

***JUNETEENTH***  
***A Celebration of Freedom***

By: Dr. Charles Taylor

**TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE**

By: Richard A. Koritz ♦ Reverend Ronald V. Myers, Sr. ♦ Nikia Poché

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## **Chapter 1**

### **What is Juneteenth?**

What date did Juneteenth occur?

What happened on that date?

What was the name of the Union General that issued *General Order Number 3*?

What President issued the Emancipation Proclamation?

When was the Emancipation Proclamation issued?

How long did it take for the news of freedom to reach Galveston, Texas?

Why were the slaves in Texas the last to know they were free?

### **Critical Thinking**

Why is Juneteenth still celebrated, and when is it celebrated?

Why should we celebrate Juneteenth in addition to the Fourth of July?

## **Chapter 2**

### **From Slavery to Freedom In the United States**

How did most Americans of African descent arrive in the United States?

What were some of the inhumane conditions endured by the enslaved on the slave ships?

What were some of the horrors of slavery?

How did the enslaved resist slavery?

What was an abolitionist?

What was the Underground Railroad?

What was the South's response to the efforts of the abolitionists?

What caused the Civil War?

When did Congress issue the first historic Emancipation Act?

When did Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation take effect, and how many slaves were actually freed on that date?

What was the significance of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments?

How many black soldiers lost their lives in the Civil War?

### **Critical Thinking**

What are some of the inequities black soldiers faced during the Civil War?

Though the Emancipation Proclamation was significant, why may the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment be considered more significant?

## **Chapter 3**

### **Texas as a Slave State**

What crop accompanied the greatest growth of the enslaved population in Texas?

What fraction of Texas' population was enslaved during the 1860s?

Explain the conditions of a typical slave in Texas.

To what country did Texas slaves escape?

Why was this country especially appealing to escaping Texas slaves?

What is the definition of antebellum?

What percentage of cotton did slave labor produce?

Who encouraged their fellow Texan citizens to go to war in order to preserve slavery? Why?

Which states sent their slaves to Texas? Why? And how many enslaved blacks were sent to Texas?

What were the pros and cons of *General Orders Number 3*?

### **Critical Thinking**

Why didn't slaveholders want any part of a free black community?

If you woke up tomorrow and learned that you were a slave living in a slave state, what aspects of freedom would you miss most?

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Meaning of JUNETEENTH – FREEDOM**

What did freedom mean for former slaves?

What law was passed by Congress in March 1865? What was the significance of this law?

Name and describe the period immediately following the end of the Civil War.

How does the dictionary define "treasonable"?

What did the editor of *The Harrison Flag* newspaper denounce as "treasonable"?

What was the significance of the Texas Homestead Act?

What codes did the Texas legislature pass in 1866?

What is the definition of "disenfranchisement"?

How was disenfranchisement of the former slaves accomplished?

What institution instilled hope in blacks?

### **Critical Thinking**

Though the slaves were freed, what problems did they continue to face in society?

Imagine you were part of the legislature during the late 1860s, which laws would you make to help former slaves integrate themselves into society?

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Black Church in Slavery and in Freedom**

In what ways did the church serve as a platform for liberation?

Give examples of self-expression and creativity evident in the church.

Name two influential civil rights leaders.

What is the irony of the Juneteenth Celebration?

What do you think the author meant when he said, “The church was more than a safe house?”

#### **Critical Thinking**

How do you think the traditional prayer helped slaves cope with their plight?

Do you have a special place or activity that allows you to cope with stress?

## **Chapter 6**

### **The Legacy of Freedom**

According to historian John Hope Franklin, how did slavery weaken “America’s moral authority?”

Name two slaveholders who were presidents of the United States.

What are some of the contributions enslaved blacks made to America?

What lesson of cooperation should never be forgotten?

#### **Critical Thinking**

Explain the “blatant hypocrisy” of Patrick Henry’s statement, ‘Give me liberty or give me death.’

How did slavery corrupt slave owners’ sense of right and wrong?

## **Chapter 7**

### **Juneteenth Celebrations Down Through the Years**

What is the oldest African American holiday observance?

On what date did Juneteenth become a legal holiday in Texas, and which Texas State Representative led the effort?

Explain the traditions of the historic Juneteenth parade.

Compare and contrast the activities of *earlier* Juneteenth celebrations to activities of *current* Juneteenth celebrations.

What activities would be more likely to appear in current Juneteenth celebrations?

How many cities nationwide celebrate Juneteenth? Name four cities that host large Juneteenth celebrations.

What are the two major structures on the Comanche Crossing site in Mexia, Texas? Before the two structures were built, where were Juneteenth programs held?

Name the four main components of the contemporary celebration.

What is the significance of “Lift Every Voice and Sing?”

Who wrote “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” and in what year was it written?

#### **Critical Thinking**

Pinpoint one song that inspires you, and explain why it is a personal inspiration.

What is the overall purpose of Juneteenth?

## **Chapter 8**

### **Juneteenth Today**

Why does this family awaken before the crack of dawn on Juneteenth?

What do you think of this family’s celebration of Juneteenth?

If you could celebrate Juneteenth with your family, how would you celebrate it?

Think of an item, object, or possession you have, and explain how it symbolizes freedom.

**Richard A. Koritz**  
Editor and Publisher  
Open Hand Publishing, LLC

**Reverend Ronald V. Myers, Sr., M.D.**  
Founder & Chairman  
National Juneteenth Observance Foundation  
Visit [www.Juneteenth.us](http://www.Juneteenth.us) for more information.

**Nikia Poché**  
Intern at Open Hand Publishing, LLC  
Senior at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro