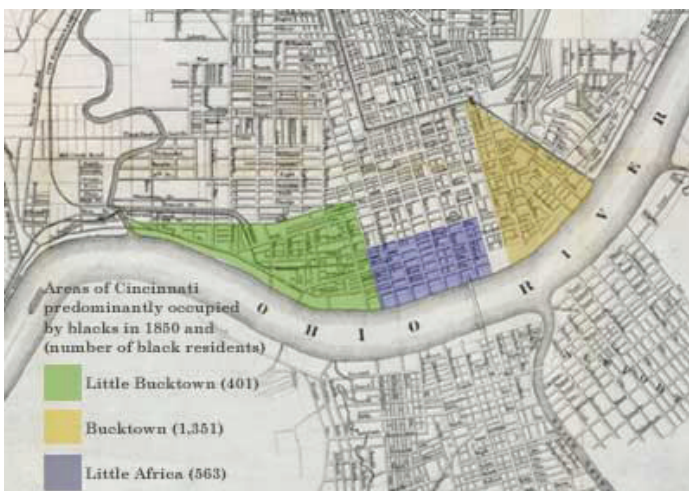


LITTLE AFRICA AND THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is located on the banks of the Ohio River in Cincinnati, Ohio. It sits in a historically important area that was once known as "Little Africa." The people who lived here served an important role in the story of the Underground Railroad. Little Africa was the gateway to freedom for thousands of freedom seekers escaping slavery.

Established in Ohio during the early nineteenth century, Little Africa was a predominantly African American community. It was one of three black settlements located along the banks of the Ohio River. A large number of African Americans, including many freedom seekers, found employment as roustabouts or in the growing steamboat industry. Little Africa in the 4th ward of the city grew quickly, with residents establishing a churches, schools and businesses. African American residents also actively assisted freedom seekers along the Underground Railroad.

Despite growing opposition to slavery by some whites during the early 1800s, communities like Little Africa reveal the difficulties around race that existed in Ohio during the



years before the American Civil War. Ohio was a state that did not allow slavery, but that did not mean that African Americans had equal rights or protections. Free blacks found it was difficult to get fair treatment, and they often formed their own communities like Little Africa.

In some sources, the area near the banks was called the swamp. **Look carefully at the map on this page—why do you think that area (highlighted purple) was called the swamp?**

VOCABULARY

Abolitionist: persons who supported the end of slavery.

Conductor: a term for a person who guided freedom seekers between "stations" or safe houses.

Courage: the quality in a person to face difficulty or danger.

Cooperation: working together for a common purpose.

Enslaved: a term for the tens of millions of kidnapped Africans transported to the Americas, and held in bondage

Freedom Seekers: a term that reveals what was in the hearts of freedom seeking African Americans who acted to make liberty a reality.

Museum: a place where artifacts and other objects of value are housed and displayed.

Ohio: a free state (buying and selling the enslaved was illegal) located in the midwestern United States. It was founded in 1803, becoming the 17th state in the union.

Perseverance: the quality in a person to make a steady effort toward a purpose in spite of the difficulties.

Roustabout: a dock laborer or deckhand who loads and unloads boats. Many persons living in Little Africa had this job since they lived close to the river bank.

COLOR ME!

Pull out your crayon box and color in this image of The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, which was built in the same location as historic Little Africa in Cincinnati, Ohio. Get creative, share a photo of your finished art on social media and tag us—we'd love to see your creations!



