



Sojourner

by Richard Lamont Pierce

Directed by Linda Haston

February 12, 2021 - Live streamed at 8:00 PM ET

Recorded links will also be available for purchase on February 12 through February 26, 2021.
Available to Teachers and Students



Dear Families, Students and Educators,

We are proud to bring you *Sojourner* by Richard Lamont Pierce. This one woman show stars Delana Flowers as she portrays Sojourner Truth. In the inspiring theatrical experience Sojourner Truth shares her journeys, stories, mind and heart with a passion and honesty that still needs to be told. For the safety to our patrons, we are presenting *Sojourner* as part of our Prime Online series. You can watch online from your home, your classroom or anywhere!

All literature produced by Prime Stage is always drawn from middle and secondary Reading Lists and themes are in the current Pennsylvania curriculum.

This Resource Guide is designed to provide background and context, classroom or home activities and content to help you enliven your students' experience with the literature and the theatre. We encourage you to use the games, activities and journal entries to spark connections with the themes, characters and story.

If you have any questions about the information or activities in the guide, please contact me and I will be happy to assist you, *and* I welcome your suggestions and comments!

Linda Haston, Education Director & Teaching Artist
Prime Stage Theatre
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The activities in this guide are intended to enliven, clarify and enrich the text as you read, and the experience as you *watch* the literature

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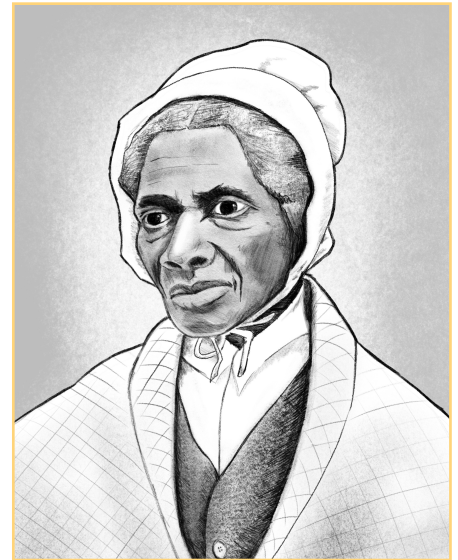
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Sojourner by Richard LaMonte Pierce

About the play

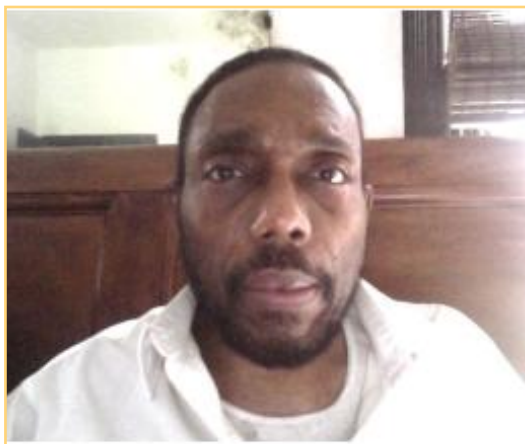
This one-woman play is a biography of Sojourner Truth. It takes a close, intimate look at Sojourner Truth's life, not only as a black woman, but as a slave. Set not in the American South, but in the North. Sojourner tells a shameful tale of a young girl at auction who was sold to slave masters. Her story will inspire you to take a look at the morals, values and conditions that shaped America, and instill in you awe at Sojourner Truth's unwavering spirit to overcome and sojourn for the truth.



Did You Know?

The very first show produced by Prime Stage Theatre 25 years ago was *A Woman Called Truth*, the story of Sojourner Truth by Sandra Fenichel Asher. On February 12, 2021 her legacy will once again come to life with this virtual live-stream stage performance simply called *Sojourner* by Richard LaMonte Pierce.

The Playwright



Richard LaMonte Pierce is an award winning author & playwright with over thirty plays to his credit. Some of his works have been performed off Broadway, throughout the United States & Africa. Richard is a founding member and playwright in residence at First World Theatre. He is also a former playwright in residences : at the Hedgerow Theatre in Rose Valley, PA., The Village Of Arts & Humanities, Bushfire Theatre, and The Venture Theatre, all in Philadelphia, PA.

