

Juneteenth

Teacher Guide and Overview



Targeted Historical Thinking Skill: Historical Significance

Thinking historically means identifying and exploring the reasons why historical people, places, events, or ideas are worth remembering; that is, their historical significance.

Overview of Juneteenth and Assignment

On June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, making Juneteenth a federal holiday. On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger read General Order No. 3, which declared the news of the Emancipation Proclamation to the people of Texas. Despite President Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation two and half years earlier, slavery remained relatively unchanged in Texas. General Order No. 3, read by Granger in Galveston on the southeast rim of the state, changed this. To the more than 250,000 enslaved people in Texas, these orders meant freedom. To this day, that is what the day celebrates. Texas made Juneteenth a holiday in 1979 and other states followed suite, but it has only been a federal holiday since 2021.

Just as General Granger announced liberation in Texas in 1865, students are to consider liberation today. Students should complete the document analysis activity on General Order No. 3 in order to think historically about the origins of the holiday. Then, students engage in art analysis before they begin their own artists' task of visualizing liberation today.

Suggested Timetable for this Lesson (Based on a 60 minute class)

Do First (7 minutes): Introduction: [What is Juneteenth?](#) Ted-ed Video

Document Analysis (30 Minutes): Read and analyze General Order No. 3. Complete THINKS and/or Historical Significance Graphic Organizers

Introduction to Liberation Art (15 Minutes): Pass out National Liberty Museum Art graphic organizer and project the directions for students. Give students time to explore the art on the website in class to begin organizer. Finish the graphic organizer for homework.

Introduction to Art Contest (8 Minutes): Go over student directions sheet for with class, provide examples (shown in following pages), and be sure to emphasize written components of the competition. Give students time to brainstorm and begin.



Primary Source Analysis: Juneteenth - General Order No. 3



Source: U.S. Major General Gordon Granger, "General Order No. 3," June 19, 1865.

Note: Despite President Abraham Lincoln issuing the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, news of emancipation did not reach parts of Texas for two and a half more years. This order, also known as the Juneteenth Order, declared that law in Texas. Six months later, on December 6, 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified, officially abolishing slavery in the United States.

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.

THINKS Document Analysis

T (Topic)

H (Historical Context)

I (Intended Audience)

	Political
	Economic
	Social
	Religious
	Other

1. When was this document created and/or circulated? Who wrote it?

1. Who was the intended audience of this document?

2. What events were occurring during the time this document was written?

2. Whose voice or perspective is not shared in this document?

N (New Vocabulary)

1. What words are new to you or need to be defined?

K (Key Purpose)

1. How would you describe the author's perspective, or point of view?

2. Taking into account the author's perspective, why do you think this document was created? In other words, what is its purpose?

S (Significance)

1. List two things or ideas that make this document historically significant.

2. Provide one quote from the document that demonstrates why it might be considered historically significant. Explain your reasoning.



Primary Source Analysis: The Trail of Tears

Establishing Historical
Significance

Historical
Event

Who was
affected?

To establish
historical
significance is
to show that a
historical
event is worth
remembering.

Juneteenth -
General Order
No. 3

Quantity: How
many people
were affected?

Profundity:
How deeply were
people's lives
affected?

Durability: For
how long were
people affected?

Relevance: How
is this still
relevant today?

In a nutshell: _____ is historically significant because:



Overview

Essential Questions:

- What is liberation?
- What roles do art and other forms of expression play in liberation?
- Does liberation look the same to everyone?

Vocabulary:

Liberation: (*noun*) freedom from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression; freedom from limits on thought or behavior

Artivism: (*noun*) the intersection of art and activism

Do Now

Ask students:

- What is liberation?
- What are some liberation movements throughout history that you know of or that we have discussed in class?
- What do you think “artivism” is? How might it have helped liberation movements throughout history?
- What does liberation look like today?

Artwork Analysis

Open the webpage for *Philly's Freedom: Artists Speak Out*, an online exhibition from the National Liberty Museum that opened in 2020: <https://www.libertymuseum.org/phillyfreedom/>

Philly's Freedom: Artists Speak Out

How do we define “liberty?” What does it mean to be “free?” These are questions and concepts that we have grappled with at the National Liberty Museum for more than 20 years, and questions we continue to explore. *Philly's Freedom* is an exhibition highlighting home-grown heroes from right here in the City of Brotherly & Sisterly Love. The exhibition showcases artwork from a group of multicultural artists depicting how they interpret freedom from their perspective as Philadelphians.

