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Student Reading 1.4: Cincinnati Then and Now

Cincinnati was not always known as Cincinnati. When it was first established, the city was actually called Losantiville. In 1790, the governor of the Northwest Territory established Hamilton County and changed the name to Cincinnati. Just a few years before this, in 1788, General Josiah Hamar established headquarters at Fort Washington in Cincinnati. From all of the money the army brought in, **merchants** quickly came into the community. When the army left Fort Washington in 1795, Cincinnati continued to grow due to its location on the Ohio River. During this time there were no roads, so rivers became they main form of travel. They were known as the great highways across America.

As a result of its location along the Ohio River, Cincinnati became known as a River City. Its access to water allowed many industries to grow and produce a variety of goods. Some of the goods produced were lumber, glass, iron casting, cloth, and meatpacking. Iron production was originally done in Northeastern Ohio, but for the early part of the 19th century, Southern Ohio became the dominate location for the industry. Cincinnati and Pittsburgh would send the iron



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up and down the Ohio River. Each city worked together to produce as much iron as possible. Meatpacking was another major industry in Cincinnati. Farmers would bring livestock to Cincinnati to be slaughtered and processed into meats to be sold at the marketplaces. However, because southern Ohio is very warm, the meat would spoil quickly, leaving the city with a horrible odor. Any meat not sold at the marketplace was dumped in the Ohio River. The people thought this would help to wash away the smell. Due to its location along the Ohio River Cincinnati became one of the most important cities in the west. It served as a large shipping port where goods were brought into the city and transported to other cities throughout the United States.

As Cincinnati continued to grow and become an important area of production and trade people began to improve the transportation systems which allowed goods to travel between cities. By 1851 three major railroads began operating in Cincinnati. They were known as: Sandusky-Mansfield-Newark, Cincinnati-Hamilton-Dayton, and Cincinnati-Cleveland. During the 1850's, railroads dominated transportation across the United States as they allowed



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people and goods to travel farther distances. This helped Cincinnati's businesses in the **production of goods**. Eventually the transportation systems and industries led to Cincinnati becoming the largest city in Ohio with 300,000 people.

During the 1900's, the United States was expanding. With the help of railroads, the meatpacking industry moved out of Cincinnati and westward into cities like Chicago. Steamboats were replaced with barges that would carry coal and other materials. Along with this, suburbs were developing around Cincinnati causing the city to expand beyond the River front area. As a result, many factory owners moved their industry several miles outside of downtown Cincinnati in order to get more space.

After World War II, Ohio went through a major shift. Jobs transitioned to transportation, public utilities, wholesale and retail trades, finance, insurance, real estate, government, and professional occupation. By 1970, jobs around Cincinnati and Ohio switched to **providing services** rather than production of goods.

