

Texas Today *Advanced*

Unit 8: Civil War

Name:

Date:

Period:

Part I: Emancipation and the Legacy of Juneteenth

One of the lasting legacies of the Civil War in Texas is the celebration of the day that news of emancipation arrived in the Lone Star State. Although Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation more than two years earlier in 1863, Southern states in rebellion had not freed their slaves, and the enslaved people in Texas had remained in bondage.

When Confederate General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House, Virginia on April 9, 1865, the rest of the Confederacy quickly collapsed. Two months later, Union troops arrived at Galveston, Texas, to officially announce and enforce the emancipation of Black Texans.

The announcement was called General Order Number 3 and was delivered by U.S. Major General Gordon Granger. Read the order below and answer the questions that follow.

General Orders No. 3

Headquarters District of Texas
Galveston, Tex. June 19, 1865

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.

By Order of Major-General Granger.

F. W. Emery
Major and Assistant Adjutant General

- A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1896.
Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

1. What was the purpose of General Order Number 3?
2. What did the order encourage the freed people to do?
3. What did the order warn the freed people not to do?
4. Why do you think General Order Number 3 included these suggestions you described in numbers 2 and 3?

Part II: Juneteenth Today

<p>General Order Number 3 freed approximately 250,000 Black Texans from slavery on June 19, 1865. In the years that followed, Black Texans and advocates of equality held celebrations on the anniversary of the announcement of General Order Number 3.</p> <p>Some of the first celebrations included political rallies and educational events to teach the freed people about their rights as American citizens.</p> <p>In 1865, the United States government created an organization called the Freedmen’s Bureau to provide services like education, legal assistance, family reunification, and medical care to the newly freed people. The Freedmen’s Bureau in Texas organized the first Juneteenth celebration at the state capital in Austin in 1867.</p> <p>Over time, Juneteenth celebrations have come to include public entertainment, music, picnics, and family reunions. Some communities across Texas organized Emancipation Committees and saved money to buy land on which to hold their celebrations, often calling the land they purchased “Emancipation Park.”</p> <p>In 1979, more than a century after the Civil War ended, the Texas legislature accepted a bill declaring Juneteenth a state holiday. Then in the 1980s, a Fort Worth educator named Opal Lee began a quest to get Juneteenth recognized as a national holiday.</p> <p>Forty years later, Lee’s dream was realized. In 2021, President Joseph Biden signed a law establishing Juneteenth as a national holiday. Opal Lee was present at the signing of the bill.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was the significance of General Order Number 3 in Texas? 2. How did Black Texans and advocates of equality celebrate General Order Number 3 after the Civil War? 3. What was the Freedmen’s Bureau and what role did it play in Juneteenth celebrations? 4. How do many people celebrate and honor Juneteenth today? 5. How was Opal Lee significant to the history of Juneteenth?
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