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Student Reading 2.6: Findlay Market:

The Last Standing of the Nine Public Markets

During the 18th and 19th centuries, stores as we know them today did not exist. Instead there were public markets that residents could travel to and purchase many items including **perishable foods**. **Perishable foods** are foods that can go bad quickly. Some of those items could have been eggs, milk, cheese and meats. These public markets served the needs of the city.

Cincinnati had nine public markets. Out of all of these only one remains today. Findlay Market has truly changed and grown with our city. But what happened to the other eight markets?

Over time as peoples' needs grew so did the demand for services. Not all markets could keep up with the change of the ever growing Cincinnati area. Some markets simply closed. The markets in downtown Cincinnati began to decline with construction of the five inclines that provided transportation from the crowded city to other neighborhoods further away. When people began moving away from



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the city, the need for the city markets changed. Many markets relocated further away, and people did not have to come to the city to shop, but could shop by their homes. More markets closed with the inventions of home refrigerators and automobiles. People now were able to store their own food and travel around on their own. They did not need one place to shop.

Today you will take a closer look at four of the nine public markets. At the end you should be able to make inferences to why those four markets do not exist today.

Pearl Street Market was the oldest public market in Cincinnati. It started in 1816. This market stood between Broadway and Sycamore Street in the downtown area. It had a large tower with a bell hanging from it. The market sold and provided food and items for the people in town. In 1934 it was torn down and today the Great American Ballpark sits where it once stood. The bell from Pearl Street Market's tower hangs at Findlay Market.



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Fifth Street Market was built in 1829 on land **deeded** to Cincinnati to be used only for a market. A **deed** is a legal document that shows who owns the land and/or property. After the Civil War a large political and legal battle began over the deed. Some people wanted the market torn down to build a fountain. In 1870, city council agreed and sent people to demolish the market. The market was demolished to prepare for construction of the Tyler Davidson Fountain. Today many of you have been to Fountain Square and have seen this fountain. It is considered the heart of our downtown area.

Court Street Market was built in 1864 on Court Street between Vine and Walnut to replace the Canal Street Market. This market was closed in 1912 by the City Board of Health for **unsanitary** conditions. Unsanitary means the market was dirty and full of germs. It was torn down in 1914.

Jabez Elliott Flower Market opened in 1894 in the downtown Cincinnati area. This market was very large and sold only flowers. Mary Holroyd donated



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\$10,000.00 to this market. Mary gave this gift in memory of her first husband, Jabez Elliott. In the 1950 with Cincinnati's ever growing city, the market was demolished to make room for a parking lot.

Findlay Market has thrived because it was located in a highly populated area and the residents chose to shop there. Built over 160 years ago, the market is still thriving today.

