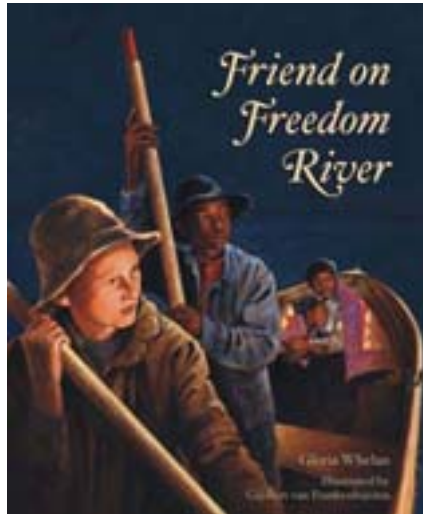


# Teacher's Guide



## Friend on Freedom River

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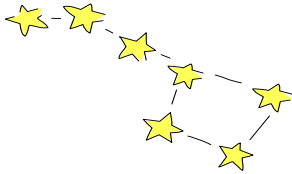
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# *Friend on Freedom River*

by  
Gloria Whelan



## Pre-reading and Background Building Activities

### ANTICIPATION QUESTIONS

Ask the following questions and discuss responses before reading *Friend on Freedom River*.

1. Do you feel that everyone deserves the freedom to choose their job/career? Does everyone deserve the freedom to decide where and when they want to travel? Does everyone deserve the freedom to learn to read and write? Does everyone deserve the freedom to be part of a family?  
*(After students have shared their answers, discuss with students that slavery deprived people of these basic freedoms. Slaves were considered to be property and had no rights. Slaves were often sold and separated from their families, deprived of learning how to read and write, forced to work long, hard hours, and not allowed to make choices in their lives. Some slave owners took good care of their slaves; however, other slave owners often beat or whipped their slaves.)*
2. Is it always easy to stand up for what you believe in? Is it always easy to do what is right?
3. What is the golden rule? (*Do unto others, as you want them to do unto you.*) Do you think this is a good rule?
4. Explain this expression: Freedom isn't free.
5. Is it dangerous to be outside in very cold weather for a long time?
6. What is a code or password? Why or when would you use a code word?
7. How are songs like messages?
8. Explain this expression: Darkness is just daylight turned inside out.

**TRAVEL BACK IN TIME**

Provide the students with a copy of the following cards and direct students to sort the cards into three piles. The first pile is to contain the cards that relate to or describe people and items from the 1800s; the second pile is to contain the cards that relate to or describe people and items from today; the third pile is to contain the cards that can relate to or describe both time periods.

Newspapers

Slavery

Quilts

Cell phones

Railroads

Microwaves

Civil War

President  
Abraham  
Lincoln

**Pre-reading and Background Building**

Television

President  
George Bush

Books

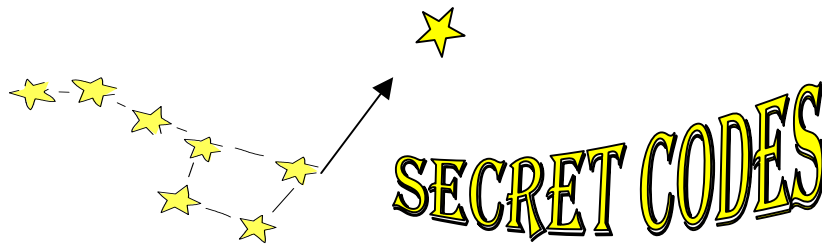
Computers

Slave auctions

Harriet  
Tubman

Airplanes

Cameras



## THE NORTH STAR

Guided by the North Star, in the darkness of night, many slaves risked their lives for freedom. The North Star is located by using the two stars at the front of the Big Dipper. By drawing an imaginary line through these two stars, the side of the Big Dipper's bowl points to the North Star.

- Create your own signpost in the sky by using glow-in-the-dark plastic stars to form the Big Dipper and North Star on your classroom ceiling.
- Create North Star bookmarkers by provide each student with eight star stickers to form the Big Dipper and North Star design on a 3" by 5" piece of black paper. (This design can also be seen on Alaska's state flag.)

## “FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD”

Music not only provided hope for those trapped in the world of slavery, but also provided a means of communication to those seeking freedom. “Follow the Drinking Gourd” is one of the coded songs used by slaves to learn about escape routes. Share the following verses and translation with your students to demonstrate how hidden messages were secretly spread from one plantation to the next.

