

MAYA ANGELOU



ROSA PARKS



HARRIET TUBMAN



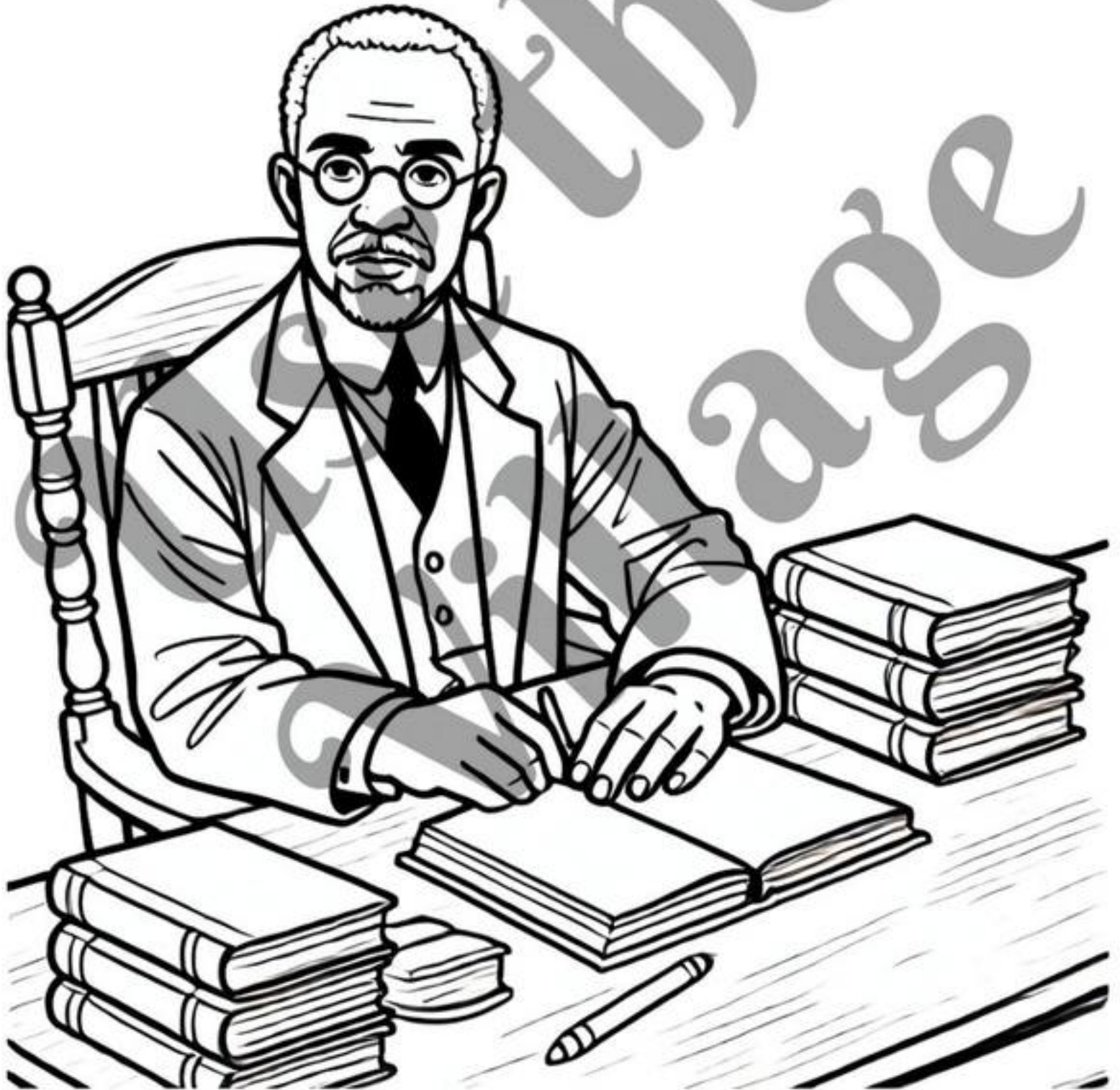
FREDERICK DOUGLASS



ZORA NEALE HURSTON



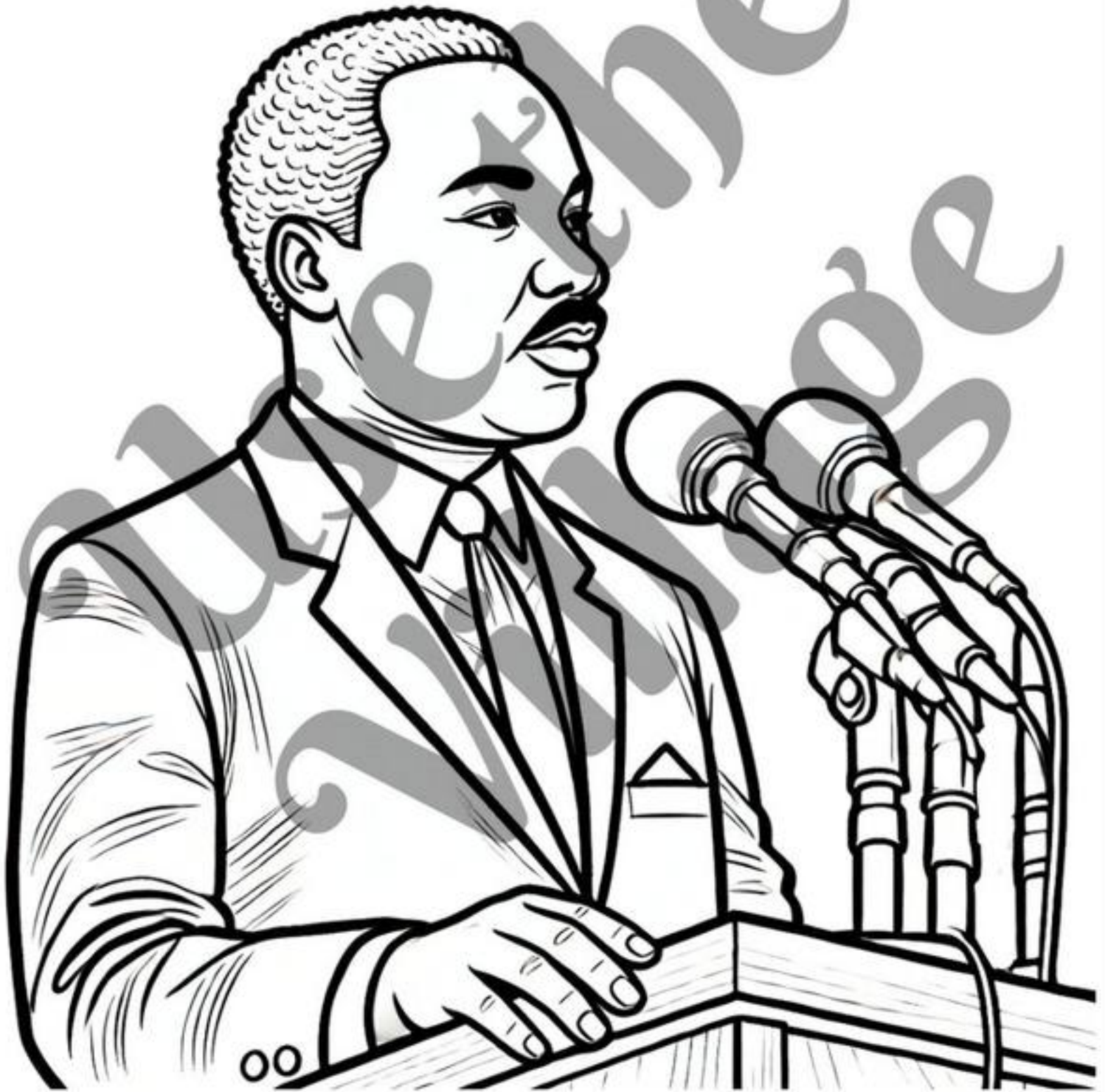
W.E.B. DU BOIS



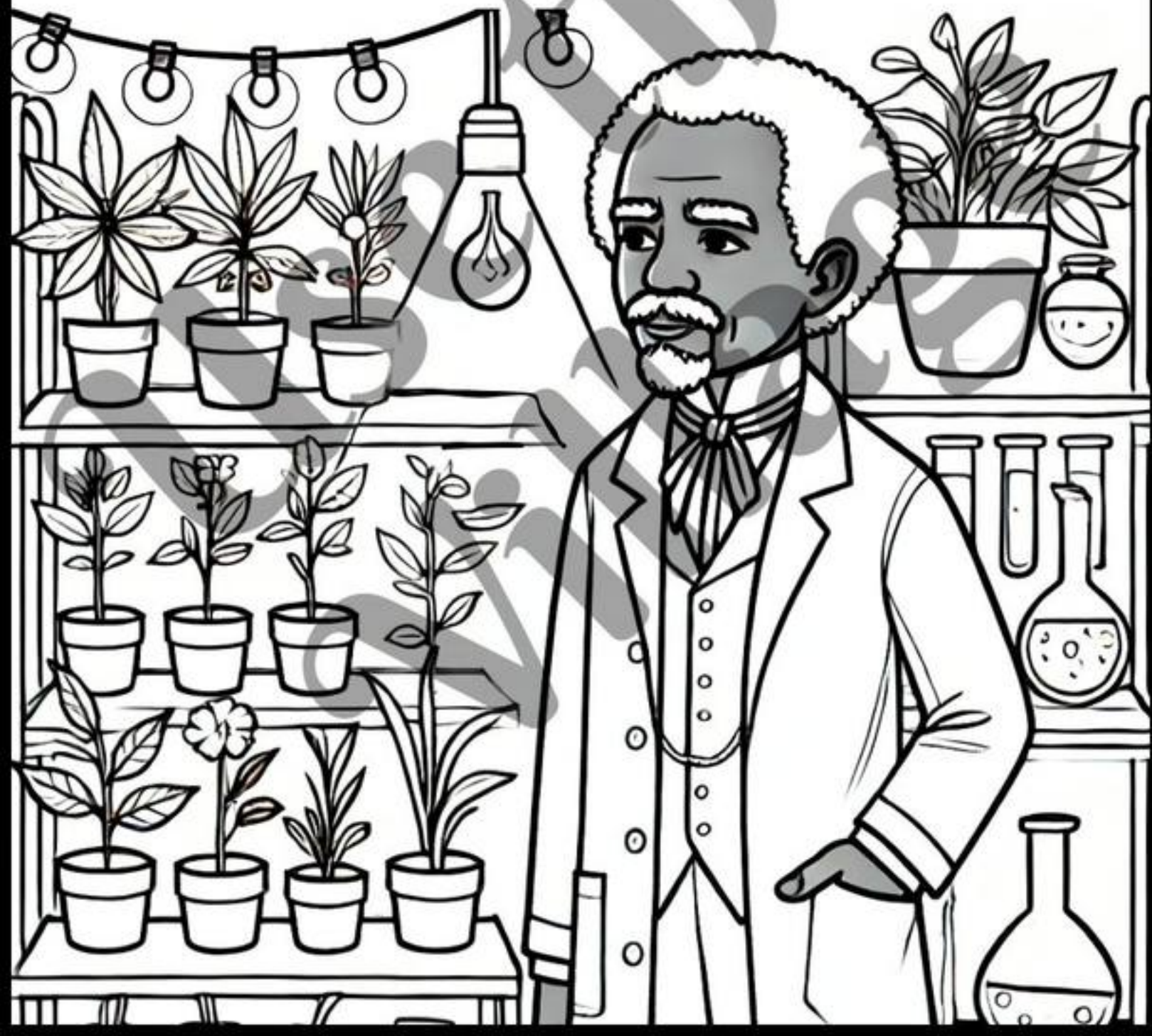
MADAME C.J. WALKER



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER



SHIRLEY CHISHOLM



CHARLES DREW



MARIAN ANDERSON



JAMES BALDWIN



KATHERINE JOHNSON



SOJOURNER TRUTH



BOOKER T. WASHINGTON



RALPH ELLISON



BESSIE COLEMAN



ALTHEA GIBSON



BAYARD RUSTIN



A. PHILIP RANDOLPH





OR

BRDR

ART

B





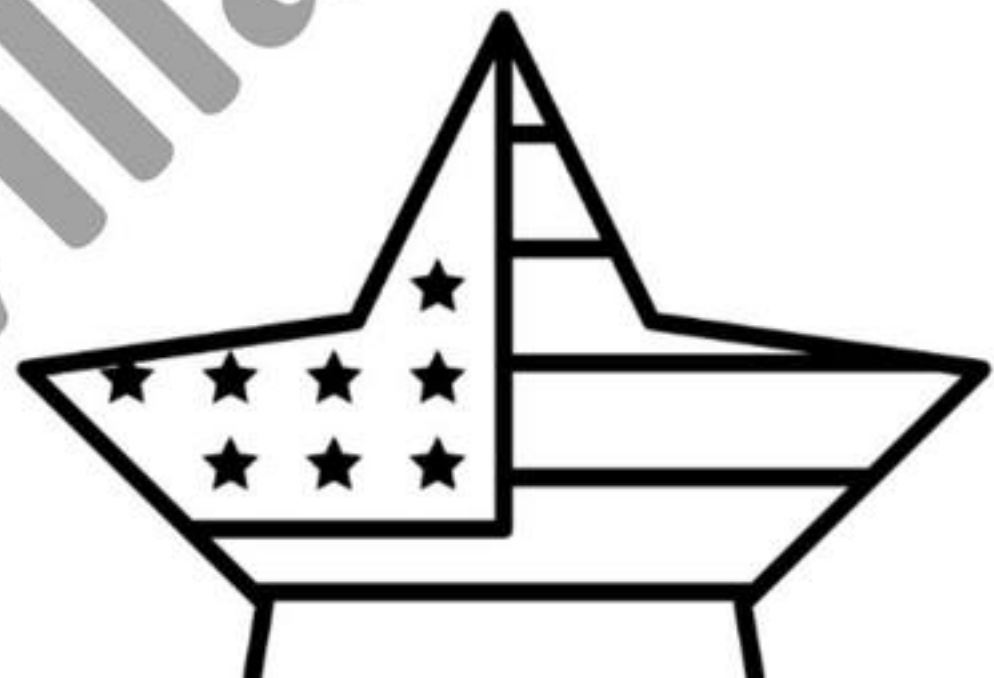






Use the
Village

D R V O



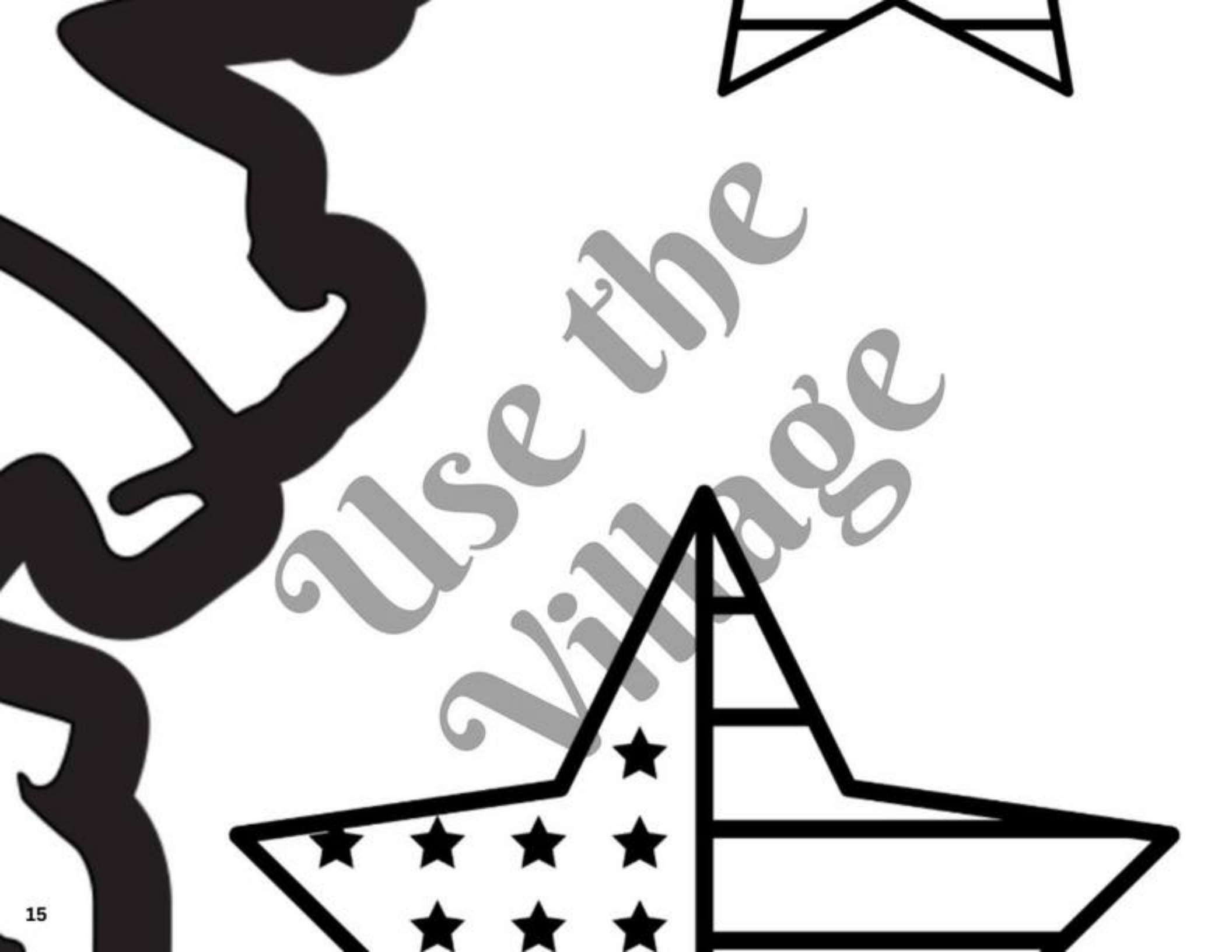


Use the
Vocabulary







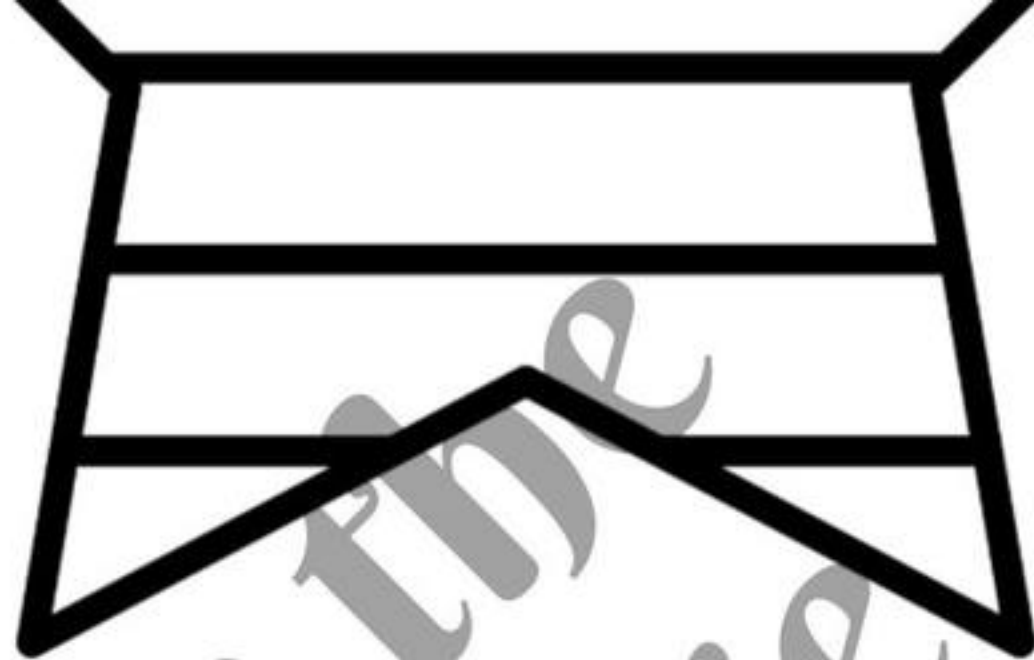






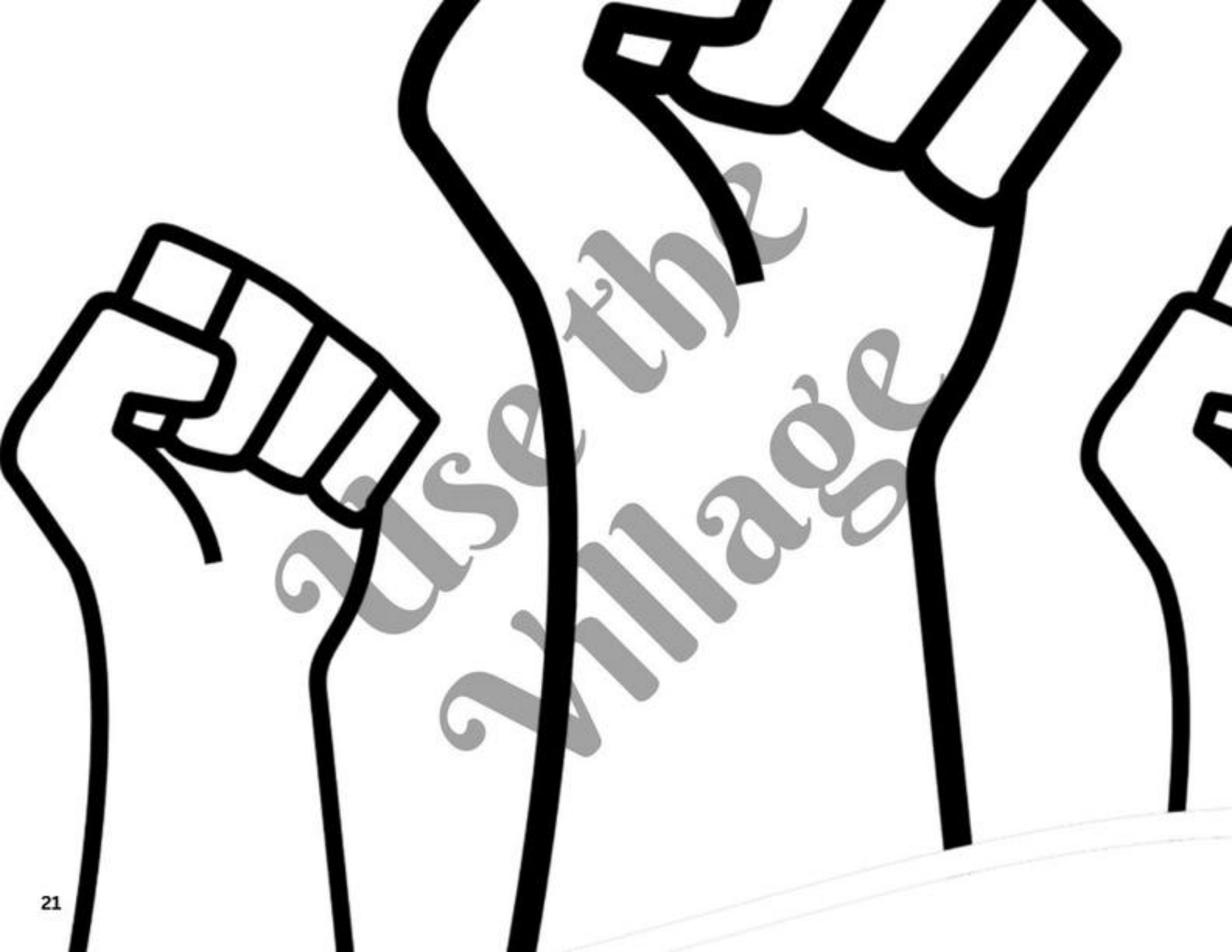






Use the
Village







Use the
Village









Readers
Theater:

Learning
Together-

A Black History
Month
Adventure



Characters:

- Narrator
- Ms. Simmons (teacher, encouraging and energetic)
- Jack (curious student who loves asking questions)
- Ava (thoughtful student who loves history)
- Carlos (a funny and energetic student)
- Sophie (quiet but insightful student)

Optional Props:

- A chalkboard or whiteboard with "Black History Month" written on it
- A small table with pretend books labeled with figures like "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." or "Maya Angelou"
- classroom setting: desks, etc.
- tray of cookies: real or cut out of paper!

Narrator:

