

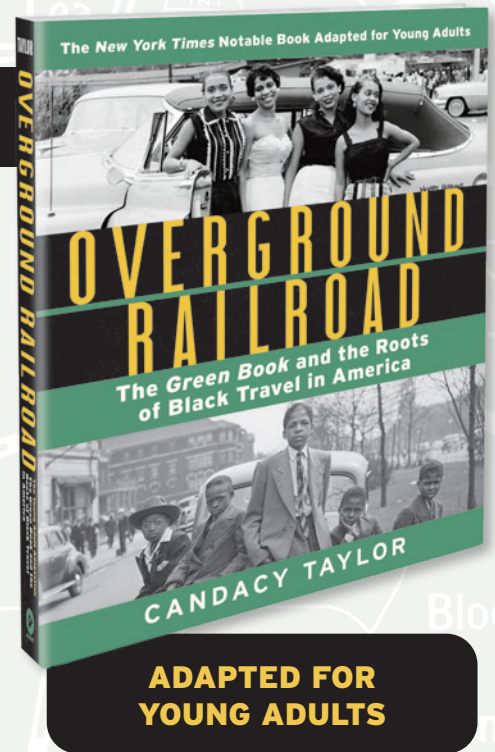
OVERGROUND RAILROAD

The *Green Book* and the Roots of Black Travel in America

By **CANDACY TAYLOR**

ABOUT THE BOOK

Published from 1936 to 1966, the *Green Book* was known as the “Black travel guide to America.” Due to segregation, it was highly dangerous for Black Americans to travel at the time—many couldn’t eat, sleep, or even get gas at most white-owned businesses. A resourceful and innovative solution to a horrific problem, the *Green Book* was a road map to safety. Award-winning author Candacy Taylor celebrates the stories of Black travelers who charted their own course and took a stand against racial segregation. Powerful and essential reading, *Overground Railroad* takes a new generation on a gripping journey through history via a road less traveled.



FAMILY READING GUIDE

Use the following questions as you read to help guide conversation and open discussion of the young reader’s edition of Candacy Taylor’s acclaimed book *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America*. These questions are designed to spark important and timely conversations for readers of all ages.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. “Although he didn’t get rich off the *Green Book*, his reward was much more valuable than money, because for every business he listed, he may have saved a life” (p. 7). What do you believe is meant by this statement? Do you believe Victor Hugo Green should be considered a great national hero?
2. Examine the image of the “dapper man in Harlem, circa 1937” on page 9. What do you see? What do you think? What do you wonder?
3. What planning or preparations did Black families need to make before taking a road trip in the *Green Book* era? In what ways are current travel restrictions to African American people similar to those that are represented in the book?
4. In addition to the dangers of “driving while black” and being stopped by the police, what other kinds of discrimination did Black people experience? How are these discriminatory practices still evident in today’s society?
5. Write a Travel Trip review for one of the vacation spots mentioned in Chapter 6. What would you include? What advice would you give to travelers? Who would they see? What would they do?
6. Listen to the song “A Change is Gonna Come” by Otis Redding. How did it reflect the social strife of the 1960s? Does that song still resonate today?
7. How did the Civil Rights Act of 1964 change our society? How did it empower Black people? How did it impact the listings in the *Green Book*?
8. Candacy Taylor shares her stepfather’s experiences to relay the dangers of travel for African American people, using his life experiences to parallel the broader historic experiences that she discusses throughout the book. How do experiences in your own family guide your awareness and understanding of the book and its stories?

Looking for more?

Visit the adult edition of *Overground Railroad* on abramsbooks.com for additional discussion questions.

DISCOVER THE UNTOLD HISTORY OF BLACK TRAVEL IN AMERICA

with the acclaimed books from award-winning author Candacy Taylor

★ **"Skillfully adapted . . . into a smooth, readable volume."**

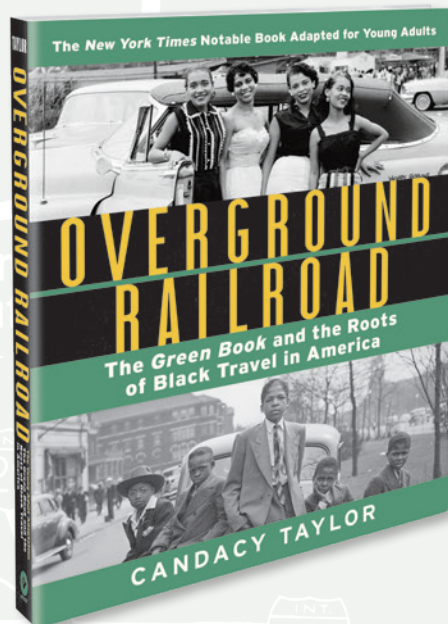
—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ **"An impressive insight into Black history that still resonates today."**

—*Booklist*, starred review

★ **"A priceless addition for researchers and readers seeking to understand . . . centuries of systemic racism in America."**

—*School Library Journal*, starred review



A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK

"A potent gift for bringing these [Green Book] sites, and the black past, alive."

—Henry Louis Gates Jr., director of the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University

"A fascinating history of Black travel."

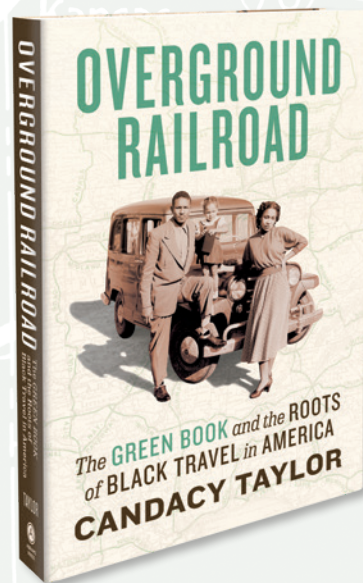
—*New York Times Book Review*

"Essential."

—*Library Journal*

"Eye-opening, deeply moving."

—*Bookpage*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Candacy Taylor is an award-winning author, photographer, and cultural documentarian. Her work has been featured in more than 50 media outlets, including *The New Yorker* and *the Atlantic*. She is the recipient of numerous fellowships and grants, including the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University and the National Endowment for the Humanities. She lives in New York.



Photo by Katrina Parks—Ascription Films