

Name _____



Freedom's First Celebration

Directions: Read the passage below about the first Juneteenth celebration. Then answer the comprehension questions that follow in complete sentences.

On June 19, 1865, the people of Galveston, Texas, awoke to news that would change their lives forever. Union soldiers arrived to announce that the Civil War had ended and that enslaved people were now free. The joyful cries echoed through the streets as families embraced, sang, and prayed together. For many, it was the first time they could truly call themselves free.

Soon, people began organizing a celebration filled with music, speeches, and food. They dressed in their best clothes, cooked favorite dishes, and shared stories of courage and hope. The day became known as **Juneteenth**, blending the words "June" and "nineteenth." It marked freedom-but also a reminder that equality would take more time and struggle. Over the years, Juneteenth spread across the nation, growing into a day of remembrance, pride, and unity.

Comprehension Questions:

1. What important event happened on June 19, 1865, in Galveston, Texas?
2. How did formerly enslaved people react when they heard the news of freedom?
3. Why was Juneteenth named that way?
4. What kinds of activities were part of the first Juneteenth celebration?
5. What message does Juneteenth continue to teach people today?