Listening Guide for *The 1619 Project* Podcast
Episode 5: "The Land of Our Fathers, Parts 1 & 2"

1619 *is a* New York Times *audio series hosted by journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, who created* The 1619 Project *initiative for* The New York Times Magazine. *You can find more information about it at* [nytimes.com/1619podcast](). *Episode five is a two-part episode that explores the history of Black land ownership in America through the experience of the Provost family, Black sugarcane farmers from Louisiana.*

Some questions to consider before listening:

1. This podcast episode talks about the history of Black land ownership through the lens of Black farmers. How much do you know about the farming industry in America? What are some issues and challenges you imagine farmers today may face?
2. Some of the history and personal stories told in this podcast are hard to listen to because they describe painful events. What can we do to take care of ourselves when something is both important to hear and difficult to listen to?

Listening Guide

Time Stamp	Main Topic	Questions to consider
0:00-6:37	Intro/Story of William Tecumseh Sherman & Special Order #15	This introduction to the episode recounts the history of Special Order #15, or the Reconstruction provision commonly referred to as "40 acres and a mule." How did the actions and decisions of the four politicians and officials mentioned (Sherman, Stanton, Lincoln, and Johnson) directly influence the lives of Black Americans at the time? What may have been a long-term effect of those actions and decisions?
6:37-15:38	June and Angie's family backgrounds	Adizah Eghan became interested in reporting on this story because of the statistics around ownership of farms by Black farmers. What does this show us about the relationship between research and journalism?

		What was the significance of owning and farming land to June's family? Can you relate to this in any way?
15:38-25:45	Where the trouble began	June says the problems and challenges his family would face getting equitable resources to manage their farm started after they were featured in a book, *Black Farmers in America*. How do you think the publishing of the book and attention that came with it may have contributed to the problems they would face? What influence does the banking industry have over the lives and livelihood of farmers?
25:45-29:17	Cumulative impact of discrimination	Do you think that the way other farmers began to characterize June as lazy and deserving of his losses is valid? Why or why not? How did June's experience change the way he understood and interacted with his cousin? What can we learn from it?
0:00-11:35	First Guaranty bank lawsuit	What is a whistleblower? What does this portion of the story teach us about the impact of someone being willing to speak out about an injustice? The lawsuit mentioned in this portion of the podcast is still open and ongoing. What do you think will be important questions for the judges and juries to consider as they study this case?
11:35-21:05	Pigford lawsuits and settlement	Racism and discrimination are often discussed as existing within legal and social systems. This means that the way a system is set up allows for easy discrimination against certain people. In what ways is the Pigford case a demonstration of systemic racism?

21:05-29:30	From Pigford to today	What was Alexander Pires' response to critics of the final decision in the Pigford settlement? Is his reasoning compelling to you? What does it mean that 20 years after this case, farmers like June may still be experiencing this kind of discrimination? How does it complicate the idea that systems and society become more fair with time? How do you interpret Ryan Doré's words at the end of his interview? Do you think they help or hurt his argument that June isn't the victim of racism in their community?
29:30-35:08	Closing	The episode closes with anecdotes by June Provost and Nikole Hannah-Jones. How do they capture the emotional impact of racism and discrimination both historically and in our modern day?

Some questions to consider after listening:

1. How has listening to this episode helped to expand your understanding of systemic racism and oppression? How has it changed your understanding of the ways in which individual people can fight against systems of oppression?
2. The issues around discrimination against Black farmers covered in this episode have been brought back to national attention as the Biden administration faces backlash for their attempt to roll out debt relief program for minority farmers. After doing some additional research on the program and the backlash, what do you think is most fair?