It's February, and the students in Ms. Simmons's class are buzzing with excitement. Today, they're learning about Black History Month, but the lesson promises a surprise twist!

Ms. Simmons:

(Clapping her hands) Alright, class! Today, we're going on a journey through history. Who can tell me what Black History Month is all about?

Jack:

(Shooting his hand up) It's about famous people and stuff, right? Like Dr. King and Rosa Parks?

Ms. Simmons:

(Smiling) That's a good start, Jack! Black History Month is a time to celebrate the contributions of Black people throughout history and recognize their impact on the world. But there's so much more to it than just names and dates.

Carlos:

(Grinning) Does it involve snacks? Because history is way better with snacks.

Ava:

(Rolling her eyes) Carlos, everything is better with snacks.

Ms. Simmons:

(Laughing) Snacks will come later, Carlos. First, let's dive into history. Imagine you're traveling back in time. Close your eyes, everyone.

Narrator:

The students close their eyes, giggling as Ms. Simmons flicks the classroom lights on and off.

Ms. Simmons:

(Whispering dramatically) We're stepping into a time machine. Hold on tight! Whoosh!

Sophie:

(Open eyes, puzzled) Uh, Ms. Simmons? We're still in the classroom.

Ms. Simmons:

(Laughing) True, Sophie, but history comes alive when we imagine! Let's start with Rosa Parks. Who knows what she's famous for?

Ava:

(Shooting her hand up) She refused to give up her seat on a bus! She was so brave.

Carlos:

(Winking) I bet she told that bus driver, "Keep your hands off my snacks!"

