

Module 10

Reconstruction



Essential Question

Did the government's decisions during Reconstruction help or hinder the rebuilding of the South?



About the Photograph: This photograph by Mathew Brady shows the city of Charleston, South Carolina, in ruins after the Civil War. Across the South, the war had left countless towns like Charleston wrecked both physically and economically.

In this module you will examine efforts by the federal government to rebuild the South after the Civil War, including the social changes, conflicts, and compromises that resulted from those efforts.

What You Will Learn . . .

Lesson 1: The Politics of Reconstruction 416

The Big Idea Congress opposed Lincoln's and Johnson's plans for Reconstruction and instead implemented its own plan to rebuild the South.

Lesson 2: Reconstructing the South 425

The Big Idea Various groups contributed to the rebuilding of southern society after the war.

Lesson 3: Life After Slavery. 432

The Big Idea During Reconstruction, African Americans gained new political and social rights but still faced discrimination in many areas.

Lesson 4: The Collapse of Reconstruction 441

The Big Idea Southern opposition to Radical Reconstruction, along with economic problems in the North, ended Reconstruction.

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HISTORY

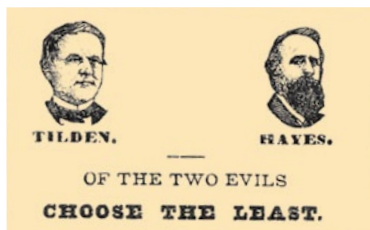
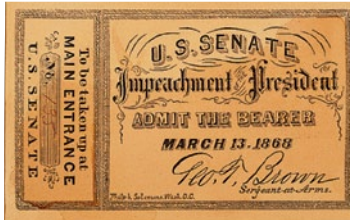
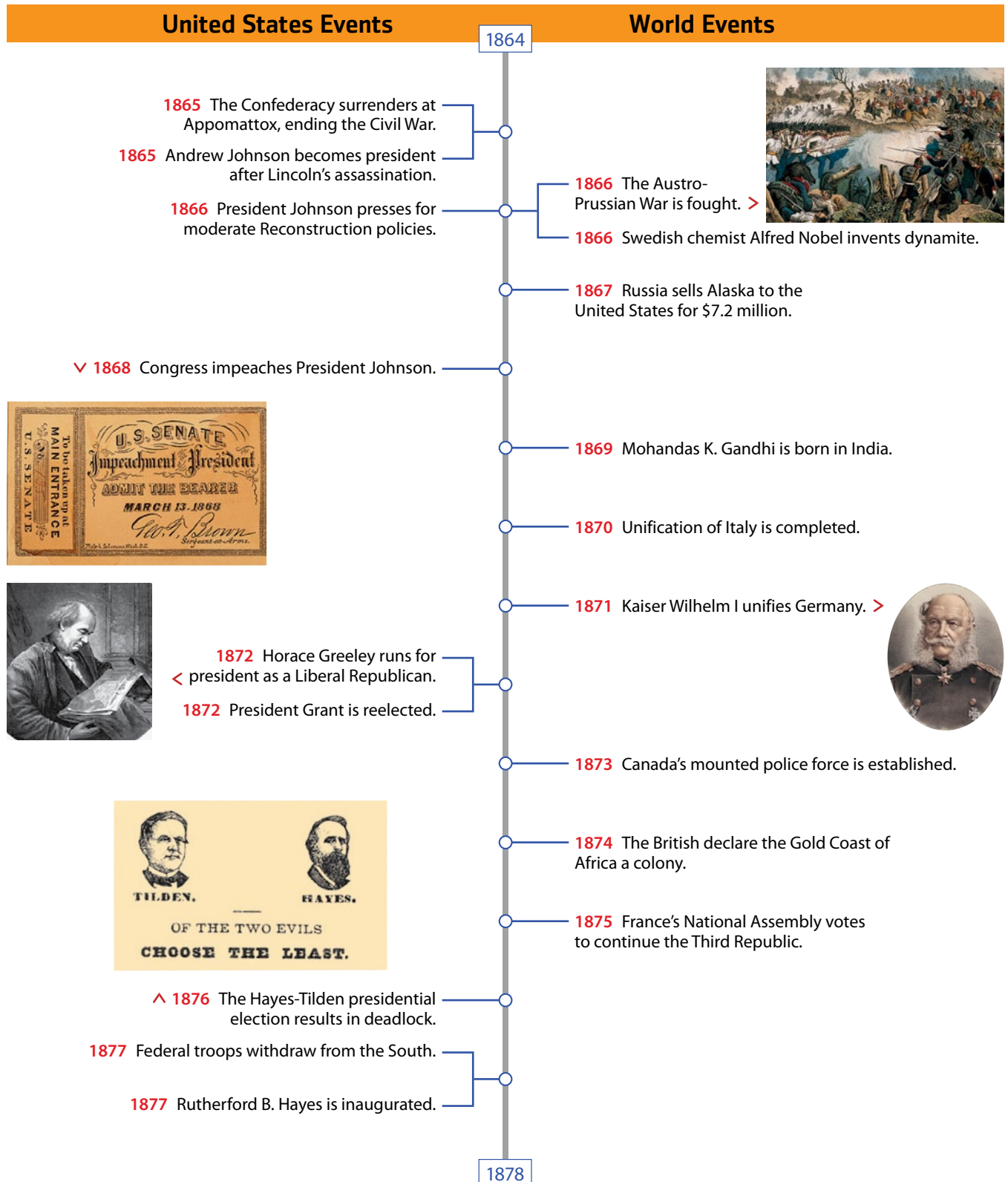
VIDEOS, including...

- President Grant: Let Us Have Peace
- President Grant: The Celebrity
- President Grant: Scandal and Legacy

- ✓ Document-Based Investigations
- ✓ Graphic Organizers
- ✓ Interactive Games
- ✓ Carousel: Conditions in the South
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Timeline of Events 1864–1878

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The Politics of Reconstruction

The Big Idea

Congress opposed Lincoln's and Johnson's plans for Reconstruction and instead implemented its own plan to rebuild the South.

Why It Matters Now

Reconstruction was an important step in African Americans' struggle for civil rights.

Key Terms and People

Andrew Johnson

Reconstruction

Radical Republicans

Thaddeus Stevens

Wade-Davis Bill

Freedmen's Bureau

black codes

Fourteenth Amendment

impeach

Fifteenth Amendment

One American's Story

As a young man, **Andrew Johnson**—who succeeded Abraham Lincoln as president—entered politics in Tennessee. He won several important offices, including those of congressman, governor, and U.S. senator.

After secession, Johnson was the only senator from a Confederate state to remain loyal to the Union. A former slave owner, by 1863 Johnson supported abolition. He hated wealthy southern planters, whom he held responsible for dragging poor whites into the war. Early in 1865 he endorsed harsh punishment for the rebellion's leaders.

"The time has arrived when the American people should understand what crime is, and that it should be punished, and its penalties enforced and inflicted . . . Treason must be made odious . . . traitors must be punished and impoverished . . . their social power must be destroyed. I say, as to the leaders, punishment, and amnesty to the thousands whom they have misled and deceived."

—Andrew Johnson, quoted in
Reconstruction: The Ending of the Civil War



Andrew Johnson, the 17th president of the United States

On becoming president, Johnson faced the issue of whether to punish or pardon former Confederates. He also faced the larger problem of how to bring the defeated Confederate states back into the Union.

Lincoln's Plan for Reconstruction

Reconstruction was the period during which the United States began to rebuild after the Civil War. It lasted from 1865 to 1877. The term also refers to the process the federal government used to readmit the Confederate states.

THE NEED FOR RECONSTRUCTION After the Civil War, federal leaders agreed that they needed to create programs to rebuild from the devastation of the war and to reunite the country. In addition, they needed to work out how to deal with those who had taken up arms against the government. Leaders also needed to address the millions of former slaves who were experiencing freedom for the first time. Complicating the process, however, was the fact that Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and Congress had differing ideas on how Reconstruction should be handled.

LINCOLN'S TEN-PERCENT PLAN Lincoln, before his death, had made it clear that he favored a lenient Reconstruction policy. Lincoln believed that secession was constitutionally impossible. The Confederate states therefore had never really left the Union. He contended that it was individuals, not states, who had rebelled and that the Constitution gave the president the power to pardon individuals. Lincoln wished to make the South's return to the Union as quick and easy as possible.

In December 1863 President Lincoln announced his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, also known as the Ten-Percent Plan. The government would pardon all Confederates—except high-ranking Confederate officials and those accused of crimes against prisoners of war—who would swear allegiance to the Union. After ten percent of those on the 1860 voting lists took this oath of allegiance, a Confederate state could form a new state government and regain representation in Congress.

Under Lincoln's terms, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Tennessee moved toward readmission to the Union. Occupied for most of the Civil War by federal troops, these states were quick to repledge their loyalty to the government. They did so even before the war ended. In 1864 the people of each state elected a new pro-Union government and sought to send senators and representatives to Congress.

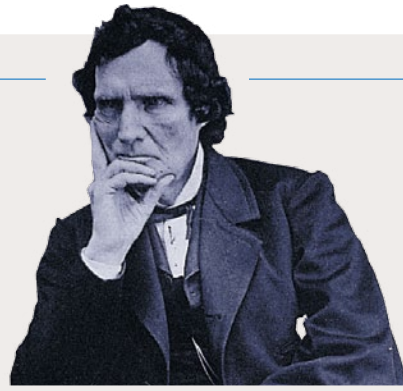
However, Lincoln's moderate Reconstruction plan angered a minority of Republicans in Congress, known as **Radical Republicans**. Led by Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Representative **Thaddeus Stevens** of Pennsylvania, the Radicals did not think the president was being harsh enough or thorough enough. They wanted to destroy the political power of former slaveholders. Most of all, they wanted African Americans to be given full citizenship and the right to vote. At the time, the idea of African American suffrage was truly radical. No other country that had abolished slavery had given former slaves the vote.

To express their dissatisfaction, the Radicals persuaded other members of Congress to deny the newly elected representatives from southern states their seats. They also proposed their own stricter plan for readmitting rebellious states to the Union.

Thaddeus Stevens (1792–1868)

Radical Republican leader Thaddeus Stevens had a commanding physical presence and was famous for his quick wit and sarcasm. One colleague called him “a rude jousting in political and personal warfare.”

