

**Juneteenth: Celebrating Freedom [Early Elementary]**  
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Have you ever heard of Juneteenth? It's a significant day in history that took place on June 19, 1865. On that remarkable day, something incredible happened: the slaves in Texas discovered that they were finally free! This event is celebrated all across the United States, and in Texas, it is even recognized as an official holiday.

Now, let's go back in time to understand the story better. During the Civil War, there were two sides: the Union and the Confederate. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued a special announcement known as the Emancipation Proclamation. This proclamation declared that the slaves in Confederate states and areas not controlled by the Union were to be set free. However, due to the lack of Union soldiers in Texas, the news of their emancipation did not reach the slaves there for over two years. Can you imagine waiting that long to hear such important news?

Finally, on June 19, 1865, something truly extraordinary occurred. Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, led by Major General Gordon Granger. General Granger read aloud General Order No. 3, which conveyed the message of freedom to the people of Texas. It stated that all slaves were now free and that they had the same rights as everyone else. Just imagine the immense joy and happiness that filled the hearts of those who received this life-changing news. It was a momentous occasion that called for celebration!

Since that historic day, June 19 has held deep significance for many Black Americans. Families would come together to celebrate, offering prayers and expressing gratitude for their newfound freedom. Juneteenth became a time to honor their heritage and ancestors, while also reflecting on the progress made. The celebration gradually spread beyond Texas as people moved to different parts of the country, taking their traditions and stories with them.

In 1980, Texas officially recognized Juneteenth as a holiday, and now it is celebrated across the nation in various ways. Festivities often include vibrant parades, delicious barbecues, and engaging games for everyone to enjoy. Families gather to share stories, delve into their history, and gain a deeper understanding of the struggles and triumphs of their ancestors. Some communities even organize contests, encouraging young minds like yours to write essays or create captivating posters about Juneteenth.

But here's the wonderful thing about Juneteenth: it is not limited to a specific group of people. Juneteenth is a holiday that invites everyone to learn, appreciate, and celebrate together. It teaches us essential lessons about freedom, equality, and treating others with kindness and respect. By commemorating Juneteenth collectively, we demonstrate our respect for diverse stories and experiences, fostering unity and understanding.

Let's honor June 19 and celebrate Juneteenth! It is a special day that reminds us of the tremendous power of freedom and the importance of treating all individuals with love and respect. It is an opportunity to learn, grow, and stand up for justice and equality. Are you ready to join in the celebration? Together, let's make Juneteenth a truly unforgettable day of joy, unity, and appreciation for our shared history.

### **Juneteenth: Celebrating Freedom [Questions]**

1. On what date did Juneteenth take place?
  - a) July 4, 1776
  - b) June 19, 1865
  - c) December 25, 1492
  
2. What remarkable event happened on Juneteenth?
  - a) The slaves in Texas discovered they were free.
  - b) The Declaration of Independence was signed.
  - c) The first Thanksgiving took place.
  
3. Who issued the Emancipation Proclamation?
  - a) President Thomas Jefferson
  - b) President George Washington
  - c) President Abraham Lincoln
  
4. Why did it take over two years for the news of emancipation to reach the slaves in Texas?
  - a) The slaves didn't want to leave
  - b) There weren't enough Union soldiers in Texas.
  - c) The news got lost in the mail.
  
5. Who led the Union soldiers that arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865?
  - a) Major General Gordon Granger
  - b) Captain Jack Sparrow
  - c) Colonel Sanders
  
6. What did General Order No. 3 declare?
  - a) Only some slaves were free.
  - b) Slavery would continue.
  - c) All slaves were now free and had the same rights as everyone else.
  
7. Why did families come together to celebrate Juneteenth?
  - a) To have a big party
  - b) To honor their heritage and ancestors.

c) To watch fireworks.

8. When did Texas officially recognize Juneteenth as a holiday?

- a) 1980
- b) 1776
- c) 2005

9. What are some common festivities on Juneteenth?

- a) Science experiments and art shows
- b) Parades, barbecues, and games
- c) Movie marathons and video game competitions

10. What does Juneteenth teach us about treating others?

- a) To treat others with kindness and respect.
- b) To ignore others' feelings.
- c) To make fun of others.

11. Why is Juneteenth a holiday for everyone to celebrate?

- a) It's a secret holiday
- b) It is only for Black Americans.
- c) It invites everyone to learn, appreciate, and celebrate together.

12. What does Juneteenth remind us of?

- a) The power of freedom and treating others with love and respect.
- b) The importance of not celebrating.
- c) The significance of staying at home.

13. What lessons can we learn from Juneteenth?

- a) Lessons about giving up
- b) Lessons about freedom, equality, and justice.
- c) Lessons about being mean to others.

14. What does Juneteenth foster?

- a) Fear and anger.
- b) Division and confusion.
- c) Unity and understanding.

15. Why should we celebrate Juneteenth?

- a) To honor our shared history and stand up for justice and equality.
- b) To do nothing.
- c) To forget about the past.



## Juneteenth: Celebrating Freedom [Answers]

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3. Who issued the Emancipation Proclamation?  
President Abraham Lincoln
4. Why did it take over two years for the news of emancipation to reach the slaves in Texas?  
There weren't enough Union soldiers in Texas.
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