

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON



BIOGRAPHY

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“I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation.... I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.” These words appeared in the first edition of the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator* in 1831. They were written by one of the newspaper's founders, William Lloyd Garrison, who was one of the most prominent supporters of the abolition of slavery in the mid 1800s.

Garrison was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts on December 10, 1805. When he was three years old, his father left the family, and his mother had to support him and his two siblings alone. Garrison helped the family by taking on a number of jobs, before becoming an apprentice to a newspaper editor. He then spent seven years learning how to write and edit well.

At first, Garrison tried buying up an existing newspaper, but this venture failed. Garrison then worked for other newspapers, including *Genius of Emancipation*, an antislavery newspaper. This increased Garrison's awareness of issues like slavery and rights.

Not long after that, Garrison joined the American Colonization Society. The society promoted the idea that African-Americans freed from slavery should live in countries on the west coast of Africa. At first, Garrison thought the society wanted to help African-Americans. But he soon saw that the society was really taking them away from American society altogether, and not reducing slavery overall.

Unhappy with the society, Garrison left around 1830. He then formed The Liberator, and used it to promote his anti-slavery views. He went on to found the American Antislavery Society, which supported complete abolition of slavery across America. While many supported his views, some were frustrated by his methods. That was because Garrison wanted to write about stopping slavery, but not get directly involved in politics to make it happen.

Later on, Garrison started attacking the U.S. Constitution itself, saying that it did not allow African-Americans to become full American citizens. In 1861, the Civil War started, largely over the issue of slavery. Garrison supported Abraham Lincoln and the Union. After the war, the 13th Amendment to the Constitution finally abolished slavery by law in 1865. Garrison ran his last edition of The Liberator on December 29 that year, and he died in 1879.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'prominent'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'prominent' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'prominent'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'prominent'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'prominent' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: abolition	outlawing

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

In 1865, slavery was finally abolished by law, which is what Garrison had been supporting.

Later Garrison wrote for newspapers that were against slavery.

As a young man, Garrison was an apprentice writer and editor.

During the Civil War, Garrison supported the Union side.

Then Garrison started writing for The Liberator newspaper, and became well-known as an abolitionist.

William Lloyd Garrison was born in Massachusetts in 1805.

Garrison then joined the American Colonization Society, but later left.

Get to the facts

1 When was the first edition of The Liberator?

2 Which society did William Lloyd Garrison join?

3 Which society did Garrison found?

4 When did the Civil War start?

5 What did the 13th Amendment do?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Slavery abolished

Imagine you are William Lloyd Garrison in 1865. You hear that the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has been passed. Slavery has been abolished, which is what you've been fighting for most of your life...(now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'prominent'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'prominent' means.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – abolition Synonym – outlawing

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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