

OMAR IBN SAID

Discovery Worksheet 1

Omar was born in Futa Toro in West Africa around 1770. It was a rich and fertile state with two harvests each year: rain allowed for a fall harvest, and flooding from the Senegal River allowed for another in the spring. It was full of busy markets where people could buy and sell their goods.

Think back to when you were younger.
Write your happiest memory below.



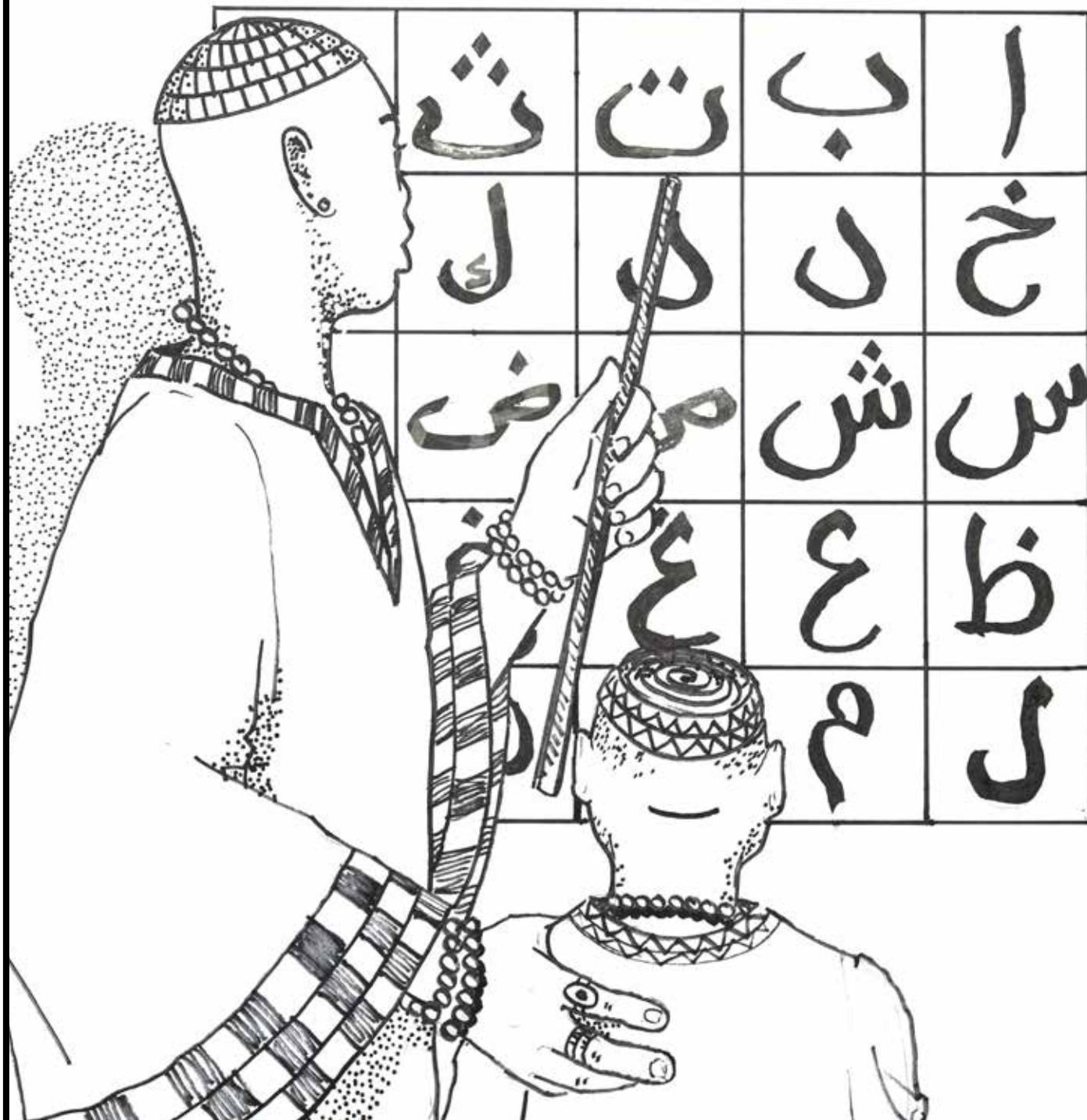
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Discovery Worksheet 2

During his childhood, Omar's older brother, Sheikh Muhammad, taught him how to read and write in Arabic, the language of the religion of Islam. Most people in Futa Toro also spoke a language called Pulaar.

Using the template below, try to copy Omar Ibn Said's name in Arabic.

عُمَرَ بْنِ سَيِّدٍ



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Discovery Worksheet 3

There were schools, books, and large buildings called mosques (masjids) where people went to pray. Like most people in Futa Toro, Omar was Muslim—a follower of the religion of Islam. The holy book of Islam is called the Quran (Koran). Many Muslims pray five times a day.

What is the theme or central idea of the story so far?

