

SSUSH10 – Identify legal, political, and social dimensions of Reconstruction.

a. Compare and contrast Presidential Reconstruction with Congressional Reconstruction, including the significance of Lincoln's assassination and Johnson's impeachment.

Reconstruction

The end of the Civil War brought with it the monumental task of physically, politically, economically, and socially repairing the United States. Questions existed over how to most efficiently and effectively make this happen. There were two different approaches to Reconstruction. Presidential Reconstruction was the approach that promoted more leniency towards the South regarding plans for readmission to the Union. Congressional Reconstruction blamed the South and wanted retribution for causing the Civil War. Their approach required much more submission from the South as a condition for readmission to the Union. Both Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction plans recognized the importance of rebuilding all aspects of the nation. Where they differed was in the details for implementation.

Reconstruction became a conflict between the Radical Republicans and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson, who proposed more moderate requirements for the former Confederate states. The Radical Republicans wanted to severely punish the South for the Civil War. Lincoln and the moderates wanted to bring the South into the Union quickly. The process of rebuilding the South began before the war ended. Presidential Reconstruction refers to when Lincoln proposed the Ten Percent Plan in 1863. This plan called on Southern states to complete three tasks in order to restore their status in the United States. First, they had to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery. Second, states had to repudiate secession. Third, when ten percent of the voters from 1860 had taken an oath of allegiance to the United States, that southern state would be restored to the Union.

Radical Republicans objected to Lincoln's plan saying the plan was too lenient and did not go far enough to protect the rights of the newly freed slaves. In response, they proposed the Wade-Davis Bill. In addition to ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, the proposed law would have required 50% of the voters of a southern state to swear their loyalty to the United States. Southern supporters believed that this was an impossible task designed to keep the South dominated by Northern political interests. Lincoln vetoed the Wade Davis Bill. Before Lincoln could reintroduce his plan he was assassinated.

Lincoln was shot and killed on April 14, 1865, just a few days after Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox. The assassination took place at Ford's Theater in Washington, where Lincoln and his wife were attending a play. John Wilkes Booth was an actor who supported the Confederacy and shot the President in anger over the Southern loss in the Civil War. Lincoln was a skilled politician who was poised to negotiate a flexible solution to the Reconstruction issue. His assassination resulted in more turmoil and political wrangling. The chaos was in part due to the new President set to fill Lincoln's untimely loss - Andrew Johnson.

Andrew Johnson had been chosen by Abraham Lincoln to be Vice President for his second term in office. Johnson was a Democrat from Tennessee, who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War even though he was a supporter of slavery. His loyalty to the Union was about bringing down the wealthy plantation owners. Johnson believed these aristocrats restricted the small farmers' ability to make money. Johnson was added to Lincoln's 1864 Presidential ticket because he was a Democrat from the South and would be a symbol of goodwill as the Civil War was coming to a close. Lincoln wanted to send a message of reconciliation.

After the assassination of Lincoln, the Reconstruction task fell to the new President. Andrew Johnson's plan for Reconstruction was actually similar to Lincoln's. The new President sought to rapidly integrate Southern states back into the Union by appointing governors who would make the required political changes. There was significant opposition to this approach by Radical Republican members of Congress who wanted the South to be dealt with more harshly. The Congressional election of 1866 returned a Radical Republican majority to Congress. The group began pushing forward bills that favored their position and Johnson vetoed each one. Congress and Johnson were at odds with one another. The political struggle quickly escalated to a level not previously tested.

In addition to vetoing Republican legislation that came to the White House for Johnson's signature, the President was also firing many Republicans from the executive offices they had held under Lincoln's administration. To preserve the Republican influence in the executive branch, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act over Johnson's veto in 1867. This law required Senate approval before the President could remove a federal official or military commander from a position in the government. Johnson ignored the law and fired Republican Secretary of War Edwin Stanton from his post. Congress responded by impeaching Johnson for breaking a federal law, but ultimately failed to remove him from office by one vote. The impeachment hearings lasted months and sidetracked the more important Reconstruction efforts of the government. Because the Congress had a Radical Republican majority, they were able to overturn any veto Johnson issued on proposed legislation. Rather than remove the President, the Radical Republicans simply waited out his term in office. This arrangement ushered in what is known as Congressional Reconstruction.

The First Reconstruction Act, which was passed over Johnson's veto in 1867, divided the South into five military districts that were administered by military governors. The law turned the clock back on any Reconstruction measures passed by Southern states. To be readmitted to the Union, the Southern states were required to guarantee former male slaves and free Blacks suffrage. The states were also required to hold open elections for both White and Black representatives to the state constitutional convention. The purpose of the state constitutional conventions was to create new state constitutions that recognized the three Reconstruction amendments to the United States Constitution - the 13th, 14th, & 15th amendments.

