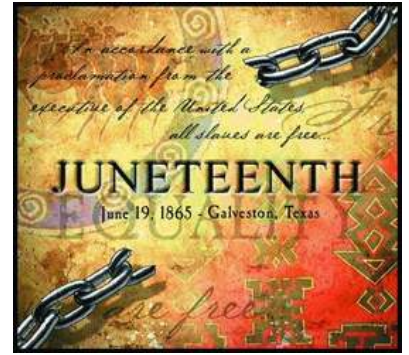


Celebrating Juneteenth



Lesson Plan: Juneteenth

Subject: Social Studies- United States History

Grade: 8

Next Generation Sunshine State Standard- Social Studies: SS.8.A.5.8, SS.8.G.2.2,

Objective:

- Students gather information about the history of the U.S. holiday Juneteenth.
- Students understand the historical elements that contributed to the delayed announcement of the emancipation of slaves in Texas.
- Students recognize the look of authentic historic documents and reproduce a facsimile of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Materials:

- Celebrating Juneteenth (background information, provided)
- Venn Diagram (provided)
- Copy of Emancipation Proclamation (provided)
- "A Nation Divided 1861-1865" map of United States

Back ground Information:



Celebrating Juneteenth

By Kat DeLong

Juneteenth is one of the oldest African American celebrations in the country. It started shortly after the end of the Civil War, and has been gaining acceptance in recent years in all kinds of communities throughout the country. It is a family-oriented celebration that focuses on community as well as recounting the stories of the past.

Far from ignoring the slave period in this country, Juneteenth celebrations strive to acknowledge the wrongs that were committed and help to raise the descendents up by concentrating on education and personal achievements. If you've never heard of Juneteenth, learn a little about the history and consider joining people all over the country as they celebrate this important holiday in June.

Juneteenth History

Juneteenth is the oldest recognized celebration that marks the end of slavery in the United States. It started in Texas, but the largest celebrations today are in Milwaukee and Minneapolis – showing how far the idea has traveled over the years. Juneteenth is always observed on or around June 19th; the day that slaves in Galveston, Texas learned that they had been freed by President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The only problem was that the slaves in Texas finally heard about their freedom in 1865 – two and a half years after it was adopted.

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation had become official on January 1, 1863. There are several theories about why the Texas slaves weren't told about their freedom for such a long period of time. One story says that a messenger was dispatched to Texas, but was murdered before he could deliver the news. Another says that the plantation owners deliberately kept the news from reaching the slaves so that they could get in one last cotton crop. Everyone agrees that there weren't enough Union troops in Texas at the time to enforce the proclamation. On June 19th 1865, Major General Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas and read General Order Number 3 to the people:

"The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of

rights and rights of property between former master and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer.”

Understandably, it took a while for the impact of the words to sink in. Many slaves seemed to be in shock. Some stayed to try and negotiate a new relationship with their former owners as employees. The quality of life on the plantations prior to the Emancipation Proclamation varied wildly, and it is likely that these slaves felt that they had been treated well enough to continue to stay on in a different capacity.

Others made their mark on their new status by leaving immediately. Some former slaves traveled to other states to reconnect with family members. Others simply headed North, since the North symbolized freedom at the time. All freed slaves faced the difficult task of trying to carve out some sort of social status where none had existed before.

Early Juneteenth Celebrations

Celebrations started in the years following General Order Number 3.

The former slaves needed a way to reconnect with each other and to recount that fateful day when their freedom was announced. Many made their way back to Galveston to mark June 19th and to hold family-oriented celebrations. Nobody is sure where the name “Juneteenth” came from, but it came to be widely known as the official name for June 19th.

As the years went on, the celebrations became more elaborate with rodeos, picnics, barbecues and fishing trips. Many of these elements are still seen in today’s Juneteenth celebrations, including large barbecue pits in public parks. Many people of the time brought something special to eat so they could share foods that weren’t available every day. There was also an emphasis on dressing well for the celebration. Most slaves were limited in their dress by slave laws, and dressing up in nice clothes was another way to show that they had been liberated.