Before serving in Congress, Stevens had practiced law in Pennsylvania, where he defended runaway slaves. He hated slavery and in time came to hate white southerners as well. He declared, “I look upon every man who would permit slavery . . . as a traitor to liberty and disloyal to God.”



After Stevens died in 1868, at his own request he was buried in an integrated cemetery. He wanted to show in death “the principles which I advocated throughout a long life: Equality of Man before his Creator.”

Reading Check

Summarize What was President Lincoln’s planned approach to Reconstruction?

RADICAL REACTION In July 1864 the Radicals responded to the Ten-Percent Plan with the **Wade-Davis Bill**. It proposed that Congress, not the president, be responsible for Reconstruction. The bill also declared that for a state government to be formed, a majority of state residents eligible to vote in 1860—not just ten percent—had to take an oath to support the Constitution.

Lincoln used a pocket veto to kill the Wade-Davis Bill after Congress adjourned. According to the Constitution, a president has ten days to either sign or veto a bill passed by Congress. If the president does neither, the bill will automatically become law. When a bill is passed less than ten days before the end of a congressional session, the president can prevent its becoming law by simply ignoring, or “pocketing,” it until the session ends. The Radicals called Lincoln’s pocket veto an outrage and asserted that Congress had supreme authority over Reconstruction. The stage was set for a presidential-congressional showdown.

Johnson’s Plan

Lincoln’s assassination in April 1865 left his successor, Democrat Andrew Johnson, to deal with the Reconstruction controversy. A staunch Unionist, Johnson had often expressed his intent to deal harshly with Confederate leaders. Most white southerners therefore considered Johnson a traitor to his region. Radicals believed that he was one of them. Both were wrong.

JOHNSON CONTINUES LINCOLN’S POLICIES In May 1865, with Congress in recess, Johnson announced his own plan, Presidential Reconstruction. He declared that each remaining Confederate state—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas—could be readmitted to the Union if it would meet several conditions. Each state would have to withdraw its secession, swear allegiance to the Union, and annul Confederate war debts. In addition, each state that sought readmission would have to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery.

To the dismay of Thaddeus Stevens and the Radicals, Johnson's plan differed little from Lincoln's. The one major difference was that Johnson wished to prevent most high-ranking Confederates and wealthy southern landowners from taking the oath needed for voting privileges. The Radicals were especially upset that Johnson's plan, like Lincoln's, failed to address the needs of former slaves in three areas: land, voting rights, and protection under the law.

If Johnson's policies angered Radicals, they relieved most white southerners. Johnson's support of states' rights instead of a strong central government reassured the southern states. Although Johnson supported abolition, he was not in favor of former slaves gaining the right to vote. He also pardoned more than 13,000 former Confederates because he believed that "white men alone must manage the South."

The remaining Confederate states quickly agreed to Johnson's terms. Within a few months, these states—all except Texas—held conventions to draw up new state constitutions. The conventions also set up new state governments and elected representatives to Congress. However, some southern states did not fully comply with the conditions for returning to the Union. For example, Mississippi did not ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. (The Mississippi legislature did eventually ratify the amendment in 2013.)

Despite such instances of noncompliance, in December 1865 the newly elected southern legislators arrived in Washington to take their seats. Nearly all were Democrats. One, Alexander Stephens of Georgia, had served as vice-president of the Confederacy, and 58 of them had previously sat in the Confederate Congress. Six more had served in the Confederate cabinet, and four had fought against the United States as Confederate generals. Johnson pardoned them all.

Johnson's gesture infuriated the Radicals and made African Americans feel they had been betrayed. In an 1865 editorial, an African American newspaper publisher responded to Johnson's actions.

"The war does not appear to us to be ended, nor rebellion suppressed. They have commenced reconstruction on disloyal principles. If rebel soldiers are allowed to mumble through oaths of allegiance, and vote Lee's officers into important offices, and if Legislatures, elected by such voters, are allowed to define the provisions of the Amnesty Proclamation, then were our conquests vain. . . . Already we see the fruits of this failure on the part of Government to mete out full justice to the loyal blacks, and retribution to the disloyal whites."

—Philip A. Bell, quoted in *Witness for Freedom: African American Voices on Race, Slavery, and Emancipation*

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION COMES TO A STANDSTILL The 39th Congress convened in December 1865. Radical Republican legislators, led by Thaddeus Stevens, disputed Johnson's claim that Reconstruction was complete. Many of them believed that the southern states were not much different from the way they had been before the war. As a result, Congress refused to admit the newly elected southern legislators.



Perhaps the best known role of the Freedmen's Bureau was promoting education among African Americans. Members opened and supported schools, taught students, and trained new teachers.

Reading Check

Analyze Causes

How did black codes help bring about the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1866?

At the same time, moderate Republicans pushed for new laws to remedy weaknesses they saw in Johnson's plan. In February 1866 Congress voted to continue and enlarge the **Freedmen's Bureau**. Congress established the bureau in the last month of the war. It assisted former slaves and poor whites in the South by distributing clothing and food. In addition, the Freedmen's Bureau set up more than 40 hospitals, approximately 4,000 schools, 61 industrial institutes, and 74 teacher-training centers. In many places, the bureau had trouble accomplishing its goals. Shortages of funds and personnel as well as opposition from hostile politicians limited what it could achieve. Nonetheless, the Freedmen's Bureau continued to work for African Americans into the 1870s.

Two months after creating the Freedmen's Bureau, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866. The new law gave African Americans citizenship and forbade states from passing discriminatory laws—**black codes**—that severely restricted African Americans' lives. Mississippi and South Carolina had been the first states to enact black codes in 1865. Other southern states had rapidly followed suit.

Black codes had the effect of restoring many of the restrictions of slavery by prohibiting blacks from carrying weapons and serving on juries. The codes also prevented blacks from testifying against whites, marrying whites, and traveling without permits. In some states, African Americans were forbidden to own land. Even worse, in many areas resentful whites used violence to keep blacks from improving their position in society. To many members of Congress, the passage of black codes indicated that the South had not given up the idea of keeping African Americans in bondage.

Johnson shocked everyone when he vetoed both the Freedmen's Bureau Act and the Civil Rights Act. Congress, Johnson contended, had gone far beyond anything "contemplated by the authors of the Constitution." These vetoes proved to be the opening shots in a battle between the president and Congress. By rejecting the two acts, Johnson alienated the moderate Republicans who were trying to improve his Reconstruction plan. He also angered the Radicals by appearing to support southerners who denied African Americans their full rights. Johnson had not been in office a year when presidential Reconstruction ground to a halt.

Congressional Reconstruction

Angered by Johnson's actions, Radical and moderate Republican factions decided to work together to shift the control of the Reconstruction process from the executive branch to the legislature. This began a period of congressional Reconstruction.

MODERATES AND RADICALS JOIN FORCES In mid-1866 moderate Republicans joined with Radicals to override the president's vetoes of the Civil Rights and Freedmen's Bureau acts. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 became the first major legislation ever enacted over a presidential veto. In addition, Congress drafted the **Fourteenth Amendment**, which provided a constitutional basis for the Civil Rights Act.

The Fourteenth Amendment made “all persons born or naturalized in the United States” citizens of the country. All citizens, regardless of race, were entitled to equal protection of the law. No state could deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. The amendment did not specifically give African Americans the vote. However, it did specify that if any state prevented a portion of its male citizens from voting, that state would lose a percentage of its congressional seats equal to the percentage of citizens kept from the polls. Another provision barred most Confederate leaders from holding federal or state offices unless they were permitted to do so by a two-thirds-majority vote of Congress.

By declaring that no state could restrict the rights or legal protection of any citizen, the Fourteenth Amendment marked a shift in the balance between federal and state power. Previously, such basic rights as freedom were legally granted by states, not the federal government. The passage of the amendment, though, made the protection of these rights a federal issue. This meant that states could not act counter to federal decisions. No longer could a states’ rights issue like the slavery debate that had led to the Civil War tear the country apart.

Congress adopted the Fourteenth Amendment and sent it to the states for approval. If the southern states had voted to ratify it, most northern legislators and their constituents would have been satisfied to accept them back into the Union. President Johnson, however, believed that the amendment treated former Confederate leaders too harshly. He felt that it was wrong to force states to accept an amendment that their legislators had no part in drafting. Therefore, he advised the southern states to reject the amendment. All but Tennessee did reject it, and the amendment was not ratified until 1868.

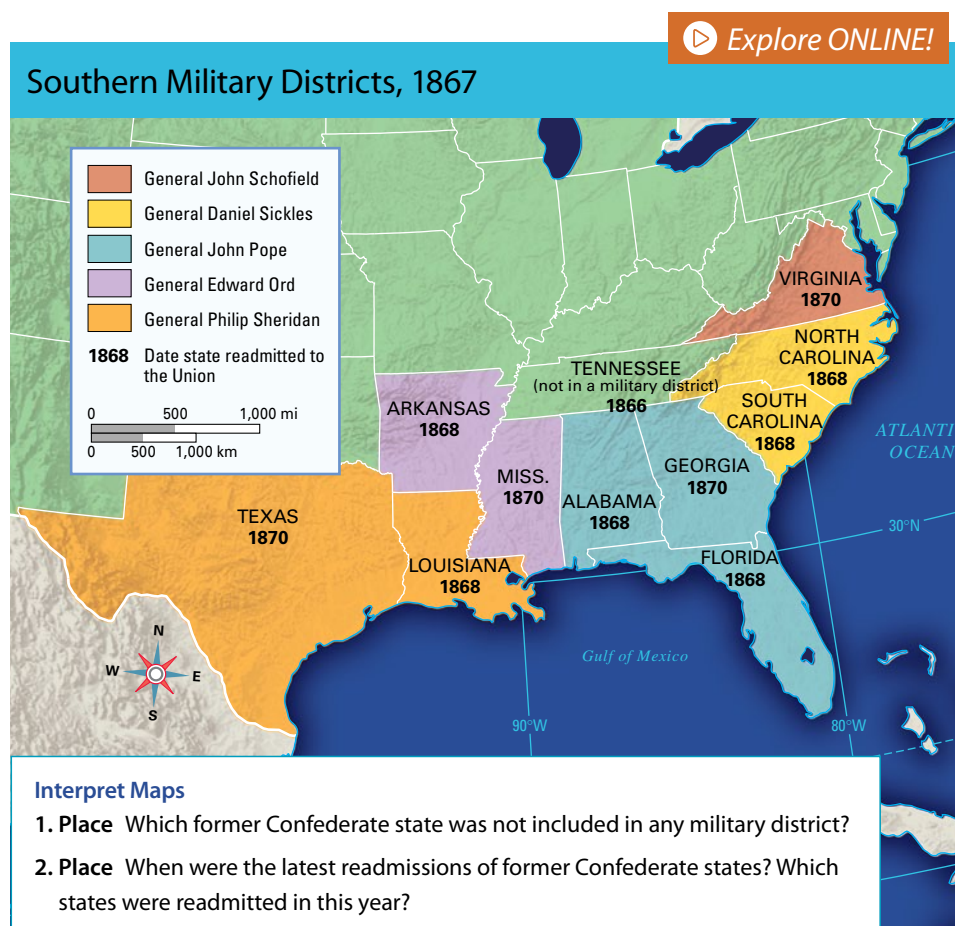
Major Reconstruction Legislation, 1865–1870