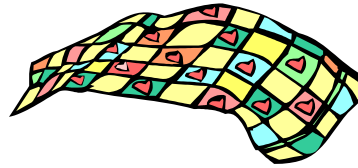
*When the sun comes back and the first quail calls  
Follow the drinking gourd  
For the old man is waiting to carry you to freedom  
If you follow the drinking gourd*

*The riverbank makes a very good road  
The dead trees show you the way  
Left foot, peg foot, traveling on  
Following the drinking gourd*

Peg Leg Joe, a carpenter who spent winters in the South, moved from plantation to plantation giving escape route instructions to slaves. The verses instructed slaves to begin their escape when the quails migrated to the South for winter because the frozen Ohio River would be easier to cross at that time. The drinking gourd was the Big Dipper, guiding slaves to travel the escape route north on the bank of the Tombigbee river, and staying on course by looking for dead trees that were marked with drawings of a left foot and a peg foot.



# QUILTS



Various symbols sewn on quilts may have been another method of secret code communication used by the Underground Railroad. Due to the secretive and guarded nature of the Underground Railroad, the quilt codes have never been textually documented, but according to oral tradition, symbols on quilts provided vital information. It is believed that the symbols on the quilts could have also been found displayed on the outside of safe houses. It could have been a way to communicate escape routes as well. The North Star was a popular symbol to place on quilts.

Create a class quilt hallway display. Provide each student with the quilt block pattern. Instruct students to draw an escape route in their design or a symbol to mark their house as a safe house. Arrange individual quilt blocks on a large piece of paper, fabric, or felt.

A large empty rectangular area with a dashed border, intended for a class quilt hallway display.



## SECRET CODES

The success of the Underground Railroad depended on people being extremely careful and secretive. The safety of the escaping slaves often meant being able to hide the slaves while on the move. Conductors often concealed escaping slaves by hiding them in wagons or boats with deep beds. Discover another method used by conductors to conceal slaves by solving the following code.

## Crack the Code

Solve the math problems and use the code to solve the missing word.

Runaway slaves traveling with conductors on the Underground Railroad often wore (\_\_\_\_\_).

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  | H  | I  | J  | K  | L  | M  |
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| N  | O  | P  | Q  | R  | S  | T  | U  | V  | W  | X  | Y  | Z  |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |

- |                    | Answer | Letter |
|--------------------|--------|--------|
| 1. $12 \div 3 =$   | ___    | ___    |
| 2. $3 \times 3 =$  | ___    | ___    |
| 3. $39 - 20 =$     | ___    | ___    |
| 4. $13 - 6 =$      | ___    | ___    |
| 5. $3 \times 7 =$  | ___    | ___    |
| 6. $45 \div 5 =$   | ___    | ___    |
| 7. $12 + 7 =$      | ___    | ___    |
| 8. $35 \div 7 =$   | ___    | ___    |
| 9. $1 \times 19 =$ | ___    | ___    |

# Friend on Freedom River



|          |          |
|----------|----------|
| fugitive | schooner |
| shoals   | current  |
| skiff    | sturgeon |

Directions

Choose a word from the box that best completes each sentence.

1. Louis watched the \_\_\_\_\_ sail off into the sunset.
2. Louis and Tyler rowed the \_\_\_\_\_ across the Detroit River.
3. The bloodhounds lost the scent of the \_\_\_\_\_ near the river.
4. You have to be strong to catch a \_\_\_\_\_ that weighs 80 pounds.
5. The swift \_\_\_\_\_ made it difficult to row the boat in the right direction.
6. Louis didn't want to bottom out the boat, so he carefully avoided the \_\_\_\_\_.

Directions

Choose two words from the word box and write your own sentences.

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## Friend on Freedom River

Directions: Number the events from the story in the correct sequence.


- \_\_\_\_\_ Louis opened his window and threw out a quilt, a sweater, and a jacket.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Louis's father left to work in the logging camps.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Louis and Tyler talked about fishing as they rowed the skiff across the Detroit River.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Louis sang and danced with his mother around the table.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A voice whispered to Louis, "Are you a friend?"
  - \_\_\_\_\_ The patrol boat swept by Louis and the runaway slaves.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Louis's mother hugged him on the shore. "When Papa comes back," Louis said, "I'll tell him, Papa, I did what I thought you would do."
  - \_\_\_\_\_ A couple in a farmhouse welcomed Louis, Tyler, Sarah, and Lucy into their warm house.
- 



# Friend on Freedom River

**Directions:**

Choose the best answer to each item. Mark the letter for the answer you have chosen.

