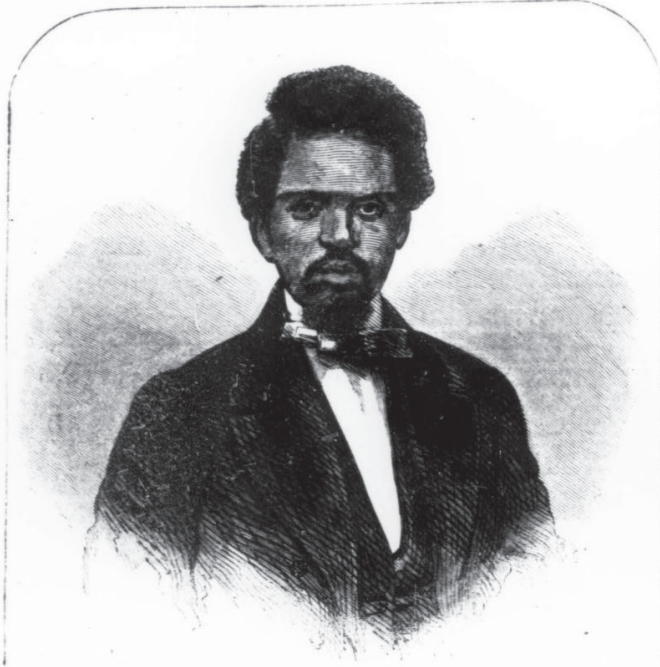


Emancipation and Juneteenth, 1862–1865

372

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

[JUNE 14, 1862.]



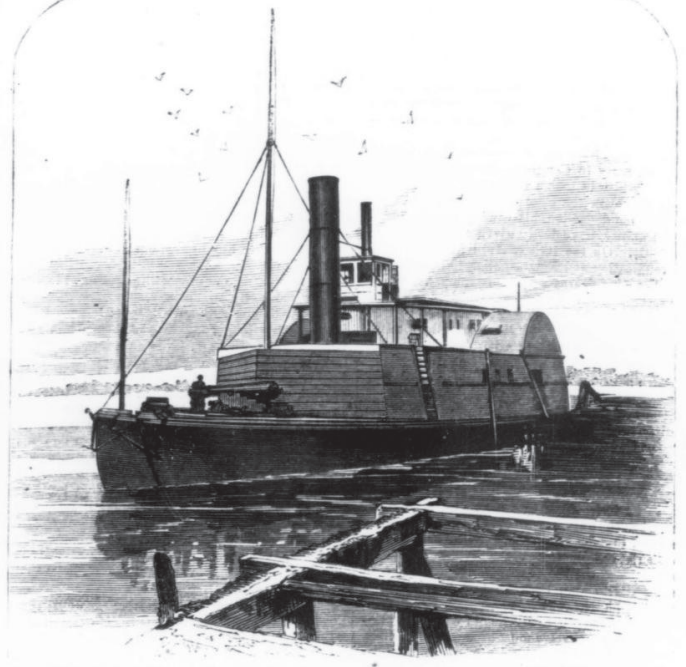
ROBERT SMALLS, CAPTAIN OF THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER."

THE STEAMER "PLANTER" AND HER CAPTOR.

WE publish herewith an engraving of the steamer *Planter*, lately run out of Charleston by her negro crew, and a portrait of her captain, ROBERT SMALLS—both from photographs sent us by our correspondent at Hilton Head. The following, from the *Herald* correspondence, will explain the transaction:

One of the most daring and heroic adventures since the war commenced was undertaken and successfully accomplished by a party of negroes in Charleston on Monday night last. Nine colored men, comprising the pilot, engineers, and crew of the rebel gun-boat *Planter*, took the vessel under their exclusive control, passed the batteries and forts in Charleston harbor, hoisted a white flag, ran out to the blockading squadron, and thence to Port Royal, via St. Helena Sound and Broad River, reaching the flagship *Wabash* shortly after ten o'clock last evening.

The following are the names of the black men who performed this gallant and perilous service: Robert Smalls, pilot; John Smalls and Alfred Girdline, engineers; Abraham Jackson, Gabriel Turner, William Morrison, Samuel Childs, Abraham Allston, and David Jones. They brought with them the wife and three children of the pilot, and the wife, child, and sister of the first engineer, John Smalls. The balance of the party were without families. The *Planter* is a high-pressure, side-wheel steamer, one hundred and forty feet in length, and about fifty feet beam, and draws about five feet of water. She was built in Charleston, was formerly used as a cotton-boat, and is capable of carrying about 150 bales. On the organization of the Confederate navy she was transformed into a gun-boat, and was the most valuable war vessel the Confederates had at Charleston. Her armament consisted of one 35-pound rifle gun forward, and a 24-pound howitzer aft. Besides, she had on board when she came into the harbor one seven-inch rifled gun, one eight-inch Columbiad, one eight-inch howitzer, one long 35-pounder, and about two hundred rounds of ammunition, which had been consigned to Fort Ripley, and which would have been delivered at that fortification on Tuesday had not the designs of the rebel authorities been frustrated. She was commanded



THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER," RUN OUT OF CHARLESTON, S. C., BY ROBERT SMALLS, MAY, 1862.

by Captain Relay, of the Confederate navy—all the other employés of the vessel, excepting the first and second mates, being persons of color.

Robert Smalls, with whom I had a brief interview at General Benham's head-quarters this morning, is an intelligent negro, born in Charleston, and employed for many years as a pilot in and about that harbor. He entered upon his duties on board the *Planter* some six weeks since, and, as he told me, adopted the idea of running the vessel to sea from a joke which one of his companions perpetrated. He immediately cautioned the crew against alluding to the matter in any way on board the boat, but asked them, if they wanted to talk it up in sober earnestness, to meet at his house, where they would devise and determine upon a plan to place themselves under the protection of the Stars and Stripes instead of the Stars and Bars. Various plans were proposed, but finally the whole arrangement of the escape was left to the discretion and sagacity of Robert, his companions promising to obey him and be ready at a moment's notice to accompany him. For three days he kept the provisions of the party secreted in the hold, awaiting an opportunity to slip away. At length, on Monday evening, the white officers of the vessel went on shore to spend the night, intending to start

on the following morning for Fort Ripley, and to be absent from the city for some days. The families of the contrabands were notified and came stealthily on board. At about three o'clock the fires were lit under the boilers, and the vessel steamed quietly away down the harbor. The tide was against her, and Fort Sumter was not reached till broad daylight. However, the boat passed directly under its walls, giving the usual signal—two long pulls and a jerk at the whistle-cord—as she passed the sentinel.

Once out of range of the rebel guns the white flag was raised, and the *Planter* steamed directly for the blockading steamer *Albatross*. Captain Parrott, of the latter vessel, as you may imagine, received them cordially, heard their report, placed Acting-Master Watson, of his ship, in charge of the *Planter*, and sent the Confederate gun-boat and crew forward to Commodore Dupont. The families of the crew have been sent to Beaufort, where General Stevens will make suitable provision for them. The crew will be taken care of by Commodore Dupont.

The *Planter* is just such a vessel as is needed to navigate the shallow waters between Hilton Head and the adjacent islands, and will prove almost invaluable to the Government. It is proposed, I hear, by the Commodore,

"The Steamer 'Planter' and Her Captor" Harper's Weekly, June 14, 1862. (Internet Archive)

Emancipation and Juneteenth, 1862–1865

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

Jason Butler is a professional learning specialist supporting K–12 social studies instruction in a large, Atlanta-area school district. Butler taught social studies, English literature, and Spanish for fourteen years.

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: Five or six 45-minute class periods

UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. These skills will enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate documents and other resources of historical significance.

The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth. Students will read documents written by military and political leaders as well as a newspaper report and the recollections of eyewitnesses. They will also look at illustrations. You will assess students’ understanding through an essay in which they make the case for a particular date as the best commemoration of the end of slavery.

