

# Día! Family Book Club

## Lesson Plan 4; Ages 8-12



### Book Information

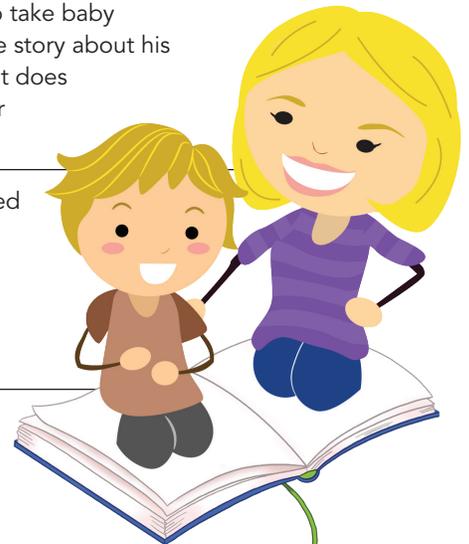
*Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis

### Pre-Club Activities

Distribute copies of the book. Ask families to read it and to talk about slavery, especially how difficult it was for slaves to become free.

### Club Activities

Activity	Description/Information
Introduction	On a projector, show vintage (public domain) posters advertising for the return of runaway slaves or warning African-Americans in free states to beware of slave catchers. Talk about the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which sought to enforce the constitutional requirement for northern states to return fugitive slaves to their owners and often ensnared free blacks as well as fugitive slaves.
Discussion Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Elijah's parents worry that he is too "fra-gile." What do they mean by that? Do you think Elijah is fragile?</li><li>2. Frederick Douglass says that the hardest step on the long journey from slavery to freedom is the very last step. Why might that be? What could be difficult or scary about starting a free life?</li><li>3. Think about the character of the Preacher. Would you have made the same mistake that Elijah and Mr. Leroy make by trusting him? Why or why not?</li><li>4. By the end of the book, does Elijah understand things better than he did at the beginning? What are some things that he understands now, and what are some things he still needs to learn?</li><li>5. Why do you think Mrs. Chloe doesn't just ask Elijah to take baby Hope north to freedom? Why does Elijah make up the story about his mother instead of just offering to take the baby? What does Mrs. Chloe have in common with Elijah's grandmother (his mother's mother)?</li></ol>
Family Activity	Many of the families in <i>Elijah of Buxton</i> have been scattered by slavery and escape. Is your family all in one place, or spread out? Using a US or world map outline, mark where your family members are located (it doesn't have to be exact). You can decorate it by drawing pictures of your family members.



Visit <http://dia.ala.org> for more resources, activity sheets, and information.



# Día! Family Book Club

## Lesson Plan 1: Ages 8-12



Activity	Description/Information
Small Group Activity	<p>In small groups, with groups cycling through craft stations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Emma Collins loves her homemade sock doll, but she gives it away to another child. Imagine that you are going to make a new doll for Emma. Use a sock, stuffing, and bits of yarn, ribbon, fabric scraps, etc. to make her a new doll. (Instructions below.)</li><li>2. Elijah helps Mrs. Holton write an inscription for her husband after she finds out he has died. Imagine that you are going to help write an inscription for Mr. Leroy, for Mrs. Chloe and Kamau, or even for the Preacher. What would you write? Write out your inscription on parchment or other fancy paper.</li><li>3. Using a foam or paper cup, make your own Liberty Bell. Buxton's Liberty Bell was made of brass, but yours will look more like America's Liberty Bell. (Instructions below.)</li></ol>
Full Group Activity	<p>Have a party to welcome baby Hope to Buxton. Ring your Liberty Bells and show off your maps, dolls, and inscriptions while sharing a snack.</p>

### Post Club Activities

1. Learn more about the lives of the real abolitionists mentioned in the book, especially John Brown and Frederick Douglass.
2. Learn more about the Buxton settlement by visiting its website at [buxtonmuseum.com](http://buxtonmuseum.com) or even planning a visit to Buxton.
3. Talk as a family about how racial discrimination persists in today's world. Discuss a current event that involves prejudice or discrimination. How do you think it should be resolved?

### Additional Resources for Club

1. Printable US and world map outlines. See US maps at: <http://nationalatlas.gov/printable/reference.html> and world map at [http://www.freeusandworldmaps.com/html/World\\_Projections/WorldPrint.html](http://www.freeusandworldmaps.com/html/World_Projections/WorldPrint.html). You might also want to consider having Western Hemisphere maps available.
2. Instructions for making a sock doll: <http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/dollcrafts/a/blsockdoll.htm>
3. Instructions for Liberty Bell craft: <http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/independenceday/a/blbellcr1.htm>