Early Juneteenth celebrations were small affairs attended by former slaves and their families. Many cities and towns would not let them use the public parks to celebrate Juneteenth, so they started picnicking and barbecuing in people’s backyards and in rural locations near streams and creeks so that they could fish at the same time. Many of the first Juneteenth celebrations were held on the grounds of African American churches. As time wore on, new African American landowners raised money to buy land or donated land that they owned for the holiday. One of the first examples of this was the purchase of Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas.

Some employers gave their employees the day off to celebrate Juneteenth, while others interrupted the festivities to demand that their people get back to work. As African American children began to attend public schools, family life became more scattered and there was less emphasis on slave history. Children were taught about Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, but nothing was included in textbooks about Juneteenth. Because of this, there was a decrease in Juneteenth celebrations through the years.

A resurgence of interest in the holiday came with the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Many marchers wore Juneteenth buttons and spread the word about this particular chapter in our history. It was discussed at the widely attended Poor People's March in Washington D.C. in 1968, and those people took Juneteenth information back to their own towns to start celebrations. Juneteenth became a Texas state holiday in 1980.

In March of 2008, Vermont became the 29th state to make Juneteenth a state holiday on the third weekend in June.

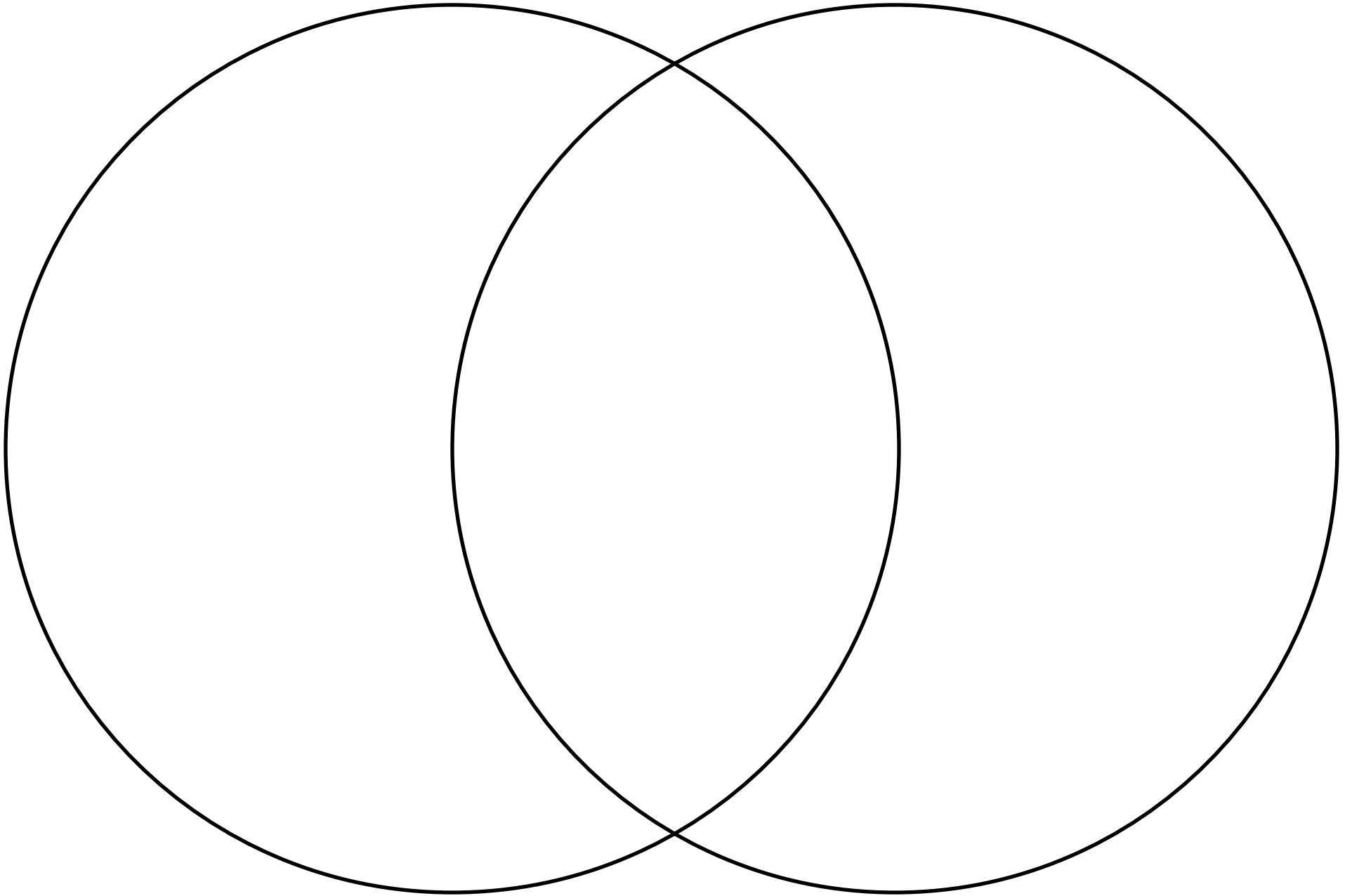
Lesson Plan Activity

1. Distribute the handout Juneteenth Celebration.
2. Have students participate in a reading activity (read aloud, silent reading, differentiated instruction activity).
3. Distribute a 1865 United States map (provided).
4. Write the following question on the board:
 - a. Discuss reasons why you think that it took nearly 3 years for news of emancipation to travel from Washington, D.C., to Galveston, Texas.
 - b. Distribute a copy of the “A Nation Divided 1861 -1865 map.”
 - c. Ask students to discuss challenges the messenger may have experienced traveling through the Northern and Southern states?
