Juneteenth Liberation and Modern Reconstruction 8-Step PBLP (Grades 7–12)

Objective: To explore the historical, cultural, and ongoing significance of Juneteenth as a marker of delayed liberation and continued resistance. Students will reflect on freedom as both a historical event and a living process by investigating systems of oppression and innovation across time. Through interdisciplinary inquiry and community-rooted projects, students will design initiatives that connect the legacy of Juneteenth to modern-day movements for reconstruction and justice.

Round Table

- ❖ **Opening Discussion:**
  - ➢ What does freedom mean to you today?
  - ➢ Why do some people experience freedom later than others?
  - ➢ How do we carry forward the work of those who were finally freed?
- ❖ **Purpose:** Introduce Juneteenth as both a historical event and a symbol of delayed justice. Students explore how freedom is celebrated, contested, and redefined across generations.
- ❖ **Materials:** Excerpts from General Order No. 3, first-hand accounts from formerly enslaved people, maps of emancipation dates across the U.S., video clips on Juneteenth history, and current news about freedom-related justice movements.

Reflection Point

- ❖ **Discussion Questions:**
  - ➢ What forms of liberation are still being sought today?
    Who in your community is doing the work of freedom and justice?
  - ➢ How can remembrance help fuel peace and harmony?
- ❖ **Materials:**
  - ➢ Reflection journals

Science (S): Health Disparities and Environmental Injustice	❖ **Objective:** Understand how systemic racism has contributed to health disparities in Black communities, both historically and today. ❖ **Activity:** Examine public health data related to asthma, lead poisoning, and maternal mortality in historically marginalized neighborhoods.
Technology (T): Communication Delays and Digital Activism	❖ **Objective:** Understand how the delay in communication of freedom (as with Juneteenth) contrasts with the immediacy of digital organizing today. ❖ **Activity:** Compare historic communication methods (e.g., General Order No. 3 delivery, telegraph systems) with modern tools (e.g., social media activism, digital archives).
Engineering (E): Designing Infrastructure for Peace	❖ **Objective:** Understand how access to infrastructure—transportation, housing, internet—impacts liberation and opportunity. **Activity:** Research how historical redlining shaped neighborhood infrastructure and transportation design, and how engineering can be used to correct inequitable access to public systems.

Arts (A): Liberation Through Creative Expression	❖ **Objective:** Understand how Black artists have used storytelling, music, poetry, and visual art to express joy, grief, and freedom. ❖ **Activity:** Study Juneteenth-related artworks, freedom songs, or protest poems.
Mathematics (M): Mapping Racial Disparities Over Time	❖ **Objective:** Understand statistical and spatial data to examine how historical redlining and racial segregation have impacted access to transportation, public services, and economic mobility. ❖ **Activity:** Analyze census tract data, historical redlining maps, and current transportation routes to identify patterns of inequity.
Social Studies (SS): Emancipation, Juneteenth, and the Ongoing Fight for Freedom	❖ **Objective:** Understand Juneteenth within the broader historical timeline of slavery, emancipation, Reconstruction, and civil rights. ❖ **Activity:** Examine the Emancipation Proclamation, General Order No. 3, and post-emancipation Black codes.

Progress Map for Project Delivery	
	❖ **Step 1: Project Proposal** Students gather foundational knowledge through a collaborative knowledge-setting session to prepare for a project-based learning process. They meet with community partners (if possible) and create a written proposal outlining the project focus and intended community benefit. ❖ **Step 2: Initial Project Proposal and Community Engagement Plan** Students submit proposals and reflect on community input, refining their plans. They outline how the project addresses real-world needs and aligns with learning objectives. ❖ **Step 3: Research Progress Update** Students conduct research and gather data by consulting with community partners to guide their project development and ensure accuracy. ❖ **Step 4: Draft of Final Project** Students compile findings into a working draft of their final project proposal. ❖ **Step 5: Final Project Refinement and Approval for Implementation** Students apply final feedback to strengthen their project and submit it for approval. Approved projects move forward to the

	community involvement and assessment phases outlined in the SOP.

Science (S): Health Justice Awareness Campaign	❖ **Project Example:** Partner with a local community health organization or environmental nonprofit to co-develop a campaign spotlighting health disparities in historically marginalized Black neighborhoods. Students examine public health disparities (e.g., asthma, maternal mortality, or water contamination) in both U.S. and international contexts.
Technology (T): Freedom Signal—A Digital Archive	❖ **Project Example:** Design an immersive storytelling experience simulating the moment General Order No. 3 was delivered in Galveston—and contrasting it with how news of liberation would spread today. Partner with a local tech hub, museum, or cultural group to stage the experience with relevant technology. The event invites the community to reflect on how access to information shapes freedom, justice, and power.
Engineering (E): Reimagining Redlined Communities Through Design	❖ **Project Example:** Work with a local urban design firm, city transportation office, or neighborhood coalition to design, breaking barriers of formerly redlined areas to reclaim love, togetherness, peace, and humanity.

Arts (A): Juneteenth Expressions Exhibit	❖ **Project Example**: Partner with the city's parks and recreation department or a local neighborhood association to design a commemorative park bench honoring Juneteenth in a public green space within a historically Black community, surrounded by symbolic trees.
Mathematics (M): Harmony Access Data Dashboard	❖ **Project Example**: Work with local data from the city's open data portal, school district, or public health department to visualize disparities in services and infrastructure. They build dashboards or poster series identifying inequity in transit access, educational investment, or health outcomes.
Social Justice (SS): Timeline of Liberation and Resistance	❖ **Project Example**: Students will partner with a local historian, advocacy group, or neighborhood association to create a **Reconstruction Report Card** evaluating how their city has upheld modern Reconstruction-era promises such as land access, education, labor rights, and voting protections since emancipation.

Community Involvement

❖ **Objective**: Students implement their final, approved projects in direct collaboration with community partners, transforming their ideas into real-world action that honors Juneteenth and amplifies ongoing work for justice and peace.

❖ **Activity**: Once final project proposals are approved, students work with selected partners—such as local historians, neighborhood associations, city council offices, public libraries, or Black-led organizations—to bring their ideas to life. Whether it's a

policy briefing, public art installation, or infrastructure redesign, students co-lead implementation, ensuring the community is both consulted and impacted. Partners and educators co-evaluate the outcomes using customized rubrics, with student reflections and feedback shaping future projects.
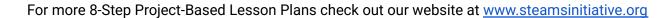
Assessment

- ❖ **Objective**: Evaluate student learning through the lens of historical understanding, community engagement, and applied civic action.
- ❖ **Methods**: Use a rubric that measures depth of content knowledge, interdisciplinary application, creativity, implementation effectiveness, and community impact. Include student self-assessments, peer reviews, and formal feedback from community partners to ensure relevance and authenticity.

Feedback Loop

- ❖ **Activity**: Facilitate structured reflection to deepen personal and civic understanding after project implementation.
- ❖ **Journal Prompt**:
  - ➢ How did this project shape your understanding of freedom, Reconstruction, and justice?
  - ➢ What local issues still reflect the unfinished work of emancipation?
  - ➢ In what ways did your project serve or uplift your community?
  - ➢ What is one change—personal or political—you are now committed to making?

Resume Integration

- ❖ Students write resume bullet points and personal statements that showcase their civic engagement, research, and real-world implementation.

For more 8-Step Project-Based Lesson Plans check out our website at www.steamsinitiative.org

For all inquiries, please email **info@steamsinitiative.org**