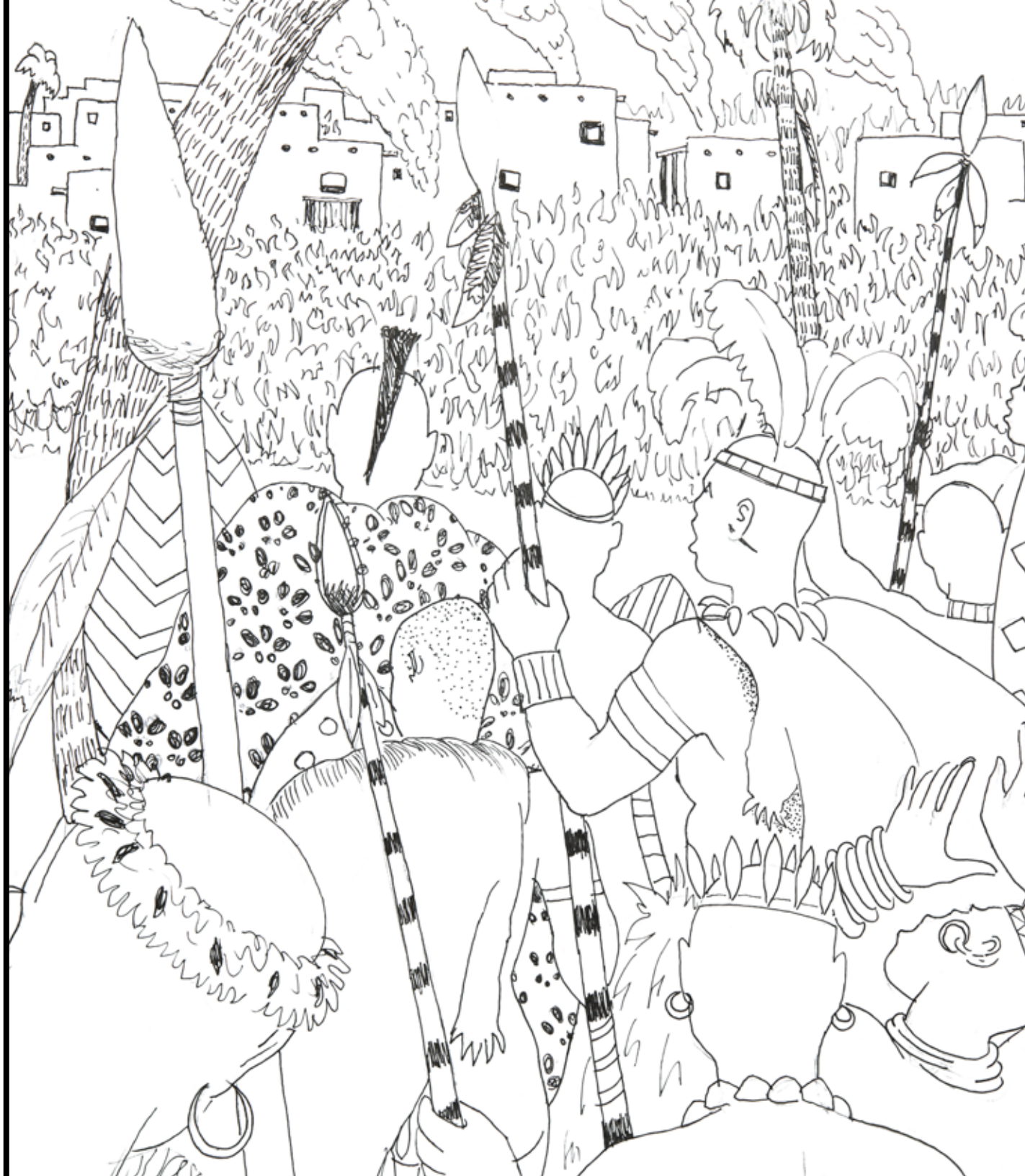


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Discovery Worksheet 4

In 1807, Futa Toro was attacked by a foreign army, which killed many people. Although Omar survived, he was captured and enslaved by enemy soldiers.

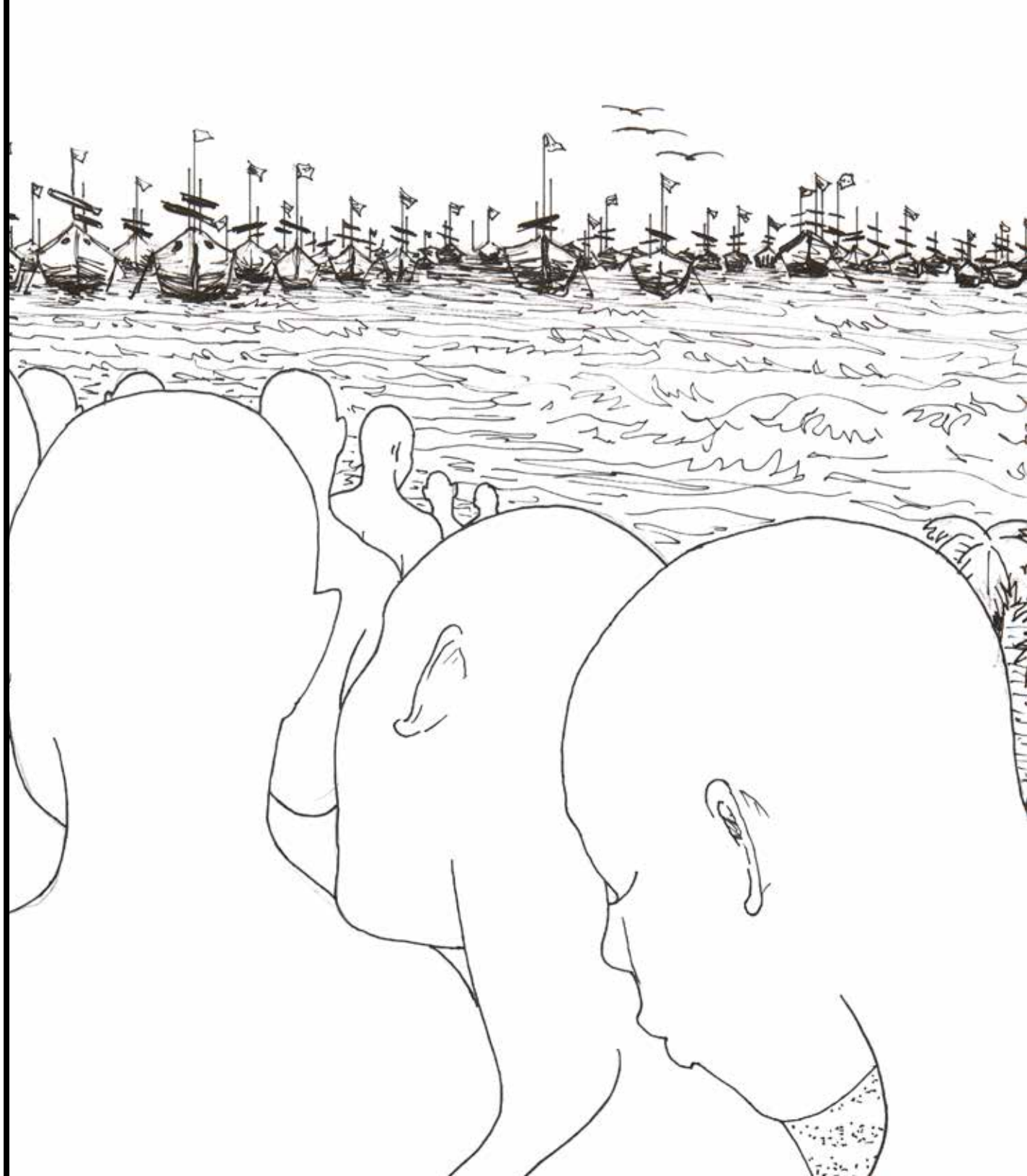
Which words create meaning and tone in this passage?



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Discovery Worksheet 5

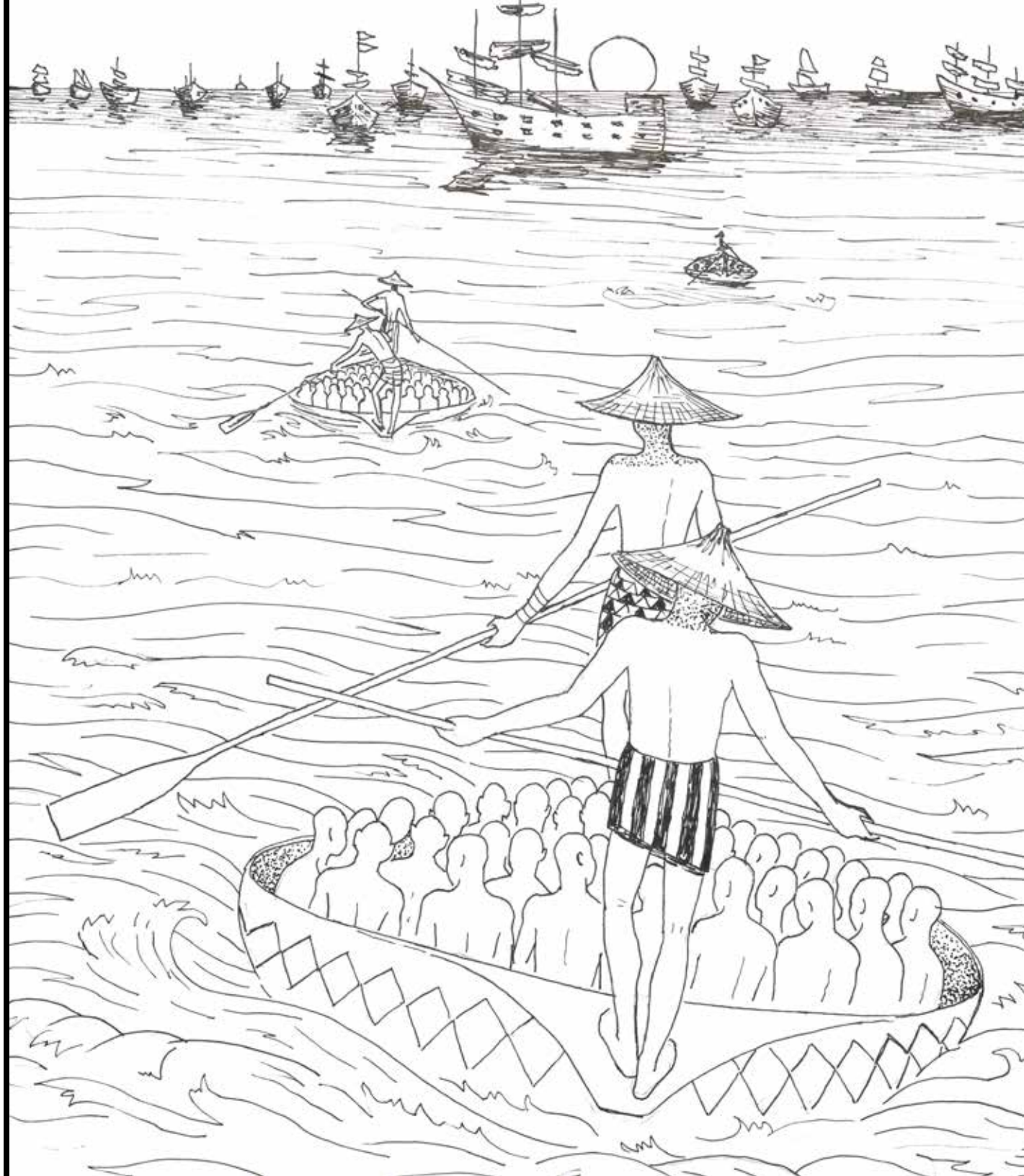
Omar—along with others—was marched to the Atlantic coast where many people were held before being sent to the United States, the Caribbean, and other countries in the Americas.



OMAR IBN SAID

Discovery Worksheet 6

Omar and the other captives were loaded onto small boats and made to board large wooden slave ships.

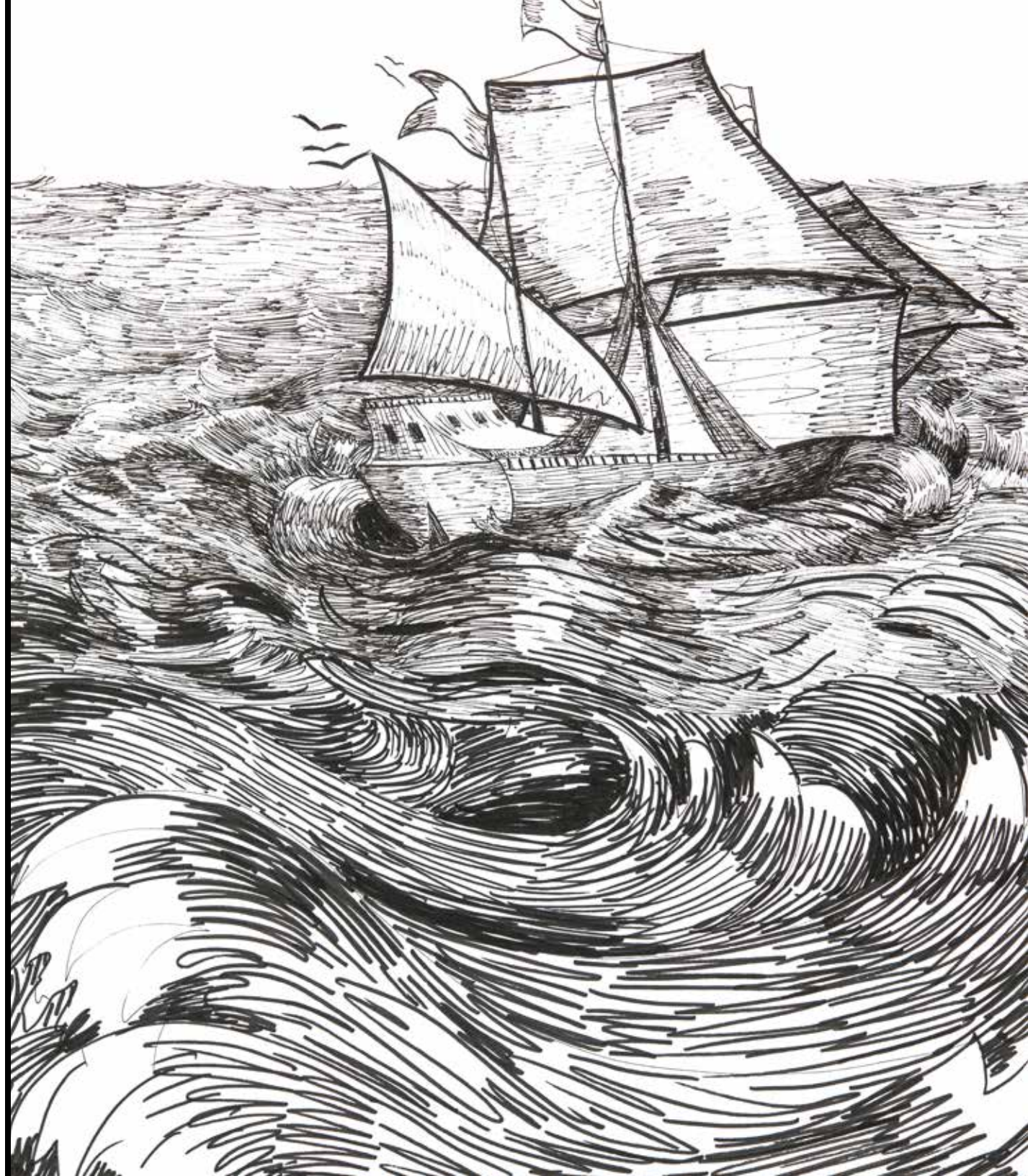


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Discovery Worksheet 7

The trip across the Atlantic Ocean was dangerous. Omar and the others were chained together in the hull of the ship with little room to move, and many died during the journey.

How does the settings from this image impact your understanding of Omar's story so far?

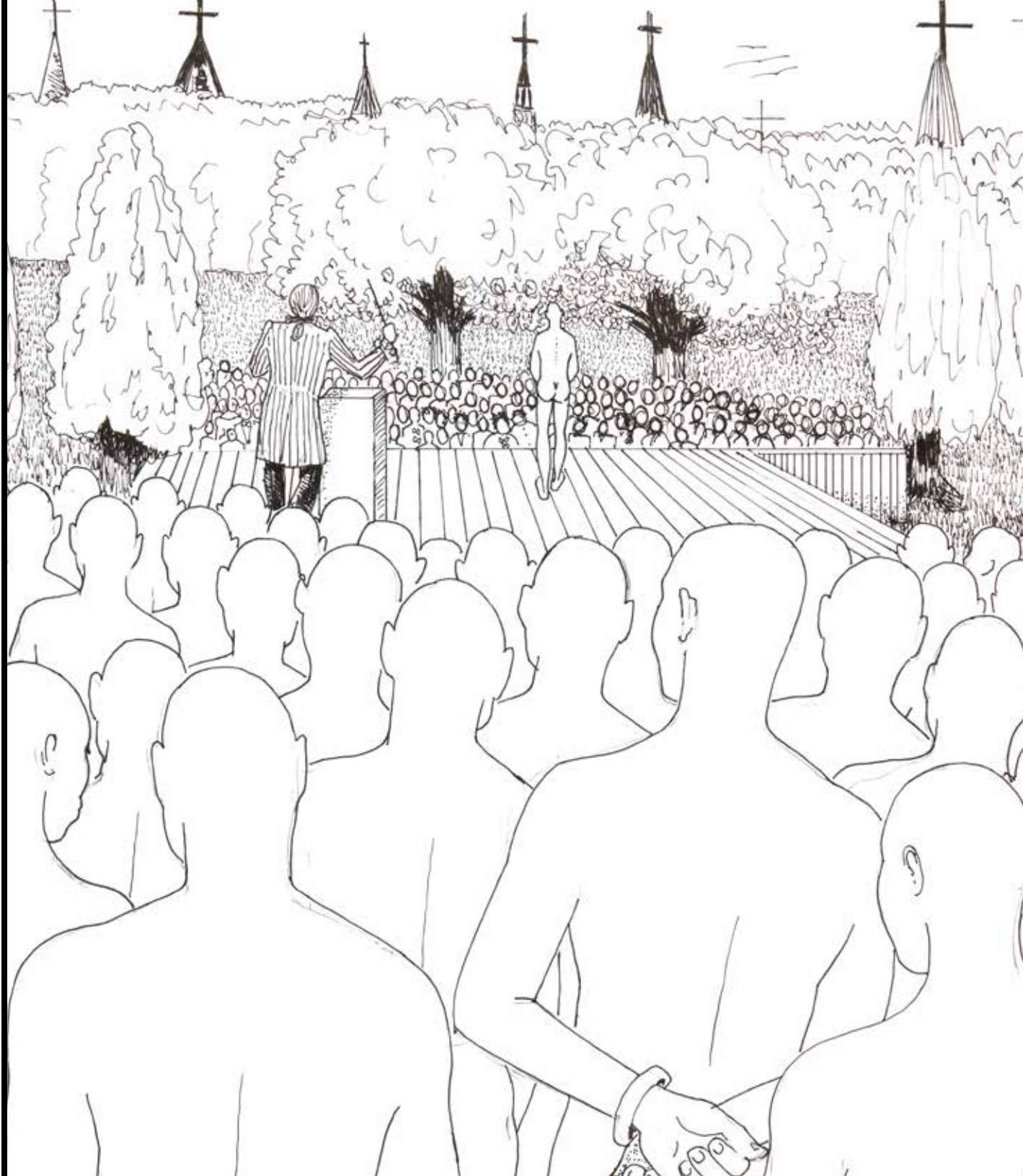


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Discovery Worksheet 8

After a month at sea, the ship docked at Gadsden's Wharf in Charleston, South Carolina. Omar was taken to a slave auction where he was purchased by a man named Johnson. Although Omar was a person with thoughts, feelings, and a family back home in Futa Toro, the law considered him the property of somebody else.

