

Name _____

Date _____

JUNETEENTH: A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM



Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19th each year, is a significant holiday that marks the end of slavery in the United States. On this day in 1865, General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that all enslaved people were free, more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth, a combination of "June" and "nineteenth," symbolizes freedom and the end of a dark chapter in American history.

Today, Juneteenth is a time to celebrate African American culture, history, and achievements. People across the country honor this day with parades, music, family gatherings, and educational events. It's a day to reflect on the importance of freedom and equality, and to appreciate the ongoing journey toward justice and respect for all people.

Knowledge Check: Write down one fact that you learned.

Reflect: What else would you like to learn about this holiday?

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A JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Read the text below and answer the questions according to the text.

Underline the main character's name.

Circle the main idea.

Marcus was very excited. Today was Juneteenth, and his family had planned a big celebration. Juneteenth was a special day that celebrated the end of slavery in the United States. It was a day to remember freedom and to have fun with family and friends.

Marcus woke up early. He helped his mom and dad decorate the backyard with red, white, and blue balloons. They hung up a banner that said "Happy Juneteenth!" Marcus's grandma was in the kitchen, cooking delicious food. The smell of barbecue chicken, cornbread, and collard greens filled the air.

Vocabulary

Juneteenth: A holiday celebrated on June 19th to mark the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States.

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A JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Soon, Marcus's friends and family started arriving. Everyone was wearing bright and colorful clothes. There was music playing, and some people were dancing. Marcus loved to dance. He grabbed his cousin Maya's hand and they twirled around the yard.

There were many games to play, too. Marcus's dad set up a sack race. Marcus and Maya jumped into big sacks and raced across the yard. They laughed so hard when they both fell down, but Marcus got up quickly and hopped to the finish line first. He won a small prize—a red toy car.

**What is Marcus's
cousin's name?**

**How is the
family celebrating?**

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A JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

After the games, everyone sat down to eat. Marcus's grandma told a story about the first Juneteenth in 1865, when the news of freedom finally reached the last group of enslaved people in Texas. Marcus listened carefully. He felt proud and thankful for the people who fought for freedom.

When it got dark, Marcus's dad lit a big bonfire. Everyone sat around the fire, singing songs and roasting marshmallows. Marcus looked up at the stars and thought about what a great day it had been.

**What does
freedom mean?**

**Why do you think
people want to
celebrate this day?**

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A JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

**How do you
celebrate holidays?**

Before bedtime, Marcus’s mom handed out sparklers. Marcus and his friends waved them around, making bright patterns in the dark. It was a beautiful sight.

As the night ended, Marcus hugged his mom and dad. “Thank you for the best Juneteenth ever,” he said. Marcus knew he would always remember this special day of freedom, fun, and family.

**What are some family
traditions you have
or that you would
create?**



COMPREHENSION CHECK

1. What is Juneteenth?
 - A. A holiday for fireworks
 - B. A day to celebrate the end of slavery in the United States
 - C. A birthday celebration
 - D. A summer festival

2. Why was Marcus excited?
 - A. Because he had no school
 - B. Because it was his birthday
 - C. Because his family had planned a big Juneteenth celebration
 - D. Because he got a new toy

3. What decorations did Marcus and his parents put up?
 - A. Streamers and confetti
 - B. Red, white, and blue balloons and a banner
 - C. Lights and lanterns
 - D. Flowers and ribbons

4. What was Marcus's grandma doing in the kitchen?
 - A. Watching TV
 - B. Baking cookies
 - C. Cooking delicious food
 - D. Cleaning the dishes

5. Who did Marcus dance with?
 - A. His mom
 - B. His dad
 - C. His friend
 - D. His cousin Maya

VOCABULARY

Word	Dictionary Meaning	Write a sentence using the vocabulary word
Freedom		
Emancipation		
Celebrate		
Sparklers		
Bonfire		

Grammar Review

Commas in a Series

Example: "The smell of barbecue chicken, cornbread, and collard greens filled the air."

Explanation: Commas are used to separate items in a list.

Quotation Marks for Dialogue

Example: "Thank you for the best Juneteenth ever," he said.

Explanation: Quotation marks are used to indicate spoken words.

Conjunctions to Connect Clauses

Example: "Marcus and Maya jumped into big sacks and raced across the yard."

Explanation: The conjunction "and" connects two related actions in a sentence.

Possessive Nouns

Example: "Marcus's grandma was in the kitchen, cooking delicious food."

- **Explanation:** The apostrophe and "s" show that the grandma belongs to Marcus

Capitalization of Proper Nouns:

Example: "Today was Juneteenth, and his family had planned a big celebration."

- **Explanation:** Proper nouns, like "Juneteenth," are always capitalized.

Grammar Practice

1. Comma in a Series

Which sentence correctly uses commas in a series?