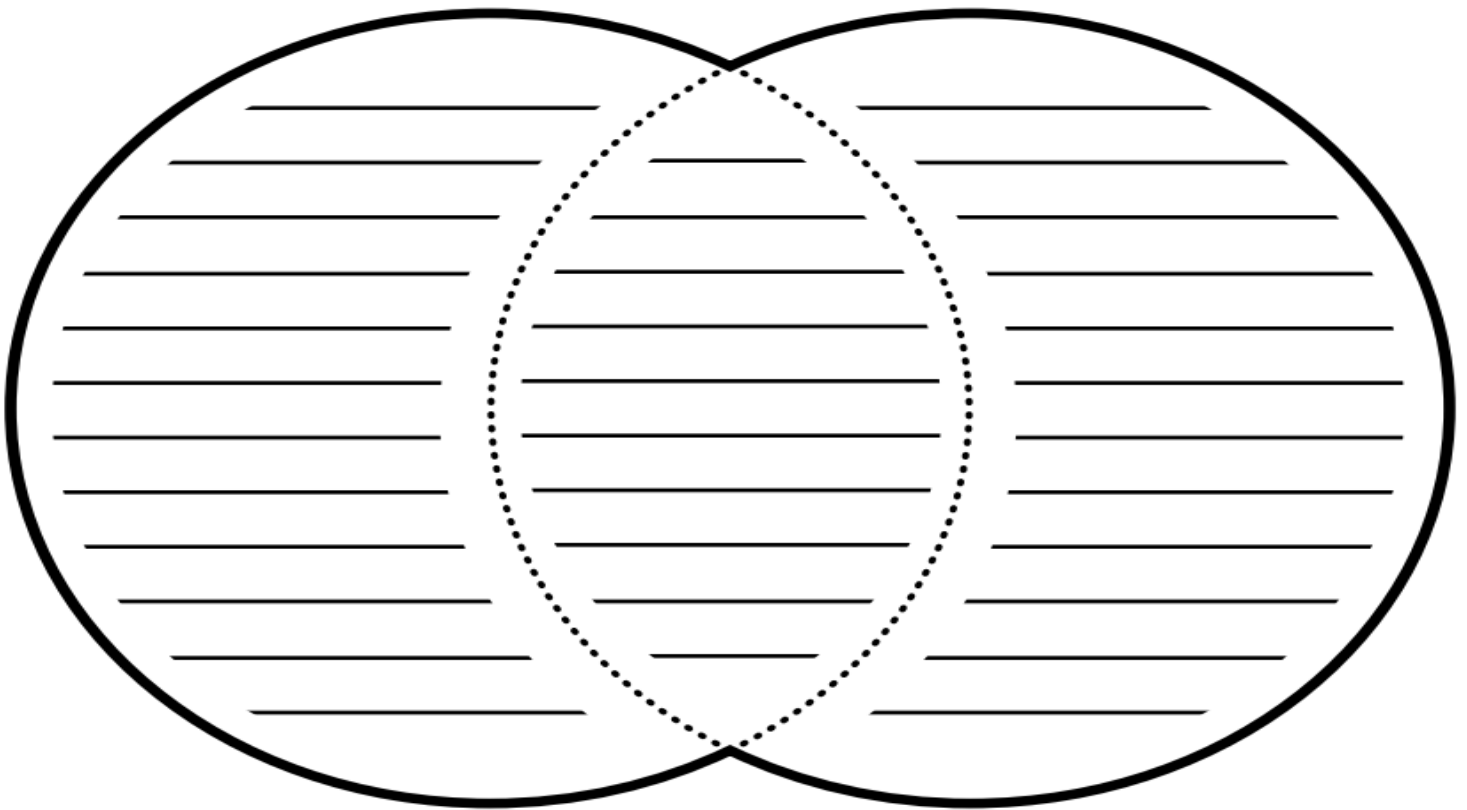
By 1870, all the former Confederate states had been re-admitted to the Union. Federal troops remained in the South to enforce the provisions of Reconstruction and to protect former slaves from mob violence. The Reconstruction process was contentious. Both Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction plans were intended to repair the badly fractured nation - politically, physically, and socially. However, the plans differed on how harshly the South should be treated. Presidents Lincoln and Johnson favored a more lenient approach. The Radical Republicans of the Congress wanted harsh punishment against the South for causing the war.

Plans for Reconstruction Guided Reading

1. What was President Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction?
2. Why did Congress not agree with President Lincoln's plan?
3. What was the Radical Republican plan for Reconstruction?
4. Complete the Venn Diagram **comparing** and **contrasting** Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction vs. Congress' plan.