Some of his plays include: *Sojourner a biography of Sojourner Truth*, *Strange Fruit*, an examination of lynching in America. *The Winter Of Our Discontent*, a study of the W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington debate, *Twilight Time*, *The Last Time Bobby Sang*

The Blues, (Musical), *A Conversation With The Devil*, *My Name Is Sapphire Damnit !!*, *The Prophet Gabriel*, (Musical), *Reflections From A Park Bench*, *The Freedom Riders*, *As I Gaze Into The Looking Glass*, (A biography of H. German Wilson), *Ordinary People / Extraordinary People*, *Do You Know Me?* & many more.

He is also the author of two books, "One Acts (A collection of one act plays)" and "Remembering The Harlem Renaissance And The Return Of The Talented Tenth" (an anthology of some of his essays, poetry, plays & short stories).

Prime Online Behind the Scenes

Sojourner is directed by Linda Haston. Linda is the Education Director and Teaching Artist for Prime Stage Theatre. She is also a professional Actors' Equity Association actress, singer and director. She has directed and/or performed for the past 22 years with local Pittsburgh professional theatre companies which include Off the Wall Theater, Quantum, Bricolage, Pittsburgh New Works, New Horizon, City Theater, The Public Theatre, PICT and Prime Stage. Prime Stage Education was excited to hang out with Linda 'virtually' and learn more about what goes into creating Sojourner's story!



I'm really looking forward to this production. How has the preparation and rehearsal process been going? Can you share a little bit about what it's like rehearsing over zoom?

The production and rehearsal process has been going well. I did not direct via Zoom. It was in person with masks and it was just the two of us. People involved with the production were on a zoom link to watch the rehearsals.

Sojourner Truth was a former slave, an abolitionist, a women's rights activist, a preacher and so much more. There are a lot of facts and bios about her online, but I'm wondering if you came across anything unexpected in your research. Did you learn anything about Sojourner Truth that surprised you? Anything that you might be able to bring into this production?

The most important things about Sojourner that I wish to extend to the audience are the first facts of this question and the fact that she spoke with a Dutch accent all of her life. She also did not use a cane, it was for pictures etc... only. She also "*bought*" her children's freedom and went to court to get it. Women were not respected or had rights to go to court for anything let alone a black woman. She did not "*run away*" she "*walked*" away, as she said. She met people from the underground railroad but was not a part of it.

Not only are you directing this play but you are also the Education Director for Prime Stage. What do you hope students and adults take away with them after watching this production. What do you want them to learn?

As Education Director and Teaching Artist for Prime Stage, I hope teachers, students and our adult audiences take away the facts and the truth about Sojourner; Women's rights activist, (long before the me too movement); a preacher (teaching God's word) with her struggle to get where her 85 years took her. Her story is just as prevalent in today's time as they were in the 1800's. I want audiences of all ages to use her strength and hear her story as it was and apply it to their lives today.

Prime Online Behind the Scenes

Sojourner stars local actress Delana Flowers. Delana has been gracing regional and community stages, playing roles from Dinah Washington in *DINAH* to Lorrell in *Dreamgirls*, from the wife of John Henry in *Mechanics of a Legend* to ancestors in *Do Lord Remember Me*. While Delana has performed on many regional and community stages, this will be her debut performance with Prime Stage Theatre. Prime Stage Education was excited to hang out with Delana ‘virtually’ and learn more about what goes into performing this iconic role!



This is your first production with Prime Stage Theatre. Could you tell us about your preparation to play someone as iconic as Sojourner Truth? What has been the most fun? What has been the most challenging?

I started with a lot of research. I was amazed at how the same story could be told different ways, sometimes by the same person. They did not have the technology to record back then. So everything was based on what the writer remembered. Sojourner could not read or write. So even in her narrative, the person dictating could have taken liberties for all we know. I found it interesting that when you read it there are places where the writer marks words that were not heard clearly.

I knew from the start that I would be channeling my grandmother. As soon as I heard and saw people commenting on Sojourner being such a tall and straight woman, I immediately thought of my grams. She passed away some years ago. We were very close and I helped care for her until she passed. I distinctly remember that even while her body was failing, her very straight, poised posture never faltered. Right up until the day she died the dignity of a resilient, Black woman shined through.

What has been the most fun has been listening to Sojourner’s 5th generation grandson talk about her and their family. It was truly fascinating and wonderful to see how universal it is that family stories were and are such a source of both joy and pain.

What has been the most challenging has been the dialect. This is my first time working with a dialect coach. She’s amazing, by the way! Dutch was Sojourner’s first language. She learned English but the Dutch dialect was still there. So I had to learn to speak English with a Dutch dialect.

