

Slavery, Civil War & Reconstruction - Reconstruction

by ReadWorks



engraving titled "Freedmen Voting in New Orleans," 1867

After the Civil War, the South was crippled. Many men had died. Many farms were destroyed. Slavery no longer ran southern plantations. Once the South surrendered, the states were treated as part of the Union again. They were punished, but they also had to be rebuilt. Reconstruction is the time period after the Civil War. During this time, the Southern way of life changed.

At first, President Lincoln was going to be in charge of Southern Reconstruction. His plan was to welcome the Southern states back into the Union. He did not want them to become bitter. Then, on April 14, 1865, Lincoln was shot. He was at a theater watching a play when John Wilkes Booth jumped on stage and killed him. The North went into mourning.

After Lincoln died, the U.S. Congress took over Reconstruction. Congress was not as lenient as Lincoln. Many Southerners did become bitter about the changes happening at their homes. They nicknamed Southerners who cooperated with Reconstruction as "scalawags" out of disdain. Many Northerners also went to the South to take part in Reconstruction. Some of the men were greedy but others really did want to help build a new, free South. The

Southerners weren't friendly to these men either. Southerners nicknamed them "carpetbaggers" because they often carried suitcases that had just been made from pieces of carpet.

During Reconstruction, three amendments were added to the Constitution. Southern states had to agree to these amendments to be part of the United States again. The 13 Amendment ended slavery. The 14 Amendment said that everyone born in the U.S. is a full citizen, including former slaves and other black people. This meant that the rights in the Constitution would no longer only apply to white people. This amendment also said that the federal government - not just each state's government - would protect those rights. The 15 Amendment allowed black men to vote.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the main idea of the 4th paragraph?

- A. The 15th amendment allowed black men to vote.
- B. The 14th amendment gave black people all the rights that white people had.
- C. Three amendments were added to the Constitution.
- D. The 13th amendment ended slavery.

2. In this passage, which of these events happened first?

- A. Three amendments were added to the Constitution.
- B. President Lincoln was going to be in charge of Southern Reconstruction.
- C. John Wilkes Booth jumped on stage and killed President Lincoln.
- D. Carpetbaggers from the North traveled to the South to help in Reconstruction.

3. In the second paragraph, the pronoun *his* in the sentence "His plan was to welcome the southern states back into the Union" refers to

- A. President Lincoln.
- B. Congress.
- C. John Wilkes Booth.
- D. a northern Carpetbagger.

4. In the passage it says that after President Lincoln was shot "the North went into mourning." What do you think **mourning** means?

- A. It means to have a celebration.
- B. It means to feel sad.
- C. It means to spend time with family.
- D. It means to get angry and fight.

5. The passage "Reconstruction" is mostly about

- A. the time period after the Civil War in the South
- B. building weapons during the Civil War
- C. how buildings were built in the South
- D. how plantations in the South were different after the war

6. How were the 3 amendments to the Constitution helpful to black people?

7. In what ways was the South in bad shape after the Civil War?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

The U.S. Congress took over Reconstruction _____ President Lincoln was shot.

- A. in spite of
- B. before
- C. after
- D. although

9. Vocabulary Word: lenient: gentle or merciful.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence

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6. How were the 3 amendments to the Constitution helpful to black people?

One amendment ended slavery. Another amendment guaranteed that the federal government would protect the rights of black people. The third amendment gave black men the right to vote.

7. In what ways was the South in bad shape after the Civil War?

The South was in bad shape after the Civil War because many people had died, many farms had been destroyed, and slavery, which was used to run plantations before the war, didn't exist anymore.

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Answers will vary.