

Africatown: A Changed Community

Answer Key

Directions: Watch [Finding the Last Slave Ship](#) and read [Their Ancestors Survived Slavery. Can Their Descendants Save the Town They Built?](#) to respond to the questions below.

1. What does it mean to “live off the water?”

Possible answer: It means that the majority of income comes from water-based trades or careers.

2. What would you say to your family or community “lives off of?”

Answers will vary. Examples: technology (computer programmers), education (teachers), land (farmers).

3. How might the creation of a church, community, and school have contributed to Africatown becoming a self-sufficient community?

Possible answers: A community is a group of people who recognize they have something in common, and they are willing to work for the common good. The church and school were community-based buildings where citizens of Africatown could come together and support one another emotionally and spiritually. Through these institutions, they could get an education that would teach them skills necessary to be productive citizens; to be critical thinkers, analyzers, and evaluators of the world around them; and to be contributing community members.

4. What does it mean to be a self-sustaining community?

Possible answer: It can thrive without outside assistance.

5. What evidence is provided in the clip that Africatown was self-sustaining? In what ways did the inhabitants support each other?

Possible answers: They grew their own food (fruit trees, chickens, gardens) and celebrated their African heritage even though they were in the Southern United States. Africatown had its own barber shops and grocery stores, businesses that supported the individuals who owned them, who were also from the community. Families cooked for themselves and their neighbors if they needed it. They helped one another.

6. What happened that changed things? Who or what drove that change?

Possible answers: The city of Mobile rezoned Africatown from residential to industrial. Africatown used to be supported by the local government as an incorporated town, but after being rezoned, the city could bulldoze areas for industry and ignore infrastructure repairs, or just buy the land.

7. In your own words, what is industrialization? How did it impact the community of Africatown?

Possible answers: Industrialization is when factories and businesses move into an area.

8. How is your community similar to or different from Africatown?

Answers will vary. Examples: There are old buildings in my community that people used to use as gathering places, such as the Grange or the Archer Lodge Community Center. Now they are rotting because nobody uses them anymore or takes care of the buildings or the property.

9. How does a sustainable community contribute to hope?

Possible answers: When a community can take care of itself and its people without relying on finances from outside sources, community members have more pride in themselves and their community. Pride leads to hope that good will come.