

Warm-up

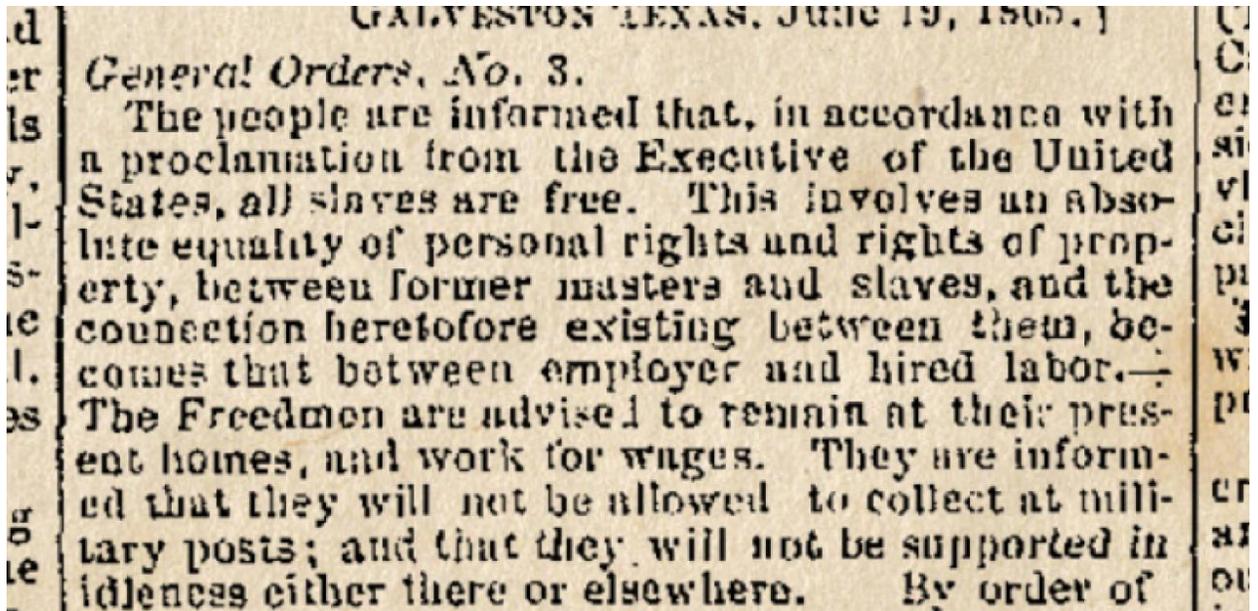
1. *Show students this brief video from Crash Course Black American History, and ask students if there was anything in the video that was new to them—how does this relate to your current understanding of the Civil War?*

Crash Course Black American History video on African-Americans in the Civil War (talks about Juneteenth in the last few minutes). Maybe it could be a warm-up with some response questions?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NgdnsjPFNE

2. *Primary Source Work: Using a strategy appropriate for your students, unpack this brief document—the original June 19th order informing enslaved people of their freedom—and pay special attention to the highlighted sentence. Ask students to discuss its significance, and to analyze the purpose of the highlighted sentence, as well as problems it might foreshadow. This could lead to a discussion of sharecropping, Jim Crow laws, and other segregationist practices.*

History of June 19, 1865

Transcript: “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 personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. **The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages.** They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.” - U.S. Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger, “General Order No. 3”



- The Galveston Tri-Weekly News, which printed General Order No. 3 on June 20, 1865, the day after it was issued. *Texas Newspaper Collection, Briscoe Center for American History, UT Austin*

[I can't for the life of me find any primary sources of formerly enslaved people who were freed on Juneteenth, but this link has lots of testimonials from from WPA interviews in the 1930s; it might be an interesting thing to look at:

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai/identity/text2/slavetofreenarr.pdf>

[\https://nmaahc.si.edu/object/nmaahc_2018.105.9?destination=/explore/collection/search%3Fedan_q%3D%252A%253A%252A%26edan_fq%255B0%255D%3Dtopic%253A%2522Emancipation%2522%26edan_fq%255B1%255D%3Dtopic%253A%2522U.S.%2520History%252C%2520Civil%2520War%252C%25201861-1865%2522

^No. 2594: "Contrabands" made happy by employment as army teamsters. This shows a glimpse of their first "free" home; being their winter quarters near City Point, Va.

- Could be a tie-in to the mention of contraband camps in the Crash Course video]

3. *Connecting the aftermath and Reconstruction to the present day: read speeches by Opal Lee and Joe Biden, and discuss how they connect to the original General Orders No. 3 document from Step 2. When Biden said “the emancipation of Black Americans didn’t mark the end of America’s work to deliver on the promise of equality,” what did he mean? How does Juneteenth*

commemorate both the “end” of something, and the “beginning” of further work toward equality?

Aftermath–Reconstruction and Later

Explicitly draw connection to slavery

How much can we assume that the students will know about Reconstruction? Presumably high schoolers who’ve taken U.S. History will have some familiarity with it? Reminders to jog memory.

Callback to “The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed[...]that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere” from earlier

Maybe get a passage from *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander? Probably too difficult for middle schoolers, but high schoolers could probably get something out of it.

What made it become a federal holiday?

“Hello, I am Opal Lee from Fort Worth, TX and I am 94 years old. I want Juneteenth to be recognized as a National Holiday. Yes, Juneteenth originated in TX, but 47 states now have it as a state day of observance to commemorate the ending of slavery and more are making it a paid day off including Virginia, New York, and Texas. I believe Juneteenth can be a unifier because it recognizes that slaves didn't free themselves and that they had help, from Quakers along the Underground Railroad, abolitionists both black and white like Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, soldiers and many others who gave their lives for the freedom of the enslaved.

I started a walking campaign to Washington, DC [in] 2016 and have continued it to bring awareness to the fact that there is support for it all across this nation. There is legislation[...] - Juneteenth National Independence Day Act - that just needs to be passed into law.

It is not lost on me that the summer of 2020 saw the largest support of Juneteenth to be a national holiday because[...]the death of George Floyd highlighted the systemic racism that still exists because of the residual effects of slavery. We can't let the swell of support just simply disappear until the summer rolls around again. We have [to] make sure Congress follows through with their commitment to honor the lives of those who came before us.” -Opal Lee, the “Grandmother of Juneteenth.” Petition on change.org,

“One hundred and fifty-six years ago — one hundred and fifty-six years — June 19th, 1865[...]a major general of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation

Proclamation and free the last enslaved Americans in Texas from bondage. A day, as you all know — I'm going to repeat some of what was said — that became known as Juneteenth. You all know that. A day that reflects what the Psalm tell[s] us: 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'

[...]

You know, I said a few weeks ago, marking the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre, great nations don't ignore their most painful moments. Great nations don't ignore their most painful moments. They don't ignore those moments of the past. They embrace them. Great nations don't walk away. We come to terms with the mistakes we made. And in remembering those moments, we begin to heal and grow stronger.

The truth is, it's not — simply not enough just to commemorate Juneteenth. After all, the emancipation of enslaved Black Americans didn't mark the end of America's work to deliver on the promise of equality; it only marked the beginning.

To honor the true meaning of Juneteenth, we have to continue toward that promise because we've not gotten there yet." -President Joe Biden, Remarks at the signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act (June 17, 2021)

Summarizers: I used to think, now I think

Turn and talk