“Sojourner” is a one-person show. There is another voice actor but you are the only person onstage in this production, right? Is that exciting? Scary? How is it different from rehearsing and performing with a cast?

Doing a woman show is both exciting and scary. I think there’s an added layer of vulnerability. You’re on your own without the saving grace of another cast mate. It’s definitely a different kind of challenge. I’ve done one other one woman show but it was a musical which in some ways gave music as a cast mate of sorts. Not this time.

How is the rehearsal process going? Are you doing everything over Zoom or have you and Linda been able to do some work in-person?

A typical week of rehearsals consists of 2 evenings of dialect on Zoom and 4 days in the studio with Linda, the director. While in the studio the production team joins rehearsals via zoom. It’s been pretty awesome to watch the ingenuity arts organizations including theaters have come up with in order to adapt to pandemic life and still be able to create.



In rehearsal, Delana prepares for her role of Sojourner Truth. The plaid dress was made specifically for this production by costume designer Kim Brown.

The Incredible Life of Sojourner Truth

As a traveling preacher, abolitionist, and women's rights activist, Sojourner Truth spoke out against the injustices affecting various communities. Propelled by her faith, Truth traveled extensively to speak about her experiences as both a woman and a former slave. Truth's activism led her to become one of the most recognizable figures in American History.

Early Years as a Slave

Sojourner Truth was given the name Isabella Baumfree at birth. She was born near Roundout Creek in the town of Hurley, Ulster County, New York. Although her exact birth date is unknown, it is believed that she was born around 1797 on the estate of Colonel Johannis Hardenbergh. The area no longer carries the physical evidence of Truth's birthplace, but a plaque in her honor commemorates this sacred ground.

At the time of Truth's birth, her parents James and Elizabeth were required to work on Hardenbergh's estate in exchange for a small cottage and farmland to cultivate crops. Shortly after her birth, Hardenbergh died and his son Charles inherited the estate. Charles removed Truth's parents from their cottage and kept them in the dark cellar of the main house with the rest of his slaves.

As the youngest of at least ten children, Truth's early life was marked with swift transition. Many of her siblings were "kidnapped" for sale, and Truth was sold for the first time at nine years old. She was sold twice within a two-year period before she was sold to her final master, John Dumont.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, enslaved Africans living in the rural areas surrounding New York State were often Afro-Dutch therefore their first language was Dutch. This was true of Truth and her family. Unfortunately, when she was sold to her first master, John Neely, his family only spoke English. Truth recalls being brutally beaten frequently for not understanding their English demands. Over her lifetime, Truth learned to speak English fluently but never lost her Dutch accent.

While enslaved by her last master John Dumont, Truth fell in love with an enslaved man named Robert from a neighboring farm. His masters, the Catlins, did not want Robert to have children that they could not benefit from and forbade the relationship. In her autobiography, Truth recalls Robert sneaking to Dumont's farm to visit her when she was ill. The Catlins found him and they "fell upon him like Tigers," tying his hands and severely beating him. After this, a somber Robert married a woman from the Catlin farm and Truth married Thomas from the Dumont farm. Truth had five children.



*Sojourner Truth Seated with Photo of her grandson (1863)
National Women's History Museum*



*Hardenbergh House (c.1933)
by Historic American Buildings Survey
National Women's Museum*

The Incredible Life of Sojourner Truth

Sojourner Truth's Faith

After years of enduring physical and sexual abuse, Truth "walked" to freedom. Dumont had agreed to grant her freedom on July 4, 1826. When Dumont refused to release her, Truth emancipated herself. Inspired by her conversations with God Truth, with her daughter in arm, left Dumont's farm just before dawn. Although Dumont pursued her, Truth was able to stay with the Van Wagners who paid Dumont \$20 as compensation for her and her young daughter's services until emancipation took effect in 1827. During her time with the Van Wanger's, Isabella successfully sued for the return of her son, Peter, whom Dumont had illegally sold to an owner in Alabama.

On June 1, 1843, Isabella changed her name to Sojourner Truth and set out to travel and preach about abolition and women's rights, telling her friends, "The Spirit calls me, and I must go." The next year she joined an abolitionist community in Massachusetts, but it dissolved in 1846, and Truth again supported herself as a housekeeper. The year 1850 was a momentous one for her: her memoirs, which she had dictated to a friend, were published as *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave*; she purchased a home in Northampton; and she spoke at the first National Women's Rights Convention in Worcester.

