

## **GROWING UP IN DAVIS BOTTOM BACKGROUND ESSAY**

A big group of children in the neighborhood, black and white, played together. They did not play only in their own yards. The whole neighborhood was their yard! Because money was tight, kids who grew up in Davis Bottom made their own fun out of simple things. They played ball games like stickball, kickball, and dodgeball. They jumped rope, climbed trees, played hopscotch. They went fishing. But it wasn't all play. The fish they caught added to the family food supply. The children helped in the garden and collected eggs from the hens. Can you find children doing these activities in the painting?

There were many chores to do. Depending on how old they were, children helped their parents do housework. They cleaned the house, washed dishes, cooked, and did laundry in a tub with a washboard.

Next to the closer houses in the painting's middle ground, you can see an apple orchard. We know there were orchards and pasture land in the valley in the early 1800s. When landowners sold their property to developers in the late 1800s, they



left their orchards behind. Davis Bottom residents gathered apples from these trees. They also gathered berries that grew wild along the valley edges.