

What is Juneteenth?

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Do you know what Juneteenth is? It is a holiday on June 19. This holiday celebrates a big moment in American history.

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln made a big speech. He made this speech during the Civil War. The speech was called the Emancipation Proclamation. In this speech, President Lincoln said enslaved people in some states were now free.

But not everyone knew about Lincoln's speech! Enslaved people in Texas did not know they were free. More than two years went by without them knowing. Finally, soldiers from the North came to Texas. They arrived on June 19, 1865. They shared the news about Lincoln's speech and the end of the war with the people there. The enslaved people in Texas learned they were free! People began celebrating!

Now, people celebrate this important day every year. People celebrate in different ways. Some states have parades, barbecues, and speeches. African Americans remember their ancestors and their bravery. They also celebrate their culture and freedom. In fact, everyone can celebrate African Americans' freedom on Juneteenth! It is a day for all Americans to learn about their history.

Vocabulary

celebrate

verb

definition: When we celebrate something, we honor it and make it special in some way.

We celebrated my grandma's birthday at her favorite restaurant this year.

Our town celebrates the Fourth of July with fireworks and a big parade.

Spanish: celebrar, festejar

forms: celebrated, celebrates, celebrating

free

adjective

definition: When someone is free, they can go where they want. They are not held back by something like a cage or prison.

Someone left the cage door open, and then the bird was free. It flew around the house and finally sat on the top of the curtains.

Spanish: libre

forms: freer, freest

speech

noun

definition: A speech is a talk given to a group of people.

Spanish: discurso