Students will be able to

- Analyze primary source documents
- Summarize the meaning of primary source texts
- Infer meaning from primary source texts
- Answer critical thinking questions related to the texts
- Use evidence from texts to formulate arguments or support interpretations
- Explain the historical context of a national holiday (e.g., Juneteenth)
- Explain the causes and agents of social and political change (e.g., emancipation)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How did enslaved people free themselves?
- How was emancipation enacted and protected by government authorities?
- What legal and military actions formalized emancipation?
- What obstacles prevented the immediate enactment of emancipation?

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9: Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.B: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Excerpt from “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor” *Harper’s Weekly*, June 14, 1862. Available from the Internet Archive, archive.org/details/sim_harpers-magazine_1862-06-14_6_285/page/372/mode/2up.
- Activity Sheet 1: Text Analysis: “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor”
- Source 2: Abraham Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, 1863
 - o The Emancipation Proclamation, designed by F. S. Butler, printed by L. Nagel, San Francisco, CA, 1864, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00742
 - o Transcript of the Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863, *Featured Documents*, Online Exhibits, National Archives, archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation
- Source 3: Joint Resolution Proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, February 1, 1865, *Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789–2011*; General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11. Washington, National Archives, catalog.archives.gov/id/1408764
- Activity Sheet 2: Compare and Contrast: The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment
- Source 4: Frederick Dielman, “Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia by the Colored People, in Washington,” *Harper’s Weekly*, May 12, 1866, p. 300, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733
- Source 5: Adalbert John Volck, “Writing the Emancipation Proclamation,” *Confederate War Etchings*, Baltimore, ca. 1880–1890 (orig. 1863), The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00493.03

- o Details in Adalbert John Volck's "Writing the Emancipation Proclamation" from the Gilder Lehrman Collection catalog
- Source 6: J. L. Magee, "Emancipation," Philadelphia, 1865, The Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, The Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolnia, [loc.gov/item/scsm000336/](https://www.loc.gov/item/scsm000336/)
- Activity Sheet 3: News Conference
- Source 7: Historical Background: "The Origins of Juneteenth" by Graham Hodges, George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana and Latin American Studies, Colgate University
- Source 8: General Order No. 3, Headquarters, District of Texas, Galveston, TX, June 19, 1865, Records of US Army Continental Commands, 1817–1947, National Archives and Records Administration, catalog.archives.gov/id/182778372
- Source 9: Excerpt from an interview with Ella Washington from *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves*, vol 16: *Texas, Part 4* (Washington DC: 1941), pp. 132–133. Interview conducted ca. 1936–1938, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mesn164/>.
- Source 10: Lucius Stebbins, "Reading the Emancipation Proclamation," Hartford, Connecticut, 1864, based on a painting by Henry W. Herrick, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC07595
- Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: The Historical Background, General Order No. 3, Ella Washington Interview, and "Reading the Emancipation Proclamation"
- Source 11: Selected Dates in the History of the Abolition of Slavery
- Activity Sheet 5: Interrogating the Sources: When Did Slavery End?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE ORIGINS OF JUNETEENTH

by Graham Hodges, Colgate University

Juneteenth is the most widely recognized, long-lived Black commemoration of slavery's demise. Juneteenth marks June 19, 1865, when federal troops commanded by General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to proclaim freedom to the state's Black residents. The Emancipation Proclamation itself, ending slavery in the Confederacy (at least on paper), had taken effect two and a half years before, and in the interim, close to 200,000 Black men had enlisted in the fight. As one former enslaved man recalled, "the 19th of June wasn't the exact day the Negro was freed. But that's the day they told them that they was free. . . . And my daddy told me that they whooped and hollered and bored holes in trees with augers and stopped it up with [gun] powder and light and that would be their blast for the celebration."¹

Celebrations continued in 1866 with church services where ministers and educators reminded parishioners of the solemn beauty of the occasion, of their duty as emerging citizens, and their profound right in the pursuit of legal equality, themes that continue to resonate in Juneteenth commemorations. Juneteenth quickly became a counternarrative to the displays of Confederate glorification of the Lost Cause.

Juneteenth pageants reminded audiences of slavery and revolts, the sorrow songs, abolitionism, Abraham Lincoln and John Brown, the Underground Railroad, Booker T. Washington, and northern philanthropy. Photographs of Juneteenth depict Black Civil War veterans, some in uniform. Pageants in the early twentieth century marking Juneteenth included "Born to be Free." Even in a time of Jim Crow and violent terrorism, spirituals such as "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" infused hope in dark times. Juneteenth celebrants enjoyed picnics, barbecues, and baseball games and other sports. They decorated carts and later automobiles with flowers.

After a lull in such festivities in the World War II period, Juneteenth's spread was amplified by the migration of Black Texans across the nation. After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the organizers of the Poor People's March connected their effort with Juneteenth. The march ended with a ceremony attended by about 50,000 at the Lincoln Memorial on June 19, 1968. In 1973, the Reverend C. Anderson Davis, former president of the Houston NAACP, began a campaign to revive Juneteenth as "Emancipation Day" in Texas. The Black Lives Matter movement further pushed the significance of Juneteenth and led to the establishment of a federal holiday in 2021.

Graham Hodges is the George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana and Latin American Studies at Colgate University. He is the author of Slavery, Freedom, and Culture (1998), Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613–1863 (1999), and Black New Jersey: 1664 to the Present Day (2018).

¹ Elizabeth H. Turner, "Juneteenth: Emancipation and Memory," in Gregg Cantrell, Elizabeth H. Turner, and W. F. Brundage, *Lone Star Past: Memory and History in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), pp. 143–175.

LESSON 1

SELF-LIBERATION, 1862

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

OVERVIEW

In the first lesson, students will begin by exploring what they already know about individuals who freed themselves from slavery. They will then analyze an article describing the daring escape of Robert Smalls and others from enslavement during the Civil War, selecting important phrases and answering critical thinking questions.

Jason Butler is a professional learning specialist supporting K–12 social studies instruction in a large, Atlanta-area school district. Butler taught social studies, English literature, and Spanish for fourteen years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How did enslaved people free themselves?

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Excerpt from “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor” *Harper’s Weekly*, June 14, 1862. Available from the Internet Archive, archive.org/details/sim_harpers-magazine_1862-06-14_6_285/page/372/mode/2up.
- Activity Sheet 1: Text Analysis: “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor”

PROCEDURE

Pre-activity

1. This pre-activity serves as a pre-assessment to gauge student understanding and engage student interest.
2. Have students answer the essential question: How did enslaved people free themselves? They should draw upon previous class discussions and readings and might also generate ideas from books or movies about self-liberators like Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Henry Box Brown, or William and Ellen Craft.
3. Lead a discussion in which some students share their responses. Make sure to provide an environment in which students are engaging in civil discourse. If students provide answers that you consider problematic, take the opportunity to redirect students’ thinking by looking at the historical record or primary sources. Try to give your students food for thought that will help them understand and learn from the lessons that follow.

If students ask questions about why all enslaved people did not self-liberate, you might share with them some of these obstacles: Before Union troops occupied parts of the South,

- self-liberation required leaving children and other relatives with their enslavers
- the consequences of being caught included death and beating
- the surrounding White community was vigilant about returning enslaved people to the people who claimed them

- slaveholders routinely withheld literacy and information from enslaved people
- all White people—not just slaveholders—could claim a right to inspect or detain Black people
- enslaved people lacked property and money to fund their journey

Activity

1. Organize the class into small groups of three or four students.
2. Hand out copies of Source 1, excerpts from the *Harper's Weekly* article “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor.”
3. You may choose to have students read the excerpts for themselves or “share read” them with the class. This is done by having the students follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).
4. Hand out Activity Sheet 1: Text Analysis: “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor.” The groups should discuss the article and come to a consensus on their selected important phrases and responses to the questions.
5. When students have completed the activity sheet, have the groups share their conclusions.

