



# 🎆 JUNETEENTH TIMELINE 🎆

## The Amazing Story of Opal Lee and Recognition of Juneteenth

Lesson Plan for Grades K-2 (Ages 5-7)

### WHAT IS JUNETEENTH?

How to explain Juneteenth hinges on age-appropriateness and readiness to understand fairness. Parents or teachers of pre-K children might keep the explanation as simple as this:

*“Juneteenth is a happy day! Long ago, some people were not free. But on June 19th, they learned they were FREE! A nice lady named Opal Lee helped make this a special day for everyone to celebrate!”*


However, kindergartens are already more sophisticated in their understanding of fairness, and this sophistication grows quickly.

Therefore the following might offer a better guide:

*“A long time ago, Black people in our country were forced into enslavement. That means that they weren't allowed to be free. Some White people made them work without getting paid. At the same time Black and White people fought to end this unfairness in America. They won! The US president then said: Now everyone must be free! People in Texas finally learned that freedom had arrived two years later. Everyone was so happy to hear this good news on that day in June. That's why we call it Juneteenth - June 19th!”*




## **A STORY OF FREEDOM**

**LONG AGO - 1865**  **Happy Freedom Day!** People in Texas learned they were free! Everyone was so happy! This day became Juneteenth.




**1926 Baby Opal is Born** A special baby named Opal Lee was born in Texas. She would grow up to be very brave and kind!



**WHEN OPAL GREW UP**  **Teacher Opal** Opal became a teacher! She loved helping children learn and be happy at school.



**2021**  **Opal's Dream Comes True!** The President said Juneteenth is now a special holiday for everyone! Opal was so happy because her dream came true!



(Connect with the timelines: Write your name and your birthdate below)



## **FUN ACTIVITIES!**

### **ACTIVITY 1: COLOR YOUR FREEDOM CELEBRATION!**

Draw a picture of people celebrating freedom! You can draw families, friends, or a party!

#### **Ideas for your drawing:**

Happy families, flags, music and dancing, Food and picnics, Friends playing together





## ACTIVITY 2: FUN QUESTIONS ABOUT OPAL LEE!

Circle the right answer for each question:

**Question 1: Which special day did Opal Lee help create?**

- a) 🍰 Birthday b) 🎆 Juneteenth ← (This is the right answer!) c) 🎄 Christmas

**Question 2: What was Opal Lee's job?**

- a) 👨‍🍳 Cook b) 🏫 Teacher ← (This is the right answer!) c) 🩺 Doctor

## ACTIVITY 3: COMPLETE THE STORY!

Help finish this story about Opal Lee. Draw pictures or write words!

**Once upon a time, there was a brave lady named Opal Lee. She wanted to help people remember a special day called...**

**Opal worked very hard because she believed...**

**When her dream came true, everyone felt...**



## IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW!

**FREEDOM** - Being able to make your own choices

**CELEBRATION** - A happy party or special day

**HOLIDAY** - A special day when we don't work or go to school

**TEACHER** - Someone who helps children learn

**BRAVE** - Being strong and not giving up



## TAKE HOME ACTIVITIES!

### FAMILY DISCUSSION






Ask your family these questions:

- What does freedom mean to our family?
  - How do we celebrate special days?
- Who are some helpers in our community?
- What makes you feel brave like Opal Lee?



## JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION IDEAS

Here are ways to celebrate Juneteenth at home:

-  Listen to happy music and dance
-  Have a picnic with red foods (watermelon, strawberries)
-  Read books about friendship and freedom
-  Make red, white, and blue decorations
-  Do something kind for your neighbors

## BE LIKE OPAL LEE!





How can you help make the world better?

**I can help others by...**

**I am brave when...**

**My dream for the world is...**

## ✧ WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING!

-  **Creative Expression:** You can show what you know through drawing and storytelling!
-  **New Words:** You're learning important words about freedom and helping others!
-  **Good Listening:** You can listen to stories and follow directions!
-  **Community Helpers:** You understand that teachers and helpers make our world better!

## ✧ GREAT JOB LEARNING ABOUT JUNETEENTH! ✧

You now know about freedom, celebration, and brave helpers like Opal Lee!

*This Month™ Educational Activities • Grade K-2 • Juneteenth 2025*