Use evidence from the text and images to write an objective statement that summarizes Omar's experiences up to this point in the story.

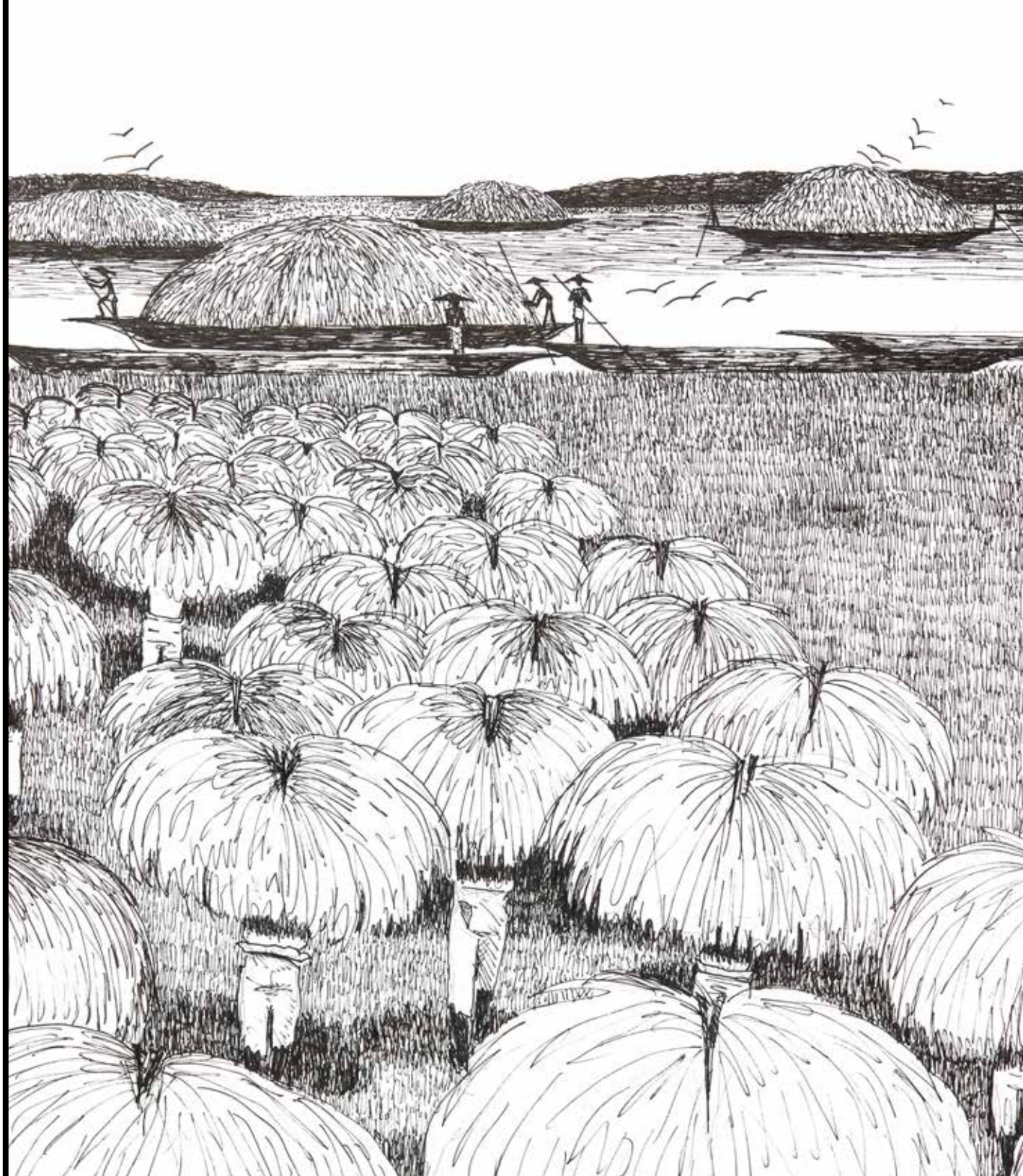


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Discovery Worksheet 9

Omar and other enslaved people were forced to harvest Carolina gold rice on Johnson's plantation. Though Johnson never worked in his fields, he continued to get rich while Omar suffered in Charleston's sweltering summer heat.

Based on the text, what does the word "forced" most likely mean?