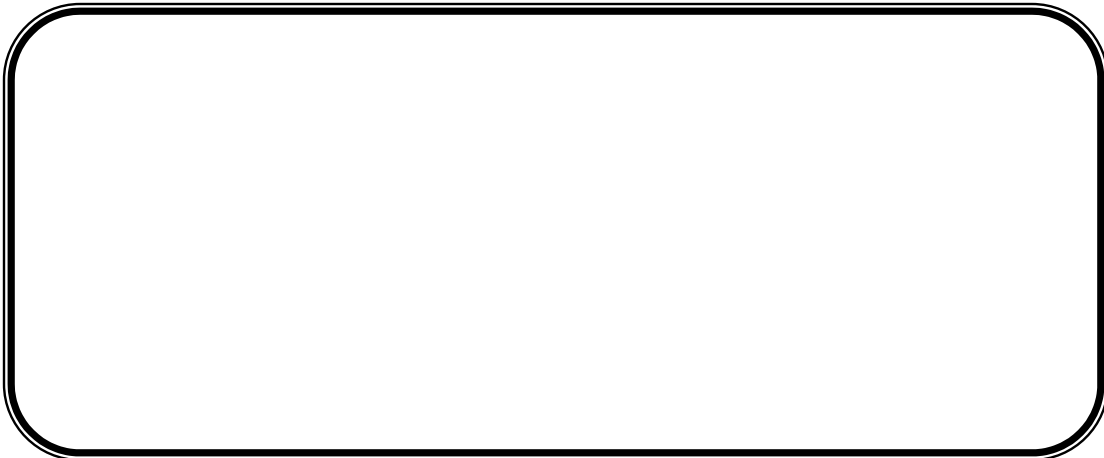
1. Where was Louis's father?
    - A. He was sailing a schooner in the Detroit River.
    - B. He was in jail for helping slaves escape.
    - C. He was working at a logging camp.
    - D. He was in France with Louis's grandparents.
  
  2. What items did Louis give to Sarah and her children?
    - A. Whitefish stew and chocolate bread
    - B. Sweater, jacket, quilt, and chocolate bread
    - C. Quilt, lantern, jacket, and chocolate bread
    - D. Fishing gear, warm clothes, and a quilt
  
  3. Why was it important for Sarah and her children to cross the river that night?
    - A. The couple living in the farmhouse in Canada was expecting them before dark.
    - B. If they waited any longer, the river would have become more dangerous.
    - C. They had to cross the river before the men in the patrol boat found them.
    - D. Slave catchers were following them; they couldn't wait and take the chance of being captured.
  
  4. Why couldn't Tyler row the boat across the river without Louis?
    - A. He wasn't strong enough to row the boat by himself.
    - B. He didn't know the currents and the shoals.
    - C. The boat had been put away for the winter.
    - D. The wind was too strong and the river was beginning to ice over.
  
  5. How do you think Louis's father will feel when he returns and hears about this event?
    - A. He will be angry that Louis risked his life.
    - B. Louis will be punished for acting foolish.
    - C. He will praise Louis for being brave.
    - D. Louis will not be trusted the next time he leaves.
- 



# Friend on Freedom River

**Directions:**

Explain how Louis felt at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story. Draw a picture that relates to your explanation of his feelings.





# Friend on Freedom River

**Directions:**

Match the quotes with the character. Read the following quotes and write the correct character name underneath each quote.