"Ar'n't I a Woman" Speech

On May 28, 1851, a large group assembled at Old Stone Church in Akron, Ohio for the Women's Rights Convention. Although she was not invited, Truth attended this meeting and spoke up during the discussion. The words Truth spoke at this meeting were thoughtful and reflective of the social climate. However, a decade after the convention was held, fellow attendee Frances Dana Gage decided to change Truth's actual words to create a speech entitled "Ar'n't I a woman?" Gage published a report of Truth's words in the *New York Independent* that was four times longer than what Truth actually said. Unfortunately, Gage's fabricated speech soon became the dominant version, as the "Ain't I a woman?" refrain resonated with many women's rights activists.

The Truth

Sojourner Truth attended and often spoke at meetings denouncing slavery and sexism. She maintained complex relationships with the leaders of various movements including; Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and William Lloyd Garrison. One of Truth's friends, Marius Robinson, published a more accurate account of Truth's Akron, Ohio speech in the *Salem "Anti-Slavery Bugle"* only a few weeks after the convention of 1851.

In 2017, Leslie Podell published "The Sojourner Truth Project," allowing users to compare the versions of the speech. The project also includes readings of Truth's speech by Afro-Dutch women in an attempt to capture what her authentic Afro-Dutch accent could have sounded like. In this more accurate address, Truth expressed similar sentiments of equality, but promoted the intellect of women.



Watch Sojourner Truth's Speech! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdyU3tRJO5A&feature=emb_logo

A copy of Reverend Marius Robinson's accurate account of Sojourner truth's speech at the Women's Right Convention can be found on page 10 of this guide!

The Incredible Life of Sojourner Truth

The Civil War

During the Civil War, Truth advocated for Union soldiers and assisted in the efforts of the National Freedmen's Relief Association and the Freedmen's Bureau. Truth was arrested in Indiana for violating Indiana State Law stating that no person of African descent can enter the state, even though the law was rarely enforced. She was released after ten days and continued to assist the efforts. In 1863, she went door to door to collect Thanksgiving food for the First Michigan Regiment of Colored Soldiers in Detroit. At the end of the war, Truth visited President Lincoln on October 29, 1864 in the White House.

Truth's grandson, James Caldwell, also actively supported the Union. In April of 1863, Caldwell volunteered for the Massachusetts 54th, the first black regiment of Massachusetts.

Later Life

The Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 did not mean retirement for Sojourner Truth. She continued to advocate and speak out in the name of justice under God. She famously fought for issues such as the resettlement of freed people and women's suffrage. In her final years, Truth lived with her daughters in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Sojourner Truth died of old age in Battle Creek, Michigan on November 26, 1883. Although Truth and her family believed she was one hundred and five years old, she was only about eighty-six. Since her death, Truth's likeness can be found on paintings, statues, and within the pages of history textbooks. This bust is the first sculpture to honor an African American woman in the United States Capitol.

Famous Bust

The bronze bust of abolitionist and women's-rights advocate Sojourner Truth is the first sculpture to honor an African American woman in the United States Capitol. The over-life-size bust shows her in a cap and shawl similar to those in which she was often photographed. She is depicted with a smile suggesting confidence and determination. The texture of her hair and shawl contrast with the smooth surfaces of the face and under blouse.

Information in the section is from aoc.gov and The National Women's Museum at <https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/sojourner-truth>

"Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me."

—Sojourner Truth



*Sojourner Truth and Abraham Lincoln, Washington, D.C., October 29, 1864
Painted by Franklin C. Courter (1893)
Courtesy U.S. Library of Congress*



First Lady Michelle Obama at the unveiling of the bust of Sojourner Truth at the U.S. Capitol.

“On Women’s Rights”

Did you know that there are two versions of Sojourner Truth’s famous “Ar’n’t I a Woman” Speech?

When Sojourner Truth gave her historical speech at the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, she emphasized the need to fight for equal rights for African American women. Fellow abolitionist Frances Dana Barker Gage published Truth’s speech in the *New York Independent* in 1863, but little of it lines up with a transcript published a month after the convention by Reverend Marius Robinson in *Anti-Slavery Bugle* in 1851. He attended the event and transcribed what Sojourner Truth said.