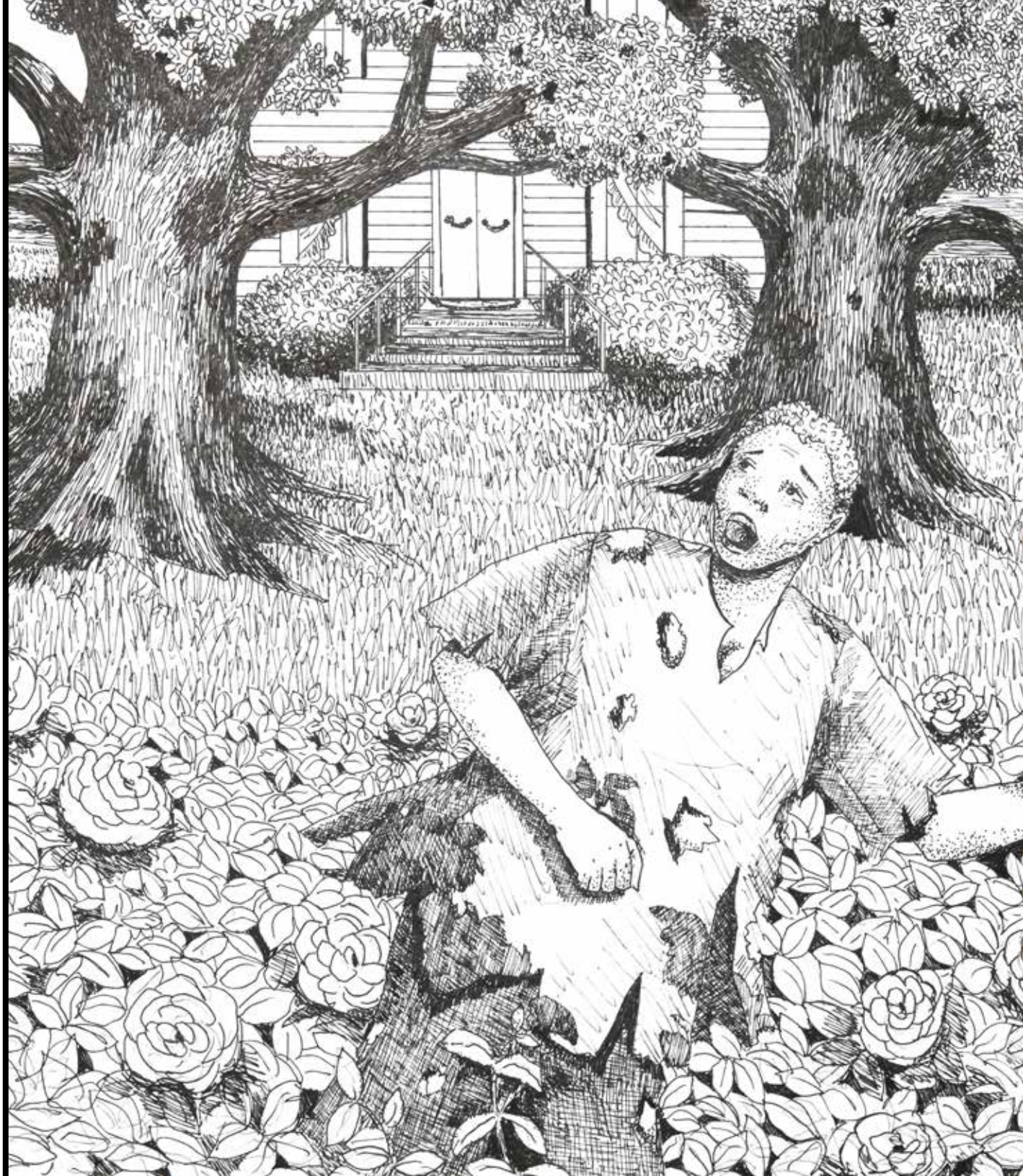


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Discovery Worksheet 10

According to Omar, Johnson was a small, weak, and wicked man. Omar said he was afraid to remain with a man who committed so many evil acts, so he ran away.

In addition to running away, what other ways did enslaved people resist slavery?

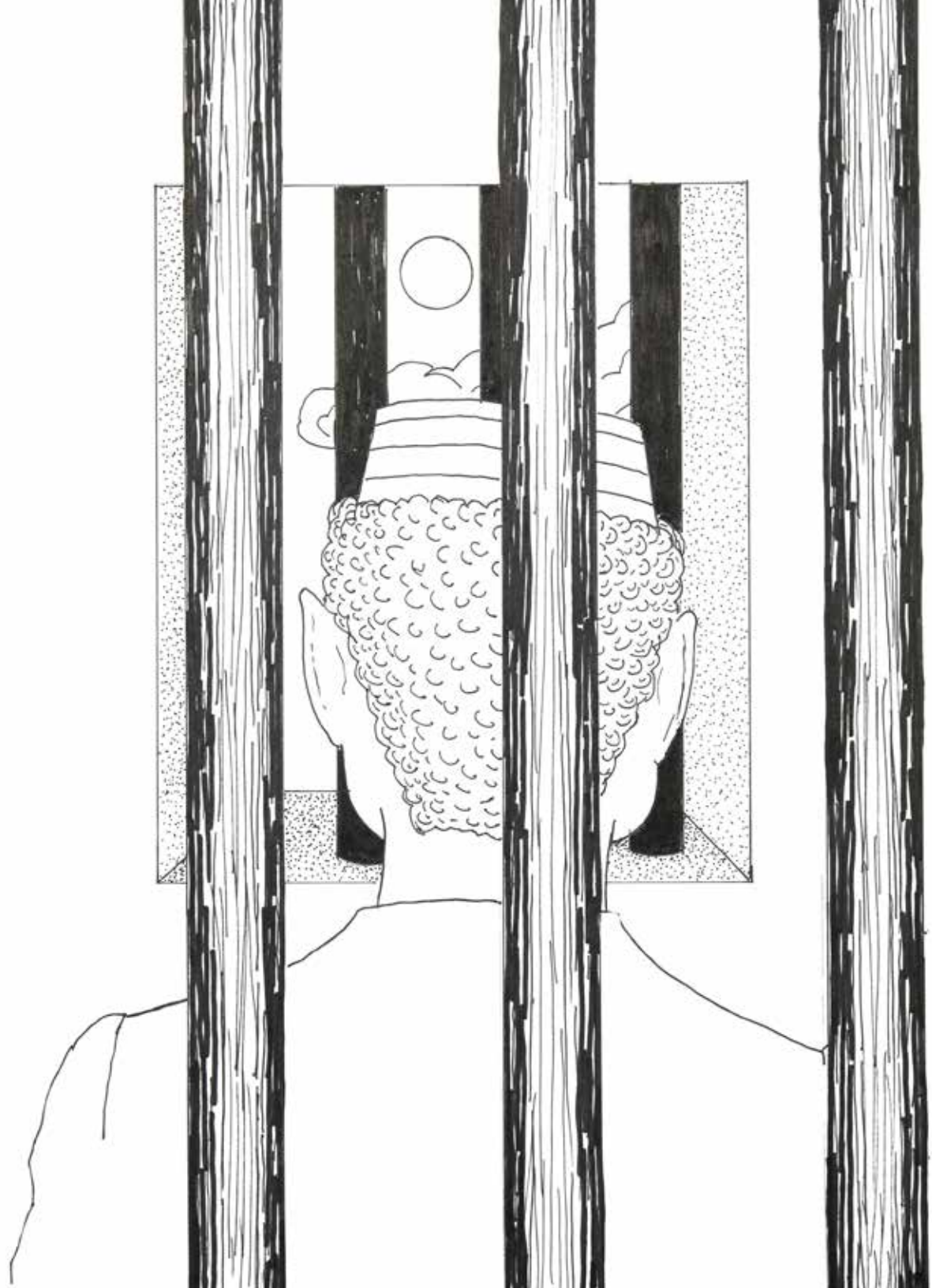


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Discovery Worksheet 11

For a month, he remained free and walked from Charleston to Fayetteville, North Carolina, where he was recaptured and thrown in jail.

How does the setting of Omar in jail contribute to the mood and development of the plot of the story?