LESSON 2

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION AND THE THIRTEENTH AMENDMENT, 1863–1865

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

OVERVIEW

In the second lesson, students will analyze two of the most significant documents that ended the institution of slavery in the United States: the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution. The students will examine the commonalities and differences in these two documents.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- How was emancipation enacted and protected by government authorities?

MATERIALS

- Source 2: Abraham Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, 1863
 - o The Emancipation Proclamation, designed by F. S. Butler, printed by L. Nagel, San Francisco, CA, 1864, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00742
 - o Transcript of the Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863, *Featured Documents*, Online Exhibits, National Archives, [archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation](https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation)
- Source 3: Joint Resolution Proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, February 1, 1865, *Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789–2011*; General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11. Washington, National Archives, catalog.archives.gov/id/1408764
- Activity Sheet 2: Compare and Contrast: The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment

PROCEDURE

1. Organize the class into small groups of three or four students.
2. Distribute Sources 2 and 3, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment.
3. You may choose to have students read the documents for themselves or share read them as described in Lesson 1.
4. Hand out Activity Sheet 2: Compare and Contrast: The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment. The students will examine both documents and use the Venn diagram and the critical thinking questions to identify what they share and how they differ. Each group should discuss their responses and come to a consensus.
5. When students have completed the activity sheet, ask the groups to share their conclusions.

Jason Butler is a professional learning specialist supporting K–12 social studies instruction in a large, Atlanta-area school district. Butler taught social studies, English literature, and Spanish for fourteen years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

LESSON 3

VISUAL MATERIALS TELL THE STORY, 1863–1866

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will analyze an engraving of a celebration of emancipation from a newspaper as a well as two political illustrations revealing strong perspectives on President Lincoln and the emancipation of enslaved people. They will then use a mock news conference activity to demonstrate their understanding.

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GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One or two 45-minute class periods

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How was emancipation enacted and protected by government authorities?
- What legal and military actions formalized emancipation?
- What obstacles prevented the immediate enactment of emancipation?

MATERIALS

- Source 4: Frederick Dielman, “Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia by the Colored People, in Washington,” *Harper's Weekly*, May 12, 1866, p. 300, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733
- Source 5: Adalbert John Volck, “Writing the Emancipation Proclamation,” *Confederate War Etchings*, Baltimore, ca. 1880–1890 (orig. 1863), The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00493.03
 - o Details in Adalbert John Volck's “Writing the Emancipation Proclamation” from the Gilder Lehrman Collection catalog
- Source 6: J. L. Magee, “Emancipation,” Philadelphia, 1865, The Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, The Alfred Whital Stern Collection of Lincolnia, loc.gov/item/scsm000336/
- Activity Sheet 3: News Conference

PROCEDURE

1. Organize the class into small groups of four to six students.
2. Share Source 4, the illustration of the 1866 emancipation celebration in Washington DC. Have students engage in a quick-write about what they would infer was going through the minds of those who were celebrating.

3. Lead a discussion in which some students share their responses. Because this is a compelling question with more than one valid potential response, be sure not to deem certain answers right or wrong. Ask them to explain their responses and point out places in the image that represent their point of view. This is a good opportunity to promote the skill of supporting a claim with evidence from primary sources.
4. News Conference Activity: Distribute the Magee and Volck images along with the News Conference activity sheet. Have the students study the images closely looking for details that indicate the illustrator's intent. Clues may include such elements as facial expressions, small details, and lighting, to create mood or tone.
5. Each group is assigned or chooses one of the images: "Emancipation" or "Writing the Emancipation Proclamation." The image by Magee, "Emancipation," is fairly straightforward. However, the Volck image is full of historically significant symbols, which are explained in a separate note. You may choose to share that note with the students who are working on the Volck image.
6. Students select who will represent the artist who created the illustration, and the rest of the group members will take the role of reporters at a news conference.
7. The members of each group will work together to create
 - a. A very brief statement by the artist: This should include the name of the artist, the name of the artwork, when it was created, and what it generally conveys.
 - b. Two or three questions for reporters to ask the artist to go deeper into the artist's message and highlight the meaning of the elements of the image. You may choose to have the students draft follow-up questions and answers.
 - c. The artist's response to each of the questions: The students should be careful to cite evidence from the image for the answers given by the artist. Discuss appropriate word choice with the students to steer them away from inflammatory language.
8. Presentation: If possible, have the students watch a recording of an actual news conference, preferably involving political or artistic issues, prior to this activity.
 - a. The student playing the artist delivers brief remarks introducing the illustration.
 - b. The reporters raise their hands and are selected by the artist, who answers their questions.
 - c. The "news conference" continues until all of the questions have been asked.
 - d. Repeat the process with all of the groups. This may mean going into another class period to allow time for all of the presentations, as well as time to debrief the experience.
 - e. Have the class debrief the presentations. Which were the most effective? What made them effective? How could the presentations have been improved?

LESSON 4

JUNETEENTH (1865)

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will read the Historical Background essay by historian Graham Hodges, and analyze General Order No. 3, which is the foundational document for Juneteenth; excerpts from an interview with a woman who was enslaved in Texas in June 1865; and a print, “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation.” Students will use a document analysis activity sheet for their examination of these sources.

Jason Butler is a professional learning specialist supporting K–12 social studies instruction in a large, Atlanta-area school district. Butler taught social studies, English literature, and Spanish for fourteen years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How was emancipation enacted and protected by government authorities?
- What legal and military actions formalized emancipation?
- What obstacles prevented the immediate enactment of emancipation?

MATERIALS

- Source 7: Historical Background: “The Origins of Juneteenth” by Graham Hodges, George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana and Latin American Studies, Colgate University
- Source 8: General Order No. 3, Headquarters, District of Texas, Galveston, TX, June 19, 1865, Records of US Army Continental Commands, 1817–1947, National Archives and Records Administration, catalog.archives.gov/id/182778372
- Source 9: Excerpt from an interview with Ella Washington from *Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States From Interviews with Former Slaves*, vol 16: Texas, Part 4 (Washington DC: 1941), pp. 132–133. Interview conducted ca. 1936–1938, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mesn164/>.
- Source 10: Lucius Stebbins, “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation,” Hartford, Connecticut, 1864, based on a painting by Henry W. Herrick, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC07595
- Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: The Historical Background, General Order No. 3, Ella Washington Interview, and “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation”

PROCEDURE

Pre-activity

1. Engage in a short class discussion on the creation of the Juneteenth federal holiday, officially called Juneteenth National Independence Day. The idea of a federal Juneteenth holiday was introduced in 1996 but wasn't officially recognized as a federal holiday until 2021.

Activity

1. Distribute Source 7, the Historical Background essay on Juneteenth. You may share read the essay with the class or have them read it silently to themselves.
2. Organize the class into small groups of three or four students.
3. Distribute Sources 8, 9, and 10, which include General Order No. 3, an interview with a woman who had been born into slavery, and a print showing a soldier reading the Emancipation Proclamation to an African American family.
4. Students might have questions about how Ella Washington's oral history came into being, and why it dates from the 1930s (published in 1941). During the New Deal, the federal government hired American writers, folklorists, and ethnographers to interview the last living people who had been enslaved. The interviewers were sometimes White people and sometimes Black people. Sometimes the name of the interviewer is recorded, and sometimes it is not; in this case it is not available. Interviewers recorded the narratives and then transcribed them. Therefore, the use of dialect might be attributed to the speaker (Washington), or it might have been exaggerated by the interviewer. This is one person's memory, it is not representative of all slaveholders' and enslaved people's reactions, but it does show possible reactions to the end of the Civil War and abolition.
5. Hand out Activity Sheet 4: Text Analysis: The Historical Background, General Order No. 3, Ella Washington Interview, and "Reading the Emancipation Proclamation." This activity sheet pulls together all the sources used in this lesson. They will pull one important phrase from each of the texts (the secondary source essay and the two primary sources) and then answer the critical thinking questions examining the print in light of the other sources they read.
6. When students have completed the activity sheet, have the groups share their conclusions.

LESSON 5

ENACTING EMANCIPATION: WHEN DID SLAVERY END?

