Working Across Alabama

Trades and occupations in Alabama, 1812 to 1860

SS24.4.12a "Identify different trades and occupations of Alabamians in the period from 1812 to 1860."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each trade or occupation named in the passage, and circle the words that tell what those workers did.

A Workday in Alabama

1. In 1845, an Alabama farmer might start the day before sunrise. Farmers grew corn for food and cotton for sale. Enslaved Black farm workers were forced to plant and pick cotton on many farms. They did not get to choose this work or keep the money from the crop. Other farm workers were paid for their labor. Each farm needed many hands at harvest time.

2. In a growing Alabama town, a blacksmith heated iron and shaped it into tools or horseshoes. A carpenter cut wood to build houses, barns, and wagons. A tailor sewed clothes and repaired torn shirts. Some skilled workers were enslaved and forced to use their skills for others. A family might visit more than one worker in a day, perhaps to mend a coat and fix a wagon.

3. At the river landing, a boat pilot guided a steamboat along the water. A dock worker loaded bales of cotton onto boats headed for other markets. A merchant sold goods such as salt and cloth in a store. Rivers linked farms and towns to places farther away. The pilot, dock worker, and merchant had different tasks, but all helped goods move between people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which occupation grew corn for food and cotton for sale?

2. Which two town trades worked with iron and wood? Tell what each worker made or built.

3. Which occupation guided a steamboat, and which loaded cotton onto boats?

4. What occupation did some enslaved Black Alabamians have on farms, and what did they do?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new Alabama river town in 1845. Write three sentences naming two occupations from the passage, telling what each worker would do, and explaining how their work would help the town.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each trade or occupation named in the passage, and circle the words that tell what those workers did. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which occupation grew corn for food and cotton for sale?	**Farmer.**
2	Which two town trades worked with iron and wood? Tell what each worker made or built.	**A blacksmith shaped iron into tools or horseshoes. A carpenter built houses, barns, or wagons from wood.**
3	Which occupation guided a steamboat, and which loaded cotton onto boats?	**A boat pilot guided a steamboat. A dock worker loaded cotton onto boats.**
4	What occupation did some enslaved Black Alabamians have on farms, and what did they do?	**They were farm workers who planted and picked cotton.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our new river town needs a carpenter and a boat pilot. The carpenter can build a store where families can buy supplies. The boat pilot can guide steamboats to our landing so the store can receive goods.

Accept any two occupations named in the passage for the open task if their described work fits the passage and the response explains how both would help the town. For question 4, accept farm laborer for farm worker.