Ms. Simmons:

(Playfully stern) Carlos, no snacks involved, but Rosa Parks stood up—or should I say sat down—for what was right. Her courage helped start the Montgomery Bus Boycott, a key moment in the Civil Rights Movement.

Jack:

(Squinting) Wait, so she didn't get up because she was tired?

Ms. Simmons:

(Patiently) She was tired of unfair laws, Jack. Imagine being told you couldn't sit wherever you wanted just because of the color of your skin. How would you feel?

Jack:

(Frowning) That's not fair at all.

Narrator:

The students nod in agreement, imagining how Rosa Parks must have felt.

Ms. Simmons:

Now, let us talk about Maya Angelou. (Holds up a pretend book) She wrote a book about her life called *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. What might a singing bird suggest about hope and freedom?

Sophie:

(Quietly) Maybe... it's about finding hope even when life is hard?

Ms. Simmons:

(Encouraging) Exactly, Sophie! Maya Angelou wrote about her life, her struggles, and her triumphs. She inspired millions with her words.

Carlos:

(Snapping fingers) I could write a poem too! Roses are red, violets are blue, history is cool, and snacks are too!

Ava:

(Giggling) Carlos, you're hopeless.

Ms. Simmons:

(Laughing) Keep practicing, Carlos. You might just be the next poet we study! Now, let's talk about someone else—someone who made a big impact in science and agriculture. Who's heard of George Washington Carver?

Jack:

(Shrugging) Wasn't he the peanut butter guy?

Ms. Simmons:

(Laughing) Sort of! George Washington Carver didn't invent peanut butter, but he found over 300 uses for peanuts. He also created products from sweet potatoes, pecans, and soybeans. And he didn't stop there—he taught farmers better ways to grow crops so they could take care of their soil.

Ava:

(Wide-eyed) Whoa, so he was like a scientist and a teacher?

Ms. Simmons:

Exactly, Ava. He believed in helping others, especially poor farmers, to make their lives better. He used his knowledge to make a difference.

Carlos:

(Musing) Hmm... so if I figure out 300 ways to use chocolate, can I be famous too?

Ms. Simmons:

(Playfully) Maybe, Carlos. But remember, it's not just about what you discover—it's about how you use it to help others.

Jack:

(Thoughtfully) George Washington Carver sounds like a really kind guy. Did he ever get rich?

Ms. Simmons:

(Smiling) No, Jack. He cared more about helping people than making money. He once said, "It is not the style of clothes one wears... but it is simply service that measures success."

Sophie:

(Quietly) I like that. Helping others is more important than being rich.

Narrator:

The students smile, thinking about how they can help others too.

Ms. Simmons:

And now... (dramatic pause) snack time!

Narrator:

The students cheer as Ms. Simmons pulls out a tray of cookies, ending the lesson with laughter and full bellies.

Name: _____

Date: _____

What did Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, and George Washington Carver teach us about courage, hope, and service?

