

STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE

This resource guide is designed to help students at all levels research and write their essays or create their artwork. Use these resources as starting points and always follow your curiosity!

What Is Juneteenth? — Key Facts

- June 19, 1865: Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that enslaved people were free — more than two years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863).
- The delay was due to a lack of Union presence in Texas to enforce the proclamation. Enslavers deliberately withheld the information.
- "Juneteenth" is a blend of "June" and "nineteenth."
- The day has been celebrated in Black communities since 1866 and became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021.
- Juneteenth is also called Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Emancipation Day.

Key Historical Context — For Essays

- Emancipation Proclamation (1863): Declared enslaved people in Confederate states free but could not be enforced in rebel-held areas.
- 13th Amendment (1865): Abolished slavery in the United States, with one exception: people convicted of a crime.
- Reconstruction (1865–1877): A period of rebuilding in which Black Americans gained political rights, held office, and built communities, before that progress was diminished by Jim Crow.
- Black Codes & Jim Crow Laws: Laws passed across the South to re-restrict Black freedom through segregation, voting restrictions, and criminalization.
- Civil Rights Movement (1950s–1960s): A period of wide-spread civil disobedience against legalized racial segregation and discrimination in America. This period includes the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Tips for Essay Writers

- Start with a hook: an interesting question, a surprising fact, or a personal moment.
- Make sure your essay has a clear main idea (thesis). What are you trying to say?

- Use evidence: facts, examples, quotations, or personal experiences that support your point. If you quote it, you must cite it! You may use MLA, APA, or hyperlinks to cite your sources.
- Connect the personal and the historical: the best essays link your own experience to the bigger story.
- Read your essay out loud before submitting. You'll catch errors and hear if it flows well.
- Don't use generative AI. Grammar checking software is allowed, but you should not write your essay—in part or in full—using generative AI. We will check!

Tips for Art Division Students

- Start by brainstorming: What words, colors, images, or feelings come to mind when you think of freedom?
- Think about symbolism: what images could represent freedom without spelling it out?
- Use color with intention: warm colors (red, orange) can suggest energy and struggle; cool colors (blue, green) can suggest peace and hope.
- Don't rush — take your time with details. Craftsmanship matters.
- Write a short description of what your artwork means to you. Judges want to understand your vision.

A Note on Academic Integrity

All submitted work must be your own original creation. Using someone else's words or ideas without credit—even from a website or AI—is plagiarism and will disqualify your entry.

Paraphrase in your own words and always cite where you got your information. If you're unsure, ask a teacher or trusted adult for help.