

SHAPING America



LESSON 25:

“RECONSTRUCTING THE NATION”

Lesson Assignments

You are encouraged to be very attentive while viewing the video program. Review the video objectives and be prepared to record possible answers, in abbreviated form, as you view the video. The topics and time periods may differ somewhat from, the chapters of the textbook your school system is using. Each video program chronicles a wide array of events and personalities during a specific time period of American history prior to 1877. Keep in mind that one of the overarching goals of each lesson is to help you understand how past historical events and actions by historical personalities did not occur in a vacuum, and that they are inextricably interwoven in your society today.

Activities:

Your teacher may assign one or more activities for each lesson. Refer to your course syllabus for details.

OVERVIEW

After the battles were fought and the buglers were silent, the North and South now faced the staggering challenges of peace. Major issues had to be resolved. How would the South physically be rebuilt? How would the newly liberated blacks be integrated into the social and political life of the South? Perhaps most important of all, who would direct the process of the formal Reconstruction—the president, Congress, or the southern states themselves? In the final analysis, all three were involved in Reconstruction. The Radical Republicans controlled Congress after the Civil War and demanded that the southern states seek formal readmission to the Union. Mandatory requirements for readmission to the Union for southern states included ratification of the 13th Amendment, revision of state constitutions and the inclusion of a provision that abolished slavery, reorganization of southern states into military districts controlled by federal troops, etc.

Congress created the Freedmen’s Bureau in 1865 as a kind of primitive welfare agency to provide food, clothing, medical care, and education for blacks. Its greatest success came in the area of education. But in other areas the bureau’s accomplishments were meager. Local administrators often conspired with southern planters to keep blacks in a form of servitude. President Johnson shared the

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white-supremacist views and repeatedly tried to kill the bureau. He engaged in a constant battle with Radical Republicans who supported black suffrage and advancement. Eventually Johnson was impeached for violating the Tenure of Office Act and narrowly escaped removal from office.

Southern state regimes attempted to regulate the affairs of the emancipated blacks by passing a series of state laws called the Black Codes. The goal of the Black Codes was to ensure a stable and subservient labor force. The codes condemned blacks to an economic status that provided no opportunity for advancement. With no capital or land, blacks were forced to accept the status of sharecroppers and were once again tied to the white-owned plantations.

A series of constitutional amendments were added to the U.S. Constitution in an attempt to provide the freed slaves with political rights. The 13th Amendment followed up on the Emancipation Proclamation by abolishing slavery. The 14th Amendment made blacks citizens of the United States, and the 15th granted them the right to vote.

During the Reconstruction period when northern troops were stationed in the South, blacks enjoyed the most political power they were to have for almost 100 years. They joined the Republican Party and held a variety of state and national political offices. Their accomplishments in the South included the creation of a public school system and reforming the tax structure. Unfortunately for the blacks, the end of Reconstruction in 1876 meant a withdrawal of federal troops, and white southerners immediately took steps to regain control of the government. The notorious Ku Klux Klan emerged to terrorize and murder any blacks that dared to vote Republican or attempt to hold office. The so-called “redeemers,” who consisted of white Democrats, regained control of the government in the South and set about to redeem the South from the evils of Reconstruction. The “solid south” emerged with the dominance of white Democrats and the demise of black Republicans.

Was Reconstruction the great failure its critics made it out to be? There is no doubt it failed to bring lasting freedom to the blacks, nor did it create racial equality. It left a legacy of hatred in the South as most southerners viewed it as an act of vengeance by northern Republicans. On the other hand, it did result in a series of civil rights laws and the additions to the U.S. Constitution of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. While none of the preceding were initially major success stories, they did pave the way for future advancements for blacks.



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VIDEO OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are designed to assist the viewer in identifying the most significant aspects of the video segment of this lesson. You should take succinct notes while viewing the video.