Lincoln's Plan

Radical Republicans' Plan



5. What event in 1865 ended the hopes of a Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction?
6. Why did Lincoln choose Andrew Johnson to be his Vice President in 1864?
7. List the Amendments that came about directly as a result of the First Reconstruction Act passed by Congress.

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c. Describe the significance of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments

Reconstruction Amendments

The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth amendments are collectively referred to as the Reconstruction Amendments. They effectively ended slavery, extended citizenship, and allowed voting rights for former (male) slaves. These amendments are significant because they establish a federal mandate concerning the end of slavery in the United States. Even with these amendments to the United States Constitution, many states in the South passed Black Codes, or Jim Crow Laws, that restricted Blacks and denied them true equality.

The Thirteenth Amendment was adopted in 1865 and is very direct concerning the end of slavery in the United States. The amendment reads, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." Because the amendment ended slavery, it made null the provisions for slavery within the original Constitution. The overturned policies included a fugitive slave clause requiring runaway slaves to be returned to their owners and the 3/5 Compromise concerning the count of slaves as part of a state's population for representation in the Congress.

The Fourteenth Amendment was adopted in 1868 and is a little more complex than the Thirteenth amendment, which banned slavery. There are two main provisions in the amendment. First, it declares that all people born or naturalized to the United States are citizens. As a Reconstruction Amendment, this provision meant that former slaves were indeed citizens of the United States. The second provision of the Fourteenth Amendment requires that states protect the rights of all United States citizens. States are expected to provide "equal protection of the laws" and "due process of law." This particular amendment is still often used by civil rights activists to defend against discrimination.

The Fifteenth Amendment was adopted in 1869. The text of this amendment is also very brief. The amendment reads, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The second section adds, "The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation." The Fifteenth Amendment did little to limit the effects of poll taxes, the grandfather clause, and literacy tests implemented in Southern states to block Blacks from voting after Reconstruction ended. It was not until the 1950s and 1960s that Black Codes were struck down by Supreme Court rulings and Congressional legislation. An example of legislation that struck down discriminatory state policies was the Voting Rights Act of 1965 passed by the United States Congress.

The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments are together known as the Reconstruction amendments. They were intended to establish policy at the national level regarding the end of slavery and the process for ensuring a protection of rights for former slaves. Even with the power of these amendments, the Black population of the United States did not experience true equality until almost 100 years later with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling in 1954.

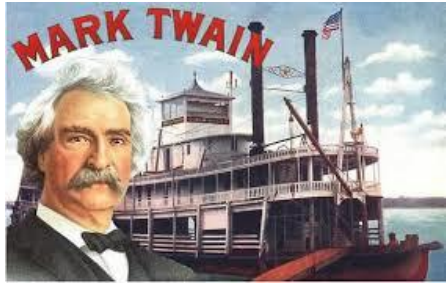


RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

Directions: Using your own words, Summarize the legal changes the amendment brought to the United States.

13TH AMENDMENT: _____

14TH AMENDMENT: _____

15TH AMENDMENT: _____

		
<p>The year is 1873. Picture yourself as a Freedmen (New freed former slave) living in the southern U.S. during Reconstruction. Pretend you are writing a letter to a family member who had escaped to the North before the Civil War. Since this person was a runaway slave, you would not have had any contact with this person for many years. In writing your letter you'll be describing the events of the past 12 or more years.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Letter Requirements:</p> <p>Content- Write in detail about how one of the Reconstruction Amendments will directly benefit you (80 points)</p> <p>Format- Meets all requirements of a letter according to ELA formatting (10 points)</p> <p>Spelling/Grammar- Contains no grammatical or spelling errors (10 points)</p>	<p>Create a Poster that visually represents the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments using poster board. The poster board should be divided into equal sections for each of the Amendments. Each Amendment should contain a brief written description of the law as well as a colorful picture.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Poster Requirements:</p> <p>Amendment Descriptions (30 points)</p> <p>Hand-drawn Images (45 points – 15 for each Amendment)</p> <p>Colorful/Visually Appealing (25 points)</p>	<p>Using Padlet (padlet.com) Create a digital poster that details the 13th, 14th, & 15th Amendments. Incorporate various forms of multimedia (pictures, cartoons, movie clips, & audio) to make your digital poster appealing and informative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Poster Requirements:</p> <p>Amendment Written Descriptions (30 points)</p> <p>Use AT LEAST three different forms of multimedia to describe the Amendments (60 points or 20 each)</p> <p>Spelling/Grammar- Contains no grammatical or spelling errors (10 points)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">**Digitally submit your poster by emailing me the hyperlink to chancehicks@gcbe.org . Write your full name in the subject line.**</p>