Why is it important to celebrate Black History Month?

How can we practice inclusion and fairness in our everyday lives?

Ms. Simmons



Jack



Ava



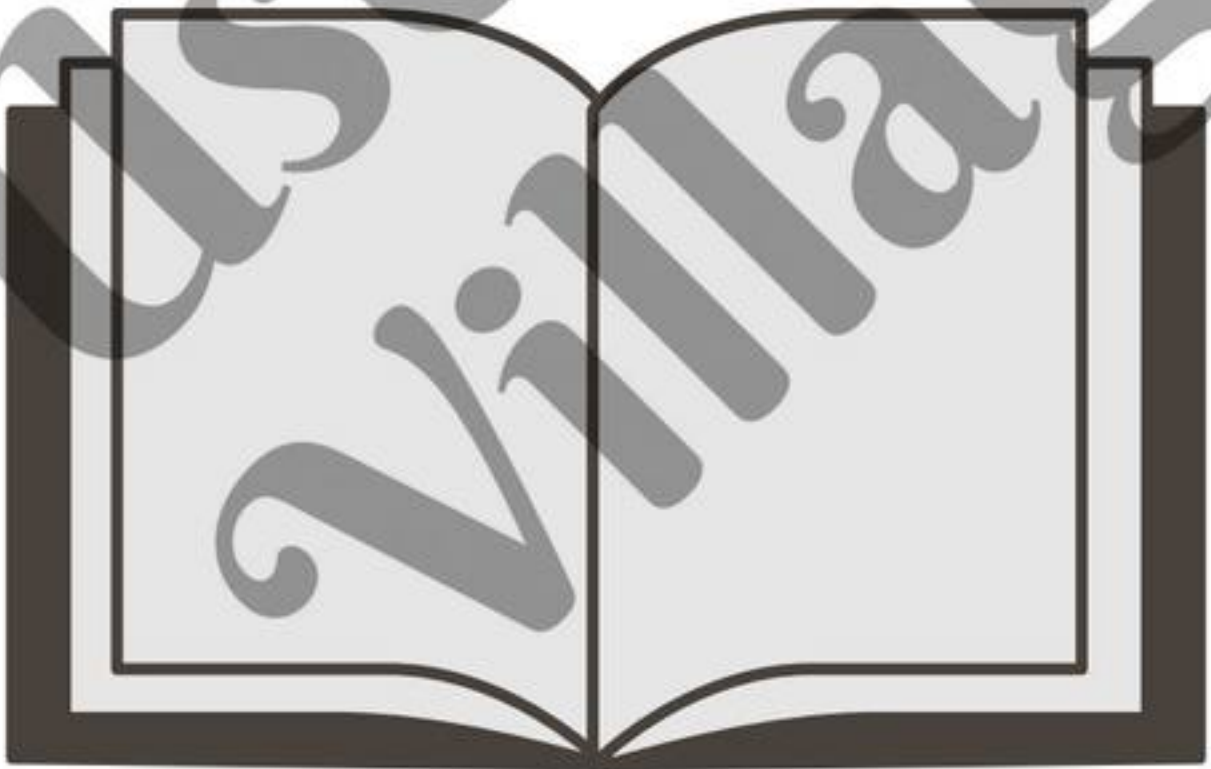
Carlos



Sophie



Narrator



Teacher Suggestions:

Assigning Roles: Consider your students' reading levels and confidence when assigning roles. Encourage students to practice their parts at home or during independent reading time.

Practicing Fluency: Have students practice their parts multiple times to build fluency and expression.

Props & Costumes: Use the optional props list to create simple, engaging props.

Character Labels: Students can also use the provided character names to either cut out to hang around their neck to help identify characters to the audience or alternatively draw and illustrate what they imagine their character to look like.

Performance: Arrange a space in the classroom where students can perform. Invite other students to watch the final performance to boost students' confidence and make it more special.

Reader Response Questions: Use the provided questions to facilitate a post-performance discussion. This will help assess comprehension and encourage students to think critically about the play.

Extension Activities:

- **Creative Writing:** Write a poem inspired by Maya Angelou.
-
- **Science Fun:** Research some of George Washington Carver's peanut or sweet potato inventions. Create your own "invention" using an everyday item.
-
- **Role-Play:** Act out a scene where you stand up for something you believe in, like Rosa Parks.

