

Reconstruction TOP 11

Story Elements (Overview)

- a. Time: 1865-1877; after the Civil War; known as **Reconstruction**
- b. Place: United States- **North and South**
- c. People involved:
 - **Presidents:** Abraham Lincoln and then Andrew Johnson
 - **Radical Republicans**
 - **Freed Slaves**
 - **Southern land owners** (a.k.a the Southern **elite**) and **Poor southerners**
 - **Subversive** or terrorists groups (KKK)
- d. Main Events: **rebuilding** the Union (physically and socially); **Freedman's Bureau**; passing the **13-15th Amendments**; **terrorist groups**; **black codes**; **sharecropping**
- e. When thinking of these main events, think about how they provided **hope**, created **change**, or helped in the rebuilding efforts. Sometimes the opposite occurred, so note that too!

1. In 1865, Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Courthouse, ending the Civil War.

- a. At the end of the War: Over 600,000 people were killed, the South was destroyed (spirit and land), and four million slaves were freed, President Lincoln assassinated, Andrew Johnson became president
- b. White people: Elite (rich) landowners= left without workers to work their plantations. Poor white southerners= remained poor white southerners.
- c. Newly freed slaves: didn't own land to make a living; left the plantations/South for the North (factory/industry jobs) or out West (new lives on their land)
- d. If they stayed in the South: married, created strong communities around their churches, received an education in Freedman Schools, started their own business, voted and held public offices, and tried to be as independent as possible until what little land they received was given back to the elite/rich landowners and former Confederate leaders.
- e. For the poor (white or black): little opportunity for wages (pay) since they did not or could not own land (land = power), so this led to an arrangement called sharecropping.
- f. Emancipation Proclamation only freed slaves in the territories controlled by the Confederacy. The 13th Amendment freed all slaves in 1865.

2. The Freedman's Bureau was established by Congress before the end of the Civil War.

- a. Goal: help ALL people in the South in need, especially freedmen
- b. How: provided food, clothing, medical care, education, and some protection from hostile Southerners, helped many freemen find jobs and provide some protection in labor contracts dealing with sharecropping.
- c. Its most important contribution was creating thousands of schools throughout the South.

3. Reconstruction was a social, political, and economic revolution (change) that failed to fulfill its promise to African Americans and then left the US with problems of poverty and discrimination we are still dealing with today. It's the healing /rebuilding of the country after the Civil War.

- a. Socially- former slaves were now freed and this caused problems with many white southerners (race relations)
- b. Politically- rich white landowners remained in control of state governments; for a few years AA were able to vote and hold public office
- c. Economically- land meant power; former slaves didn't and couldn't own land so became sharecroppers
- d. Physically- the South was destroyed (land/buildings burned).
- e. Emotionally- Peace needed to be returned to the Union; rebuild/heal the country's "heart"
- f. Lasted about twelve years, between 1865 and 1877.

- g. Was divided into two phases, based on who was in control or who was making many of the decisions: Presidential and Congressional

KEY: S = social E= economic P= political

GROUP	GOAL/AIM	HOPE	CHANGE
Lincoln	Easy and lenient way to re-admit Southern states into Union	Gave Southerners hope of rejoining the Union	To bring the Union back together
Johnson	Continue Lincoln's lenient plan	Allowed states to pass Black Codes (P)	Southern elite land owners had to ask for pardons from him
Southern Elite land owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go back to life the way it was before the war ("rebuild" their former lives) [S,E,P] Keep their social status (S) Would not recognize former slaves as equal citizens (S) Used threats and violence to intimidate their former slaves (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> re-elected former Confederates to Congress to make new laws (P) supported the passing of Black Codes to keep African Americans inferior (P) 	Entered into sharecropping contracts with former slaves since they no longer had "free" labor with slavery (E)
Congress and the Radical Republicans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punish the South Make sure rights were given to former slaves (which equals more votes for them) [S, P] 	Sent troops to supervise in the South to make sure they were giving rights to freedmen (P)	Refused to recognize former Confederate leaders in Congress (P)
African Americans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reunite their family members (S) Married (S) Create a network of churches in which to build their community around (S) Travel freely (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> considered citizens (S) have the right to vote (P) schools created to educate former slaves (even though they were not equal to white schools) (S, E) some elected into government positions (P) Hope for land- some were given land that belonged to former Confederates but was later taken back (S, E) freedom meant they could leave the plantations (S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From slavery to sharecroppers (E) Opportunity for education (S,E) Black codes later become Jim Crow Laws (P) Moved from the "big house" to a plot of land they could work (S, E)
Poor Southerners a.k.a. "scalawag"	Cooperate with the Republican government to gain some kind of power since they were "lower-class" (S, P)	had a political voice for the first time since they cooperated with the Radical Republican government in the South (P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They also became sharecroppers since they didn't own land or have lots of money (E) Some became tenant farmers if they could afford to rent land (E)

4. Presidential Period of Reconstruction occurred at the end of the Civil War and lasted two years. Overall, this version of Reconstruction was considered lenient towards the South. This angered Northerners who believed the South should be punished for starting the war.