We invite you on this journey to explore what freedom means through a diverse collection of stories, reflections, and images from Philadelphia artists. While many of these works are reflected through the lens of large, important events such as a global pandemic and the Black Lives Matter Movement, others are focused on more personal issues around identity, love, and the struggle to communicate and stay connected in a world that continues to be fragmented and divisive.

Select an artwork that you feel your students will respond to:

- Serena Saunders, *Push Back*
- Serena Saunders, “No Time to Break” Project
- Chuck Styles, *PICK*
- Chuck Styles, *We The People*
- Chelsey Luster, *Defend Black Girls*
- Shanina Dionna, *Show Up*

Lead a visual thinking exercise and ask:

- What is the first thing you notice?
- What is going on in this image?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What else do you see?
- When do you think this artwork was created?

Have each student pick an artwork and identify/examine the following elements:

- Colors
(example: the neutral blacks, browns, and grays in Chuck Styles's *We the People*)
- Patterns
(example: the swirls of color in Serena Saunders's "No Time to Break" Project)
- Text
(example: the "Defend Black Girls" sign in Chelsey Luster's *Defend Black Girls*)
- Objects
(example: the cotton in Chuck Styles's *PICK*)
- Symbols
(example: the red ribbon in Serena Saunders's *Push Back*)
- Themes
(example: activism through protest in Shanina Dionna's *Stand Up*)

Some artworks may not contain all these elements, and some elements may overlap in multiple categories. That's okay! This exercise is meant to help students identify as many elements of an artwork as possible and think about what they may represent.

Share out and lead a discussion:

- While these artworks and artists are reflecting on experiences in Philadelphia, what do you see that speaks to a national or global experience? What do you see that speaks to you personally?
- What do you see that speaks to or represents liberation?
- What do you see that looks like "activism"?

Artwork Ideation

Students will choose one historical or contemporary Black leader or artist who represents liberation. Reflecting on the artwork viewed in *Philly's Freedom* and with the following elements in mind, students will begin ideating an artwork they will create that encapsulates their chosen figure:

- Colors
- Patterns
- Text
- Objects
- Symbols
- Themes

Students should have some background knowledge and understanding of the person's experiences, beliefs, and goals before getting started. Additional research may be needed.

Further Discussion

- Why is it important for everyone, regardless of race and background, to define what liberation looks like in their life?
- How can an understanding of liberation and equity for all help us individually?



Artwork Analysis

Name of Artwork:

Artist:

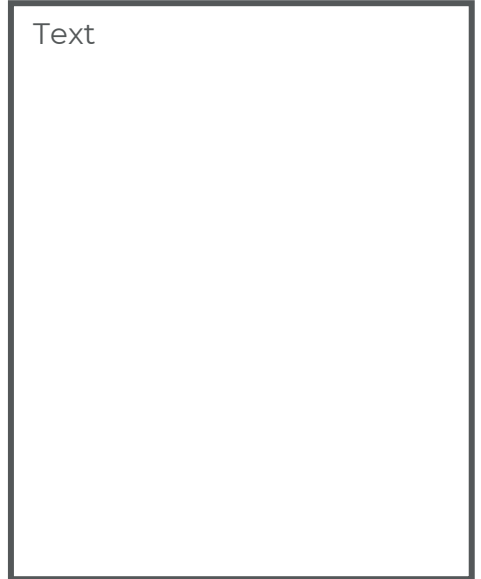
Colors



Patterns



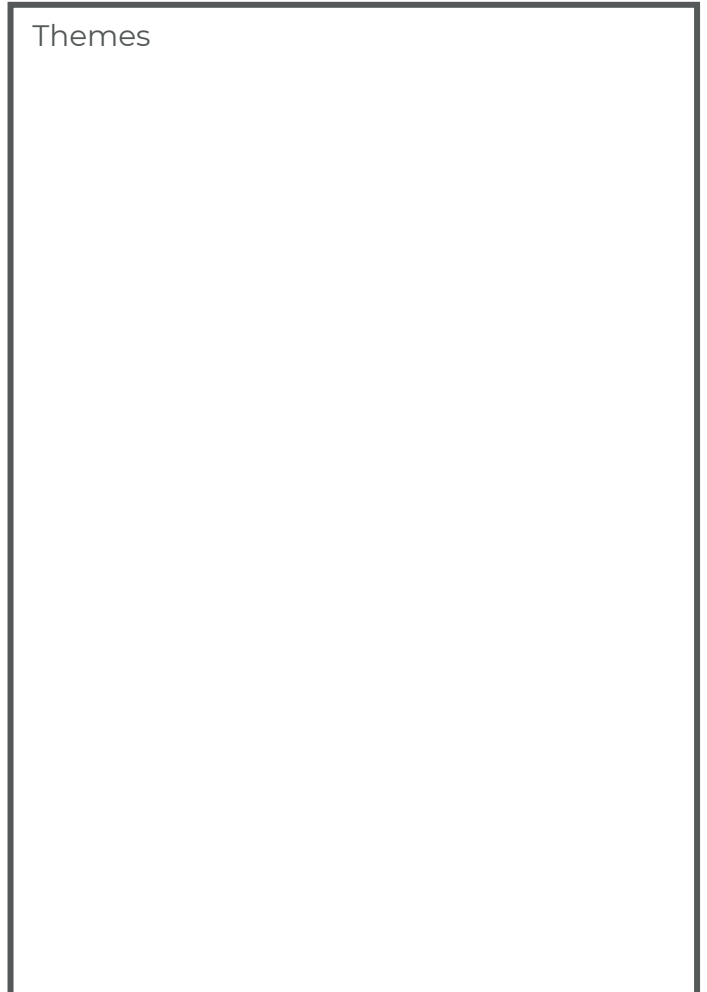
Text




Objects



Themes



Symbols



Artwork Ideation

Black Leader:

Student Artist:

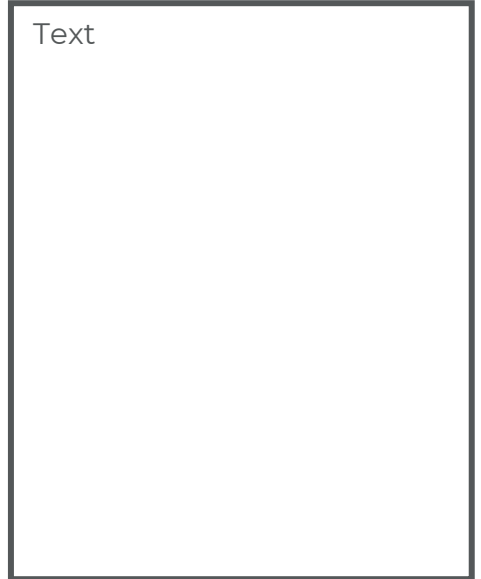
Colors



Patterns



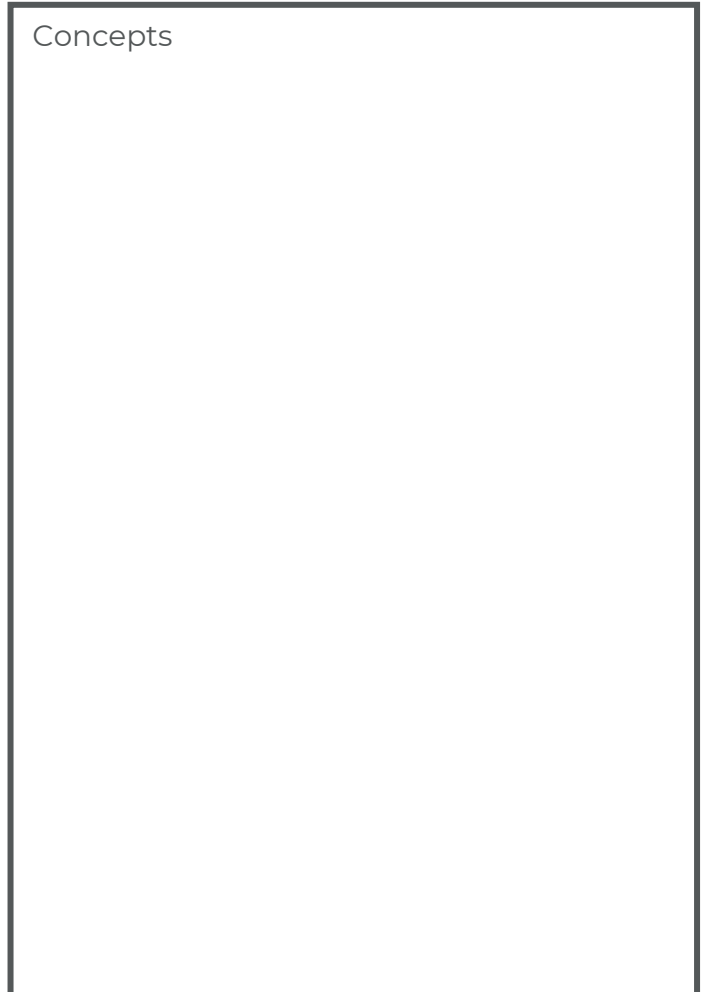
Text



Objects



Concepts



Symbols

