

Learning to Read: Version for Student Annotation

Name: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Class: _____

Verses

Summarize Meanings

1) Very soon the Yankee teachers Came down and set up school;	
2) But, oh! how the Rebs did hate it,-- It was agin' their rule.	
3) Our masters always tried to hide Book learning from our eyes;	
4) Knowledge didn't agree with slavery, T'would make us all too wise.	
5) But some of us would try to steal A little from the book,	
6) And put the words together, And learn by hook or crook.	

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's "Learning to Read"

7) I remember Uncle Caldwell Who took pot-liquor fat	
8) And greased the pages of his book, And hid it in his hat.	
9) And had his Master ever seen The leaves upon his head,	
10) He'd have thought them greasy papers, But nothing to be read.	
11) And there was Mr. Turner's Ben, Who heard the children spell,	
12) And picked the words right up by heart, And learned to read 'em well.	
13) Well, the Northern folks kept sending The Yankee teachers down;	
14) And they stood right up and helped us, Though Rebs did sneer and frown	
15) And, I longed to read my Bible, For precious words it said;	

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's "Learning to Read"

16) But when I begun to learn it, Folks just shook their heads.	
17) And said, there is no use trying, Oh! Chloe, you're too late;	
18) But as I was rising sixty, I had not time to wait.	
19) So I got a pair of glasses And straight to work I went,	
20) And never stopped till I could read The hymns and Testament.	
21) Then I got a little cabin-- A place to call my own--	
22) And I felt as independent As the queen upon her throne.	