- a. Lincoln's 10% Plan- if 10% of the people in a state would pledge allegiance to the United States and ratify the 13th Amendment, then they could form new state governments, elect representatives to Congress, and fully participate in the Union again.
- b. Johnson- knew Congress would not approve of former Confederates being back in control of the states, so he allowed the Southern states to form new state governments and elect former leaders when Congress was not in session.
- c. Black Codes- ways to keep freed slaves inferior socially, politically, and economically; replaced the former slave codes; denied the rights of African Americans making life not much different even after slavery had been outlawed
- d. Examples of black codes included prohibiting them (to keep someone from doing something) from: traveling freely, owning personal property, owning/carrying guns, and voting.

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION	HOPE	CHANGES	REBUILDING EFFORTS
Abraham Lincoln	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve the union End the Civil War as quickly as possible Protect the rights of freemen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy or lenient plan (10% Plan) Protect rights of freedmen (no slavery-13th Amend.) Not punish the South- show kindness and mercy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebuild the Union physically Wasn't an immediate change but did change within a year Easy way for states to be readmitted into the Union
Andrew Johnson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Lincoln's plan Humiliate the Southern elite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made wealthy landowners ask for pardon (forgive) in order to gain back their citizenship rights Black Codes passed in South to keep former slaves inferior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed states to form new governments and to elect former Confederates to Congress Recognized the rights of all Americans for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" Passed Black Codes that hurt race relations Blacks still not allowed to own land

5. Many in Congress believed the President was too lenient with southerners, and they wanted to make sure the Civil War was not fought in vain and that freed slaves were really free. Their decisions took over those of the president so the new phase was called Congressional Reconstruction. During this 10 year phase, Congress made most of the decisions regarding Reconstruction.

- a. During Presidential Reconstruction, southerners used violence and threats to intimidate their former slaves; was often described in Northern newspapers; voters elected Republicans (known as Radical Republicans by some Southerners) to Congress who promised to protect the freedom of former slaves.
- b. 14th Amendment overturned the Dred Scott decision- AA no longer seen as property. Johnson was not in favor of this amendment and campaigned against it.
- c. Eventually the House voted to impeach (charge him with a crime) Johnson in 1868, but the Senate found him not guilty by one vote!

CONGRESSIONAL RECONSTRUCTION	HOPE	CHANGES	REBUILDING RESULTS
Led by Radical Republicans, who were led by Thaddeus Stevens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voters elected Republicans to Congress to ensure that former slaves were really free 14th/15th Amendments gave citizenship and the right to vote to former slaves Some AA were elected to government positions Supported by some southern whites (called scalawags) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punish the South Extended the Freedman's Bureau Refused to allow former Confederate leaders back in Congress Former slaves were now recognized as citizens with equal protection and due process of the law (14th) All males, even former slaves, have the right to vote (15th) Tried to impeach President Johnson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedman's Bureau still helping those in need Some Northerners came south to help rebuild and make \$\$ (carpetbaggers) Divided South into 5 military districts supervised by government troops to make sure rights were being given to former slaves. Eventually southern Democrats regain control of state governments through violence and fraud

6. The 13th-15th Amendments were sometimes referred to as the Reconstruction Amendments or Acts. They were designed to end slavery and protect the rights of former slaves. They were only effective as long as Republicans were in control of the state governments or while the federal troops were in the South to protect their social and political rights.

- In order to amend the Constitution, 2/3 of the states had to ratify them before they could become law.
- No law or provision was made for African Americans to own their own land. Most Confederates refused to sell land to them-even if they had the money to buy their land.

AMENDMENT	PURPOSE	HOPE	EFFECT ON RACE RELATIONS
13	Ended slavery everywhere in the US	Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not seen as equals Reunite their families
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognized citizenship of AA Gave rights to all citizens for due process and equal protection of the law 	Citizenship- not considered property anymore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not seen as equals Black codes passed to keep them inferior
15	All men have the right to vote no matter their race, creed, or previous condition of servitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting rights- voted for those who supported their interests Held political offices (like in state governments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southerners felt this was passed to just protect the power and numbers of the Republican party White southerners refused to recognize their leadership in government Passed voting laws to keep African Americans from voting

7. Eventually Reconstruction comes to an end. Northerners lose interest in supporting the efforts to rebuild the south by paying taxes and they were tired of the problems and lack of political skills of the former slaves. This led to the Compromise of 1877....which basically ended Reconstruction.