WRITE



LIKE MAYA ANGELOU

RESIST



LIKE ROSA PARKS

ORATE



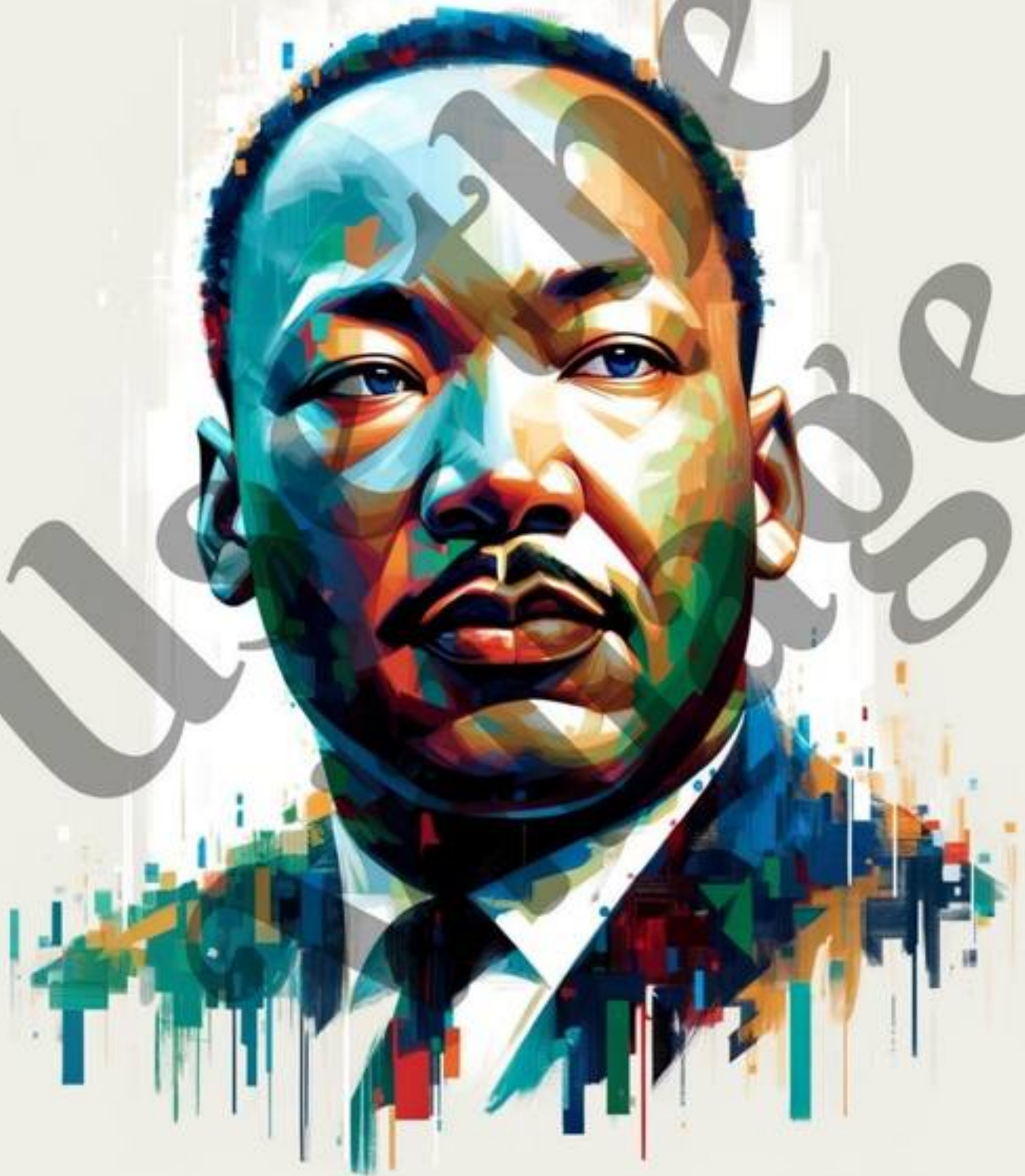
LIKE FREDERICK DOUGLASS

ENLIGHTEN



LIKE W.E.B. DU BOIS

DREAM



LIKE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

LEAD



LIKE SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

LIBERATE



LIKE HARRIET TUBMAN

INNOVATE



LIKE GEORGE WASHINGTON
CARVER

EDUCATE



LIKE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

SPEAK



LIKE SOJOURNER TRUTH

HEAL



LIKE CHARLES DREW

PERFORM



LIKE MARIAN ANDERSON

EXPRESS



LIKE JAMES BALDWIN

CALCULATE



LIKE KATHERINE JOHNSON

NARRATE



LIKE ZORA NEALE HURSTON

ILLUMINATE



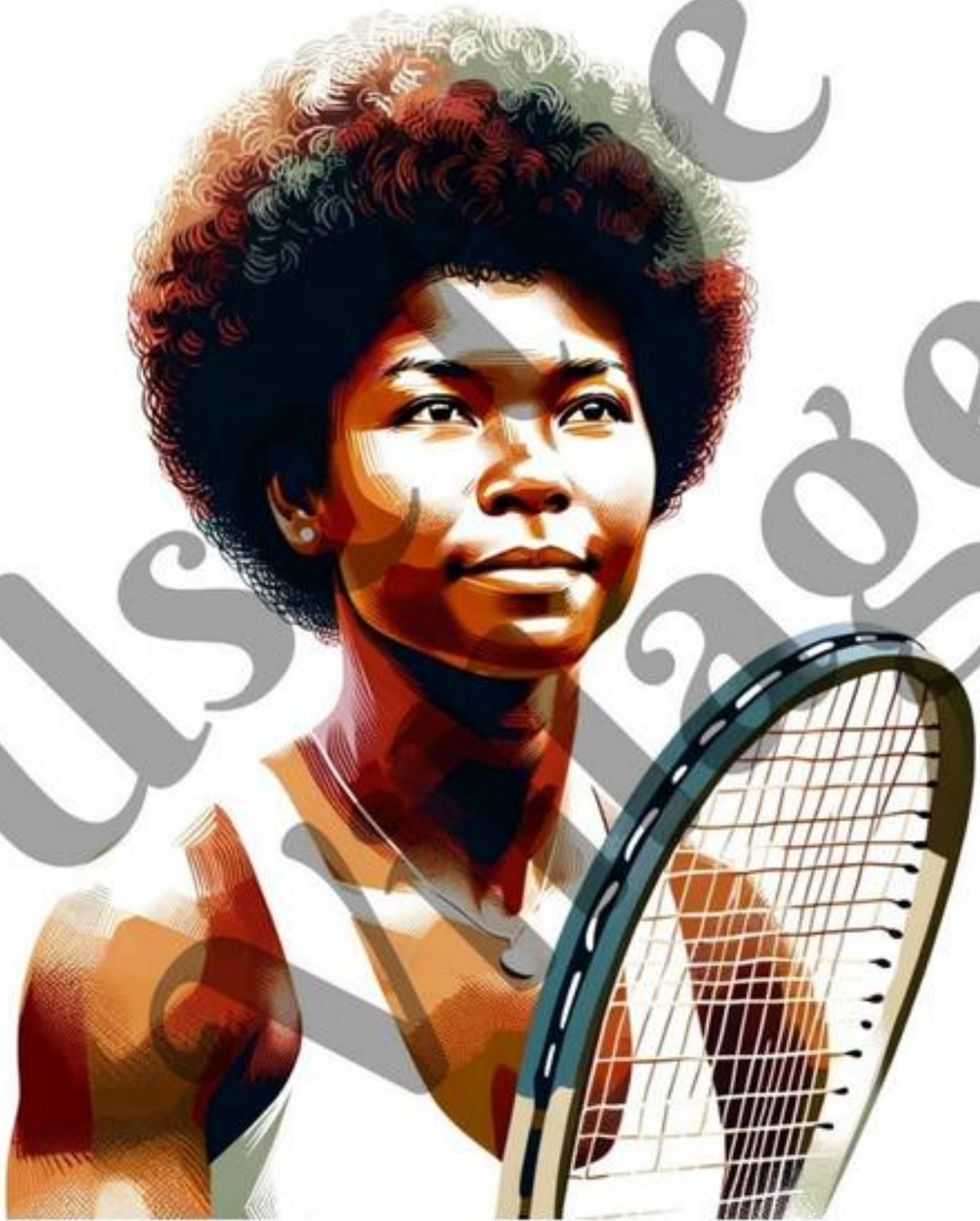
LIKE RALPH ELLISON

SOAR



LIKE BESSIE COLEMAN

CONQUER



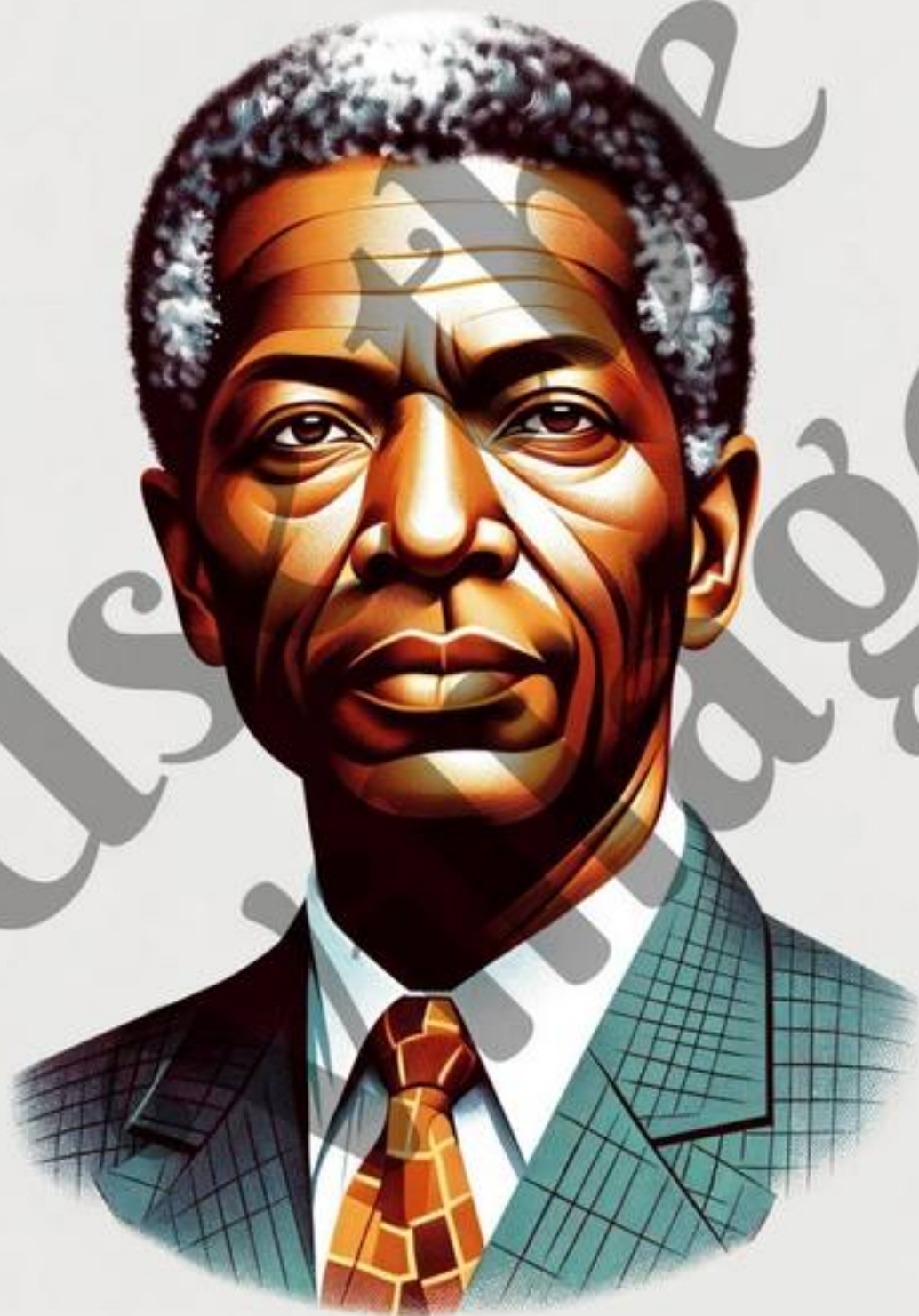
LIKE ALTHEA GIBSON

ORGANIZE



LIKE BAYARD RUSTIN

MOBILIZE



LIKE A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

ACHIEVE



LIKE MADAM C.J. WALKER



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Use the
Village



ROSA PARKS

Use the
Villages



GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Use the
Villages



MAYA ANGELOU

Use the
Villages



HARRIET TUBMAN

Use the
Villages



W.E.B. DU BOIS

Use the
Villages



BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

Use the
Village



SOJOURNER TRUTH

Use the
Villages



CHARLES DREW

Use the
Villages



KATHERINE JOHNSON

Use the
Village

Martin Luther King Jr.

He gave the famous "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963.

He helped lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott to fight against unfair bus rules.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his work in civil rights.

He believed in nonviolent protests to make the world a better place.

His birthday is January 15. The U.S. holiday honoring him is the third Monday in January.

He was arrested nearly 30 times for protesting against unfair laws and fighting for civil rights.

Rosa Parks

She refused to give up her seat to a white man on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955.	Her brave action helped start the Montgomery Bus Boycott.	She was known as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement."
She worked at the NAACP as a secretary before her famous bus protest.	She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996.	She wrote a book about her life called Rosa Parks: My Story.

George Washington Carver

He was a scientist who found over 300 uses for peanuts.

He also invented new ways to use sweet potatoes and pecans.

He was born into slavery but became a famous teacher and inventor.

He shared many discoveries freely, but he did receive patents, including one for a peanut-based cosmetic.

He taught at Tuskegee Institute for over 40 years.

He taught farmers how crop rotation could help keep their soil healthy.

Maya Angelou

She was a famous poet, writer, and speaker.	She wrote a book about her childhood called <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i>.	She was the first Black woman to write and present a poem at a U.S. presidential inauguration.
She acted in plays and was also a singer and dancer.	She won over 50 honorary degrees for her work.	When she was only 16, she was the first Black female streetcar conductor in San Francisco.

Harriet Tubman

She was called the "Moses of her people" because she led many enslaved people to freedom.	She was a conductor on the Underground Railroad, a secret network that helped enslaved people escape.	She made 13 trips back to the South to rescue people.
During the Civil War, she worked as a spy and a nurse for the Union Army.	She helped women fight for the right to vote.	In 2023, the U.S. Navy announced that a new ship would be named in her honor.