WORD SEARCH

K C Y T C O N D U C T O R
O O W S O M T Q Z Y G F F
I U F I O L U M Q X W R X
H R J N P C J E I S E L T
O A J O E H V A S E A R U
B G O I R N H M D U E Y O
V E V T A O S O Z T M L B
U C U I T D M L I W T S A
Q G A L I X F I A Q V M T
J E O O O E U M X V S Z S
A L Z B N S R E K E E S U
P W Z A N W W A O N Z D O
P E R S E V E R A N C E R

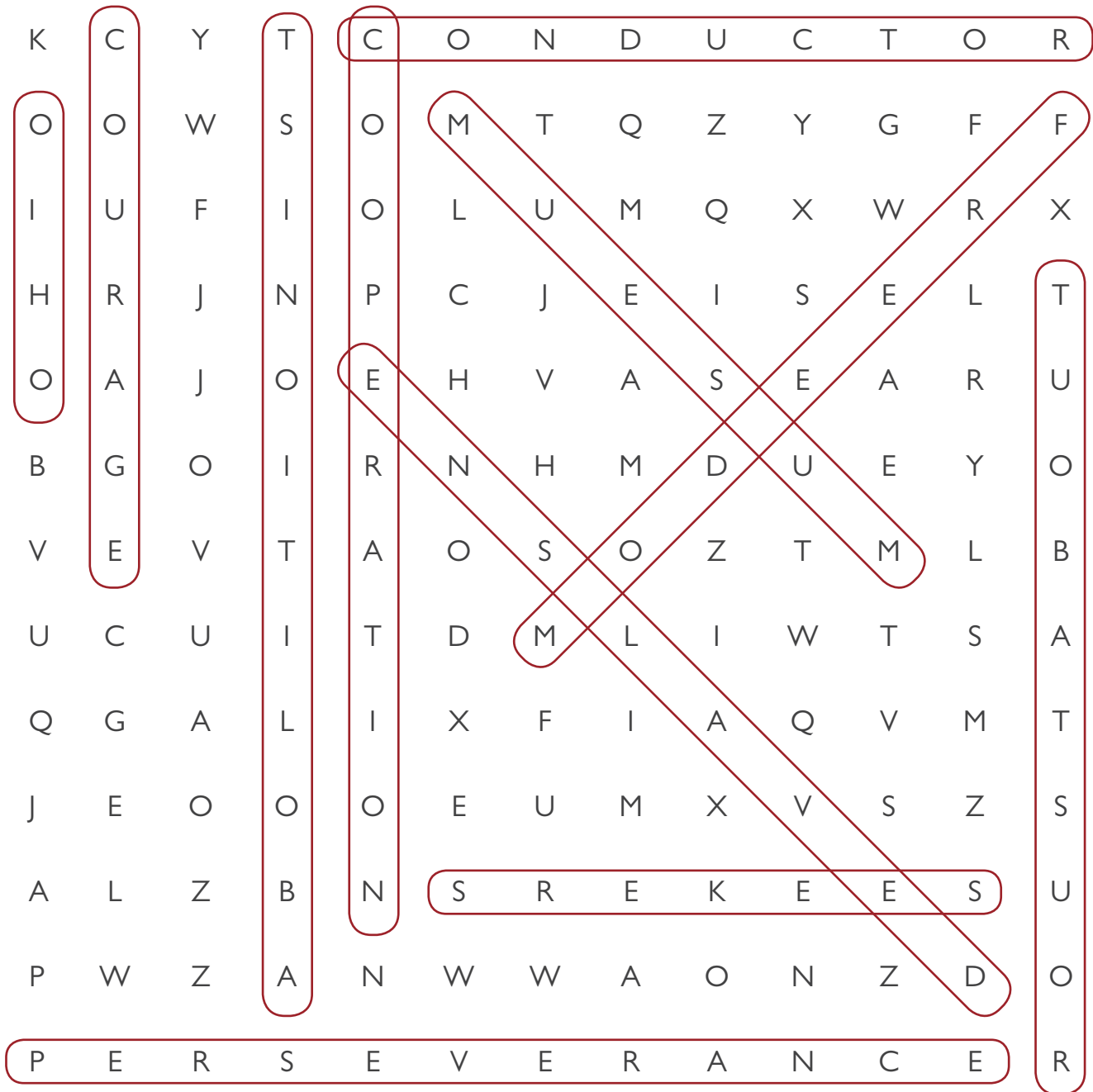
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ANSWER KEY



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