- A. Marcus invited his friends family and neighbors to the Juneteenth party.
- B. Marcus invited his friends, family and neighbors to the Juneteenth party.
- C. Marcus invited his friends, family, and neighbors to the Juneteenth party.
- D. Marcus invited his friends family, and neighbors to the Juneteenth party.

2. Quotation Marks for Dialogue

Which sentence correctly uses quotation marks for dialogue?

- A. Marcus said, today is Juneteenth.
- B. "Marcus said, today is Juneteenth."
- C. Marcus said, "Today is Juneteenth."
- D. Marcus said "today is Juneteenth."

3. Possessive Nouns

Which sentence correctly shows possession?

- A. Marcus grandma was cooking in the kitchen.
- B. Marcus's grandma was cooking in the kitchen.
- C. Marcus grandma's cooking in the kitchen.
- D. Marcus's grandma was cooking in the kitchen.

4. Capitalization of Proper Nouns

Which sentence correctly capitalizes the proper noun?

- A. Today is juneteenth, a special day to celebrate.
- B. Today is Juneteenth, a special day to celebrate.
- C. Today is juneteenth, a special day to Celebrate.
- D. Today is Juneteenth, a special day to Celebrate.

5. Conjunctions to Connect Clauses

Which sentence correctly uses a conjunction to connect clauses?

- A. Marcus wanted to play, but he had to help decorate first.
- B. Marcus wanted to play; he had to help decorate first.
- C. Marcus wanted to play but he had to help decorate first.
- D. Marcus wanted to play, he had to help decorate first.

Activity Sheets

Word Search

M J U N E T E E N T H W X H J
Z L S F E W N U L K L S V L H
X G E H M I Y X P I E S B E F
H C U N A N V V G M R V Y T R
E E E A N O C K F U T W G R E
G L T Z C M L B W Z F P U A E
V E K P I G U D J Q G U E D D
F B C A P D L S I E R M R I O
R R A N A O N J W A A T M T M
E A V K T I L A X U N Z Z I N
C T N J I U K L K R G P U O R
H I L S O H V D A Z E I F N V
H O W N N D X F O A R P K I W
D N U X L U E W B L I J A C Y
C F Z P U Y I Q C U L T U R E

emancipation

celebration

Juneteenth

freedom

tradition

culture

Granger





Cross-Curricular Activities



Lesson Plan: Creating Artwork Inspired by Juneteenth

Grade Level: 4th-5th Grade
Subject: Art and Social Studies
Duration: 1 hour

Objective:

Students will create artwork that symbolizes freedom and celebration inspired by Juneteenth. They will learn about the significance of Juneteenth and study works by African American artists related to freedom and history.

Materials:

- Drawing paper or canvas
- Paints, markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Scissors, glue, and magazines/newspapers for collages
- Images and information about Juneteenth
- Examples of artwork by African American artists (e.g., Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringgold, Romare Bearden)

Introduction (10 minutes):

1. Brief Discussion on Juneteenth:

- Explain the significance of Juneteenth, highlighting it as a day celebrating the end of slavery in the United States.
- Discuss how Juneteenth is a day of freedom and celebration, and how it is observed with events like parades, family gatherings, and community activities.

2. Introduce African American Artists:

- Show examples of works by African American artists like Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringgold, and Romare Bearden.
 - Discuss how their artwork reflects themes of freedom, history, and celebration.
- 



(Continued)

Activity (40 minutes):

1. Brainstorming (5 minutes):

- Ask students to think about what freedom and celebration mean to them.
- Encourage them to consider colors, symbols, and images that represent these ideas.

2. Creating Artwork (30 minutes):

- Students will choose to draw, paint, or make a collage.
- They will create artwork that symbolizes freedom and celebration, inspired by Juneteenth.

3. Reflection and Sharing (5 minutes):

- Have students share their artwork with and explain what the picture represents.

Conclusion (10 minutes):

1. Discussion:

- Discuss the importance of artistic expression in understanding and celebrating cultural and historical events.
- Highlight how art can be a powerful tool to communicate feelings and tell stories about significant events like Juneteenth.

Assessment:

- Completion of artwork that includes symbols and elements related to freedom and celebration.
- Ability to articulate the significance of their artwork during the sharing session.

Extensions:

- Research more about the lives and works of African American artists studied in the lesson.
- Write a short paragraph or poem about what freedom means to them to accompany their artwork.





History:

Research and present on the historical context of Juneteenth, including the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation. Students can create posters or digital presentations.

Science:

Explore the impact of cotton farming on the environment and economy in the 19th century. Discuss how scientific advancements in agriculture have changed farming practices since then.

Civics:

Discuss the significance of civil rights and freedom. Students can learn about the amendments to the Constitution that relate to freedom and equality, and how these have evolved over time.

