to help these people apprehend those they previously enslaved. This sent formerly freed enslaved people into hiding and attempts to run away were made as states became “hunting grounds” and families were broken apart.</p>	<p>1. Summarize the Black history of Oakville in your own words.</p> <p>In the 1850s, approximately 400 Black people settled in Oakville who had escaped slavery via the Underground Railroad. Escaped enslaved people, such as James W. Hill, helped others escape slavery by aiding them to get from New York to Oakville.</p>
<p>2. Who was Henry Bibb and why was he important at this time?</p> <p>Henry Bibb was born an enslaved person in 1815 and finally escaped slavery in 1840. Henry and his wife launched an anti-slavery newspaper called “Voice of the Fugitive” and founded the Refugee Home Society. These actions led to the North American Convention of Colored Freemen in which Henry was the president. The convention lasted three days in which Henry fought against slavery in the United States, and prompted the assistance of those fleeing Ontario.</p>	<p>2. What point is Duncan trying to make about Black people coming to Canada via the Underground Railroad?</p> <p>The main idea of this article is that Black people are the “fabric of Canada” (said Duncan) and did more than just escape slavery, but rather came to Canada as entrepreneurs. For example, Duncan’s great-great-grandfather, Samuel Adams, came to Canada and invented a device called the “stonehooker” which was used to build houses. Other worked as barbers, hairdressers, gunsmiths, newspaper creators, and many other essential roles within the community.</p>