In her website The Sojourner Truth Project, Leslie Podell goes on to explain what Neil Irvin Painter, a professor at Princeton University, first noticed. “The popular but inaccurate version was published in 1863, (12 years after Sojourner gave the speech) Curiously, Frances Gage not only changed all of Sojourner’s words but chose to represent Sojourner speaking in a stereotypical ‘southern black slave accent’, rather than in Sojourner’s distinct upper New York State low-Dutch accent. Gage’s actions were well intended. However, her actions were a gross misrepresentation of Sojourner Truth’s words and identity. By changing Truth’s words and her dialect to that of a stereotypical southern slave, she effectively erased Sojourner’s Dutch heritage and her authentic voice. As well as unintentionally adding to the oversimplification of the American slave culture and furthering the eradication of our nations Northern slave history.”

Below is the version of published by Sojourner Truth’s good friend, Reverend Marius Robinson in the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*. Read below and then visit <https://www.thesojournertruthproject.com> to compare both versions of the speech.

“On Women’s Rights” by Sojourner Truth (Salem, Ohio, June 21, 1851)

She came forward to the platform and addressed the President with great simplicity: “May I say a few words?”

Receiving an affirmative answer, she proceeded: “I want to say a few words about this matter. I am a woman’s rights. I have as much muscle as any man, and can do as much work as any man. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that? I have heard much about the sexes being equal. I can carry as much as any man, and can eat as much too, if I can get it. I am as strong as any man that is now.

As for intellect, all I can say is, if a woman have a pint, and a man a quart — why can’t she have her little pint full? You need not be afraid to give us our rights for fear we will take too much, — for we can’t take more than our pint’ll hold. The poor men seems to be all in confusion, and don’t know what to do. Why children, if you have woman’s rights, give it to her and you will feel better. You will have your own rights, and they won’t be so much trouble.

I can’t read, but I can hear. I have heard the bible and have learned that Eve caused man to sin. Well, if a woman upset the world, do give her a chance to set it right side up again. The Lady has spoken about Jesus, how he never spurned woman from him, and she was right. When Lazarus died, Mary and Martha came to him with faith and love and besought him to raise their brother. And Jesus wept and Lazarus came forth. And how came Jesus into the world? Through God who created him and the woman who bore him. Man, where was your part? But the women are coming up blessed be God and a few of the men are coming up with them. But man is in a tight place, the poor slave is on him, woman is coming on him, he is surely between a hawk and a buzzard.”

The Descendants of Truth.com

An interview with descendants of Sojourner Truth

On January 14, Prime Stage Theatre had the distinct pleasure of virtually meeting and interviewing Cory McIechey and Lateef “Cal” Calloway. Cory McIechey is Sojourner Truth’s 5th-generation grandson. He is an artist living in Grand Rapids, Michigan and president of Descendants of Truth.com, a non-profit committed to upholding the legacy of Sojourner Truth. Lateef “Cal” Calloway is the founder of the Phoeion Group LLC (dba Calliwood Productions LLC), a Sojourner Truth historian and long time friend of the McIechey family. Cal is currently producing a feature biographic film on the life and times of Sojourner Truth in partnership with co-producers Gloria Steinem, Cherryl Espinoza and Chaz Elbert. Cory and Cal shared many facts about Sojourner Truth and her remarkable family. Below are some highlights of this enlightening conversation.



Cory and Cal in Central Park, NYC at the monument to Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony & Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Wayne Brinda (Artistic Director) and Cal speak about the powerful presence of Sojourner Truth.

Wayne: *In our research we discovered one person who had met Sojourner Truth in her later life. They described Sojourner as being statuesque and that she had very piercing eyes. Eyes that would look into you and beyond!*

We’ve seen some other plays about her life that portray her a hobbled over and small. But, everything I’m reading is that she was strong and statuesque - virtually her whole life. Are we right on that?

Cal: *Absolutely. You are right! There’s a lot of that. Here’s what’s interesting. She’s the one who inspired the others! We hear about Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. And then, when we bring up Sojourner Truth, people are surprised. I’m surprised that we don’t talk more about her legacy in the history books. It was Sojourner Truth who paved the way for them!*

Linda Haston (Stage Director for *Sojourner*) shares her vision for the production of *Sojourner*.

Linda: *I can tell you what we are doing. We are focusing on the language. We are not having an African Southern dialect. She never spoke with that dialect. She spoke Dutch with a Dutch accent and so did her mother.*

I’m focusing on her walking away, not running away. She’s a strong black woman of her time! That’s what I want people to see.