Legislation	Provisions
Freedmen’s Bureau Acts (1865–1866)	Offered assistance, such as medical aid and education, to freed slaves and war refugees
Civil Rights Act of 1866	Granted citizenship and equal protection under the law to African Americans
Fourteenth Amendment (ratified 1868)	Made all persons “born or naturalized in the United States” citizens; stipulates that states that prevented male citizens from voting would lose a percentage of their congressional seats; barred most Confederate leaders from holding political offices
Reconstruction Act of 1867	Abolished governments formed in the former Confederate states; divided those states into five military districts; set up requirements for readmission to the Union
Fifteenth Amendment (ratified 1870)	Banned voting discrimination based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude”
Enforcement Act of 1870	Protected the voting rights of African Americans and gave the federal government power to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment

1866 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS The question of who should control Reconstruction became one of the central issues in the bitter 1866 congressional elections. Johnson, accompanied by General Ulysses S. Grant, went on a speaking tour, urging voters to elect representatives who agreed with his policy. But his train trip from Washington, DC, to St. Louis and Chicago and back was a disaster. Johnson offended many voters with his rough language and behavior. His audiences responded by jeering at him and cheering Grant.

In addition, race riots in Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana, caused the deaths of at least 80 African Americans. Such violence convinced northern voters that the federal government must step in to protect former slaves. In the 1866 elections, moderate and Radical Republicans won a landslide victory, gaining a two-thirds majority in Congress. This ensured them the numbers they needed to override presidential vetoes. By March 1867 Congress was ready to move ahead with its Reconstruction policy.

RECONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1867 Radicals and moderates joined in passing the Reconstruction Act of 1867. The act did not recognize previously formed state governments—except for that of Tennessee, which had ratified the Fourteenth Amendment and had rejoined the Union. The act divided the other former Confederate states into five military districts, each headed by a Union general. Voters—including African American men—would elect delegates to conventions in which new state constitutions would be drafted. In order for a state to reenter the Union, its constitution had to ensure African American men the vote. The state also had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment.



JOHNSON IMPEACHED Johnson vetoed the Reconstruction Act of 1867 because he believed it was in conflict with the Constitution. Congress promptly overrode the veto. Angry Radical leaders felt President Johnson was not carrying out his constitutional obligation to enforce the laws of the nation and argued that he was taking actions that hindered their Reconstruction efforts. For instance, Johnson removed military officers who attempted to enforce the Reconstruction Act. As a result, the Radicals looked for grounds on which to **impeach** the president—that is, to formally charge him with misconduct in office. The House of Representatives has the sole power to impeach federal officials, who are then tried in the Senate.

In March 1867 Congress had passed the Tenure of Office Act. This act stated that the president could not remove cabinet officers “during the term of the president by whom they may have been appointed” without the consent of the Senate. One purpose of this act was to protect Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, the Radicals’ ally.

Johnson, along with many others, was certain that the Tenure of Office Act was unconstitutional. To force a court test of the act, Johnson fired Secretary of War Stanton. His action provided the Radicals with the opportunity they needed. The House brought 11 charges of impeachment against Johnson, 9 of which were based on his violation of the Tenure of Office Act. Johnson’s lawyers disputed these charges by pointing out that President Lincoln, not Johnson, had appointed Secretary Stanton. The act thus did not apply.

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

Tension in the Government

When the House of Representatives drew up articles of impeachment against President Andrew Johnson in 1868, one of the charges they filed against him was disrespect for the legislative branch. In the articles, the House cited comments made by Johnson that they felt besmirched the reputation and dignity of Congress. One such comment by Johnson appears below.

“We have witnessed in one department of the government every endeavor to prevent the restoration of peace, harmony and union. We have seen . . . a body called or which assumes to be the Congress of the United States, while in fact it is a Congress of only part of the States. We have seen this Congress pretend to be for the Union, when its every step and act tended to perpetuate disunion and make a disruption of States inevitable.

We have seen Congress gradually encroach, step by step, upon constitutional rights, and violate day after day, and month after month, fundamental principles of the government. We have seen a Congress that seemed to forget that there was a limit to the sphere and scope of legislation.”

—from Articles of Impeachment, Article X

Analyze Historical Sources

1. What does this passage suggest about the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of the government during Reconstruction?
2. Do you think that displaying contempt for Congress is a valid justification for the impeachment of a president? Why or why not?

Johnson's trial before the Senate took place from March to May 1868. On the day of the final vote, tension mounted in the jammed Senate galleries. Would the Radicals get the two-thirds vote needed for conviction? People in the Senate chamber held their breath as one by one the senators gave their verdicts. When the last senator declared "Not guilty," the vote was 35 to 19. This result was one vote short of the needed majority.



A campaign poster supporting the Republican ticket in the election of 1868

ULYSSES S. GRANT ELECTED The Democrats knew that they could not win the 1868 presidential election with Johnson. They instead nominated the wartime governor of New York, Horatio Seymour. Seymour's Republican opponent was Civil War hero Ulysses S. Grant. In November, Grant won the presidency by a wide margin in the electoral college. But the popular vote was less decisive. Out of almost 6 million ballots cast, Grant received a majority of only 306,592 votes. About 500,000 southern African Americans had voted, most of them for Grant. This highlighted the importance of the African American vote to the Republican Party.

After the election, the Radicals feared that pro-Confederate southern whites might try to limit black suffrage. Therefore, they introduced the **Fifteenth Amendment**. This amendment states that no one can be kept from voting because of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The amendment would also affect northern states, many of which at this time barred African Americans from voting. Ratified by the states in 1870, the amendment was a major victory for the Radicals.

However, some southern governments refused to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, even when violence was used to prevent African Americans from voting. In response, Congress passed the Enforcement Act of 1870. This law gave the federal government power to punish those who tried to prevent African Americans from exercising their rights. In 1871, for example, the government declared martial law in parts of South Carolina. Such federal involvement in southern politics was common during Reconstruction.

Reading Check

Summarize What were the main benefits that the Fourteenth Amendment offered African Americans?

Lesson 1 Assessment

- Organize Information** Fill in a table with features of presidential Reconstruction and congressional Reconstruction.

Presidential Reconstruction	Congressional Reconstruction

What are some reasons presidential Reconstruction failed? Which reason do you think was most significant?

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Analyze Effects** Do you think the Radical Republicans were justified in impeaching President Johnson? Why or why not?

Think About:

- the controversy over Reconstruction policies
- the meaning of the Tenure of Office Act
- Johnson's vetoes

- Predict** Describe how Reconstruction might have been different if Abraham Lincoln had lived.
- Contrast** How did the views of presidents Lincoln and Johnson on Reconstruction differ from the views of the Radicals?
- Interpret Tables** Look again at the table of major Reconstruction legislation. What was the primary focus of these laws and amendments?

Reconstructing the South

The Big Idea

Various groups contributed to the rebuilding of southern society after the war.

Why It Matters Now

During Reconstruction, the South began to shift from an agricultural society into the economically and culturally diverse region it is today.

Key Terms and People

carpetbagger

scalawag

Henry Grady

One American's Story

Edwin H. McCaleb served in the Confederate army until he was seriously injured in battle. Found and treated by the Union army, McCaleb was taken north and held captive. While in prison, he met and received aid from the Chandler family, who visited him during his recovery. After the war, McCaleb returned to his native Mississippi. Soon afterward, he wrote to T. P. Chandler to express his gratitude and to describe the conditions he found at home.

"Our country is now in a disturbed condition caused by the fiery ordeal through which we just passed [and] the total absence of both military or civil law in all parts of this state except the few garrisoned towns. Were it not for the natural quiet and law abiding disposition of our people we would be subjected to a reign of lawlessness and outrage. . . . All the good men of the land desire to return to their peaceful avocations [and] be permitted to enjoy the blessings of liberty transmitted by our ancestors who fought side by side through the Revolution [and] on the plains of Mexico."

—Edwin H. McCaleb, from a letter to T. P. Chandler, June 6, 1865



Southern soldiers returning from the Civil War found much of the region in ruins.

Despite the disorder, McCaleb believed that the South could get back to normal. Like many southerners, though, he worried about the government's Reconstruction plans. McCaleb predicted hard times before things got better.

Conditions in the Postwar South

The dissatisfaction noted by Edwin McCaleb was only one of the challenges facing the South after the Civil War. The war had left much of the region in ruins and its economy in shambles. In addition, southerners had to endure what they viewed as interference by northerners who moved in to help reconstruct the suffering region.

PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS Because the Civil War was fought mostly on southern soil, southerners faced the challenge of physically rebuilding a battle-scarred region. Union general William T. Sherman estimated that his troops alone had destroyed about \$100 million worth of Confederate property in Georgia and South Carolina during the war. Charred buildings, twisted railroad tracks, demolished bridges, neglected roads, and abandoned farms had to be restored or replaced. Throughout the South, formerly bustling cities like Atlanta, Richmond, and Charleston had largely been abandoned. Some of these cities bore the scars of long sieges by Union troops, including buildings leveled by artillery shells.

The economic effects of the war were devastating for the South. Property values had plummeted. Those who had invested in Confederate bonds had little hope of recovering their money. Many small farms were ruined or in disrepair, their owners killed in battle. Plantations lay untended, their workforces gone. As a result of these and other factors, southerners of every economic class were poorer than they had been at the start of the war. In one county in Alabama, for example, the wealth per capita among whites dropped from \$18,000 in 1860 to about \$3,000 in 1870.

Not only were many of the South's economic resources destroyed, but the region's population was devastated. More than one-fifth of the adult white men of the Confederacy died in the war. Many of those who did return from battle were maimed for life. Tens of thousands of southern African American men also died, whether fighting for the Union, suffering from disease, or working in Confederate labor camps.