1. Assess the significance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.
2. Analyze the role played by Andrew Johnson during Reconstruction.
3. Examine the successes and failures of Reconstruction.
4. Examine the role played by the following during and immediately after Reconstruction: Black Codes, Freedmen's Bureau, KKK, Redeemers, and land ownership.

WEB ACTIVITIES

These activities are assigned at the discretion of your teacher. They are offered as suggestions to help you learn more about the material presented in this lesson.

Activity 1: Analysis of Political Cartoons Related to President Andrew Johnson

- a. Access and review the following web sites:
The American Civil War. Dakota State University:
<http://homepages.dsu.edu/jankej/civilwar/civilwar.htm>
Library of Congress. African American Perspectives Pamphlets from the Daniel A.P. Murray Collection. 1818-1907:
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aaphome.html>
War, Reconstruction and Recovery in Brazoria County (Texas):
<http://bchm.org/wrr/Index2.html>
Black Codes: <http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p10.html>
Military Reconstruction: <http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p9.html>
Blacklash Against Freedman: <http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p5.html>
Harper's Weekly. Towards Racial Equality:
<http://blackhistory.harpweek.com/SlaveryHome.htm>
Harper's Weekly. The Ku Klux Klan Hearings:
<http://education.harpweek.com/KKKHearings/ItemsListOf.htm>

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The Presidential Elections from 1860-1884:

<http://elections.harperweek.com/>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson:

<http://www.andrewjohnson.com/>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson.

List of Cartoons:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ListofCartoons.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Reconstruction and How It Works. (Political Cartoon):

[http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/](http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ReconAndHowItWorks.htm)

[ReconAndHowItWorks.htm](http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ReconAndHowItWorks.htm)

Harper's Weekly. Andrew Johnson Kicking Freedmen's Bureau:

[http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoons/](http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoons/KickingFreedmensBureau.htm)

[KickingFreedmensBureau.htm](http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoons/KickingFreedmensBureau.htm)

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson. Domestic Intelligence:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/05AJFirstVetoes/iiia-2.htm>

National Archives and Records Administration Document Analysis

Worksheets:

<http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/analysis/analysis.html>

Library of Congress. Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/studqsts.html>

- b. Write an analysis of three of the political cartoons related to Andrew Johnson at: <http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoons/ListOfCartoons.htm> and use the National Archives Cartoon Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.



Activity 2: Analysis of Oath of Allegiance Required of Southerners

- a. Access and review the following web sites:
- The American Civil War. Dakota State University:
<http://homepages.dsu.edu/jankej/civilwar/civilwar.htm>
- Library of Congress. African American Perspectives Pamphlets from the Daniel A.P. Murray Collection. 1818-1907:
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aaphome.html>
- War, Reconstruction and Recovery in Brazoria County (Texas):
<http://bchm.org/wrr/Index2.html>
- Black Codes:
<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p10.html>
- Military Reconstruction:
<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p9.html>

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Blacklash Against Freedmen:

<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p5.html>

Harper's Weekly. Towards Racial Equality:

<http://blackhistory.harpweek.com/SlaveryHome.htm>

Harper's Weekly. The Ku Klux Klan Hearings:

<http://education.harpweek.com/KKKHearings/ItemsListOf.htm>

The Presidential Elections from 1860-1884:

<http://elections.harpweek.com/>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson:

<http://www.andrewjohnson.com/>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson. List of Cartoons:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ListofCartoons.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Reconstruction and How It Works. (Political Cartoon):

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ReconAndHowItWorks.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Andrew Johnson Kicking Freedmen's Bureau:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoons/KickingFreedmensBureau.htm>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson.

Domestic Intelligence:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/05AJFirstVetoes/iiia-2.htm>

Library of Congress Document Analysis Worksheets:

<http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/analysis/analysis.html>

Library of Congress. Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/studqsts.html>

- b. Analyze the Oath of Allegiance document located at <http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p9.html> and use the National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.

