

Study Guide



Sometimes there's a cost to doing the right thing," says Captain Norstad after standing up to a swindler. A theft threatens Jordan's reputation. As the *Christina* family faces desperate times, a deaf child named Peter joins them.

Hi Friends—Can the Freedom Seekers win against the evil coming against them?

Let's Talk About . . . Words you might need

Find a dictionary and fill in the definitions:

swindler

wildcat bank

mud clerk

“had her steam up” (as for the *Christina*)

tributary

station (as in Underground Railroad)

cistern

magistrate

microcosm

Learn a new language! Turn to the end of this section to find the sign language chart: *How to Finger Spell the Alphabet*. If you'd like to learn more, look for books that will help you grow in your sign language skills.

Let's Talk About . . . The story

Use the blank space between questions to write your answer or create sections in your loose-leaf notebook when you want to write more. To find something in the story, check the number (ch. 1) at the end of the first question. That means chapter 1. Look there until you see another note (ch. 2, or 3, or 4) directing you to a different chapter.

- What is a wildcat bank? (ch. 1)
- What is a swindler?
- Why were some banks both risky and dishonest?

- Think about this saying: “In America the streets are paved with gold!” Why was that thought a possible trap for immigrants in their new land of freedom?
- What Dexter was trying to do was legal, but why was it wrong?
- How did Captain Norstad protect Mr. Iverson and convince him of the swindler’s dishonesty?
- When Captain Norstad said, “Sometimes there’s a cost to doing the right thing.” Libby asked, “And a reward?” What does Pa tell her?
- Have you ever needed to pay a cost for doing the right thing? Explain.
- What did Hattie say that convinced Captain Norstad about what meant the most to her?
- When Captain Norstad stopped Dexter from cheating an immigrant, the swindler got even. What will happen if Pa can’t meet the double payment? (ch. 3)

Let’s Talk About . . . Freedom . . . What is it?

- What has happened to Serena since Libby and Caleb last saw her? (ch. 4)
- What does the woman of the house say about Hattie’s work? Serena’s work?

- What does the man of the house say about Jordan's work?
- How would John Jones, the businessman, use the money Jordan brought him?
- What has happened to Jordan since Caleb and Libby last saw him?
- What does it mean to try to do big things for God without God's help? (ch. 5)
- When the people in Jordan's church started muttering about the lost money, what did Rev. Freeman tell them? (ch. 6)
- How did the people respond?
- How did Jordan change during the church service? What does he want now?
- Study the Upper Mississippi River map from Galena down to St. Louis. Why were many of these cities important in the Underground Railroad?
- Serena found an Alton, Illinois, address. Why is Alton an especially dangerous place for Jordan?

Let's Talk About . . . A never-give-up family

- How did Samson rescue the unknown boy on the street? (ch. 4)
- Why is Peter able to speak but not hear? (ch. 5)
- What does Captain Norstad want for Peter? In what ways can Pa, Libby, and Caleb be a never-give-up family for Peter? (ch. 5 & 6)
- Describe Caleb's birthday gift to Libby. What made that gift so meaningful to Libby?
- Write the words of Psalm 27:1 here. Why is it such a good verse to memorize? Consider copying verses that are especially meaningful to you on a 3 x 5 card. Write the place in the Bible where you found that verse on the back side of the card. Keep all those cards together in an index box so that you can return to the verses and review them. Soon you'll have a great number of verses that you have memorized and can recall any time of the day or night.
- Libby is upset when she finds Peter with a lighted candle. What makes fire especially dangerous on a steamboat? (ch. 8)
- Peter often teaches sign language to Libby and Caleb. (ch. 9) How does that help all of them communicate quickly and well?

- Look up Samuel Morse and his invention. Why is Mr. Morse a special person to Peter?

Let's Talk About . . . Helping others

- Why does Caleb risk his life to help Jordan? (chs. 7 & 8)
Why is it so dangerous to ask about Jordan's father?
- When Captain Norstad asked Caleb if he had prayed about going, Caleb said, "Yes, sir. I found a Bible verse that was so real it seemed to jump off the page." What does it mean when a verse seems to jump off the page?
- What did Caleb learn about Micah Parker? (ch. 9)
- As the *Christina* steams toward Alton, Captain Norstad asks Libby, Caleb, Jordan, and Peter to make a promise that if they find the swindler they should get help from a grown-up—a policeman or sheriff. Why is that an important promise?

Let's Talk About . . . Making choices

- Libby prays, "I want something worth living for, Lord. Something real—something worthwhile. But that seems so big, God—so hard—even impossible. Can You help me choose what counts most?" (ch. 14) How will that prayer help Libby make life-time choices?
- Detective Allan Pinkerton warned, "A foolhardy man rushes in where even angels fear to tread. But a brave man is wise about handling danger. Sure and I'm wishing

that the ten toes of your feet steer you clear of trouble.” (ch. 17) Why is it easier to be foolhardy than to be wisely brave? Think of examples.

- In *Midnight Rescue* Jordan used a certain walk for a disguise. Micah also uses a different-than-usual walk the same way (ch. 18). What did both of them know about the strong way they usually appeared?
- Libby, Jordan, and Peter must decide whether to leave the small chest in the ground. (ch. 19) As Libby thinks about what to do, she remembers people who made life-changing decisions. Why was her decision so important?
- What is Peter's big surprise? (ch. 20)
- In Hannibal Jordan told Libby when he wanted his birthday to be. What spiritual was the church singing when Jordan knew it was his birthday? (ch. 20). **Let's send up a shout with them!**

Let's Write About . . . Wise words from Freedom Seekers

Jordan and his father Micah are fictional, but had great value because they knew how to take good care of horses. Their story is set within a microcosm of historic people who lived in the Alton and Brighton area of Illinois. In the midst of their daily work these people took an active part in the Underground Railroad. (ch. 10, 11, and 12)

- What is a microcosm? Why can a microcosm of wise people influence what happens in an entire area?

In your notebook write down what these people did and said. How did they make valuable contributions to what was happening in their time? What did they believe? Why are their words important both then and now?

- **Priscilla Baltimore**, (ch. 10) the Harriet Tubman of the Alton, Illinois, area, who found and rowed runaway slaves across the wide Mississippi River. What practical help did she give in showing people where to go?
- In telling Caleb how to protect Jordan? (ch. 12)
- **Major Hunter** (military) **and his wife Rebecca** offered hospitality and encouragement. (ch. 10) Write down what Rebecca said about what Mr. Lovejoy believed. Include the words, “He respected a higher law—God’s law.”
- What is Caleb’s summary of Mr. Lovejoy’s words?
- What is freedom of the press? In an encyclopedia see **Constitution of the United States, Amendment 1**.
- Why is it important to understand freedom of the press? To respect the laws of the country and also hold yourself responsible for how you use that freedom? What is Rebecca’s answer?

- **Elijah Lovejoy** is known as the first American martyr for freedom of the press. A 100-foot monument to his memory has been placed in the Alton, Illinois, cemetery. (See acknowledgments.) What did Mr. Lovejoy live for? What did he die for? Go to www.state.il.us/hpa/lovejoy/monument.htm.

- **Reverend John Livingston** asked Caleb, “What do you plan to do about Elijah Lovejoy being your hero?” (ch. 11) What is Caleb’s answer?

- What does it mean to be a man or woman of honor?

- **Thomas Dimmock**, newspaperman and editor. When he asks Caleb why Elijah Lovejoy is his hero, what does Caleb answer?

- **Benjamin Godfrey**, managing contractor and builder for the St. Louis, Alton, and Chicago Railroad. Why did he start a school for girls? (ch. 13)

- **Mr. Gilson**, the magistrate who said, “This is the Lord’s day. I make no arrests on Sunday.” Why?

- **Dr. Thomas Brown**, Brighton, Illinois. Libby asked, “When you know what might happen, how can you keep on helping fugitives?” (ch. 14) Dr. Brown answers, “How can I *not* help them? God’s law is higher than that of men.” Why was Deuteronomy 23:15 an important Bible verse for people working in the Underground Railroad?

- Dr. Brown asks, “Should I obey someone who sees a fellow human being as a piece of property? Or should I obey God?” What reason does Dr. Brown give for obeying God?
- “When two laws are in conflict with each other, God’s law is more important—more to be followed.” How do Elijah Lovejoy and Dr. Brown agree?
- Can you give other examples where a law made by man goes against the ways of God?
- Give examples of ways in which national, state, and local governments of the United States have **supported and cherished** laws made by God.
- **Dr. Brown’s daughter, Frances.** Why do you think she read Bible stories to the children of slaves she and her father were protecting?
- Ask yourself, In what ways does God want me to be a Freedom Seeker? How can I honor him and contribute to the well-being of others?

Can the ten toes of your feet steer clear of trouble? And why does Libby want to be safe?

Thanks for being my friends through books. I’ll meet you in the next Freedom Seekers novel . . . *The Mysterious Signal!*



THE MANUAL Alphabet

Courtesy of the Illinois
School for the Deaf, Jacksonville.