



A Curriculum Guide to

All Different Now: Juneteenth, the First Day of Freedom

by Angela Johnson

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About the Book

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 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?
3. How do other 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 in the story learned the news of their freedom? What do you think will be different for them 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?

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. Plan a classroom celebration, and talk about all of the emotions surrounding the day.
2. 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.
3. Ask students to interview family members or friends about their memories of past freedom celebrations. Direct students to write up their information or make audio recordings and share them with the class.
4. 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. 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.
5. 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?
6. Listen to a recording of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing.” (Several renditions are available 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.

Guide written in 2014 by Margaret Tice, elementary school librarian and adjunct professor at Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies.

This guide, written in alignment with the ELA Common Core Standards (www.corestandards.org), has been provided by Simon & Schuster for classroom, library, and