W. E. B. Du Bois

He was the first Black person to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University.	He helped start the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).	He believed education was the key to equality for Black Americans.
He wrote a famous book called The Souls of Black Folk.	He lived to be 95 years old.	He moved to Ghana, Africa, in his later years.

Booker T. Washington

He was born into slavery but later became a famous teacher.	He founded Tuskegee Institute, a school for Black students in Alabama.	He wrote a book about his life called Up From Slavery.
He believed in working hard and learning skills to improve lives.	In 1901, President Theodore Roosevelt invited him to dinner at the White House.	He gave a famous speech called the Atlanta Compromise.

Sojourner Truth

She was born as Isabella Baumfree but changed her name.	She escaped slavery and became a famous speaker and activist.	She gave a famous speech called "Ain't I a Woman?" about women's rights.
She helped recruit Black soldiers for the Union Army during the Civil War.	She worked to help freed slaves find jobs and homes.	In 1828, she won a court case that helped bring her son Peter home from slavery.

Charles Drew

He improved ways to process and store blood plasma, helping save many lives.

He helped start the first blood banks.

His research made blood transfusions safer.

He was a doctor and a scientist.

He was the first Black person to earn a Doctor of Medical Science degree from Columbia University.

He taught many future Black doctors and helped train surgeons.

Katherine Johnson

She was a mathematician who helped NASA send astronauts into space.	She helped calculate the flight path for Apollo 11, the first moon landing.	She was one of the first Black women to work at NASA.
Her story was told in the movie Hidden Figures.	She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.	She loved math as a child and started college when she was just 15 years old.

Name: _____ Date: _____



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WORD SEARCH



Find the words below in the word search.

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

MARTIN
RIGHTS
DREAM
PROTEST

PEACE
SPEECH
JUSTICE
FREEDOM

EQUALITY
CORETTA
HOPE
CHANGE

Name: _____ Date: _____



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WORD SEARCH



Find the words below in the word search.

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

MARTIN
RIGHTS
DREAM
PROTEST

PEACE
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JUSTICE
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EQUALITY
CORETTA
HOPE
CHANGE

Name: _____

Date: _____

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Read the passage about Frederick Douglass and answer the questions.



Frederick Douglass was born around 1818 and grew up in Maryland. As a young boy, he was an enslaved person, which means he wasn't free and had to work very hard without any choice. But Frederick was very smart and learned to read and write secretly, which was a brave thing to do because slaves were not allowed to learn these things.

When he grew up, Frederick escaped to a place where he could be free. He then worked very hard to help other slaves become free too.

He wrote books, gave speeches, and even advised President Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, on how to help slaves gain their freedom. This was a very important job!

Frederick Douglass is remembered for his bravery and for fighting for freedom and fairness for all people, no matter what color their skin is.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 What was life like for Frederick Douglass when he was a child?