Cal: *That’s great. **You’re right! Sojourner did not run away from John Dumont’s farm. She walked.***

You know, Sojourner’s story is compelling and your work is enhancing it. I refer to Sojourner Truth and compare her to Tiger Woods. I compare Sojourner Truth to Serena and Venus Williams. And people say, well, hold on, Serena Williams and Venus Williams are current. But like those athletes - Truth was ahead of her time.

When Venus and Serena started kicking butt in tennis, we didn’t have a lot of African-Americans playing the sport. But now, they say, “oh, shoot, we can play tennis, too.” They inspired the world - just like Sojourner Truth

We talk about Rosa Parks and Harriet Tubman and I love them. But, how do you compared them to someone like Sojourner who won a son out of slavery, who influenced Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and had grandsons in a fifty fourth regiment. Sojourner won court cases against white men in the 1800s! That is unheard of! She had strength to go before the women’s convention and give a woman speech about equality and women’s rights. Yet, many people still neglect to talk about Sojourner Truth. This it it necessary to tell her story, because she inspires everybody

The Descendants of Truth.com

An interview with descendants of Sojourner Truth

Cory and Cal speak about Sojourner's literacy.

Linda: *I know that in her childhood, she was never given an opportunity for literacy. But I just wondered in her later years being such a brilliant woman. I wondered if she had access to literacy.*

Cal: *There are people who have an amazing memory. That was Sojourner Truth. She had an incredible memory which is why she was also so very, very articulate in her narrative. **She did learn to read and write later in her life. Her kids and her children actually taught her how to read and write.***

Cory: *I have to say respectfully, Cal's more of Sojourner's grandson than I am because he sleeps and drinks Sojourner Truth and he knows more about it than me. Just to speak to what he was saying about Sojourner Truth though, her kids used to read the Bible to her all the time. And she would just remember. She had an excellent memory. I think I have got a little bit of that memory from her because I can look at something, remember, and draw it from memory.*

Cal and Cory give Prime Stage insight into preserving Sojourner Truth's legacy.

Cory: *This is how I look at it, because I'm fortunate enough to be her descendant. We don't really have anything that was passed down from our ancestors to our grandmothers. There was also a fire that Sojourner Truth had in Battle Creek, everything she had was destroyed. So, there's not too much left over. But, I look at her life logically. She was dealing with these terrible conditions. Those experiences had to have hardened her to the point where she stood up tall and straight. She was speaking with the Dutch accent and she spoke eloquently because she was around educated people. You can't be admired by other educated people unless you speak like them. And then, there's a spirituality or spiritualness that I feel about her. But there's also my cousin Thomas, who is Sojourner Truth's oldest living relative. He has turned his whole house into a museum. He has a book from 1865 with the Sojourner Truth image engraved on the cover.*

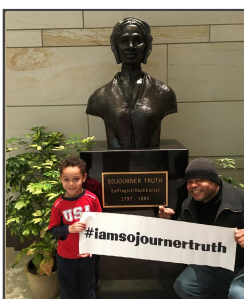
Cal: *Thomas Mclichey! He lives, he breathes, he knows. He feels Sojourner's spirit. You know, Sojourner Truth had a cane. So, he has a cane and he walks in her footsteps as well. He does things like that. Aside from the different memorabilia, he makes images in honor of Sojourner Truth. He wants to go on his deathbed knowing that in the world, her legacy will continue.*



Cory and his cousin, Thomas, in the basement of the Van Wagner home in New York State. The Van Wagner's took Sojourner in after she left Dumont. In was in this home that Sojourner slept in a bed for the first time in her life.



Thomas and Cory pose in a Sojourner Truth Statue in Ulster County, New York.



Descendants of the Truth is a non-profit organization created by the family of Sojourner Truth to keep her legacy alive for now and generations to come.

Visit the website for more educational opportunities and to learn more about the family of Sojourner Truth.

<https://descendantsofthetruth.com>

Activities, Games & Journal Entries

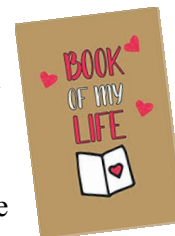
We encourage you to use these in-home or classroom activities to spark personal connections with the play and provide a deeper understanding of Sojourner Truth's fight for equality.

History

Create a timeline of Sojourner Truth's life. Have at least five important dates on your time line and illustrate it with drawings of your own.