NORTHERNERS MOVE SOUTH In the wake of the Civil War, floods of northerners migrated into the war-torn South. These migrants had mixed motives. Some were Freedmen's Bureau agents, teachers, and ministers who felt a moral duty to help former slaves. Some sought positions in southern



Southern families like this one lost their homes and most of their possessions because of economic problems after the Civil War.

Reading Check
Identify Problems

What were the main problems that southerners had to address after the Civil War?

governments, hoping to help rebuild the war-torn region. Others wanted to buy land, invest in cotton plantations, or start new industries legitimately. Still others were dishonest and greedy businesspeople and politicians who hoped to profit from southerners' misfortunes.

Despite these varied motives, most white southerners mistrusted all the new northern arrivals. They believed that the newcomers wanted to exploit the South's postwar turmoil for their own profit. Southern Democrats referred to the northerners who moved to the South after the war with the unflattering name **carpetbaggers**. The name referred to the belief that these northerners arrived with so few belongings that everything could fit in a carpetbag, a small piece of luggage made of carpeting. It implied that the new arrivals were low-class individuals with little to bring to southern society. In truth, however, most carpetbaggers were well-educated members of the middle class.

Whatever the carpetbaggers' backgrounds, southerners resented their presence. Emma Falconer, only 15 when Reconstruction began, later recalled how her community in Mississippi felt about northern involvement in governing the South.

"We all know how the unprincipled politicians came down and took charge and deprived the whites who fought in the rebel army from voting . . . When there were political conventions it was these unprincipled politicians that ruled the day."

—Emma Falconer, from a Federal Writer's Project interview

In fact, some white southerners chose not to remain in the South with northerners in control. Several thousand planters emigrated to Europe, Mexico, and Brazil after the war.

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

"Unwelcome Guest"

Of all the political cartoonists of the 19th century, Thomas Nast (1840–1902) had the greatest and most long-lasting influence. This Nast cartoon from a southern Democratic newspaper depicts Carl Schurz, a liberal Republican who advocated legal equality for African Americans. Schurz is shown as a carpetbagger trudging down a dusty southern road as a crowd of people watch his arrival.

Analyze Historical Sources

1. Is Schurz shown in a positive or negative light? How can you tell?
2. Why do you think the cartoonist portrays the southern people standing in a group, far away from Schurz?



Background

Although the terms *carpetbagger* and *scalawag* were negative labels imposed by political enemies, historians still use the terms when referring to the two groups.

Politics in the Postwar South

As Congress took over Reconstruction, political power shifted in the South. The Democratic Party, once dominant in southern politics, lost its influence with the demise of the Confederacy. In its place, the Republican Party swept in to take control of politics and state governments in the region.

THE REPUBLICANS IN CHARGE The Southern Republican Party during Reconstruction consisted of three groups who worked together to achieve their goals. The first group consisted of the recently arrived carpetbaggers from the North. Working with them were newly freed African Americans. They overwhelmingly supported the Republican Party because it was the party of Lincoln—the same party that had freed them from servitude. In fact, African Americans represented the largest number of Republican voters in the South during Reconstruction.

In addition, a number of white southerners, realizing that their political opportunities would be limited as Democrats, chose to join the Republicans. Some of these new Republicans hoped to take advantage of their new party affiliation to win a high office and gain wealth and power. Others believed that a Republican government offered the best chances for the South to rebuild and industrialize. The majority were small farmers who wanted to improve their economic and political positions. They also hoped to prevent the former wealthy planters from regaining power.

Democrats who opposed the Republicans' plan for Reconstruction called these white southerners who changed parties **scalawags**. They scorned the scalawags and considered them traitors to their southern heritage. In the minds of most southern Democrats, a scalawag was worse than a carpetbagger. As a former governor of North Carolina stated, hostility from a former opponent was to be expected, but “a traitor to his own people can’t be trusted or respected.”

The alliance of the three Republican groups was often an uneasy one. Despite their shared party affiliation, the three groups did not always agree on issues. Few scalawags, for example, shared the Republican commitment to civil rights and suffrage for African Americans. Over time, many of them returned to the Democratic Party.

NEW REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS Under the congressional Reconstruction program, each southern state had to create a new government and adopt a new constitution before it could be readmitted to the Union. As a result, state constitutional conventions met, and southern voters elected new, Republican-dominated governments in the 1860s.

These new governments brought many changes to the region. They abolished property requirements for voting and for holding office. They also repealed black codes throughout the South. The new Republican governments furthermore began extensive public works programs. They built roads, bridges, and railroads and established orphanages and institutions for the care of the people with mental illnesses and disabilities. They also created the first public school systems that most southern states had ever had.

Reading Check
Analyze Causes Why did the presence of scalawags in the South lead to conflict within the Republican Party?

These ambitious projects—and the larger state governments that were required to administer them—were expensive. Few financial resources were available. Northern capitalists were reluctant to invest in the region. To raise money, most southern state governments increased taxes of all kinds. This drained existing resources and slowed the region's recovery. Hardest hit by the tax increases were large landowners, former members of the planter class. Many of the rich were already angry at the increased involvement of Republicans, the non-wealthy, and African Americans in state government. The new taxes only increased their resentment.

Although they upset many southerners, the new governments did satisfy the requirements for readmission. In 1868 the former Confederate states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina reentered the Union. They joined Tennessee, which had reentered earlier. The remaining four former Confederate states completed the process by 1870. However, even after all the states were back in the Union, the Republicans did not end the process of Reconstruction. This is because they wanted to make economic changes in the South.

ONGOING CONFLICTS In an attempt to persuade white voters to support the Republican Party, some Republican governors began to appoint white Democrats to state offices. This policy backfired, however. It convinced very few white Democrats to change parties, because they saw the move as a political ploy. In addition, it made blacks feel betrayed by the party that had freed them from slavery.

The new status of African Americans required fundamental changes in the attitudes of most white southerners. Some whites thought that the end of slavery would ultimately benefit the South and therefore supported the Republicans during Reconstruction. Many white southerners, though, refused to accept blacks' new status and resisted the idea of equal rights. A Freedmen's Bureau agent noted that some "Southern whites are quite indignant if they are not treated with the same deference as they were accustomed to" under the system of slavery.

Changes in the Southern Economy

The changes wrought by the Civil War demanded changes in the southern economy. The plantation system, once the backbone of southern society, had collapsed. Fields that had not been tended for four years were no longer fit for cultivation without extensive preparation, and the former source of that labor—slaves—no longer existed.

RESTORATION OF PLANTATIONS Most southerners were content to own small farms and raise food to support their families. The planter class, however, wanted to restore the plantation system, in which many acres were devoted to a single profitable cash crop, such as cotton. Some wealthy northern merchants and owners of textile mills encouraged the planters in their efforts to reestablish plantations and resume widespread cotton production.

Planters claimed that to make the plantation system work, they needed to have almost complete control over their laborers. Before the abolition of slavery, planters had forced young and old men and women to work in the fields for extremely long hours. Because they now had to pay laborers and could not force field hands to put in brutally long workdays, the planters feared that they might not be able to make a profit. In addition, many former slaveholders deeply resented having to negotiate for the services of their former slaves.

Planters also faced a labor shortage, caused by a number of factors. The high death toll of the war had reduced the number of able-bodied workers. Many African American women and children refused to work in the fields after they were freed. They felt that raising cotton under the direction of white overseers was too much like slavery. Still, plantation owners found enough paid labor to make cotton a profitable resource again—for a time.

COTTON NO LONGER KING In the years following the Civil War, another economic change turned southern agriculture upside down. Cotton was no longer king. During the war, demand for southern cotton had begun to drop as other countries increased their cotton production. As a result, prices plummeted after the war. In 1869 the price of cotton was 16.5 cents per pound. By the late 1870s the price had fallen to about 8 cents per pound. Instead of varying their crops, southern planters tried to make up for the lower prices by growing more cotton. This created an oversupply that only drove down prices even further.



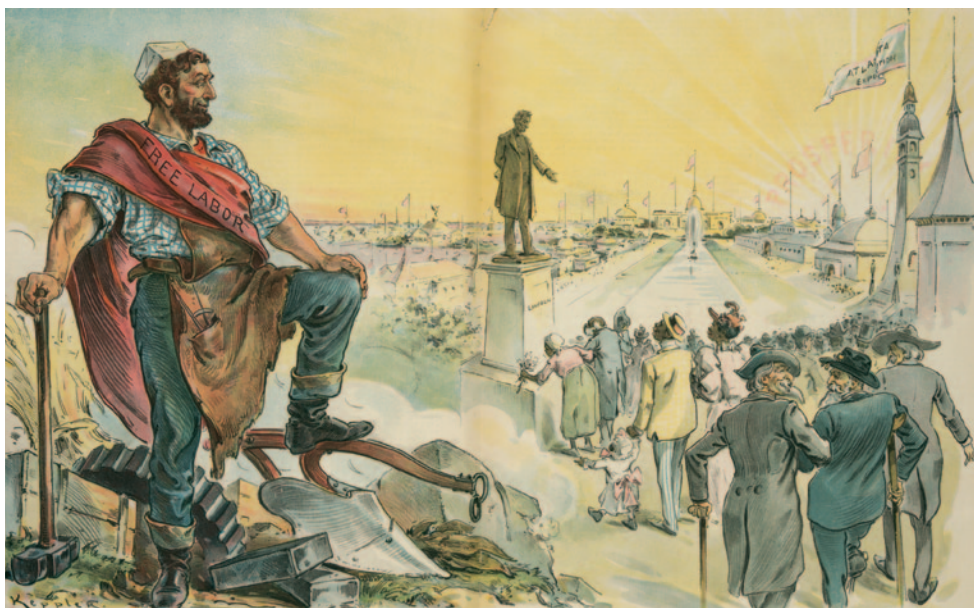
One successful southern industry was the manufacture of tobacco products.

The South's agricultural problems did lead to attempts to diversify the region's economy. Textile mills sprang up, and a new industry—tobacco-product manufacturing—took hold. Diversification helped raise the average wage in the South, though it was still much lower than the average salary received by northern workers.

