

LEARNING GUIDE

History Quilt: Juneteenth

Grade 4



Juneteenth Quilt. Renee Allen, textile artist.

Overview: History in Textile

In 2012, textile artist Renee Allen created a story quilt to commemorate Juneteenth, the day Texas enslaved persons learned of their freedom in Galveston. The approximately 5x5' quilt is made with cotton fabric and thread, acrylic paint, and colored pencil. In this activity, learners will analyze how quilt elements tell the story of this historical event. They will also create a story quilt of their own.

Objectives

- Identify the historical context of Juneteenth
- Analyze artistic elements of a story quilt
- Plan and create an original story quilt

Social Studies TEKS

4th grade: 4.14.D

Materials

- Juneteenth Quilt image
- Quilt analysis resource
- Juneteenth proclamation text
- Quilt storyboard resource
- Quilt supplies such as craft paper, cloth scraps, personal photographs etc.
- Markers, colored pencils
- Glue, tape

Vocabulary

Emancipation Proclamation (ih-man-sih-PAY-shun prok-luh-MAY-shun) noun: Executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862, effective January 1, 1863. This order freed 3.5 enslaved African Americans in the Confederate states.

Juneteenth (jyoon-TEENTH) noun: American holiday celebrated on June 19th to commemorate June 19, 1865, the day when Union general Gordon Granger read federal orders in Galveston, Texas, proclaiming that all previously enslaved persons were freed. The name is a combination of the words *June* and *nineteenth*.

textile (TEK-stile) noun: a type of cloth or woven fabric

Historical Context

Two years after the Emancipation Proclamation took effect in other Confederate states, enslaved persons in Texas finally learned of their freedom. Many slaveholders had waited until Union troops arrived to enforce the news. General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston on June 19, 1865 to proclaim freedom for the enslaved people of Texas, the last Confederate state to hear the news. The Emancipation Proclamation pertained just to the Confederate states. It wasn't until the 13th Amendment passed in December 1865 that slavery was abolished across the United States. The first known Juneteenth celebration began in 1866 and spread across the country. Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, became a Texas state holiday in 1980.

Activity

45-60 minutes

Ask learners pre-activity questions to help them think about Juneteenth and its historical significance. Example questions might include:

- What do you already know about what happened in Texas on Juneteenth? Why is this day a holiday?
- Why would an artist want to make a quilt to tell an historic story? How is a story on a quilt different or the same as a story in a book?
- Why is it important to remember history?
- What moments in your own personal or family history would you like to be remembered? How could a quilt help preserve your story?

Help learners use the quilt image and analysis resource to study the details of Juneteenth that are presented in the quilt. Read aloud the proclamation text and discuss how enslaved people might have felt hearing those words. Talk with learners about what images they could represent on a quilt that would preserve important moments in their own lives.

Juneteenth Quilt (2012)

Renee Allen, textile artist



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Juneteenth Quilt Analysis

Observation 1

Look closely at the quilt image for a few minutes. Think about the images and colors. What do you think is most interesting about the quilt? Write your answer below.

Observation 2

Draw two lines (one vertical, one horizontal) to divide the quilt image into four squares. Write what you see in each of the squares in the chart below.

	People	Objects	Activities
Square 1			
Square 2			
Square 3			
Square 4			

Questions

Answer these questions about one of the quilt sections:

- Why do you think the artist chose to represent these people as part of her quilt?
- What can you learn from the objects and activities about what life was like at the time?
- What questions about Juneteenth do you have after studying this quilt? How can you find the answers to those questions?

Text of General Order #3 (Juneteenth Proclamation)

Read aloud by General Gordon Granger, June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas

"The people 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, become that between employer and hired labor. The freed are advised to remain 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."

History Quilt Storyboard

Think about what memories of you and your family you would want pictured on a story quilt. Draw a sketch in each square. When you're finished, cut out each square and mount it on a piece of cloth or colored paper to make your own story quilt.