2 What did Frederick Douglass do to help slaves become free?

3 Why is Frederick Douglass an important person in history?

Name: _____

Date: _____

HARRIET TUBMAN

Read the passage about Harriet Tubman and answer the questions.



Harriet Tubman was born around 1820 in Maryland, where she lived as an enslaved person. This meant she wasn't free and had to work very hard even when she was just a little girl. But Harriet was brave and smart. When she grew up, she escaped to a place where she could be free. This was very risky, but Harriet was determined to be free.

After she escaped, Harriet didn't just enjoy her freedom; she wanted to help others. She became a leader in something called the Underground Railroad, which wasn't a real train but a secret path to help slaves escape to safe places.

Harriet was very careful and clever, leading many slaves to freedom at night. She used signals and songs to keep them safe and never let anyone get caught.

During the Civil War, Harriet worked as a nurse and a spy, helping the army that was fighting to end slavery. She was the first woman to lead a mission in this war, freeing more than 700 slaves in one raid.

After the war, Harriet Tubman kept helping people. She worked to give women and African Americans the right to vote and spoke to many people about why this was important. She is remembered as a hero for her bravery, kindness, and fought for freedom and equality.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 What was Harriet Tubman's life like when she was a child?

2 What was the Underground Railroad, and what did Harriet do to help?

3 Why do we remember Harriet Tubman as a hero?

Name: _____

Date: _____

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Read the passage about George Washington Carver and answer the questions.



George Washington Carver was a famous African American scientist and teacher. He was born around 1864 in Missouri. As a child, George had a difficult life because he was born into slavery. However, he had a strong desire to learn, especially about plants and nature.

When he grew up, George became the first African American to enroll at Iowa State University. He studied agriculture there, which is the science of farming. George became a brilliant scientist and a professor. He taught his students about soil conservation and crop rotation, which are ways to keep the soil healthy for farming.

George is most famous for his work with peanuts. He discovered over 300 uses for peanuts, including cooking oil, soap, and ink. He also found ways to use other crops like sweet potatoes and soybeans. This helped many farmers in the South, who were struggling with poor soil.

George Washington Carver cared a lot about helping others. He used his knowledge to improve the lives of many farmers. He believed in hard work, education, and kindness. He passed away in 1943, but his legacy continues to inspire people today.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 What was George Washington Carver famous for?

2 What are some uses George Washington Carver found for peanuts?

3 How did George help the farmers in the South?

Name: _____

Date: _____

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Read the passage about Martin Luther King Jr. and answer the questions.



Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. He grew up in a time when not everyone was treated equally, especially African Americans. Martin was a very smart student and a great speaker. He believed that everyone should be treated fairly, no matter their skin color, and he worked hard to make this happen.

Martin became a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, which was a big effort to get equal rights for African Americans. He gave many speeches and led peaceful marches, asking for fairness and equality. His most famous speech was called "I Have a Dream," where he talked about his hope for a world where everyone is treated the same.

Martin Luther King Jr. helped to change the laws so that African Americans had the same rights as everyone else. He taught people to fight for what is right in a peaceful way. We remember Martin Luther King Jr. as a hero who worked hard for peace and equality.

Name: _____

Date: _____

- 1 When and where was Martin Luther King Jr. born, and what kind of student was he?

- 2 What was the Civil Rights Movement, and what role did Martin play in it?

- 3 What was Martin Luther King Jr.'s most famous speech, and what was its message?

Name: _____

Date: _____

MAYA ANGELOU

Read the biographical passage about Maya Angelou and answer the questions.



Maya Angelou (1928 – 2014) was an American writer, poet, and speaker. She was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and given the name Marguerite Johnson. Growing up, Maya faced many challenges. She lived in a time when people were treated unfairly because of their skin color, and she had to learn to stand strong against these unfair rules.

When Maya was eight years old, she went through something very scary and sad that made her stop talking. But Maya found comfort and joy in reading books and discovering the power of words. She read all kinds of books, from fairy tales to poetry, and she started to write her own stories and poems.

As she got older, Maya's voice became louder and clearer. She shared her stories with the world in her book "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." This book talks about her childhood and how she overcame her fears to speak out for what is right. Maya's words were like a song that could make people feel hope and courage.

Maya Angelou didn't just write books. She also gave speeches, taught at universities, and even helped leaders who wanted to make America a fairer place for everyone. She was like a teacher to the whole country, teaching about love, kindness, and the importance of treating all people with respect. Maya Angelou's life was a bright light that continues to shine. She taught us that no matter what we go through, our voices can be powerful tools for change.

Name: _____

Date: _____

- 1 What did Maya do when she stopped speaking, and how did it help her?

- 2 What is the title of Maya Angelou's famous book, and what story does it tell?

- 3 Besides writing, what other ways did Maya Angelou help teach and inspire people?

Name: _____

Date: _____

W.E.B. DU BOIS

Read the biography of W.E.B. Du Bois and answer the comprehension questions using the passage for reference.



W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) was a famous African American writer, teacher, and activist who worked tirelessly for equal rights. He was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, to a family that believed strongly in the power of education. As a young boy, W.E.B. loved reading and learning, and his teachers encouraged him to set big goals. His dedication to school helped him grow into a brilliant thinker who wanted to make the world a better place.

When W.E.B. grew up, he made history as the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1895. He studied history and wrote about the ways racism harmed people and kept them from achieving their dreams. W.E.B. believed that education was the key to fighting injustice, and he spent his life working to help others understand why equality was so important.

W.E.B. Du Bois helped start an important group called the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in 1909. This organization worked to protect the rights of African Americans and fight against unfair laws and segregation. Before that, he co-founded the Niagara Movement in 1905, which encouraged people to demand justice and fairness. W.E.B. wrote many books and gave powerful speeches to inspire people to stand up for what was right.

Later in life, W.E.B. moved to Ghana, a country in Africa, where he continued his work to bring people together and support freedom for all. Even in his final years, W.E.B. was committed to justice. He passed away in 1963, but his life and work left a lasting impact.

W.E.B. Du Bois's story teaches us the importance of learning, determination, and standing up for what is right. He is remembered as a leader who fought for justice and inspired people around the world to dream of a better future.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 Where was W.E.B. Du Bois born, and what did his family believe in?

2 What organization did W.E.B. Du Bois help create in 1909, and what was its purpose?

3 Where did W.E.B. Du Bois move later in life, and what work did he continue there?

Name: _____

Date: _____

ROSA PARKS

Read the passage about Rosa Parks and answer the questions.



Rosa Parks was born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama. She grew up at a time when the laws were not fair to African Americans. Rosa was a quiet, respectful woman, but she was also very brave. She worked as a seamstress, sewing clothes, but she also was involved in fighting for equal rights for African Americans.

One famous day, on December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa did something very brave. She refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white person, as the unfair laws required. Rosa was arrested for this, but her brave action started a big change.

It led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, where African Americans refused to ride the buses until they were treated fairly. This was a big step in the Civil Rights Movement, which worked to make sure everyone, no matter their skin color, was treated equally.

Rosa Parks is known as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" because of her brave stand that day. She showed that one person's actions could help change the world for the better. She continued to fight for equal rights for all people for the rest of her life.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 Where and when was Rosa Parks born, and what was her job?

2 What brave thing did Rosa Parks do on a bus in 1955?

3 Why is Rosa Parks called the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement"?
