

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Becoming Free

**Directions:** Read the following quotes from freedmen and answer the questions that follow.

“The end of the war came like that-like you snap your fingers. Everyone was singing. We was all walking on golden clouds. Hallelujah! Everyone went wild. We all felt like heroes, and like nobody had made us that way but ourselves. We was free! Just like that, we was free.”- Felix Haywood

“When the Yankee soldiers came, the blacks ran and hid under the beds, and the soldiers came and poked their bayonets under the beds and shouted, “Come on out from under there. You’re free.”-Dicey Thomas

“We had no time for any celebration, for [our former master] made us get right off the place-just like you take an old horse and turn it loose. You see a lot of cattle in the field eating the grass with a fence ‘round them, and then somebody opens the gate an’ says, “Git!” That’s how he was. No money, no nothin’.”- William Mathews

*American Memory. Library of Congress. **Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938.***

### Questions for Discussion:

1. What are the different reactions some freedmen had after being freed? Provide specific examples from the text.
2. According to Dicey Thomas, some blacks hid under the beds when the soldiers arrived to free them. Why do you think that was?
3. What do you think your first reaction as a freedman would have been? Complete the thought bubble below.