BY JASON BUTLER (CREATED 2022, REVISED 2024)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will wrestle with the compelling question of what date should be commemorated as the end of slavery. Practicing the skill of historical argumentation, they will choose several dates and justify why each of them could be an appropriate response to the question.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How did enslaved people free themselves?
- How was emancipation enacted and protected by government authorities?
- What legal and military actions formalized emancipation?
- What obstacles prevented the immediate enactment of emancipation?

MATERIALS

- Source 1: Excerpt from “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor” *Harper’s Weekly*, June 14, 1862
- Activity Sheet 1: Text Analysis: “The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor”
- Source 2: Abraham Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, 1863
- Source 3: Joint Resolution Proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, February 1, 1865
- Activity Sheet 2: Compare and Contrast: The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment
- Source 4: Frederick Dielman, “Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia by the Colored People, in Washington,” *Harper’s Weekly*, May 12, 1866
- Source 5: Adalbert John Volck, “Writing the Emancipation Proclamation,” *Confederate War Etchings*, Baltimore, ca. 1880–1890 (orig. 1863)
- Source 6: J. L. Magee, “Emancipation,” Philadelphia, 1865
- Activity Sheet 3: News Conference
- Source 7: Historical Background: “The Origins of Juneteenth” by Graham Hodges, George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana and Latin American Studies, Colgate University

Jason Butler is a professional learning specialist supporting K–12 social studies instruction in a large, Atlanta-area school district. Butler taught social studies, English literature, and Spanish for fourteen years.

GRADE LEVELS: 7–12

RECOMMENDED TIME FOR COMPLETION: One 45-minute class period

UNIT OVERVIEW: This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ (TLTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. Students will learn and practice skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual primary and secondary source materials. The five lessons in this unit explore the avenues by which emancipation was enacted, providing a context for the federal holiday of Juneteenth.

- Source 8: General Order No. 3, 1865
- Source 9: Excerpt from an interview with Ella Washington, ca. 1936–1938
- Source 10: Lucius Stebbins, “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation,” Hartford, Connecticut, 1864
- Activity Sheet 4: Critical Thinking Questions: The Historical Background, General Order No. 3, Ella Washington Interview, and “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation”
- Source 11: Selected Dates in the History of the Abolition of Slavery
- Activity Sheet 5: Interrogating the Sources: When Did Slavery End?

PROCEDURE

Pre-activity

1. Ask students the question, “If it stopped raining at your house at 6:00 p.m., stopped raining at your friend’s apartment at 6:30 p.m., and stopped raining at your cousin’s house at 7:00 p.m., when would you say it stopped raining?” Allow 30–60 seconds for students to think. Lead a share-out in which students provide their answer along with the justification for their answer. Today’s activity will engage the students in thinking about when slavery ended.
2. Distribute Source 11: Selected Dates in the History of the Abolition of Slavery. The question of when slavery ended in the United States may not be as straightforward as it seems. Use this chronology to engage the students in a discussion of why this question is not as simple as it may first appear.
3. Questions to consider asking your students to enhance the rigor of their thinking:
 - Was abolishing slavery in a place like Connecticut (where slavery was rare) as significant as abolishing slavery in Virginia, a state with a high enslaved population?
 - How significant were laws that banned the importation of slaves? Were they the beginning of the end of slavery?
 - Although this activity focuses on laws of abolition or emancipation, are there other key events or milestones that could be considered as key steps in the end of slavery?

Be sure to ask students to provide evidence from the texts for their responses.

4. Lead a share-out in which students argue that different dates could be celebrated as the end of slavery in the United States. They should support their arguments with evidence from the documents.
5. Revisit the question you asked at the beginning of the pre-activity. Have the students changed their responses and if so, why?

Activity

1. Students will need access to all of the sources from the prior lessons. Encourage students to use the activity sheets from the other lessons as research notes for their essay.
2. Essay Question: “What date should be celebrated as the end of slavery in the United States?”


Optional enrichment

After the whole-group share-out, lead a Four Corners activity in which students consider, debate, and settle on various responses to the question, “What date should be celebrated as the end of slavery in the United States?”

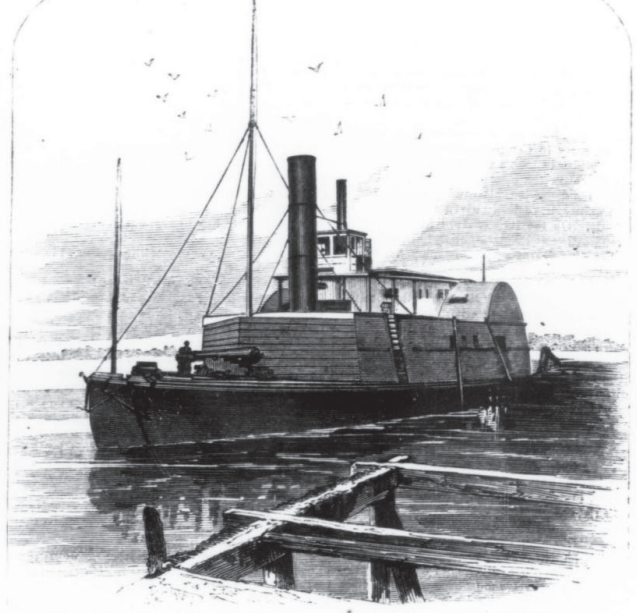
1. Tally the leading four dates chosen by the students.
2. Label each corner of your room to represent one of those four dates.
3. Ask students to stand in the corner whose date is most aligned with their opinion.
4. Allow the students gathered in each corner to discuss the reason their date is the best answer.
5. Have one spokesperson from each corner share the group's position.
6. Ask students if any of them would like to move to another corner. You may ask them to share their thinking as they consider altering their original position.
7. Students who have changed their minds will move to another corner. If they are unsure, they can stand halfway between two corners.

Source 1: Excerpts from "The Steamer 'Planter' and Her Captor," 1862

372 HARPER'S WEEKLY. [JUNE 14, 1862.]



ROBERT SMALLS, CAPTAIN OF THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER"



THE GUN-BOAT "PLANTER," RUN OUT OF CHARLESTON, S. C., BY ROBERT SMALLS, MAY, 1862.

THE STEAMER "PLANTER" AND HER CAPTOR.

We publish herewith an engraving of the steamer *Planter*, lately run out of Charleston by her negro crew, and a portrait of her captain, ROBERT SMALLS—both from photographs sent us by our correspondent at Hilton Head. The following, from the *Herald* correspondence, will explain the transaction:

One of the most daring and heroic adventures since the war commenced was undertaken and successfully accomplished by a party of negroes in Charleston on Monday night last. Nine colored men, comprising the pilot, engineers, and crew of the rebel gun-boat *Planter*, took the vessel under their exclusive control, passed the batteries and forts in Charleston harbor, hoisted a white flag, ran out to the blockading squadron, and thence to Port Royal, via St. Helena Sound and Broad River, reaching the flagship *Wabash* shortly after ten o'clock last evening.

The following are the names of the black men who performed this gallant and perilous service: Robert Smalls, pilot; John Smalls and Alfred Gradine, engineers; Abraham Jackson, Gabriel Turno, William Morrison, Samuel Chisholm, Abraham Allston, and David Jones. They brought with them the wife and three children of the pilot, and the wife, child, and sister of the first engineer, John Smalls. The balance of the party were without families.

The *Planter* is a high-pressure, side-wheel steamer, one hundred and forty feet in length, and about fifty feet beam, and draws about five feet of water. She was built in Charleston, was formerly used as a cotton-boat, and is capable of carrying about 1,000 bales. On the organization of the Confederate navy she was transformed into a gun-boat, and was the most valuable war vessel the Confederates had at Charleston. Her armament consisted of one 32-pound rifle gun forward, and a 24-pound howitzer aft. Besides, she had on board when she came into the harbor one seven-inch rifled gun, one eight-inch Columbiad, one eight-inch howitzer, one long 32-pounder, and about two hundred rounds of ammunition, which had been consigned to Fort Ripley, and which would have been delivered at that fortification on Tuesday had not the designs of the rebel authorities been frustrated. She was commanded by Captain Relay, of the Confederate navy—all the other employes of the vessel, excepting the first and second mates, being persons of color.