At the end of the Civil War, most of the state banks in the South were saddled with Confederate debts—loans made to the Confederate government. The banks awaited repayment that, in most cases, would never come. In the following years, falling cotton prices and mounting planters' debts caused many banks to fail. The only credit that southerners in rural areas could get was that offered by local merchants. Despite efforts to improve the southern economy, the devastating economic impact of the Civil War rippled through southern life into the 20th century.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH Even as southern agriculture suffered, industry began to grow in southern cities. As Radical Republican governments improved the South's railroad system and linked it to northern lines, Atlanta and other cities became important business centers. Southern business leaders joined with northern investors to build textile mills and other manufacturing ventures.

Although begun during Reconstruction, most of the South's industrial growth occurred after the period ended. By the late 1880s, however, southern industry had made huge strides forward. The South was on its way to a stronger economy. The result was what newspaper editor **Henry Grady** of Atlanta, Georgia, called a "New South."



By Reconstruction's end, southern business leaders had declared the birth of a New South. A new economy built on paid labor as opposed to slavery would bring industrial growth and prosperity to the region.

"The old South rested everything on slavery and agriculture, unconscious that these could neither give nor maintain healthy growth. The new South presents a perfect democracy . . . a social system compact and closely knitted, less splendid on the surface, but stronger at the core—a hundred farms for every plantation, fifty homes for every palace—and a diversified industry that meets the complex need of this complex age."

—Henry Grady, from the "New South" speech, December 21, 1886

Reading Check

Analyze Causes

What factors contributed to the stagnation of the southern economy?

Despite Grady's grand words, he was not interested in creating a society of equality. Grady, like other southern industrial leaders, believed in the separation of the races. Although he claimed that black southerners were given fair chances to succeed economically, his words were empty talk. Grady hoped that by suggesting that racial tensions in the South had been resolved, he could entice northerners to invest in southern businesses. His efforts had some success, and Atlanta became the South's major industrial center.

Lesson 2 Assessment

- Organize Information** Use a table to list problems facing the South after the Civil War and at least one attempted solution for each one

Problem	Attempted Solution

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Evaluate** Do you think the new state governments were successful in bringing change to the South during Reconstruction? Explain your answer.

Think About:

- the goals of Republicans in power
- the actions of the new governments
- the reactions of Democrats

- Form Generalizations** How did the Civil War weaken the southern economy? Give examples to support your answer.
- Analyze Issues** Why do you think carpetbaggers and scalawags were mistrusted and scorned by southern Democrats?

Life After Slavery

The Big Idea

During Reconstruction, African Americans gained new political and social rights but still faced discrimination in many areas.

Why It Matters Now

Many African American institutions, including colleges and churches, were established during Reconstruction.

Key Terms and People

Hiram Revels

sharecropping

tenant farming

One American's Story

Ned Cobb was born in central Alabama in the mid-1880s, the son of a former slave. Growing up, he heard stories from his older relatives about life at the end of the Civil War and during Reconstruction. In their experience, the end of slavery offered great promise, but it did not prove to be exactly what they had been expecting.

"My grandmother and other people that I knew grew up in slavery time, they wasn't satisfied with their freedom. . . . But they would open up every once in a while and talk about slavery time—they didn't know nothin about no freedom then, didn't know what it was but they wanted it. And when they got it they knew that what they got wasn't what they wanted, it wasn't freedom, really. Had to do whatever the white man directed em to do, couldn't voice their heart's desire."

—Ned Cobb, writing as Nate Shaw, from *All God's Dangers*



Freedmen's schools like this one helped ease the often difficult transition from slavery to freedom.

Cobb's grandmother was not alone. Many former slaves found themselves overwhelmed and confused by their new status after the Civil War. Freed after a lifetime of slavery, many found it difficult to adapt to the social, political, and economic changes happening around them. Still, many hoped that their new freedom would lead to better lives.

Adjusting to Freedom

Amid the turmoil of the South during Reconstruction, African Americans looked forward to new opportunities. Slaves had been forbidden to travel without permission, to marry legally, to attend school, and to live and work as they chose. After the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, the 4 million former slaves gained the chance to take control of their lives.

UNCERTAIN STATUS At first, many former slaves were cautious about testing the limits of their freedom. One freedman explained, “We was afraid to move. Just like . . . turtles after emancipation. Just stick our heads out to see how the land lay.” As the reality of freedom sank in, freed African Americans faced many decisions. Without land, jobs, tools, money, and with few skills besides those of farming, what were they to do? How would they feed and clothe themselves? How and where would they live?

For many African Americans, the first step in attaining true freedom was casting off the limits that had been placed on them before the Civil War. For example, slaves had been forbidden to travel without a pass. White planters had enforced that rule by patrolling the roads. During Reconstruction, African Americans took advantage of their new freedom to go where they wanted. One former slave from Texas explained the passion for traveling: “They seemed to want to get closer to freedom, so they’d know what it was—like it was a place or a city.”

As part of their newfound freedom, many former slaves also sought new ways to define their identities. As slaves, most had been given the same last name as their owners. For example, Ned Cobb’s father had been a slave of the Cobb family. When they became free, many African Americans chose to change their slave names for new names that cast off their history of servitude and celebrated the opportunities that came with freedom. Some, wanting to reflect the glories of freedom, chose the names of influential leaders from the early days of the United States, such as Alexander Hamilton or Thomas Jefferson. In addition, many former slaves insisted on being addressed formally, as Mr. or Mrs. with their last name. Before the war, they had generally been called only by first names. The full address was seen as a break with the past.

Many former slaves bought charts like this one to keep track of their family histories.



REUNIFICATION OF FAMILIES As part of their new freedom, many newly freed African Americans also sought to locate long-lost relatives. Slavery had split African American families apart. Spouses sometimes lived on different plantations. Children were often separated from their parents. During Reconstruction, many freed African Americans took advantage of their new mobility to search for loved ones. In 1865, for example, one man walked more than 600 miles from Georgia to North Carolina, looking for his wife and children.

The Freedmen's Bureau worked to reunite families. African American newspapers printed poignant “Information Wanted” notices about missing relatives. Tragically, in many cases, the lost family members were never found. However, freed persons, who had been denied legal unions under slavery, could now marry legally and raise children without the fear that someone would sell them. For African Americans, reconstructing their families was an important part of establishing an identity as a free people.

EDUCATION Because slaves had been punished if they tried to learn how to read and write, nearly 80 percent of freed African Americans over the age of 20 were illiterate in 1870. During Reconstruction, however, freed people of all ages—grandparents, parents, and children alike—took advantage of their new freedom and sought education.

African Americans established educational institutions with assistance from a number of public and private organizations, including the Freedmen's Bureau and various African American churches. They raised money to buy land, build schools, and pay teachers' salaries. By 1870 African Americans had spent more than \$1 million on education. Initially, most teachers in black schools were northern whites, about half of whom were women. However, educated African Americans like Robert G. Fitzgerald also became teachers. By 1869 black teachers outnumbered white teachers in these schools.

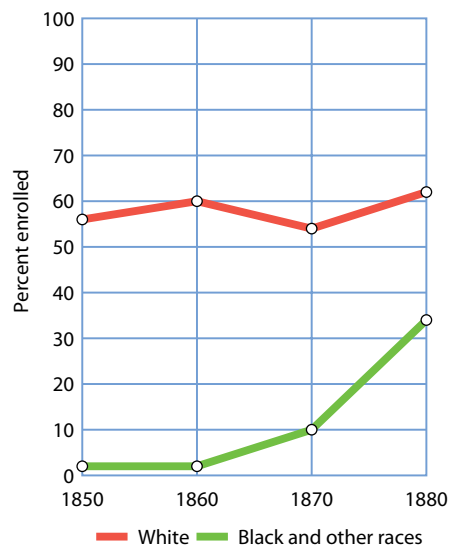
Education For African Americans

FREEDMEN'S SCHOOL

Many of the first African American schools, like the one shown here, were established by the Freedmen's Bureau to educate the children of former slaves.



School Enrollment of 5- to 19-Year-Olds, 1850-1880



Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*

Interpret Graphs

How might you explain why white school enrollment decreased between 1860 and 1870, while enrollment of others increased?



LEARNING TO READ

Among former slaves, younger generations sometimes helped educate their elders. A young woman in Mt. Meigs, Alabama, teaches her mother to read.

In African American schools, it was not unusual to see small children studying alongside adults and senior citizens. Many elderly African Americans felt that it was never too late to learn to read and write, skills they had longed for all their lives. One school even listed among its first enrollees a 105-year-old who had served in the American Revolution! The efforts of such students paid off. At the end of the Civil War, only 15 percent of African Americans could read and write. By 1880 that figure had risen to 27 percent.

In addition to primary and high schools, some organizations wanted to create colleges at which former slaves could seek advanced education. Many of these colleges still operate today. Designated historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), they have since opened their doors to students of all backgrounds, although African Americans are still the majority population at many of them.

The first predominantly black college in the South was Shaw College in Raleigh, North Carolina. It was established by the American Baptist Home Missionary Society in 1865 to educate both men and women. More colleges quickly followed, built through the efforts of churches, social organizations, and the Freedmen's Bureau. Among them were such prominent schools as Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia (1867); Howard University in Washington, DC (1867); and the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia (1868), now called Hampton University. Many of these early colleges for African Americans focused on job training and practical skills. A few, however, such as Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, emphasized general education over practical training.

Some white southerners, outraged by the idea of educated African Americans, responded violently. In one instance, former slave Washington Eager was murdered because, as his brother explained, he had become "too big a man . . . he [could] write and read and put it down himself." Despite the threat of violence, freed people were determined to learn. By 1877 more than 600,000 African Americans were enrolled in elementary schools.

CHURCHES AND VOLUNTEER GROUPS During the slavery era, many slaves had attended white churches and camp meetings with their owners. Resenting the preachers who urged them to obey their masters, the slaves had also held their own religious gatherings called "praise meetings."

After the Civil War, many African Americans founded their own churches, which were usually Baptist or Methodist. They held services similar to the earlier praise meetings. Because churches were the principal institutions that African Americans fully controlled, African American ministers emerged as influential community leaders. They often played an important role in the broader political life of the country as well.

Besides organizing their own schools and churches, freed African Americans formed thousands of volunteer organizations. They established their own fire companies, trade associations, political organizations, and drama groups, to name just a few. These groups not only fostered independence but also provided financial and emotional support for their members. The groups furthermore offered African Americans opportunities to gain the leadership skills that slavery had often denied them.

Reading Check
Summarize How did freed African Americans try to improve their lives?

