Black History in New Jersey
Slavery in New Jersey
Historians are not sure when blacks first appeared in New Jersey.

It is believed that the Dutch were the first to bring slavery to the area.

The earliest record of slavery in New Jersey was made in 1680 in Shrewsbury, Monmouth County.
New Jersey’s first constitution, the *Concessions and Agreement* encouraged slavery.

The Concessions and Agreement offered settlers an additional sixty acres of land for every slave imported during 1664, forty-five acres for each slave imported the following year, and thirty acres for each one in 1666.
New Jersey’s slave population reached its peak of 12,422 in 1800.
Some slaves in New Jersey resisted bondage and ran away.

Financial rewards were offered for their return.
In 1804 legislation was passed to abolish slavery gradually.

Under the 1804 Act, all children born of slaves after July 4, 1804, were to be freed or manumitted after serving as apprentices to their mother’s masters.

Females would be freed after serving twenty-one years and males after serving twenty-five years.
Slave owners issued manumission certificates to free slaves.
Questions

1. Who do historians believe first brought slaves to New Jersey?

2. What was New Jersey’s first constitution called?

3. Were rewards offered for slaves trying to escape to freedom?
Underground Railroad in New Jersey
Some African Americans use the Underground Railroad to escape slavery.

In 1849 Harriet Tubman used the Underground Railroad to escape from slavery in Maryland. She came to New Jersey, and from 1849 to 1852, spent her summers working in hotels in Cape May, New Jersey to earn money to help others escape.
There were several Underground Railroad stops in New Jersey.

There were stations and conductors throughout the state.

1. The Grimes Homestead, Mountain Lakes
2. Peter Mott House, Lawnside
3. Bethel AME Church, Greenwich Township
4. Mount Zion African Methodist Church, Woolwich Township
The home of Dr. John Grimes was a station on the Underground Railroad.

Dr. Grimes was a Quaker and antislavery advocate. He was once arrested for harboring a runaway slave.
The home of Peter Mott in Lawnside, New Jersey was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Mott was a free black man and farmer. He and his wife Eliza gave refuge to runaway slaves who were making their way north through southern New Jersey.
Springtown, New Jersey, now Greenwich Township, was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

The town was established by slaves who were manumitted or had escaped from Delaware, Maryland and other southern states.

The congregation of Bethel AME Church in Springtown offered lodging to fugitive slaves.

It is said that Harriet Tubman also used the Church.
Members of the Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church provided protection, supplies and shelter for runaway slaves. Several original members of the congregation directed conductors and slaves north after taking care of their personal needs. A secret, three foot by four foot trap door in the floor of the church's vestibule provided access to a hiding place in the crawlspace under the floor.
The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 made it legal for runaway slaves to be seized and returned to the south.

New Jersey was one of the few northern states that sanctioned the act.

This meant that Underground Railroad passengers had to proceed with caution in the state.
Questions

1. How did some African Americans escape slavery?

2. Where did Harriet Tubman work to earn money?

3. Why did runaway slaves have to proceed with caution in New Jersey?
The Civil War
1861-1865
In 1863, President Lincoln Issued the Emancipation Proclamation which authorized the use of African Americans in combat.

More than 180,000 African Americans fought in the Civil War and served in the Union Army.
During the Civil War, New Jersey sympathized with the south.

The state did not organize any Black Regiments. Blacks from New Jersey had to join other state regiments.

More than 2,800 blacks from New Jersey served in black regiments during the war. Many joined the *US Colored Troops 22nd Regiment* which was organized in Pennsylvania.
Records of US Colored Troops 22\textsuperscript{nd} Regiment
CAMP "WILLIAM PENN,"
CHELTEN HILLS, PA.

This Certifies, That Arthur Bromwell
of Mercer County, State of New Jersey
was mustered into the service of the United States, a Private
in Company A, Twenty-Second Regiment U. S. Colored Troops,
on the Fifth day of December 1864,
to serve for three years or during the war.

January 19th, 1864

Albert Jance Capt.
Commanding Company.

J. R. Maddox
Commanding Regiment.
CAMP "WILLIAM PENN,"
CHELTON HILLS, PA.

This Certifies, That

Samuel
of [illegible]
County, State of [illegible]
was mustered into the service of the United States, a Volunteer
in Company 13, TWENTY-SECOND REGIMENT U. S. COLORED TROOPS,
on the [illegible] day of January 1864,
to serve for three years or during the war.

[Signature]
Commanding Company.