Robert Smalls, with whom I had a brief interview at General Benham's headquarters this morning, is an intelligent negro, born in Charleston, and employed for many years as a pilot in and about that harbor. He entered upon his duties on board the *Planter* some six weeks since, and, as he told me, adopted the idea of running the vessel to sea from a joke which one of his companions perpetrated. He immediately cautioned the crew against alluding to the matter in any way on board the boat, but asked them, if they wanted to talk it up in sober earnestness, to meet at his house, where they would devise and determine upon a plan to place themselves under the protection of the Stars and Stripes instead of the Stars and Bars. Various plans were proposed, but finally the whole arrangement of the escape was left to the discretion and sagacity of Robert, his companions promising to obey him and be ready at a moment's notice to accompany him. For three days he kept the provisions of the party secreted in the hold, awaiting an opportunity to slip away. At length, on Monday evening, the white officers of the vessel went on shore to spend the night, intending to start on the following morning for Fort Ripley, and to be absent from the city for some days. The families of the contrabands were notified and came stealthily on board. At about three o'clock the fires were lit under the boilers, and the vessel steamed quietly away down the harbor. The tide was against her, and Fort Sumter was not reached till broad daylight. However, the boat passed directly under its walls, giving the usual signal—two long pulls and a jerk at the whistle-cord—as she passed the sentinel.

Once out of range of the rebel guns the white flag was raised, and the *Planter* steamed directly for the blockading steamer *Augusta*. Captain Parrott, of the latter vessel, as you may imagine, received them cordially, heard their report, placed Acting-Master Watson, of his ship, in charge of the *Planter*, and sent the Confederate gun-boat and crew forward to Commodore Dupont. The families of the crew have been sent to Beaufort, where General Stevens will make suitable provision for them. The crew will be taken care of by Commodore Dupont.

The *Planter* is just such a vessel as is needed to navigate the shallow waters between Hilton Head and the adjacent islands, and will prove almost invaluable to the Government. It is proposed, I hear, by the Commodore,

Transcript of "The Steamer 'Planter' and Her Captor"

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From Harper's Weekly, June 14, 1862, p. 372, Internet Archive, archive.org/details/sim_harpers-magazine_1862-06-14_6_285.

NAME

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Activity Sheet 1: Text Analysis
“The Steamer ‘Planter’ and Her Captor”

Important Phrases

Which phrases or sentences in the article are the most important or powerful? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

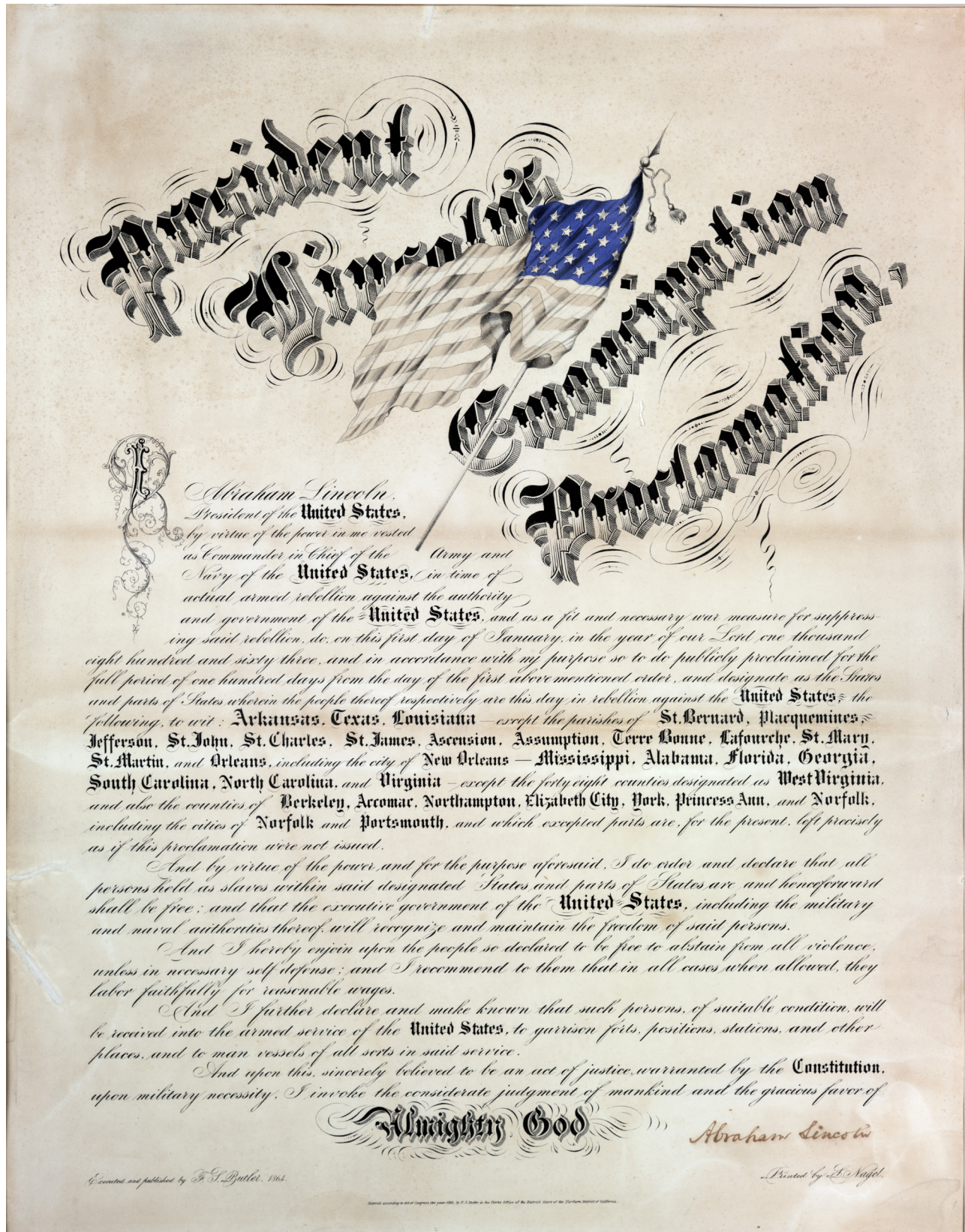
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Critical Thinking Questions

1. What were the critical steps in these formerly enslaved people’s self-liberation?

2. Why was the plan for their escape to freedom left up to Robert Smalls?

Source 2: The Emancipation Proclamation, 1863



F. S. Butler, The Emancipation Proclamation, San Francisco, 1864. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00742)

Transcript of the Emancipation Proclamation

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.