New Roles in Politics

For many African Americans, their greatest gain following the Civil War was the opportunity to take part in the political system. As slaves, they had not been allowed any say in how their states or country was run, and now they felt they had a chance to remedy that situation. Many hoped that they could improve and protect their newfound freedoms through political activity.

AFRICAN AMERICANS AS VOTERS The primary tool for enacting any sort of political change is suffrage. African Americans—who made up the largest group of southern Republicans—gained voting rights as a result of the Fifteenth Amendment. During Reconstruction, African American men registered to vote for the first time; nine out of ten of them supported the Republican Party. Although most former slaves had little experience with politics, and relatively few could read and write, they were eager to exercise their voting rights.

“We are not prepared for this suffrage. But we can learn. Give a man tools and let him commence to use them and in time he will earn a trade. So it is with voting. We may not understand it at the start, but in time we shall learn to do our duty.”

—William Beverly Nash, quoted in *The Trouble They Seen: Black People Tell the Story of Reconstruction*

In many areas of the South, almost 90 percent of the qualified African American voters voted. Early in 1868 a northerner in Alabama observed that “in defiance of fatigue, hardship, hunger, and threats of employers,” African Americans still flocked to the polls in record numbers.



This woodcut from a newspaper shows freedmen voting in Washington, DC, in June 1867.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS The period from 1865 to 1877 saw growing African American involvement in politics at all levels. For the first time, African Americans held offices in local, state, and federal government. At first, most African American politicians were freeborn. Many were ministers or teachers who had been educated in the North. By 1867, however, former slaves were winning a greater number of offices.

In the early years of Reconstruction, most black officials held minor posts, and the powerful figures in the South’s Republican governments were white. As years passed, however, a few black politicians rose to positions of prominence. African Americans filled important local positions, serving as sheriffs and school commissioners. Later, black officials held significant state offices, such as secretary of state. However, these positions were generally appointed ones that had little real power to enact legislation.

Hiram Revels (1822–1901)

Hiram Revels of Mississippi (pictured on the far left, with—left to right—African American representatives Benjamin S. Turner of Alabama, Robert C. De Large of South Carolina, Josiah T. Walls of Florida, Jefferson M. Long of Georgia, Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina, and Robert Brown Elliott of South Carolina) was born of free parents in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Because he could not obtain an education in the South, he attended Knox College in Illinois. As an African Methodist Episcopal minister, he recruited African Americans to fight for the Union during the Civil War and also served as an army chaplain.



In 1865 Revels settled in Mississippi. He served on the Natchez city council and then was elected to Mississippi's state senate in 1869. In 1870 Revels became the first African American elected to the U.S. Senate. Ironically, he held the seat that had once belonged to Jefferson Davis.

Eventually, a few African Americans gained offices of national prominence. In 1870 **Hiram Revels** of Mississippi was elected to the U.S. Senate. Revels was the first African American to serve in either house of Congress. The same year, Joseph Rainey of South Carolina was elected to the House of Representatives. He was the first black member of that body. In Louisiana, P.B.S. Pinchback became the first African American to serve as governor. For about a month beginning in December 1872, Pinchback, who was lieutenant governor at the time, took over as the state's leader when the elected governor was impeached.

Leaders like Revels, Rainey, and Pinchback were rare, though. Although there were almost as many black citizens as white citizens in the South, African American officeholders remained in the minority. Only South Carolina had a black majority in the state legislature. No southern state elected an African American governor. Moreover, out of 125 southerners elected to the U.S. Congress during congressional Reconstruction, only 16 of them were African Americans.

LAWS AGAINST SEGREGATION By the end of 1866, most of the Republican southern state governments had repealed the black codes. African American legislators took steps to push social equality a step further by proposing bills to desegregate public transportation. In 1871 Texas passed a law prohibiting railroads from making distinctions between groups of passengers, and several other states followed suit. However, many antisegregation laws were not enforced. State orphanages, for example, usually had separate facilities for white and black children.

African Americans themselves focused more on building up the black community than on total integration. By establishing separate African American institutions—such as schools, churches, and political and social organizations—they were able to focus on African American leadership and escape the interference of the whites who had so long dominated their lives.

Reading Check

Find Main Ideas

What methods did African Americans use to increase their role in the democratic system?

Economic Opportunities

The end of slavery meant a chance for a new economic life for southern African Americans. No longer forced to toil for others, freed slaves had the chance to seek new jobs, often away from the plantations to which they had been tied before. Some African Americans packed up their belongings and set out in search of new opportunities. Others sought to build new lives in places closer to home.

IN SEARCH OF NEW JOBS At the end of the Civil War, thousands of former slaves were eager to leave the plantations that they associated with oppression. Most of them chose to move to southern towns and cities where they could find jobs. From 1865 to 1870, the African American population of the ten largest southern cities doubled. A smaller number of freed slaves moved to the North. Regardless of the region, however, cities usually offered only segregation, poor housing, and low-paying jobs.

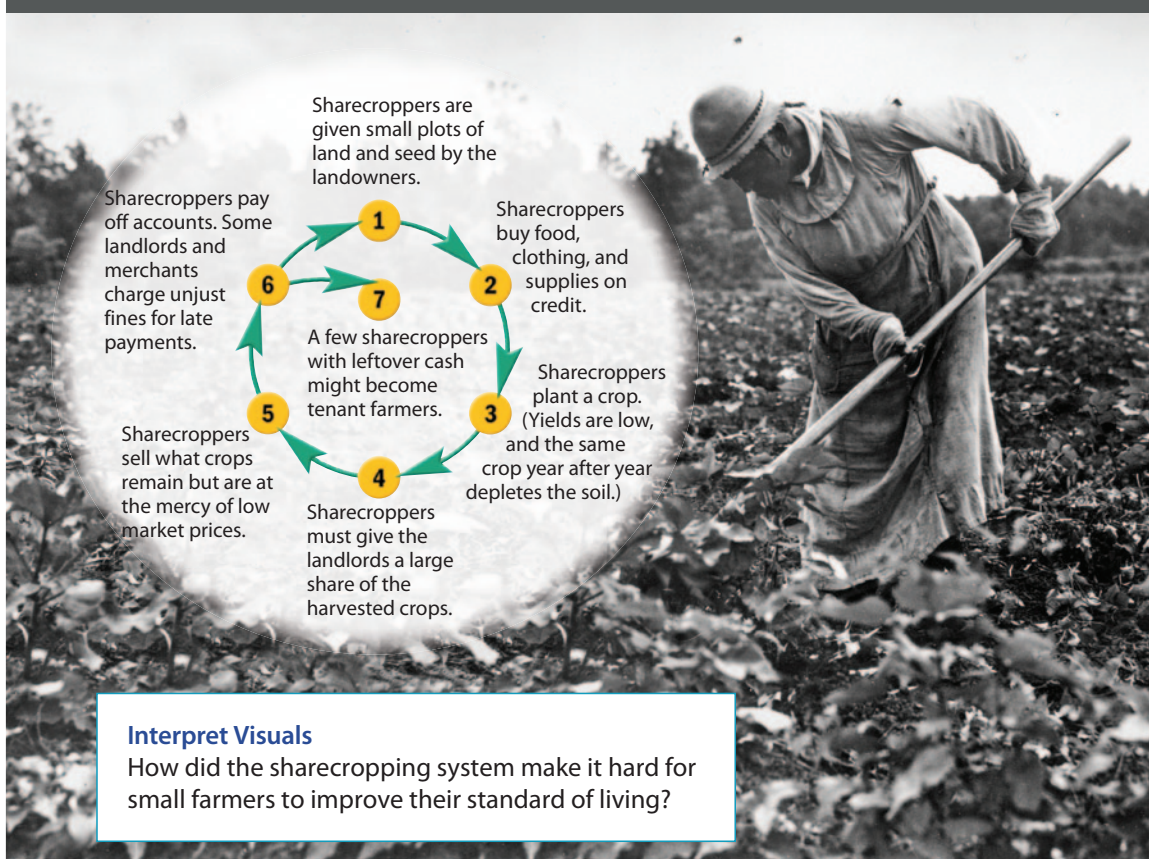
The majority of former slaves, however, remained in the rural South. Some continued to work for their former slaveholders, now receiving wages for their work. Others, however, were determined to build their own farms, raising enough food to support themselves and their families. Many of these would-be farmers pinned their hopes on land that had been promised to them during the Civil War.

40 ACRES AND A MULE In January 1865, shortly before the end of the Civil War, General Sherman had promised the freed slaves who followed his army 40 acres of land per family and the use of army mules. Soon afterward, about 40,000 freed persons settled on 400,000 abandoned or forfeited acres in coastal Georgia and South Carolina. The freed African Americans farmed their plots until August 1865, when President Johnson ordered that the original landowners be allowed to reclaim their land and evict the former slaves.

Many freed African Americans asserted that they deserved part of the planters' land. An Alabama black convention declared, "The property which they hold was nearly all earned by the sweat of our brows." Some Radical Republicans agreed. Thaddeus Stevens called for the government to confiscate plantations and to redistribute part of the land to former slaves. However, many Republicans considered it wrong to seize citizens' private property. As a result, Congress either rejected land-reform proposals or passed weak legislation. An example was the 1866 Southern Homestead Act. Although it set aside 44 million acres in the South for freed blacks and loyal whites, the land was swampy and unsuitable for farming. Furthermore, few homesteaders had the resources—seed, tools, plows, and horses—to farm successfully.

Even those African Americans who had the means to purchase land could not always obtain it. Many found landowners unwilling to sell land to them. In part, this was because some white southerners did not want to lose African American workers as a source of cheap labor. They feared that land ownership would give former slaves a degree of economic independence. Still, some freedmen found ways to purchase farms or other land. For example, by 1870, 1 in every 12 African American families in Mississippi owned land.

Sharecropping: A Cycle of Poverty



A sharecropper works a Georgia cotton field in 1870.

SHARECROPPING AND TENANT FARMING For most African Americans, however, landowning remained a dream. Without land, people could not grow crops to sell or to feed their families. Economic necessity thus forced many former slaves to sign labor contracts with planters. In exchange for wages, housing, and food, freedmen worked in the fields. However, this arrangement did not satisfy either freedmen or planters. Freedmen thought that the wages were too low and that white employers had too much control over them. On the other hand, planters often lacked sufficient cash to pay workers. These conditions led planters and laborers to experiment with two alternative arrangements: sharecropping and tenant farming.

