

A Curriculum Guide to

All Different Now: Juneteenth, the First Day of Freedom

by Angela Johnson

Illustrated by E. B. Lewis

About the Book

Imagine what it would be like to be free for the first time in your life. In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which proclaimed that all “persons held as slaves” within the states that seceded from the United States were free. This did not end slavery, however, this did spark change in the United States. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger, along with the Union soldiers, landed in Galveston, Texas, and told everyone that the Civil War had ended and that all of the slaves were free. A young African-American girl tells us the story of this important day and how her family and friends reacted to the news and celebrated their first day of freedom. She knows that everything will be “all different now.” This is a gentle retelling of what this momentous day might have been like.

Prereading Activity

The activity below correlates to the following Common Core State Standards:

(RL.3.1, 2, 9, 10) (RL.4.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10) (RI.3.1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10) (RI.4.1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9) (W.3.7, 8) (W.4.1, 7, 8, 9) (SL.3 – 4.1, 6)

Build Background Knowledge

- Direct students to gather in a large circle and explain that they will be learning about an event that happened at the end of the Civil War and what life was like at that time.
- Discuss what the students already know about the Civil War.
- Explain to the students that they will be reading a short historical fiction text, that is a text where the story is fictional but the time period is true.
- Build upon students’ prior knowledge by reading other picture books about the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation or by looking at images or videos. See “Using Historical Fiction to Learn about the Civil War” from [readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/using-historical-fiction-learn-779.html?tab=4#session1) (<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/using-historical-fiction-learn-779.html?tab=4#session1>)

Discussion Questions

The discussion questions below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards:

(RL.K.1, 2, 3, 7, 9) (SL.K – 1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) (RL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9) (RL.2 – 4.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9) (RI.2 – 4.3, 4, 9) (SL.2 – 3.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

1. What is the setting for the story? When and where does the story take place? What type of work does the narrator and her family do?

2. How do the different family members react to the news of their freedom? What do you think of their reactions? How do you think that you might have reacted?
3. How do the people in the story celebrate their new freedom?
4. Look at the illustrations of people celebrating. How would you describe the expressions on their faces?
5. What is the mood of the story? Use examples of the words in the story as well as the illustrations to support your answers.
6. The book is full of sensory images. Look back over the text. What examples of words that illustrate the senses can you find? Try to find an example for each of the five senses.
7. Why is the smell of honeysuckle important? How does it frame the action of the story?
8. The title of the story is *All Different Now*. What was different right away when the people found out about the news of their freedom? What do you think will be different for the people in the story in the days and weeks to come?
9. How long did it take the family in the story to find out that they were free from the time between the Emancipation Proclamation and the announcement in Galveston? Think of an important news event that happened recently. How long did it take for you to find out about it?
10. Think about how you and your family celebrate important events. Discuss how your celebrations are similar to the celebrations in the story. How are they different?

Activities

The activities below correlate to the following Common Core State Standards:

(RL.K.1, 2, 3, 7, 9) (RL.1.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9) (RL.2 – 4.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9) (SL.K – 3.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) (W.K – 4.1, 2, 3, 7, 8) (W.4.9) (RI.2 – 4.3, 4, 9)

1. Research how Juneteenth is celebrated. Direct students to make posters promoting a Juneteenth celebration. Plan a classroom celebration.
2. Compare Juneteenth celebrations and Cinco de Mayo celebrations. Use a Venn diagram to record the differences and the similarities.
3. Divide students into small groups and research what other freedom celebrations take place in different countries. Create a chart of celebrations together with how each holiday is celebrated. The class could then create their own freedom celebration using elements from each type of celebration.

4. Ask students to interview family members and friends about their memories of freedom celebrations. Direct students to write up their information and share with the class. Or, direct students to make audio recordings of their information and share with the class.

5. After reading aloud *All Different Now*, read aloud another book about freedom such as *Underground* by Shane W. Evans. Lead a discussion about the two books. How are the books the same? How are they different? Are there similar sensory images in both books? How does each book portray freedom? Direct the students to write a short essay about how they feel about the concept of freedom, or direct students to draw or paint a picture about what freedom means to them.

6. Read aloud the selection from the *Days of Jubilee* by Patricia C. and Fredrick L. McKissack entitled “The General Says We Free.” Lead a discussion with the students about the selection and the book *All Different Now*. How is the account in “The General Says We Free” similar to *All Different Now*? How is it different? How did freedom change the lives of both families?

7. Listen to a recording of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing.” (Several renditions are on this site as well as a short history of the song: <http://www.klru.org/juneteenth/>). Discuss with students how the song relates to *All Different Now*. How do both the song and the book depict the concept of freedom? Direct the students to write how they feel about freedom after listening to both the song and the book. Or, direct the students to draw or paint a picture showing what freedom means to them.

8. Discuss with students how the family and friends in *All Different Now* found out about their freedom and what they did to celebrate. Expand upon the story by creating dialogue among the family and friends. Divide the students into small groups and have each group write a short play using the discussion as a starting point. Each group can then practice their plays and perform for each other or for other classes. Or the plays could be read as readers’ theater.

Additional Resources (see also the list of online resources listed in the back of *All Different Now*)

- 1862: Antietam and Emancipation Curriculum by the Civil War Trust
<http://telegraph.civilwar.org/education/curriculum/Elementary/3%20Antietam%20and%20Emancipation/Antietam%20and%20Emancipation%20Lesson%20Package.pdf>
- The Emancipation Proclamation Commemorative Coloring Book:
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/kids/>
- Emancipation Proclamation: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h1549.html>
- Celebrate Juneteenth with a replica of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation:
<http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/juneteenth-proclamation-jubilation-lesson-plan/>
- Juneteenth Celebration: <http://www.klru.org/juneteenth/>
- History of Juneteenth by Henry Gates, Jr., on PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-is-juneteenth/>
- Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/maroonsista/juneteenth-black-history-moments/>
- Resources about Juneteenth from Social Studies for Kids (warning: lots of ads):
<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/juneteenth.htm>

- Compare Cinco de Mayo and Juneteenth:
<http://learn421.net/content.php?pid=269882&sid=2226296>
- Lesson plans from Lessonplanet.com: <http://www.lessonplanet.com/article/social-studies/juneteenth-lesson-plans>

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