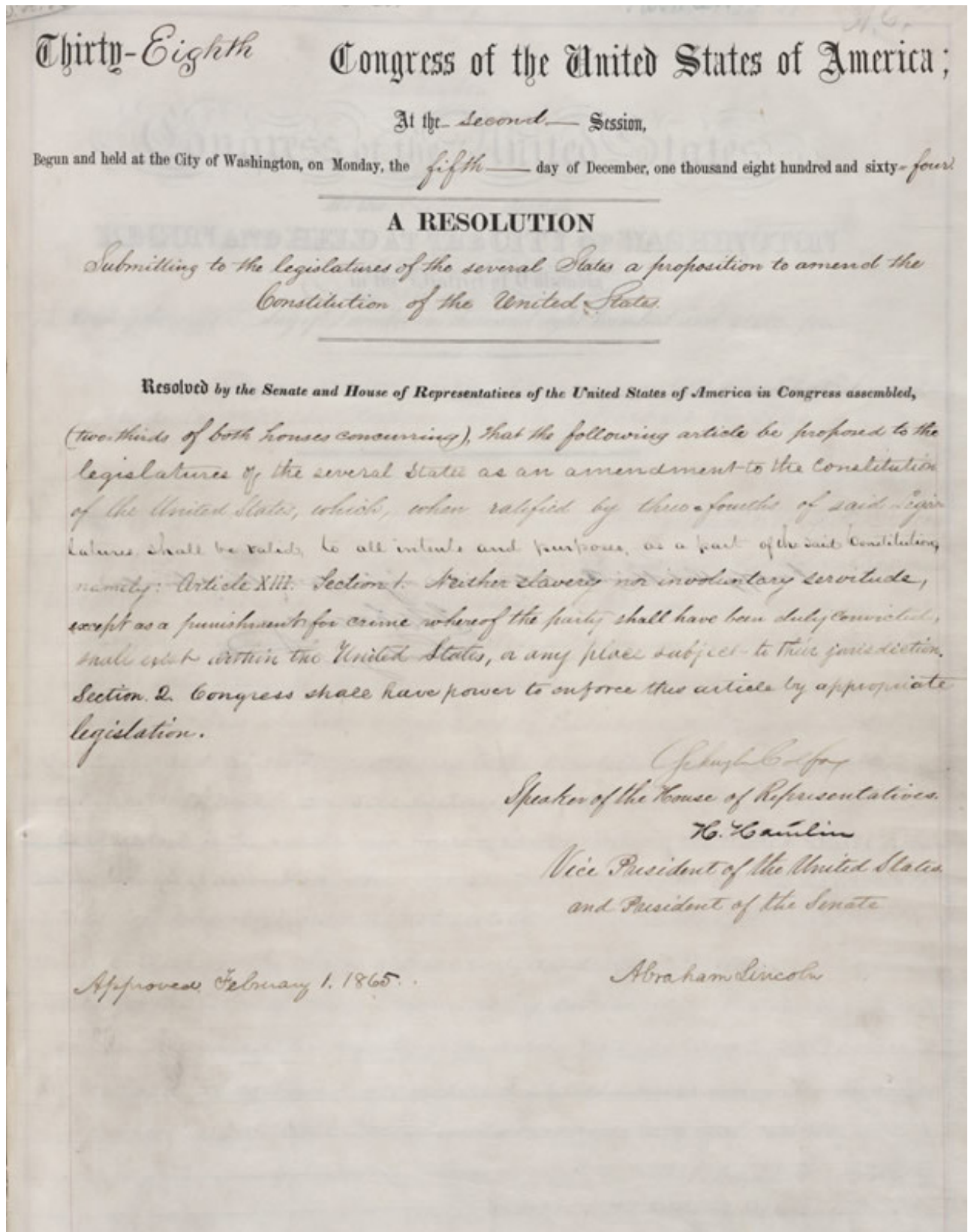
Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

From “The Emancipation Proclamation,” Featured Documents, Online Exhibits, National Archives, [archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation](https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation).

Source 3: Joint Resolution Proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, 1865



National Archives

Transcript of the Thirteenth Amendment Resolution

Thirty-Eighth Congress of the United States

At the Second Session

Begun and held at the City of Washington, on Monday, the fifth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four

A Resolution

Submitting to the legislatures of the several States a proposition to amend the
Constitution of the United States.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, (two-thirds of both houses concurring), that the following article be proposed to the legislatures of the several states as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of said Legislatures shall be valid, to all intents and purposes, as part of the said Constitution, namely: Article XIII. Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Schuyler Colfax
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Hannibal Hamlin
Vice President of the United States
and President of the Senate

Approved February 1, 1865

Abraham Lincoln

From Joint Resolution Proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, February 1, 1865, Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, 1789–2011; General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11. Washington, National Archives, catalog.archives.gov/id/1408764.

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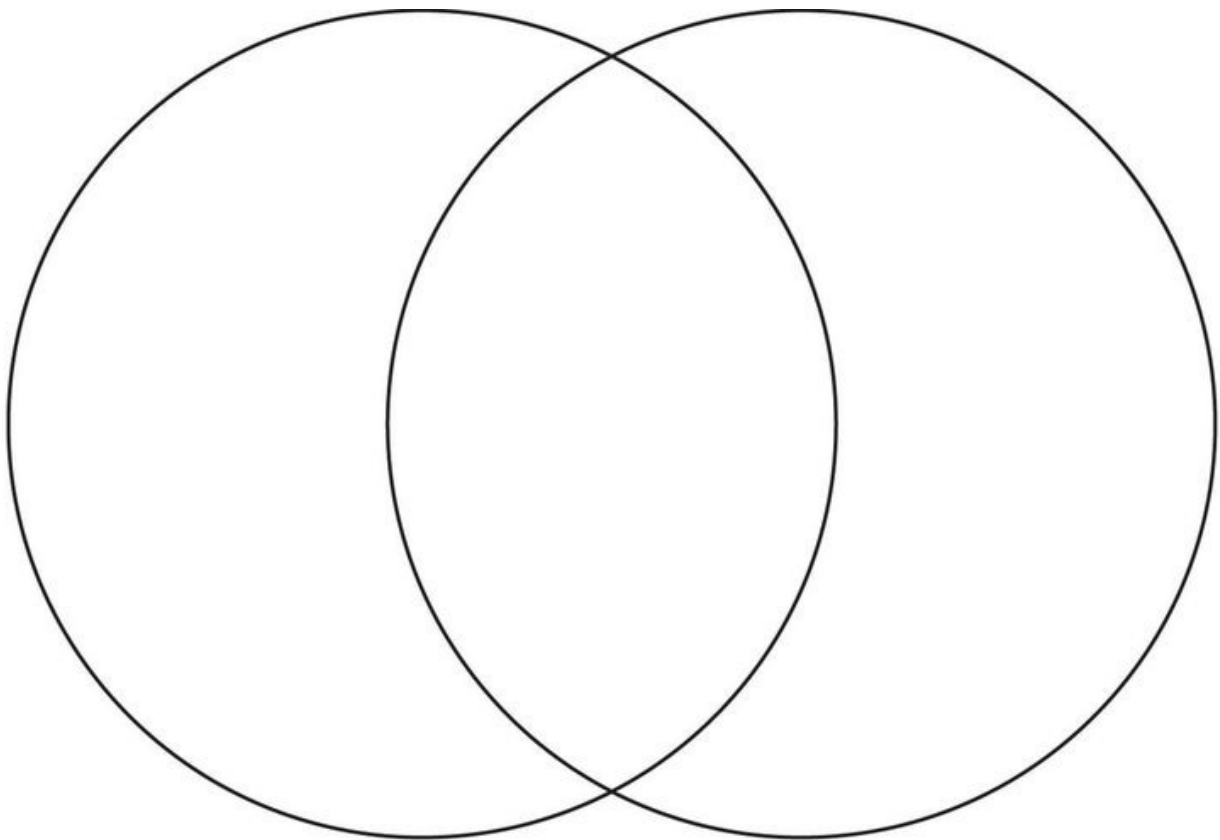
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Activity Sheet 2: Compare and Contrast
The Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment

Instructions: Use the Venn diagram to compare the two documents.

Emancipation Proclamation

Thirteenth Amendment



Critical Thinking Questions

1. What is the common theme of both documents?

2. What was the most significant contribution to the abolition of slavery in each document?

Source 4: "Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery," 1866



Frederick Dielman, "Celebration of the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia by the Colored People, in Washington," Harper's Weekly, May 12, 1866. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733)

Source 5: "Writing the Emancipation Proclamation" by Adalbert John Volck, 1863



Confederate War Etchings, Baltimore, ca. 1880–1890 (orig. 1863) (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC00493.03)

Details in Adalbert John Volck's "Writing the Emancipation Proclamation"

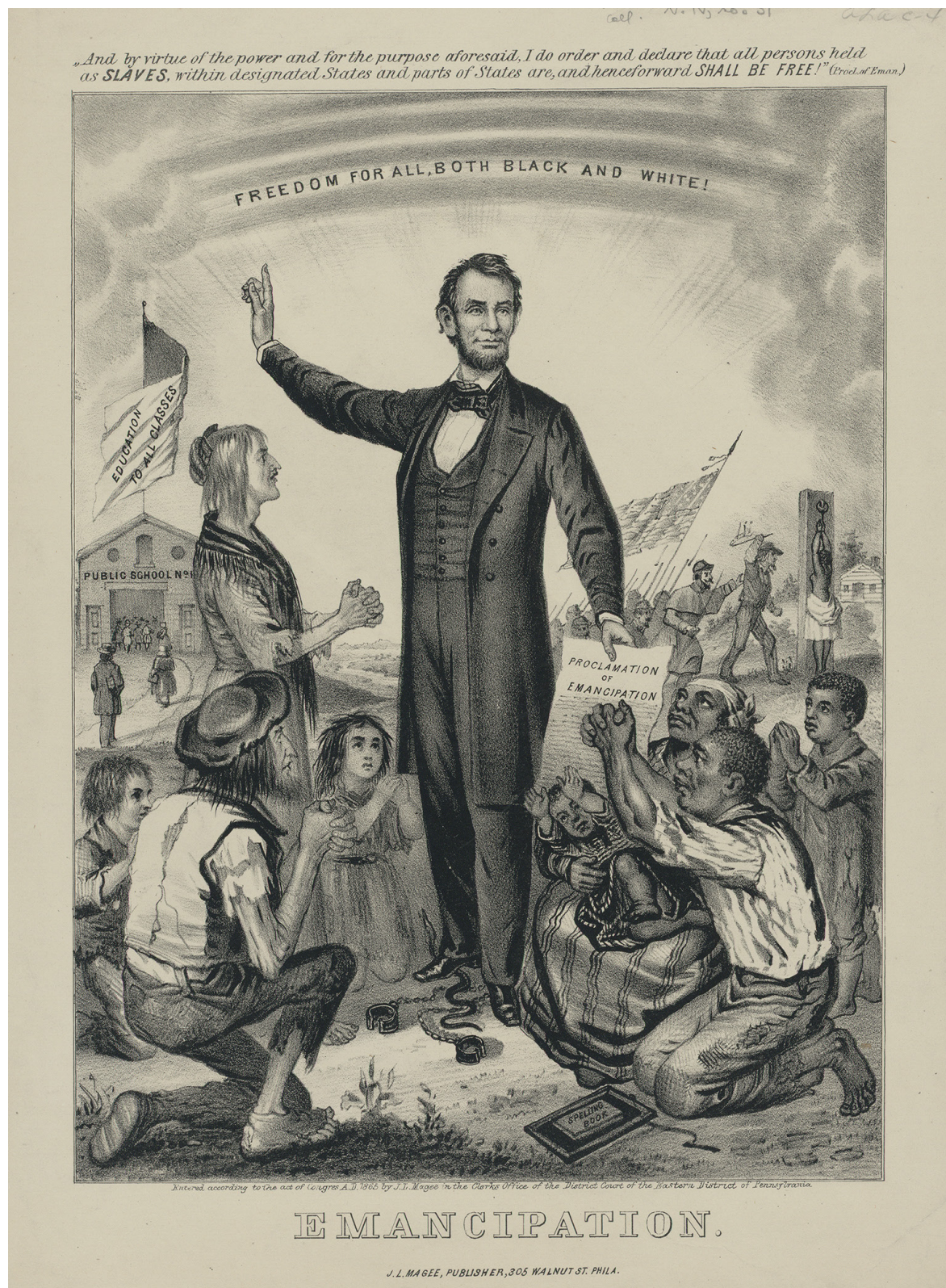
description from the Gilder Lehrman Collection catalog

- Lincoln writes the Emancipation Proclamation slumped in his chair, the back of which is carved to resemble the head of a donkey.
- Lincoln's foot sits on a copy of the US Constitution.
- Demon imagery is found throughout: the legs of the table are cloven hooves and the devil holds an inkwell.
- The curtain is held back with an ornament shaped like a vulture.
- The head of the statue representing Liberty is covered by a Scotch cap (a mask worn by prisoners that Lincoln was rumored to have used to sneak into Washington DC for his inauguration) to simulate a baboon.
- Paintings in the background depict John Brown as "St. Ossawatamie" and the slave rebellion on "St. Domingo."
 - o Ossawatamie is a reference to a battle at the town of Osawatomie, Kansas, in August 1856 when some 250 pro-slavery border ruffians attacked the free-soil town. John Brown defended the town with a few dozen men, but it was burned to the ground and his son, Frederick, was killed.

John Brown was a White abolitionist whose willingness to use violence to fight slavery, most notably in Kansas and Virginia, made him a hero to many Northerners and a villain to many Whites in the South.

 - o St. Domingo is a reference to Saint Domingue (the former name of Haiti). From 1791 to 1804, enslaved people of African descent revolted against their French colonial masters, resulting in the island nation's independence under Black leadership. A successful slave rebellion, especially one so close to American shores, frightened many White Americans, who feared similar developments in the United States.

Source 6: "Emancipation" by J. L. Magee, 1865



J. L. Magee, "Emancipation," Philadelphia, 1865. (The Library of Congress)

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

News Conference

Name of Subject

Artist's Statement:

Write your question here:	
Answer:	Evidence from the text:
Write your question here:	
Answer:	Evidence from the text:

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

Write your question here:	
Answer:	Evidence from the text:
Write your question here:	
Answer:	Evidence from the text:

Source 7: Historical Background The Origins of Juneteenth

by Graham Hodges, Colgate University

Juneteenth is the most widely recognized, long-lived Black commemoration of slavery's demise. Juneteenth marks June 19, 1865, when federal troops commanded by General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to proclaim freedom to the state's Black residents. The Emancipation Proclamation itself, ending slavery in the Confederacy (at least on paper), had taken effect two and a half years before, and in the interim, close to 200,000 Black men had enlisted in the fight. As one former enslaved man recalled, "the 19th of June wasn't the exact day the Negro was freed. But that's the day they told them that they was free. . . . And my daddy told me that they whooped and hollered and bored holes in trees with augers and stopped it up with [gun] powder and light and that would be their blast for the celebration."¹

Celebrations continued in 1866 with church services where ministers and educators reminded parishioners of the solemn beauty of the occasion, of their duty as emerging citizens, and their profound right in the pursuit of legal equality, themes that continue to resonate in Juneteenth commemorations. Juneteenth quickly became a counter-narrative to the displays of Confederate glorification of the Lost Cause.