[Signature]
Commanding Regiment.
This Certifies, That Charles Riley
of Mercer County, State of New Jersey,
was mustered into the service of the United States, a Private
in Company E, Twenty-Second Regiment U. S. Colored Troops,
on the fifth day of January, 1864,
to serve for three years or during the war.

C. O. Bergin
Commanding Company.

Commanding Regiment.
Questions

1. What document gave African Americans the Right to fight in the Civil War?

2. Who did New Jersey sympathize with during the Civil War?

3. What regiment did most blacks from New Jersey join?
Rights for African Americans
New Jersey politics were influenced by feelings in the south.

When Abraham Lincoln ran for reelection in 1864 New Jersey did not support him.

In 1865 the state legislature, which was controlled by Democrats, refused to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery.
In 1866 Republicans gained control of the legislature.

This legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment which guaranteed the right of Citizenship to everyone born in the United States.
In 1868 Republicans lost control of the legislature. The new legislature rescinded its ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment.

In 1870 the legislature rejected the Fifteenth Amendment which extended voting rights to all races.

Both amendments were soon ratified by enough states to make them a federal law. Black males received the right to vote despite New Jersey’s views on rights for African Americans.
Thomas Mundy Peterson, from Perth Amboy, was the first African American to cast a vote under the Fifteenth Amendment.
Questions

1. Did New Jersey support Abraham Lincoln when he ran for reelection?

2. Which Amendment gave voting rights to black men?

3. Who was Thomas Mundy Peterson
Education
A school desegregation law was enacted in New Jersey in 1881 and upheld by the State Supreme Court in 1884.

The law did not stop some local school officials from having separate facilities based on race.
Many school districts in the southern part of the state practiced segregation in classrooms and teacher assignments until the 1940s.

Burlington County maintained a separate school for blacks until 1948.
New Jersey
Manual Training and Industrial School
For Colored Youth
(Bordentown School)
The Bordentown School was established in 1886 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. It was moved to Bordentown in 1896.

The school placed strong emphasis on discipline and order. Students were assigned chores that included work on the school’s farm.

Bordentown exemplified the educational philosophy of Booker T. Washington, and was known as the “Tuskegee of the North.”
Bordentown students working in apple orchard
Cooking Class for Girls

Auto Shop
The school was a site for activities such as tournaments of the American Tennis Association, the black counterpart to the United States Lawn Tennis Association.
The Bordentown Manual and Training School had a highly regarded staff yet it faced criticism from blacks who questioned the value of manual education as a solution to race problems and who opposed segregated public schools.

In 1894 Bordentown became state supported. As a state supported school it had to open its doors to all races.

The school remained open until 1955.
Discussion Question

What are some things about the Bordentown school that are different from schools today?
Notables in the History of Blacks in New Jersey
Donald M. Payne was the first African American to represent New Jersey in the United States Congress.

Payne was elected in 1988 to represent the 10th Congressional District of New Jersey and was reelected in each subsequent election. In 2010 he was elected to serve his twelfth term in the US House of Representatives.

Congressman Payne was a leading advocate for education and was instrumental in making K-12 public schools more successful and college more affordable.
Walter G. Alexander (1880-1953) was the first black man elected to the New Jersey State Legislature.

Madeline Williams (1894-1968) was the first black woman elected to the New Jersey State Legislature.
Question

Who was Donald Payne?
Discussion Question

What is important to know about the history of African Americans in New Jersey?
Answers

Slavery in New Jersey
1. Who do historians believe first brought slaves to New Jersey? **Ans.** The Dutch
2. What was New Jersey’s first constitution called? **Ans.** Concessions and Agreements
3. Were rewards offered for slaves trying to escape to freedom? **Ans.** Yes

Underground Railroad
1. How did some African Americans escape slavery? **Ans.** Underground Railroad
2. Where did Harriet Tubman work to earn money? **Ans.** In Hotels
3. Why did runaway slaves have to proceed with caution in New Jersey? **Ans.** There was a law that said they could be captured and sent back to the south.

The Civil War
1. What document gave African Americans the Right to fight in the Civil War? **Ans.** Emancipation Proclamation
2. Who did New Jersey sympathize with during the Civil War? **Ans.** The South
3. What regiment did most blacks from New Jersey join? **Ans.** 22nd Regiment US Colored Troops

Rights for African Americans
1. Did New Jersey support Abraham Lincoln when he ran for reelection? **Ans.** No
2. Which Amendment gave voting rights to black men? **Ans.** 15th
3. Who was Thomas Mundy Peterson? **Ans.** First black man to vote under the 15th Amendment

Notables in New Jersey
Who was Donald Payne? **Ans.** The first African American to represent New Jersey in the United States House of Representatives.