- a. In this election, Democrats agreed to support a Republican president (Rutherford B. Hayes) in exchange for the final removal of all military troops in the south.
- b. In 1877, twelve years after the Civil War, all troops left the south. The rights and freedoms that African Americans had won were once again taken away and there was no longer any protection for their rights.
- c. Southern Democrats went back to being in control of state governments and creating laws to deny rights to AA.
- d. The federal government basically abandoned the African Americans.

8. Some subversive or discriminatory groups in the South tried to intimidate and terrorize African Americans. Their goal was to use violence, intimidation, and voter fraud to keep African Americans from exercising their rights from the 13-15th Amendments so white southerners could regain control of state governments.

- a. Examples: Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and the Knights of the White Camellia.
- b. KKK: social organization at first (made up of ex-Confederate soldiers, white southerners, judges, lawyers, businessmen, and politicians) but grew into a terrorist group; believed in white supremacy and tried to keep African Americans from voting; burned crosses in the yards of AA and those who supported their rights; physically beat African Americans and publically lynched them (hanging them from trees).
- c. Ways AA were kept from voting which limited their political rights: (1) polls places changed without telling them; (2) made the polling places too far away for them to get to them; (3) forced to pay a poll tax (payment); (4) take a literacy (reading/writing) test on the Constitution; (5) "grandfather clause" allowed you to vote if your father/grandfather voted prior to 1867 (which was before AA had the right to vote)

9. Sharecropping was an economic plan to help land owners and former slaves. Land owners needed workers for their land/crops since slavery had been abolished. Many lacked the cash to pay workers since they were paying taxes for schools and other services. Former slaves needed a job and place to live since they didn't and couldn't own land. So sharecropping became the solution. Unfortunately, it created a condition of constant debt for the former slave and many remained in poverty.

- a. It was the end of slavery and not the Reconstruction policy that changed society in the South. With slavery, landowners had workers but didn't have to pay them.
- b. The Southern elite wanted to quickly re-establish cotton production to keep their superior social position and dominate politics in the state governments.
- c. The US became more industrialized in the late 1800s after Reconstruction and offered different types of work and employment opportunities. But the South remained more agricultural and relied on farming and human labor through sharecropping agreements.
- d. Cotton prices fell due to overproduction decreased demand, so farming was not as profitable as before. Cotton also depleted the soil and the boll weevil devastated crops it attacked. This forced many farmers off their land.
- e. By the 1880s, textile factories and many mills were being built and attracting white workers to leave their farms. However, African Americans were denied these textile jobs. Entrepreneurs began to build textiles and factories in the up country and then later in the Midlands and Low Country of SC.

This Person	Needed	So They Provided	And The Result Was
Landowner	Workers to grow their crops and work their land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A place for worker to live All supplies and tools needed to work the land 	Agreements varied, but basically once the owner took his share (for what he provided) when the goods were sold, the farmer was left with the rest
Former slave (farmer) a.k.a. the sharecropper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A job A place to live Were uneducated and lacked skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The labor or work force to work the land They could choose whether or not to have their wives and children work the fields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A kind of social and economic independence since he was providing a living for his family Remained economically dependent on landowner Usually remained in debt to landowner (and like being a slave over again)

10. What were the social, political, and economic effects of Reconstruction on African Americans?

Social [😊 + 😊]	Political [🏛️]	Economic [💰]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Left plantations in search of family members Some moved North and West, but most returned to the South because that is what they knew Refused to have their wives or children work in the fields like they did as slaves Church was a major influence on their culture. Communities were built around the church, where people could go to get educated or learn a trade or skill Lived in separate neighborhoods or plots away from the “big house” Race relations- were not seen as equals to whites. Black codes and eventually Jim Crow laws kept them inferior and segregated Were not given the same jobs as given to whites Were often the “last hired and first fired” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the Republicans were in charge, many had the right to vote and held political positions or jobs Many supported and voted for the Republicans who helped support their rights after slavery was abolished Black Codes eventually took away much of the freedoms and rights they were entitled to experience Jim Crow laws began the idea of “separate but equal” or segregation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were not allowed to own land (land = power) by white landowners When land was given to them, it was quickly taken away and returned to the original white landowner Became sharecroppers with landowners This often left them in constant debt to the landowner and was almost like being a slave again.

11. At the end of the 1800s, black codes were soon replaced by Jim Crow Laws. These laws were designed to maintain white supremacy and were the beginning of segregation between the two races. This idea of “separate but equal” would remain until the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, even though it violated the “equal protection” part of the 14th Amendment.

- a. In the 1896 Supreme Court case called *Plessy v. Ferguson*, “separate but equal” was considered legal by the U.S. Supreme Court. This allowed states to pass newer laws (Jim Crow Laws) in the 1890s, making it almost impossible for African Americans to vote and had them going to separate schools and churches and segregated housing, theaters, and transportation.