5. Create a venn diagram on the board; discuss today’s means of communication, specifically information that has the ability to travel instantaneously, for example the internet. Therefore, the idea that an important government announcement took almost 3 years to travel from Washington, D.C., to Galveston, Texas, seems unbelievable. Although Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, the slaves in Texas did not hear that they had been freed until June 19, 1865.
6. Distribute the venn diagram (provided) to students; Compare and contrast today’s means of communication and communication used in 1865.
7. **Classroom Discussions:**
 - a. This announcement prompted spontaneous celebrations in the streets. African Americans celebrate Juneteenth (a combination of June and nineteenth) as a legal holiday in Texas and throughout the United States with parades, prayers, picnics, games, and family gatherings. A reading of the Emancipation Proclamation marks the beginning of many local festivities. Discuss the local Juneteenth celebrations in and around South Florida.
 - b. Have students discuss Juneteenth, highlight the fact that Juneteenth remains one of the few U.S. holidays that does not have a commercial component.
 - c. Ask students to brainstorm and identify other non-commercial holidays and speculate on what has protected them from exploitation.
 - d. A legend tells that Abraham Lincoln's messenger to Texas had an ornery mule and that is why the news took so long to arrive. Debate whether the length of time was intentional or accidental.

- e. Older students study the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights to find loopholes which were closed by the Emancipation Proclamation to insure rights for men of all colors. Further study these documents to see that the rights of women were omitted.
8. Create a timeline:
- a. Create a timeline leading up to emancipation, putting the proclamation and Juneteenth into the historical context of the Civil War.

Source: <http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/detail/juneteenth-proclamation-jubilation-lesson-plan/>

Communication Ports 1865 vs Today



The Emancipation Proclamation

January 1, 1863

A Transcription By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth[]), and which excepted parts, are for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM NCOLN
WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

A Nation Divided 1861-1865