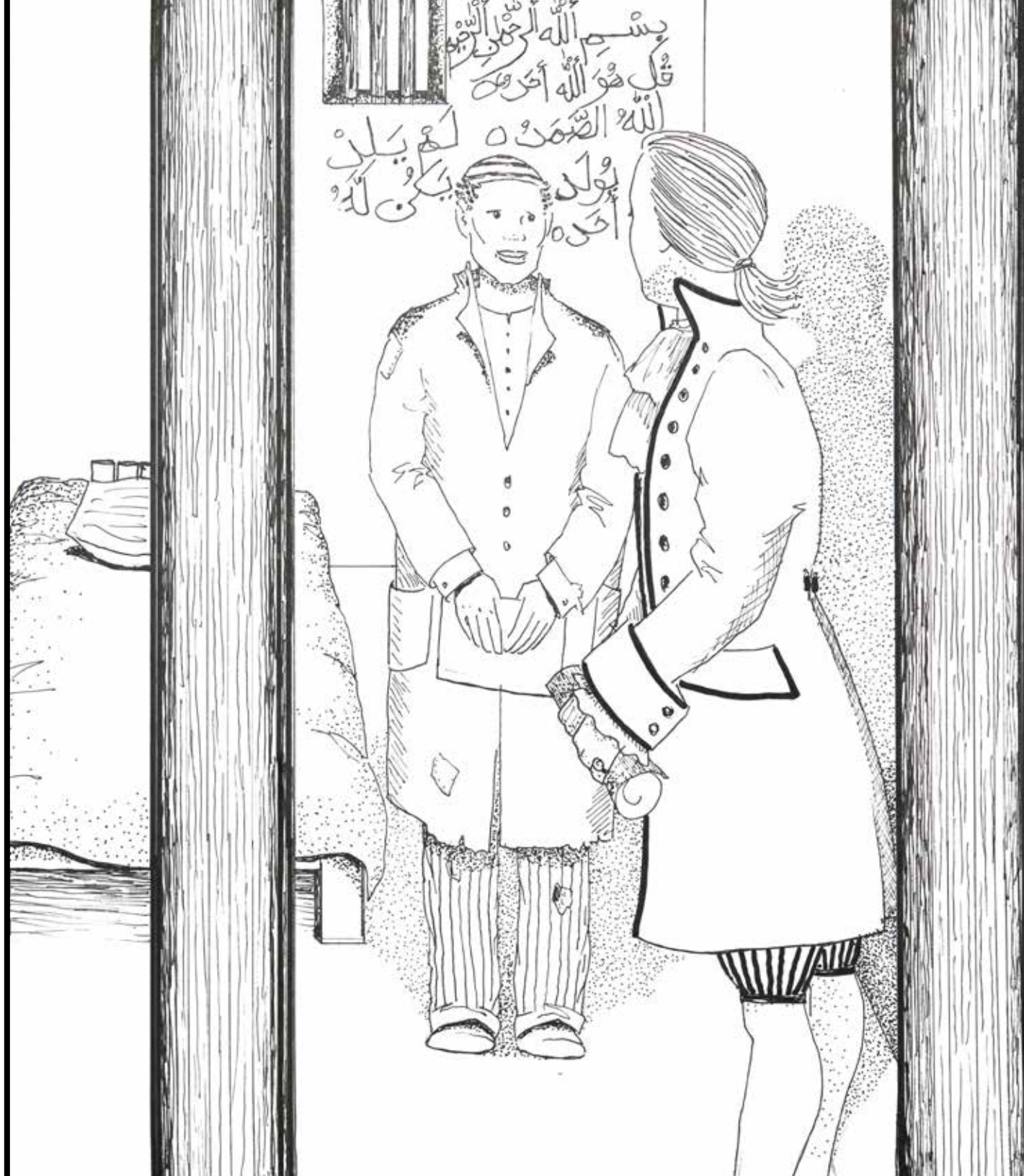


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Discovery Worksheet 12

Omar began writing verses from the Quran on the walls of his cell in Arabic with a piece of charcoal. One man said he would buy Omar and take him back to Charleston. Omar said, "No, no, no." Afterwards, another man named Jim Owen took Omar to his plantation where he remained enslaved for the rest of his life.

In addition to Omar, can you name two other historical figures jailed for their fights for freedom?

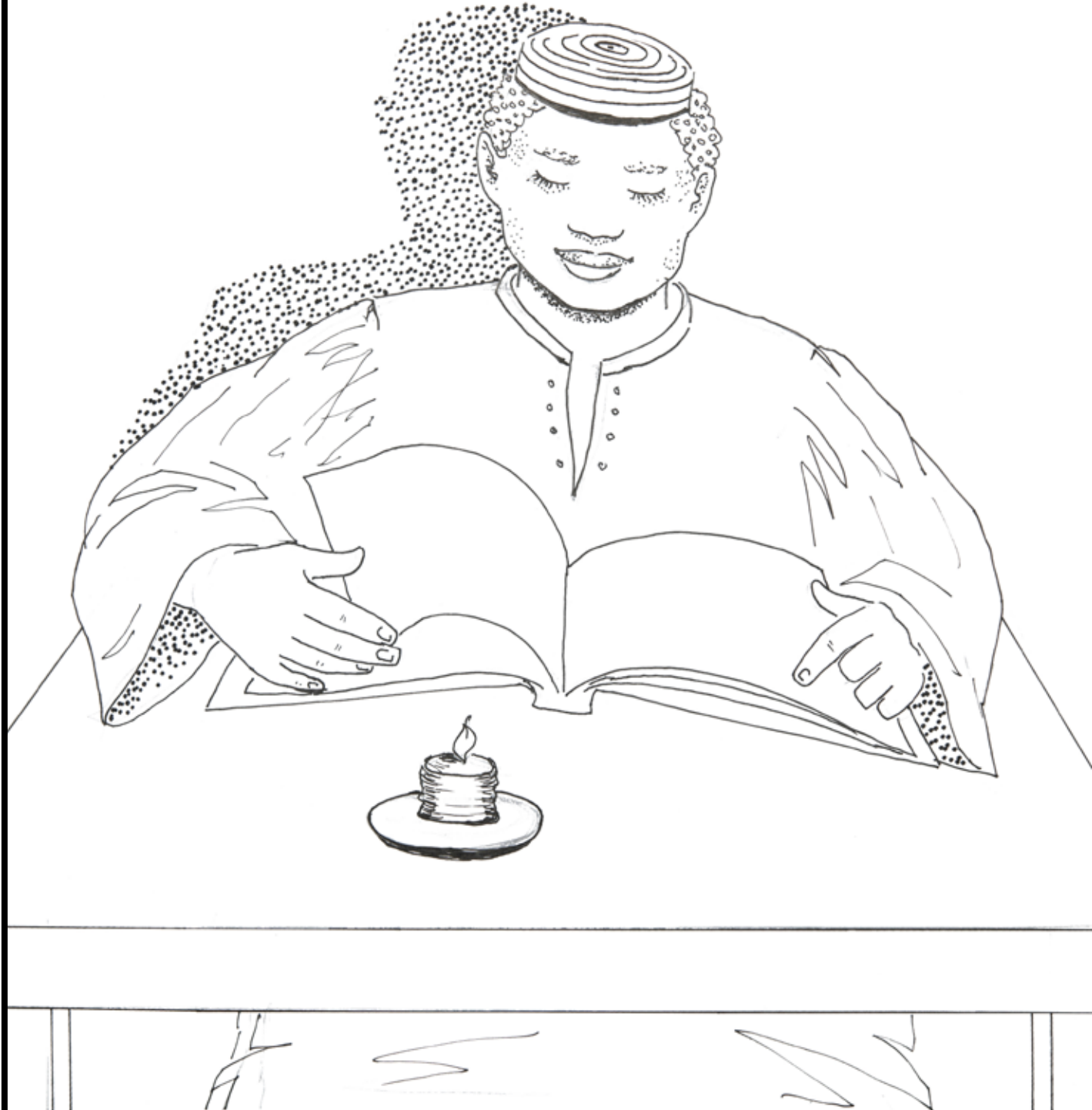


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Discovery Worksheet 13

When Omar arrived at the Owen plantation, faith was still very important to him. He was given a Quran and a Bible written in Arabic.

Do you think Omar influenced the family at the Owen plantation?

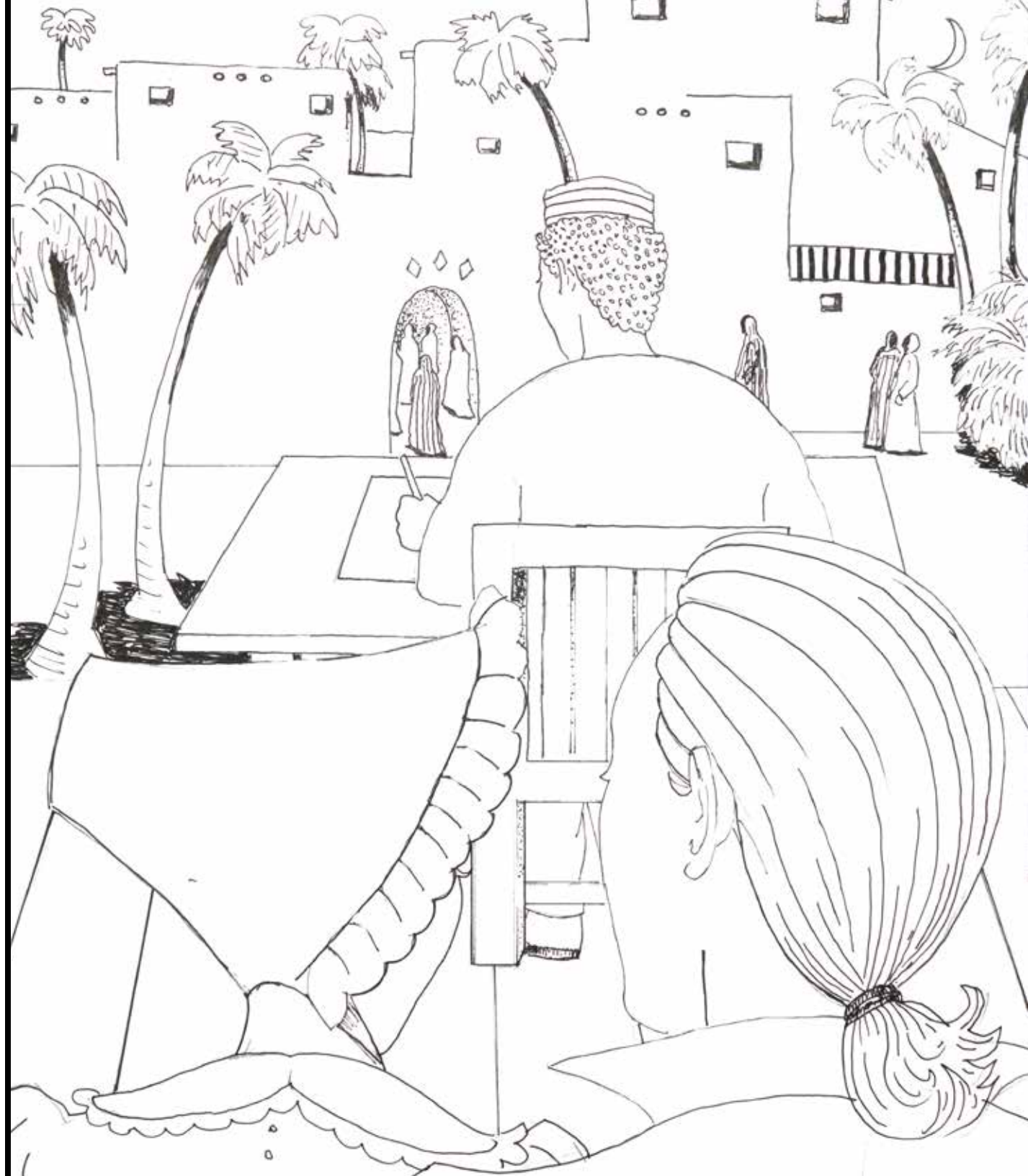


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Discovery Worksheet 14

Though Omar remained enslaved, he was not made to do hard work in the fields. He was asked to write his own story, which he did in Arabic, thinking all the while of his home. He also wrote several pages in Arabic, which were passages from the Quran. In 1819, he wrote to John Owen, Jim Owen's brother, that he longed to see Africa again.

Write a summary of Omar's story using key details from the worksheets.



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Discovery Worksheet 15

Omar died at the age of 93 shortly before the end of the Civil War, which brought freedom to enslaved people across the country. He was buried in Bladen County, North Carolina.

What do you imagine Omar was thinking about in this picture?

