

## PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS:

# JUNETEENTH EMANCIPATION DAY

On June 19, 1865, U.S. Major General Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3, announcing that the approximately 250,000 enslaved people in Texas were free. This day of emancipation is now celebrated as Juneteenth, which is sometimes called Freedom Day or Emancipation Day. By law, the Emancipation Proclamation had already freed most enslaved people months earlier when the Union won the Civil War on April 9, 1865. But, information about the Union's victory and the liberation of enslaved people did not reach outlying areas for months. Some of the last people to be informed were in Texas.



Read this passage quoting the first two sentences of General Order No. 3, issued on June 19, 1865. Then answer the question.

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.

**proclamation from the Executive:** refers to the Emancipation Proclamation from President Lincoln in 1863

1. What is the main idea of this excerpt?

- a. The Emancipation Proclamation is not accepted as valid in Texas.
- b. The relationship between former "masters" and enslaved people will remain the same in Texas.
- c. Enslaved people in Texas are free and can no longer be owned as property.
- d. Enslaved people in Texas will only be free if they are hired by employers that live in other states.

The remaining text gives some specific limitations and attempts to advise the now-liberated population of formerly enslaved people. Read the concluding sentences. Then answer the questions.

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.

**collect:** gather  
**idleness:** an insulting reference to inactivity or loitering

2. What is the General Order advising the "freedmen" to do?

- a. Join the military.
- b. Enjoy absolute equality.
- c. Leave the place that enslaved them and earn wages elsewhere.
- d. Quietly stay in the place that enslaved them and work for wages.

3. Why were "freedmen" told not to "collect" at military posts? What does General Order No. 3 want to stop formerly enslaved people from doing?

Sample answer: This rule was intended to prevent the "freedmen" from joining together to start an uprising.