Activity 3: Analysis of the Black Codes Document

- a. Access and review the following web sites:

The American Civil War. Dakota State University:

<http://homepages.dsu.edu/jankej/civilwar/civilwar.htm>

Library of Congress. African American Perspectives Pamphlets from the Daniel A.P. Murray Collection. 1818-1907:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/aap/aaphome.html>

War, Reconstruction and Recovery in Brazoria County (Texas):

<http://bchm.org/wrr/Index2.html>

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Black Codes:

<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p10.html>

Military Reconstruction:

<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p9.html>

Blacklash Against Freedmen:

<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p5.html>

Harper's Weekly. Towards Racial Equality:

<http://blackhistory.harpweek.com/SlaveryHome.htm>

Harper's Weekly. The Ku Klux Klan Hearings:

<http://education.harpweek.com/KKKHearings/ItemsListOf.htm>

The Presidential Elections from 1860-1884:

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Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson:

<http://www.andrewjohnson.com/>

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson. List of
Cartoons:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ListofCartoons.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Reconstruction and How It Works. (Political Cartoon):

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListofCartoons/ReconAndHowItWorks.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Andrew Johnson Kicking Freedmen's Bureau:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/ListOfCartoonsKickingFreedmensBureau.htm>

Harper's Weekly. Andrew Johnson Kicking Freedmen's Bureau:

Harper's Weekly. The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson. Domestic
Intelligence:

<http://www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com/05AJFirstVeto/iiia-2.htm>

National Archives Records and Administration Document Analysis
Worksheets:

<http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/analysis/analysis.html>

Library of Congress. Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/studqsts.html>

b. Analyze the Black Codes document located at:

<http://www.bchm.org/wrr/recon/p10.html> and use the National Archives
Written Document Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.



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Activity 4: Analyzing Articles from *Harper's Weekly* on the Ku Klux Klan

- a. Access and review the following web sites:
Harper's Weekly. The Ku Klux Klan Hearings:
<http://education.harpweek.com/KKKHearings/ItemsListOf.htm>
National Archives and Records Administration Document Analysis Worksheets:
<http://www.nara.gov/education/teaching/analysis/analysis.html>
Library of Congress. Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/studqsts.html>
- b. Compare and contrast two of the *Harper's Weekly* articles on the Ku Klux Klan located at <http://education.harpweek.com/KKKHearings/ItemsListOf.htm> and use the National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet as a guide for your analysis.

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PRACTICE TEST

After watching the video and reviewing the objectives, you should be able to complete the following Practice Test. Access the Answer Key to score your answers after you have completed the Practice Test.

Multiple Choice:

Select the single best answer. It will be indicated if more than one answer is required.

1. The greatest achievements of the Freedman's Bureau were in:
 - A. Its distribution of land.
 - B. Education.
 - C. The provision of food and clothing.
 - D. Helping people to find employment.
2. The main purpose of the Black Codes was to:
 - A. Guarantee freedom for the blacks.
 - B. Insure a stable labor supply.
 - C. Allow blacks to marry.
 - D. Prevent blacks from becoming sharecroppers.
3. Which of the following was not one of the Reconstruction era amendments?
 - A. Twelfth.
 - B. Thirteenth.
 - C. Fourteenth.
 - D. Fifteenth.
4. Radical Republican state governments:
 - A. Did little of value.
 - B. Passed much desirable legislation and badly needed reforms.
 - C. Were more corrupt than northern state governments.
 - D. Had all of their reforms repealed by the all-white "redeemer governments."



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5. Methods used by Ku Klux Klan members to achieve their goal of white supremacy included:
- A. Beatings.
 - B. Scare tactics.
 - C. Murder.
 - D. All of the above.

Essay Question:

1. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of Reconstruction.

Answers to the Practice Test:

The correct answer is indicated first, followed by the objective (s) that correlate with the test question.



1. B: 4
2. B: 4
3. A: 1
4. B: 3
5. D: 4