Book of My Life

Sojourner Truth kept a "Book of Life." It was a scrapbook and autograph book. Abraham Lincoln signed it, and so did Ulysses S. Grant. Ask students to think about what they would include in their own "Book of Life". It may include drawings, poems and journal entries. Students should discuss which events in their own lives, in and out of school, they would like to include. They may want to keep track of local, national, and world events, too. Suggest that they dedicate a page to a hero or person that they look up to and make a list of people they admire.



Sojourner Truth Cards



Sojourner Truth created cards to sell to supporters in order to raise funds for her causes. Although it is unclear whether Sojourner Truth coined the phrase, "I sell the shadow to support the substance," found at the bottom of the photo card, she was vigilant in maintaining control of her photographic image. She knew that selling these cards could support her work for women's and African American rights.

Answer the following questions as a class discussion or in a journal.

1. What do you think is meant by the phrase "I sell the shadow to support the substance"? (NOTE: Photographers of this period often referred to a subject's captured image as the "shadow".)
2. Photos such as this one were carefully planned and posed. Why do you think Sojourner Truth chose to be shown knitting in this photograph

Create a Truth Card Poster

Imagine that Sojourner Truth is giving a speech in your city. Design a contemporary card or poster to promote her message of equality and African American rights.

Equality and Perseverance Graph

During an era in which both racism and sexism were the norm in this country, Sojourner Truth insisted that black people should be treated as the equals of whites and that women deserved the same rights as men. In this activity from PBS Education, students will watch a short video and then create a graphic organizer to highlight examples of Sojourner Truth's quest for equality and examples of perseverance.

1. Click her to watch the video:

<https://wqed.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/american-vid-sojourner-truth/sojourner-truth/>

2. Create your Graphic Organizer

Take a blank sheet of paper and fold it in half long ways. Open the sheet of paper so that it looks like there are two columns. On one side write "Quest for Equality" on the other side write "Example of Perseverance". Take a moment to think about Sojourner Truth and her life consider her actions. List examples of her perseverance and actions in her quest for equality.

3. Discussion or writing activity Question

Why do you think Sojourner Truth is considered an American Icon?

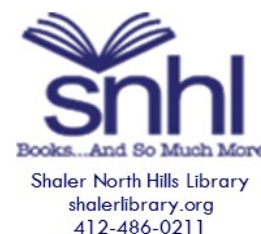
Journal Entries

1. A sojourner is a person who resides temporarily in a place. Abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth chose her own name. Why do you think she might have described herself as a "sojourner" and what truth do you think she may have wanted to share?
2. Pretend that you were in the audience at that church in Akron, Ohio, when Sojourner gave her famous speech, "On Women's Rights." Write a letter home to someone describing what you heard and saw that important day.

Reading List

Sojourner

If this play has piqued your interest, why not check out a book or movie and explore more? Your public libraries have many online resources you can access from home through online services Libby, Hoopla, or Flipster! Check your library's website for help in getting started or use this handy link: [Your Library From Home](#).



For Children

Who Was Sojourner Truth? (picture book)

Sojourner Truth: A Voice for Freedom (Great African Americans Series) (picture book)

Only Passing Through: The Story of Sojourner Truth (picture book)

Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride (picture book)

Sojourner Truth's "ain't I a Woman?" (21st Century Skills Library: Front Seat of History: Famous Speeches) (picture book)

For Adults

Sojourner Truth: Speaking Up for Freedom by Geoffrey Horn

An examination of the life of the woman born into slavery who became a well-known abolitionist and crusader for the rights of African Americans in the United States.

The Portable Nineteenth-Century African American Women Writers

The most comprehensive anthology of its kind: an extraordinary range of voices offering the expressions of African American women in print before, during, and after the Civil War. Edited by Hollis Robbins and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., this collection comprises work from forty-nine writers arranged into sections of memoir, poetry, and essays on feminism, education, and the legacy of African American women writers. *Available in print and as an ebook.*

Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol by Nell Irvin Painter

Peel away the myths surrounding one of the most important historical women of the 19th-century. No one who reads Painter's groundbreaking biography will forget this landmark figure and the story of her courageous life.

Narrative of Sojourner Truth by Sojourner Truth

Truth's landmark slave narrative chronicles her experiences as a slave in upstate New York and her transformation into an extraordinary abolitionist, feminist, orator, and preacher. This volume includes the "Book of Life," a collection of letters and sketches about Truth's life written subsequent to the original 1850 publication of the *Narrative*, and "A Memorial Chapter," an account of her death.