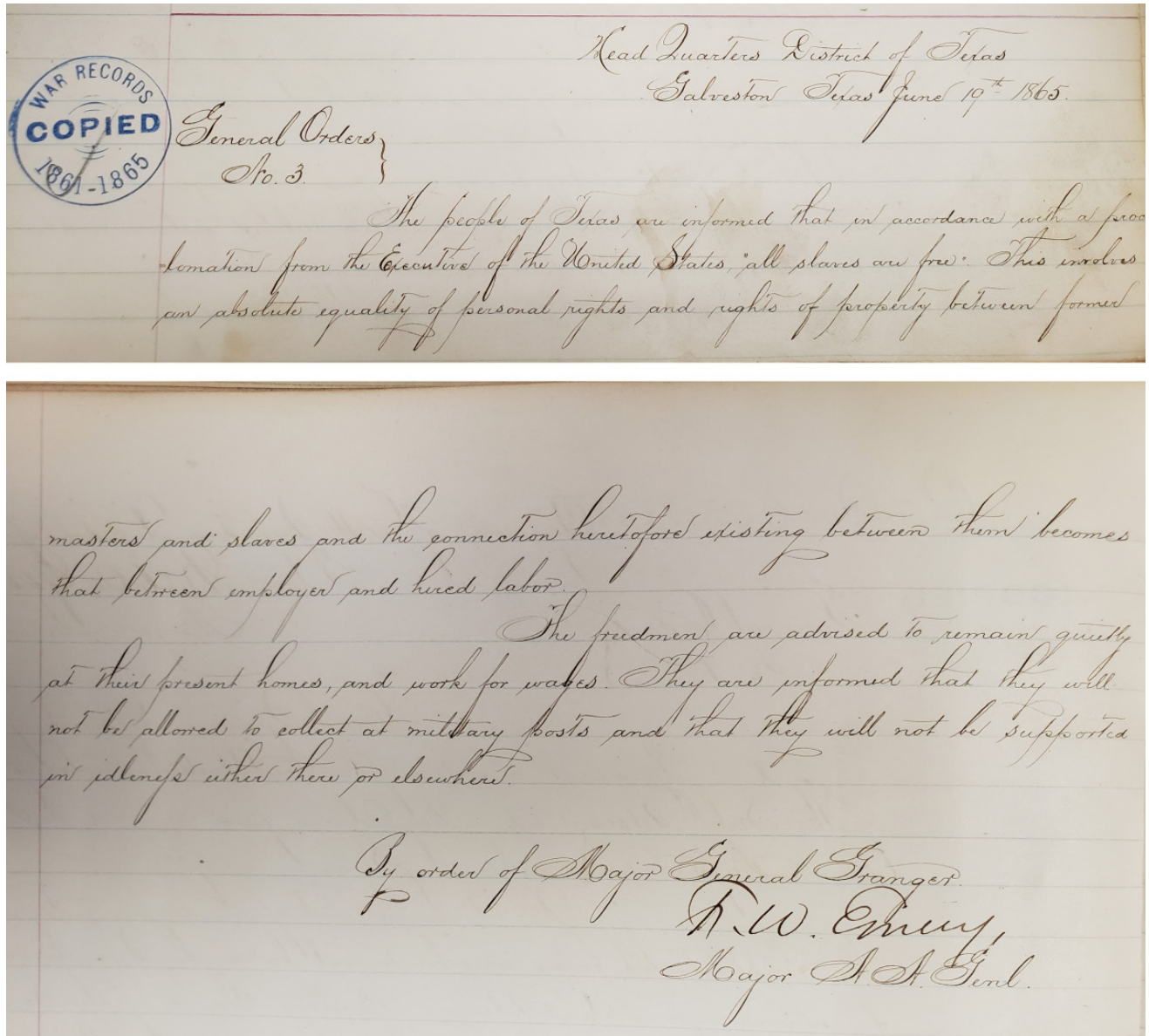
Juneteenth pageants reminded audiences of slavery and revolts, the sorrow songs, abolitionism, Abraham Lincoln and John Brown, the Underground Railroad, Booker T. Washington, and northern philanthropy. Photographs of Juneteenth depict Black Civil War veterans, some in uniform. Pageants in the early twentieth century marking Juneteenth included "Born to be Free." Even in a time of Jim Crow and violent terrorism, spirituals such as "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" infused hope in dark times. Juneteenth celebrants enjoyed picnics, barbecues, baseball games and other sports. They decorated carts and later automobiles with flowers.

After a lull in such festivities in the World War II period, Juneteenth's spread was amplified by the migration of Black Texans across the nation. After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the organizers of the Poor People's March connected their effort with Juneteenth. The march ended with a ceremony attended by about 50,000 at the Lincoln Memorial on June 19, 1968. In 1973, the Reverend C. Anderson Davis, former president of the Houston NAACP, began a campaign to revive Juneteenth as "Emancipation Day" in Texas. The Black Lives Matter movement further pushed the significance of Juneteenth and led to the establishment of a federal holiday in 2021.

Graham Hodges is the George Dorland Langdon Jr. Professor of History and Africana and Latin American Studies at Colgate University. He is the author of Slavery, Freedom, and Culture (1998), Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613–1863 (1999), and Black New Jersey: 1664 to the Present Day (2018).

¹ Elizabeth H. Turner, "Juneteenth: Emancipation and Memory," in Gregg Cantrell, Elizabeth H. Turner, and W. F. Brundage, *Lone Star Past: Memory and History in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), pp. 143–175.

Source 8: General Order No. 3, 1865



Records of US Army Continental Commands. (National Archives)

Transcript of General Order No. 3

Headquarters District of Texas

Galveston Texas June 19th 1865

General Orders

No. 3

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 A.A.Genl

From General Order No. 3, Headquarters, District of Texas, Galveston, TX, June 19, 1865, Records of US Army Continental Commands, 1817–1947, National Archives and Records Administration, catalog. [archives.gov/id/182778372](https://www.archives.gov/id/182778372).

Source 9: Excerpt from an Interview with Ella Washington, ca. 1936–1938

I heared everybody say a war goin' on and my uncle and cousin run 'way to de head bureau, where de Yankees at. My mammy say it at Milligan, Texas. Time dey ready for freedom in Louisiana, dey refugees us to Texas, in de wagons. Us travel all day and half de night and sleep on de ground. It ain't take us so long to git to Calvert, out dere in de bottom of Texas, and dey puts us on de Barton plantation. We's diggin' potatoes dere when de Yankees come up with two big wagons and make us come out of de fields and free us. Dere wasn't no cel'bration 'bout it. Massa say us can stay couple days till us 'cide what to do.

Well, den somethin' funny happen dere. De slaves all drinks out an old well. Dey'd drink water in de mornin' and dey'd have de cramps awful bad 'bout dinner time and in de evenin' dey's dead. Dey dies like flies, so fast dey couldn't make de coffins for dem. Dey jes' sew dem up in sacks and bury dem dat way. Some de slaves say massa put de poison in de well. I don't know what kill dem but it sho' look funny.

From an interview prepared by the Federal Writers' Project of the WPC for the State of Texas, Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves (Washington DC: 1941), pp. 132–133. Interview conducted ca. 1936–1938.

Source 10: "Reading the Emancipation Proclamation" by Lucius Stebbins, 1864



Lucius Stebbins, "Reading the Emancipation Proclamation," Hartford, Connecticut, 1864, based on a painting by Henry W. Herrick. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC07595)

NAME

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Activity Sheet 4: Text Analysis
Historical Background, General Order No. 3, Ella Washington Interview,
and “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation”

Important Phrases

Which phrases or sentences in these documents are the most important or powerful? Choose one phrase from each and give the reason for your choice.

Historical Background:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

General Order No. 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Ella Washington Interview:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

NAME

PERIOD

DATE

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Does the image “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation” *reflect* any of the ideas or statements from these three documents? In what way?

2. Does the image “Reading the Emancipation Proclamation” *refute* any of the ideas or statements from these three documents? In what way?

Source 11: Selected Dates in the History of the Abolition of Slavery

Year	Event	Notes
1777	Vermont became the first state to ban slavery.	Some evidence suggests slavery continued for three decades.
1780	Pennsylvania passed the Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery.	
1783	The Massachusetts Supreme Court issued a ruling that voided state laws permitting slavery.	
1787	Northwest Ordinance governed the United States' first acquisition of land.	The Ordinance banned slavery in territory that would become five new states.
1799	New York passed a gradual emancipation law.	
1817	New York became the first state to completely ban slavery.	The ban would take effect on July 4, 1827.
1850	California was admitted to the Union as the nation's thirty-first state.	The US would never again have more slave states than free states.
1863	Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation.	The Proclamation banned slavery in the Confederate states.
1865	Congress passed a Joint Resolution proposing the Thirteenth Amendment.	The amendment was sent to the states for ratification, which was certified in December 1865.
1865	Robert E. Lee surrendered his troops to Ulysses S. Grant.	This was the most significant Confederate surrender leading to the end of the Civil War.
1865	General Order No. 3 was issued in Texas	On June 19, 1865, it informed formerly enslaved individuals in Texas that they were free.
1866	The Cherokee Nation signed a ban on African slavery.	This was the last major slavery ban in the US.

DATE _____

The end of slavery was a pivotal moment in American history. But when did slavery end? Using evidence from the documents that you have analyzed in this unit, develop an argument that answers the following question: What date should be celebrated as the end of slavery in the United States?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.