In **sharecropping**, landowners divided their land and gave each worker—either freed African American or poor white—a few acres, along with seed and tools. At harvest time, each worker gave a share of his crop, usually half, to the landowner. This share paid the owner back and ended the arrangement until it was renewed the following year. In theory, “croppers” who saved a little and bought their own tools could drive a better bargain with landowners. They might even rent land for cash from the planters and keep all their harvest, in a system known as **tenant farming**. Eventually they might move up the economic ladder to become outright owners of their farms.

A Sharecropper's Story

During Reconstruction, many freed African Americans became sharecroppers in hopes of saving money to buy land. As former sharecropper Henry Blake noted, however, those dreams were very difficult to realize. Most sharecroppers spent their entire lives in debt.

"When we worked on shares, we couldn't make nothing—just overalls and something to eat. Half went to the other man and you would destroy your half if you weren't careful. A man that didn't know how to count would always lose. He might lose anyhow. They didn't give no itemized statement. No, you just had to take

their word. They never give you no details. They just say you owe so much. . . . If you didn't make no money, that's all right; they would advance you more. But you better not leave him—you better not try to leave and get caught. They'd keep you in debt."

—Henry Blake, from a Federal Writer's Project interview

Analyze Historical Sources

What difficulties does Blake note that sharecroppers faced?

Reading Check

Identify Problems

What caused Reconstruction land-reform proposals to fail?

The arrangement seldom worked in practice, however. Most tenant farmers bought their supplies on credit, often at inflated prices. Farmers rarely harvested enough crops to pay for both past debts and future supplies. The end result was that very few farmers saved enough cash to buy land. As a result, they found themselves trapped in a constant circle of debt.

In the end, sharecropping and tenant farming were disturbingly similar to slavery. Black farmers were once again tied to the land on which they worked, with little hope of escape, although they were now at least nominally free.

Lesson 3 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Use a table to identify ways in which life changed for newly freed African Americans during Reconstruction.

Changes during Reconstruction	
Political	
Economic	
Social	

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
3. **Evaluate** Which accomplishment of African Americans during Reconstruction do you consider most significant? Explain your choice.
- Think About:**
- the development of a free African American community
 - the lingering effects of slavery
 - opportunities for leadership
 - efforts to fight discrimination
4. **Form Generalizations** What roles did churches and the Freedmen's Bureau play in helping freed slaves adjust to their new lives?
5. **Analyze Issues** Thaddeus Stevens believed that giving land to former slaves was more important than giving them the vote. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. **Summarize** Describe the gains made by African American politicians at various levels of government. What limitations did African American politicians face?

The Collapse of Reconstruction

The Big Idea

Southern opposition to Radical Reconstruction, along with economic problems in the North, ended Reconstruction.

Why It Matters Now

The government's failure to protect African Americans' rights during Reconstruction delayed blacks' achievement of full civil rights by over a century.

Key Terms and People

Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

panic of 1873

redemption

Rutherford B. Hayes

Samuel J. Tilden

Compromise of 1877

home rule

One American's Story

In 1868 white Georgia legislators, who were in the majority in both houses, expelled 27 black members of the state senate and House of Representatives. The new state constitution gave African Americans the right to vote, they argued, but not to hold office. Outraged by this expulsion, Henry M. Turner, an African American legislator, addressed the Georgia House of Representatives.

"Whose Legislature is this? Is it a white man's Legislature or is it a black man's . . . ? . . . It is said that Congress never gave us the right to hold office. I want to know . . . if the Reconstruction measures did not base their action on the ground that no distinction should be made on account of race, color or previous condition! . . . We have built up your country. We have worked in your fields, and garnered your harvests, for two hundred and fifty years! Do we ask you for compensation? . . . We are willing to let the dead past bury its dead; but we ask you, now, for our RIGHTS."

—Henry M. Turner, quoted in *The Trouble They Seen: Black People Tell the Story of Reconstruction*



Henry M. Turner became a leading proponent of African American emigration to Africa.

The expelled legislators petitioned the U.S. Congress and were eventually reinstated in office. But by the time Congress acted, more than a year later, the terms of Turner and his colleagues were almost at an end.

Opposition to Reconstruction

White southerners who took direct action against African American participation in government were in the minority. Most white southerners swallowed whatever resentment they felt over African Americans' change in status. However, some bitter individuals relied on violence to keep African Americans from participating in politics.



Although it began as a social group, the Ku Klux Klan became a white supremacist organization whose members attacked African Americans. Members wore costumes to conceal their identities and to appear more menacing.

KU KLUX KLAN Founded as a social club for Confederate veterans, the **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)** was first established in Tennessee in 1866. As membership in the group spread rapidly through the South, many of the new chapters turned into violent terrorist organizations. By 1868 the Klan existed in practically every southern state. Its overarching goal was to restore white supremacy. Its method was to prevent African Americans from exercising their political rights.

Between 1868 and 1871, the Klan and other secret groups killed thousands of men, women, and children. Wearing hoods and disguises, KKK members rode across the countryside at night, burning schools, churches, and property. The vast majority of the Klan's victims were African Americans, especially those who were active in politics or economically successful. But whites who tried to help African Americans—whether by educating them, renting land to them, or buying their crops—were also in danger.

Another Klan objective was to drive the Republicans, who had established the Reconstruction governments, out of power. KKK members leveled death threats against Republican politicians who supported black rights. Among them was North Carolina state senator John Stephens, a white Republican, who answered warnings that his life was in danger by saying that some 3,000 African American voters had supported him “at the risk of persecution and starvation.” He said he would not abandon them. Stephens was assassinated in 1870.

While Klan members tried to conceal their identities when they struck, southern Democrats openly used violence to intimidate Republicans before the 1875 state election in Mississippi. Democrats rioted and attacked Republican leaders and prominent African Americans. Their terrorist campaign frightened the African American majority away from the polls. White Democratic candidates swept the election. The Democrats used similar tactics to win the 1876 elections in Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana.

ECONOMIC PRESSURE The Klan and other secret groups tried to prevent African Americans from making economic progress as well. African Americans who owned their own land or who worked in occupations other than agriculture were subject to attacks and destruction of property.

In fact, economic necessity forced most former slaves—who had little money or training in other occupations—to work for whites as wage laborers or sharecroppers. Some white southerners refused to hire or do business with African Americans who were revealed by election officials to have voted Republican. Eventually, the fear of economic reprisals kept many former slaves from voting at all.

Violence Against African Americans

Although it began as a social group, the Ku Klux Klan became a white supremacist organization whose members attacked African Americans. Abram Colby, who organized a branch of Georgia's Equal Rights Association and later served as a Republican member of the Georgia legislature, testified before Congress about Klan atrocities.

"[The Klan] broke my door open, took me out of bed, took me to the woods and whipped me three hours or more and left me for dead. They said to me, 'Do you think you will ever vote another damned radical ticket?' . . . I supposed they would kill me anyhow. I said, 'If there was an election tomorrow, I would vote the radical ticket.' They set in and whipped me a thousand licks more, with sticks and straps that had buckles on the ends of them."

—Abram Colby, quoted in *Testimony Taken by the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States*

Analyze Historical Sources

1. According to Colby, why did the Klan attack him?
2. Were they successful in their goal?

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE To curtail Klan violence and Democratic intimidation, Congress passed a series of Enforcement Acts in 1870 and 1871. One act provided for the federal supervision of elections in southern states. Another act gave the president the power to use federal troops in areas where the Klan was active. However, President Grant was not aggressive in his use of the power given to him by the Enforcement Acts. In 1882 the Supreme Court ruled that the 1871 Enforcement Act was unconstitutional.

Although federal enforcement of anti-Klan legislation was limited, it did contribute to a decrease in the Klan's activities in the late 1870s. However, the reason for the reduction in Klan violence was the Klan's own success. By 1880 terrorist groups had managed to restore white supremacy throughout the South. The Klan no longer needed such organized activity to limit the political and civil rights of most African Americans.

SHIFTS IN POLITICAL POWER By passing the Enforcement Acts, Congress seemed to shore up Republican power. But shortly after the acts took effect, Congress passed laws that severely weakened the Republican Party in the South. Since the beginning of Reconstruction, white southerners had complained that their most experienced leaders were barred from public service. To remedy this situation, Congress passed the Amnesty Act in May 1872.

With this act, Congress returned the right to vote and hold public office—revoked by the Fourteenth Amendment—to about 150,000 former Confederates. These former rebels would almost certainly vote Democratic. In the same year, Congress allowed the Freedmen's Bureau to expire, believing that it had fulfilled its purpose. As a result of these actions, southern Democrats had an opportunity to shift the balance of political power in their favor.

Vocabulary

amnesty a pardon granted by a government, especially for political offenses

Reading Check

Identify Problems

Why was the government weak in its ability to confront the Klan?

Scandals Hurt Republicans

As southern Republicans struggled to maintain their hold on Reconstruction governments, highly publicized political corruption in the federal government weakened their party. During the early and mid-1870s, scandals plagued the Grant administration. These scandals diverted public attention away from conditions in the South.

FRAUD AND BRIBERY President Grant was considered an honest man. However, he had no political experience before becoming president. He found it difficult to believe that others might use him for their own political advantage. When making political appointments, he often selected friends and acquaintances rather than people of proven ability. Too frequently, Grant's appointees turned out to be dishonest.

Beginning in 1872 a series of long-simmering scandals associated with Grant's administration boiled over. First, a newspaper exposed how the *Crédit Mobilier*, a construction company working for the Union Pacific Railroad, had skimmed off large profits from the railroad's government contract. Worse, the railroad had hired a Republican member of Congress to distribute—at little or no cost—company stock to key members of Congress who had been influential in granting the contract. Newspapers labeled this as bribery. Readers were outraged. Among those implicated in the scandal were several top Republicans, including Vice-President Schuyler Colfax.

REPUBLICAN UNITY SHATTERED Reformers within the Republican Party went on the attack against this corruption within their party. One group of Republicans, calling for honest, efficient government, broke from the main party and formed the Liberal Republican Party in 1872. This group hoped to oust Grant in that year's presidential election.

As the 1872 presidential election approached, the Liberal Republicans held a separate convention. They chose Horace Greeley, the editor of the *New York Tribune* and a vocal pre-Civil War abolitionist, as their candidate. He had supported some Radical Republican causes—abolition and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. However, he had broken with Radicals by calling for universal amnesty for Confederates. He also supported an end to military rule in the South. Claiming that Reconstruction governments had achieved their purpose, he wanted former slaves to fend for themselves.

