March Meaning

Use context clues to interpret a historical event.

6.P.ST.1 "Context: Develop and apply knowledge of key components of context such as background information, geographic location, cultural influences, time period, and contemporary events when interpreting and constructing texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words or phrases that give context, then label each one L for location, B for background, C for cultural influence, or T for time and events. These details help you understand why the march mattered.

The March on Washington

1. On August 28, 1963, more than 200,000 people gathered near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Many Black Americans still faced legal segregation in parts of the United States, especially in Southern states. Organizers chose the memorial because it honored President Abraham Lincoln, whose Emancipation Proclamation had declared freedom for enslaved people during the Civil War. The setting connected the march to a longer struggle for civil rights.

2. Speakers and performers brought cultural traditions to the program. Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson sang before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke. Her music drew on the Black church, a community center and source of strength for many civil rights activists. King then delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. His words described a future in which people would be judged by character rather than race. The audience's songs, signs, and speeches showed that the event was both a protest and a shared public gathering.

3. Television networks broadcast parts of the march, allowing people far from Washington to watch it. Newspapers printed photographs of the crowd and reported on King's speech. The march happened while Congress was debating a civil rights bill. In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, which banned segregation in many public places and job discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Knowing what was happening in the country helps a reader understand why the march drew such attention.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the location near the Lincoln Memorial add meaning to the march?

2. What background information explains why marchers were demanding change in 1963?

3. What cultural influence did Mahalia Jackson bring to the event, and why was it meaningful?

4. Which two contemporary details help explain why people across the country paid attention to the march?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence introduction for an imagined flyer about a community river cleanup. Include the location, a background detail, a cultural influence, and a current event that explains why the cleanup matters now.

ANSWER KEY

March Meaning

GRADE 6 · 6.P.ST.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline words or phrases that give context, then label each one L for location, B for background, C for cultural influence, or T for time and events. These details help you understand why the march mattered. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the location near the Lincoln Memorial add meaning to the march?	**It connected the march to Abraham Lincoln, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the longer struggle for civil rights.**
2	What background information explains why marchers were demanding change in 1963?	**Many Black Americans still faced legal segregation, especially in Southern states.**
3	What cultural influence did Mahalia Jackson bring to the event, and why was it meaningful?	**She sang gospel music rooted in the Black church, which was a community center and source of strength for many civil rights activists.**
4	Which two contemporary details help explain why people across the country paid attention to the march?	**Television networks broadcast parts of the march, and Congress was debating a civil rights bill.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On May 16, 2026, Riverton residents will meet beside Maple River for a cleanup. The river flows through the town park, where families have held summer picnics for decades. The event will open with songs from the community's Filipino and Mexican youth groups. Heavy spring rains recently carried litter into the river, so the cleanup is especially needed now.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect each detail to the march's meaning and importance. For the open response, accept any four-sentence flyer introduction that clearly includes all four requested context components.