

Freedom's First Celebration Answer Key

1. Union soldiers arrived to announce that the Civil War had ended and enslaved people were free.
2. They rejoiced by singing, praying, and celebrating with family and friends.
3. It combines "June" and "nineteenth," the date the news of freedom arrived in Texas.
4. People held speeches, sang songs, cooked favorite foods, and shared stories.
5. It reminds people of freedom, resilience, and the ongoing journey toward equality and unity.

Teacher's Guide:

- **Differentiation Tips:**
 - Younger students (grades 4-5) can focus on recalling key details and defining "freedom" in their own words.
 - Older students (grades 6-8) can discuss the deeper meaning of freedom and how celebrations reflect history.
- **Engagement Ideas:**
 - Play traditional Juneteenth songs or display artwork that represents freedom.
 - Invite students to create a "Freedom Poster" highlighting symbols of hope and unity.
- **Extension Activities:**
 - Have students write a journal entry imagining what it felt like to hear the news of freedom in 1865.
 - Encourage a class discussion on how Juneteenth connects to modern celebrations of independence and justice.