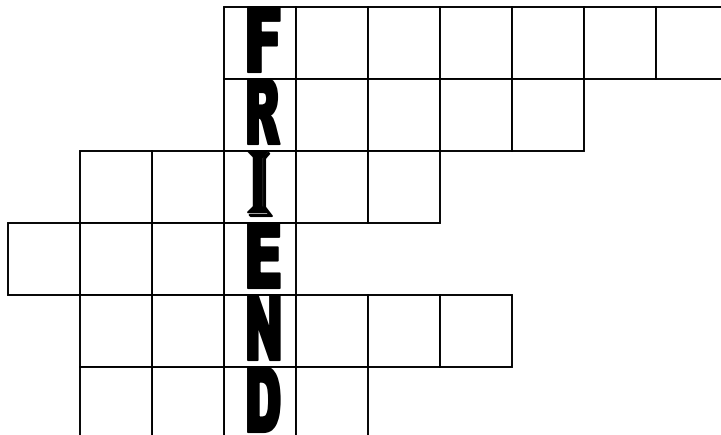
| CHARACTERS |                |                |
|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Louis      | Louis's Father | Louis's Mother |
| Sarah      | Tyler          | Lucy           |

1. "They were going to sell away Tyler just like he was no different from a cow or a horse."  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. "The New Fugitive Slave Law means jail for anyone helping slaves escape."  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. "We followed the North Star."  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. "To fight the current we got to paddle upstream as we paddle across."  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. "I bet I could row that boat across the river."  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. "How can I see some soul sent back to slavery?"  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Friend on Freedom River

Read *Friend on Freedom River* and answer the clues to complete the crossword.

1. "What do you seek?" \_\_\_\_\_
2. Many slaves crossed the Detroit \_\_\_\_\_ to freedom.
3. Have you got \_\_\_\_\_?
4. I have \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The country north of the United States
6. "Are you a friend?" was a \_\_\_\_\_ – an arrangement of words to keep a message short and secret.





# Friend on Freedom River

## Lights - Camera - Action

Place students with a partner or in small groups and role-play the following events from *Friend on Freedom River*.

Role-play Sarah and her children first approaching Louis for help.

Be persuasive, and act as if you were Sarah or Tyler convincing Louis to help them.

Pretend that you are Louis dancing and singing with your mother. Don't forget to sneak some chocolate bread before you leave!

Imagine you are in the boat with Louis, Tyler, Sarah, and Lucy. You are cold, worried, and frightened. The light from the patrol boat is coming closer and closer.

Close your eyes and picture yourself pounding on the door of the farmhouse of the couple in Canada. Role-play the couple inviting you in and urging you to stay the night.

Act as if you were Louis's mother calling your name across the water and waiting with worry by the shore for your return.

Pretend that Louis's father has returned from working in the logging camp. What do you think his father would do and say after Louis tells him about Sarah, Tyler, and Lucy.

Once again, you find yourself in the boat with Tyler. This time, however, you are enjoying yourselves and catching an 80 lb. sturgeon!



# Friend on Freedom River

## Louis and Tyler

**Directions:**

Compare and contrast Louis and Tyler by answering the questions.

1. In what ways are Louis and Tyler alike?

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2. In what ways are Louis and Tyler different?

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---

---

3. Do you think Louis and Tyler are more alike or more different? Why?

---

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---

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4. Circle the words that describe both Louis and Tyler.

|             |         |             |             |
|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| hardworking | lazy    | cowardly    | courageous  |
| honest      | foolish | responsible | trustworthy |



# Friend on Freedom River

**Directions:**

If you were able to visit with Louis, Tyler, and Lucy, what questions would you ask them?

Write two questions for each person in the boxes below.

Questions for Louis

Questions for Tyler

Questions for Lucy

Find a partner and have your partner read to you their questions. Pretend to be each character and give the answer you think each character would say. Now it's your turn. Read your questions to your partner and let your partner answer your questions for each character.



# Friend on Freedom River

**Directions:**

Discuss with students how monuments honor the memory of an important event or person. Share pictures of the “Gateway to Freedom” monument in Detroit’s Hart Plaza Riverfront Promenade, the “Tower of Freedom” monument in Canada, and of other monuments that commemorate our nation’s history.

Instruct students to create their own monument using clay or playdough to memorialize the Underground Railroad. Encourage students to write a brief description and title their monument.

**MICROWAVE PLAYDOUGH**Ingredients

1 cup flour  
1/2 cup salt  
1 tsp. cream of tartar  
1 cup water  
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil  
Food coloring, any color (optional)

Mix flour, salt, and cream of tartar. Stir in water and vegetable oil. Cook on high for 1 minute. Stir well. Continue to cook for 30-second time periods until playdough clings to the spoon and is no longer sticky. It should be pliable and soft and have the consistency of mashed potatoes. Allow to cool for a few minutes, and then knead until playdough is smooth. Store playdough in an airtight container.

# Friend on Freedom River

## *"Are You a Friend?"*

**Directions:**

Discuss with students the qualities, values, and attitudes necessary for building and maintaining friendships. Copy the following chart on poster board and brainstorm with your students specific statements regarding friendships. Try to fill each square using as many words as possible that begin with the letters in the word "friend."

Example: A friend is . . . (F) forgiving (R) responsible (I) interested in us (E) encouraging (N) nice (D) dedicated

|                 | <b>F</b> | <b>R</b> | <b>I</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>D</b> |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| A friend is ... |          |          |          |          |          |          |

## *Top Ten Ways to Be a Friend*

**Directions:**

Work on cooperative learning skills while teaching your students the qualities of a good friendship. Divide students into learning groups and instruct them to brainstorm ways to be a good friend.

Call all groups back to a whole group session and record the responses of each group. Instruct students to return to their small learning groups and create a top-ten list, with number one being the number one way of being a good friend.

After each group has determined their top-ten ranking, have each group share their list with the class. Compare what qualities each group ranked near the top of their lists.



# Friend on Freedom River

## CHOCOLATE BREAD

### Ingredients

4 cups flour  
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 package active dry yeast  
1 1/4 cup warm water (105 – 110 °)  
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil

Combine the flour and unsweetened cocoa in a bowl and blend together. Add the sugar and dry yeast, mix well. Add the oil and water and stir until you have a soft dough. Place the bread dough on a lightly floured surface and knead the dough until smooth and no longer sticky. Add more flour if necessary.

Spray the inside of the bowl with cooking oil and return the dough to the bowl, then cover it with a towel. Allow the dough to rise until it has doubled in bulk.

Punch the dough down and place it a lightly oiled bread pan. Spread the dough evenly in the pan and cover the pan with a towel. Allow the dough to rise again.

Preheat the oven to 350° and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the bread from the pan and allow the bread to cool before slicing.

# Friend on Freedom River

FREEDOM  
SLAVES  
HOPE  
COURAGE  
LAW

FRIEND  
SKIFF  
CANADA  
BRAVERY  
SECRET CODE

DETROIT RIVER  
FAITH  
FUGITIVE  
NORTH STAR

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

## **ANSWER KEY**

### **Secret Codes**

- 1.) 4, D
- 2.) 9, I
- 3.) 19, S
- 4.) 7, G
- 5.) 21, U
- 6.) 9, I
- 7.) 19, S
- 8.) 5, E
- 9.) 19, S

Runaway slaves traveling with conductors on the Underground Railroad often wore disguises.

### **Vocabulary**

- 1.) schooner
- 2.) skiff
- 3.) fugitive
- 4.) sturgeon
- 5.) current
- 6.) shoals

### **Sequence**

- 1.) Louis's father left to work in the logging camps.
- 2.) A voice whispered to Louis, "Are you a friend?"
- 3.) Louis opened his window and threw out a quilt, a sweater, and a jacket.
- 4.) Louis sang and danced with his mother around the table.
- 5.) The patrol boat swept by Louis and the runaway slaves.
- 6.) Louis and Tyler talked about fishing as they rowed the skiff across the Detroit River.
- 7.) A couple in a farmhouse welcomed Louis, Tyler, Sarah, and Lucy into their warm house.
- 8.) Louis's mother hugged him on the shore. "When Papa comes back," Louis said, "I'll tell him, Papa, I did what I thought you would do."

### **Comprehension**

- 1.) C
- 2.) B
- 3.) D
- 4.) B
- 5.) C

### **Comprehension – Match the Quotes**

- 1.) Sarah
- 2.) Louis's Mother
- 3.) Lucy
- 4.) Louis
- 5.) Tyler
- 6.) Louis's Father

### **Crossword**

- 1.) Freedom
- 2.) River
- 3.) Faith
- 4.) Hope
- 5.) Canada
- 6.) Code

### Identifying Characteristics

Answers will vary.

In what ways are Louis and Tyler alike? Close to the same age, both have good character, both are brave, both like to fish, family is important to them, good friends

In what ways are Louis and Tyler different? Different race, Tyler was born into slavery, Louis is an only child, and Tyler has a sister

Louis and Tyler are more alike than different.

Describing words: hardworking, courageous, honest, responsible, and trustworthy

### Word Search

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