Believing that it would take a united effort to oust Grant, the Democrats also nominated Greeley. Nevertheless, Greeley lost the 1872 presidential election to Grant by a wide margin. "I was the worst beaten man that ever ran for that high office," Greeley said, "and I have been assailed so bitterly that I hardly know whether I was running for President or the penitentiary." Physically exhausted by his rigorous campaign, Greeley died a few weeks after the election. This occurred before the electoral college made his defeat official.

Although the Liberal Republicans did not win the White House, they did weaken the Radicals' hold over the Republican Party. The breakdown of Republican unity made it even harder for the Radicals to continue to impose their Reconstruction plan on the South.



U. S. Grant: "I hope I get to the bottom soon."

Reading Check
Summarize Give examples of corruption in the Grant administration.

CONTINUED SCANDAL Despite the efforts of Greeley and the Liberal Republicans to clean up the Republican Party, corruption in Grant's administration continued during his second term. In 1875 the so-called Whiskey Ring was exposed. Internal Revenue collectors and other officials accepted bribes from whiskey distillers who wanted to avoid paying taxes on their product. This conspiracy defrauded the federal government of millions of dollars. One of the 238 persons indicted in this scandal was Grant's private secretary, General Orville E. Babcock. Grant refused to believe that such a close associate was guilty and helped him escape conviction.

Less than a year later, in 1876, an investigation revealed that Secretary of War William W. Belknap and his wife had accepted bribes from merchants in Indian Territory. These merchants had paid the Belknaps kickbacks to keep their hugely profitable trading concessions selling food and supplies to the Native Americans. The House of Representatives impeached Belknap, who promptly resigned his position.

In the same year, the public also learned that the secretary of the navy had taken bribes from shipbuilders and the secretary of the interior had shady dealings with land speculators. As the evidence mounted, there was increasing disgust with the blatant corruption in the Grant administration. Grant did not seek reelection in 1876.

Economic Turmoil

Political scandals created the first cracks in Republican control of the country during the 1870s. Within a few years, two economic crises forced those cracks to open wider. This turmoil further weakened the Republicans' position.

THE PANIC OF 1873 The economic problems of the 1870s struck after several years of prosperity. The economy had been expanding since the end of the Civil War. Investors had become convinced that business profits would continue to increase indefinitely. Eager to take advantage of new business opportunities in the South, northern and southern investors borrowed increasing amounts of money and built new facilities as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, many of those who invested in these new businesses took on more debt than they could afford. A Philadelphia banker named Jay Cooke invested heavily in railroads. Not enough investors bought shares in Cooke's railroad lines to cover his ballooning construction costs. He thus could not pay his debts. In September 1873 Cooke's banking firm, the nation's largest dealer in government securities, went bankrupt. This set off a series of financial failures known as the **panic of 1873**. Smaller banks closed. The stock market temporarily collapsed. Within a year, 89 railroads went broke. By 1875 more than 18,000 companies had folded.



This 1873 cartoon portrays the panic as a health officer sweeps garbage out of Wall Street. The trash is labeled “rotten railways,” and “shaky banks,” among other things.

The panic triggered a five-year depression—a period of reduced business activity and high unemployment—during which 3 million workers lost their jobs. Those who kept their jobs found their wages slashed. The loss of incomes meant that Americans could no longer afford to buy products as they had before. More businesses suffered. In addition, employee outrage over lost wages led to crippling strikes in many industries, especially railroads.

As time passed and the depression did not let up, many Americans blamed the Republican Party for failing to relieve their suffering. As a result, Democrats won a majority of congressional seats in the election of 1874. For the first time since Reconstruction began, the Republican Party was no longer firmly in control of the government.

CURRENCY DISPUTE The economic depression following the panic of 1873 also fueled a dispute over currency. During the Civil War, the federal government had begun to issue greenbacks, paper money not backed by equal value in gold. When the war ended, many financial experts advocated withdrawing the greenbacks and returning the nation completely to a currency backed by gold. This action would have reduced the number of dollars in circulation.

In contrast, southern and western farmers and manufacturers wanted the government to issue even more greenbacks. They believed that “easy money”—a large money supply—would help them pay off their debts.

In 1875 Congress passed the Specie Resumption Act, which promised to put the country back on the gold standard. This act sparked further debate over monetary policies. As the economy improved, beginning in 1878, the controversy died down. However, the passionate debate over the money question in the 1870s was one of many factors that drew the attention of voters and politicians away from Reconstruction.

Reading Check

Analyze Effects

What were the effects of the panic of 1873?

Judicial and Popular Support Fades

In 1874 a southern Democratic senator wrote, “*Radicalism* is dissolving—going to pieces.” Indeed, political scandals, economic problems, and the restoration of political rights to former Confederate Democrats seriously weakened the Radical Republicans. In addition, the Supreme Court began to undo some of the social and political changes that the Radicals had made.

SUPREME COURT DECISIONS Although Congress had passed important laws to protect the political and civil rights of African Americans, the Supreme Court began to take away those same protections. During the 1870s the Court issued a series of decisions that undermined both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

In the *Slaughterhouse Cases* of 1873, for example, the Court decided that the Fourteenth Amendment protected only the rights people had by virtue of their citizenship in the United States. Examples of these rights included the right of interstate travel and the right to federal protection when traveling on the high seas and abroad. The Court contended that most of Americans’ basic civil rights were obtained through their citizenship in a state and that the amendment did not protect those rights.

Another setback for Reconstruction was *U.S. v. Cruikshank* in 1876. In this case, the Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment did not give the federal government the right to punish individual whites who oppressed blacks. The same year, in *U.S. v. Reese*, the Court ruled in favor of officials who had barred African Americans from voting. This decision stated that the Fifteenth Amendment did not “confer the right of suffrage on anyone” but merely listed grounds on which states could not deny suffrage. Although African Americans could not be barred from voting because of their race, the amendment did not prohibit the use of other factors, such as literacy or residency requirements, in limiting voting rights.

Civil Rights Setbacks in the Supreme Court

Date	Decision(s)	Ruling
1873	<i>Slaughterhouse Cases</i>	Most civil rights were ruled to be state, rather than federal, rights and therefore unprotected by the Fourteenth Amendment.
1876	<i>U.S. v. Cruikshank</i>	The Fourteenth Amendment was ruled not to grant the federal government power to punish whites who oppressed blacks.
1876	<i>U.S. v. Reese</i>	The Fifteenth Amendment was determined not to grant voting rights to anyone but rather to restrict types of voter discrimination.

Reading Check

Analyze Issues

Why did northern attitudes toward Reconstruction change?

By the late 1870s the Supreme Court's restrictive rulings had narrowed the scope of these amendments so much that the federal government no longer had much power to protect the rights of African Americans. Although the Supreme Court would later overturn them, these decisions impeded African Americans' efforts to gain equality for years to come.

NORTHERN SUPPORT FADES As the Supreme Court rejected Reconstruction policies in the 1870s, northern voters grew indifferent to events in the South. Weary of the "Negro question" and sick of "carpetbag government," many northern voters shifted their attention to such national concerns as the panic of 1873 and the corruption in Grant's administration. In addition, a desire for reconciliation between the regions spread through the North. Although political violence continued in the South and African Americans were denied civil and political rights, the tide of public opinion in the North began to turn against Reconstruction policies.

As both judicial and public support decreased, Republicans began to back away from their commitment to Reconstruction. The impassioned Radicals who had led the fight for congressional Reconstruction and racial equality—Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens—were dead. With their loss, few northerners were willing to campaign for equal rights for African Americans. Business interests diverted the attention of both moderates and Radicals. Scalawags and carpetbaggers, meanwhile, deserted the Republican Party. Moreover, Republicans gradually came to believe that government could not impose the moral and social changes needed for former slaves to make progress in the South. As a result, Republicans slowly retreated from the policies of Reconstruction.

Democrats "Redeem" the South

Between 1869 and 1875, Democrats recaptured the state governments of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. As a result of **redemption**—as the Democrats called their return to power in the South—and the national election of 1876, congressional Reconstruction came to an end.

ELECTION OF 1876 In 1876 President Grant decided not to run for a third term. The Republicans then chose the stodgy governor of Ohio, **Rutherford B. Hayes**, as their candidate. Smelling victory, the Democrats put up one of their ablest leaders, Governor **Samuel J. Tilden** of New York. Tilden had helped clean up the graft that had flourished in New York City under the corrupt Tweed Ring.

As most people had expected, Tilden won the popular vote. However, he fell one short of the number of electoral votes needed to win. In addition, voting irregularities had left 20 electoral votes in dispute. Congress appointed a commission to deal with the problem. The commission, which had a Republican majority, gave the election to the Republican, Hayes, even though he had received a minority of the popular vote.

For the first time in U.S. history, a candidate who had lost the popular election became president. How did it happen? In the oldest tradition of politics, party leaders made a deal. Although Republicans controlled the electoral commission, Democrats controlled the House of Representatives, which had to approve the election results. Southern Democrats were willing to accept Hayes if they could get something in return.

POINT	★ COUNTERPOINT
<p><i>“Reconstruction was a failure.”</i></p> <p>Federal and state governments failed to secure the rights guaranteed to former slaves by constitutional amendments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Republican parties could not preserve black-white voter coalitions that would have enabled them to stay in power and continue political reform. • Radical Republican governments were unable or unwilling to enact land reform or to provide former slaves with the economic resources needed to break the cycle of poverty. • Racial bias was a national, not a regional, problem. After the panic of 1873, northerners were more concerned with economic problems than with the problems of former slaves. • The Supreme Court undermined the power of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. <p>At the end of Reconstruction, former slaves found themselves once again in a subordinate position in society. Historian Eric Foner concludes, “Whether measured by the dreams inspired by emancipation or the more limited goals of securing blacks’ rights as citizens. . . . Reconstruction can only be judged a failure.”</p>	<p><i>“Reconstruction was a success.”</i></p> <p>Reconstruction was an attempt to create a social and political revolution despite economic collapse and the opposition of much of the white South. Under these conditions, its accomplishments were extraordinary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Americans only a few years removed from slavery participated at all levels of government. • State governments had some success in solving social problems; for example, they funded public school systems open to all citizens. • African Americans established institutions that had been denied them during slavery: schools, churches, and families. • The breakup of the plantation system led to some redistribution of land. • Congress passed the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which helped African Americans to attain full civil rights in the 20th century. <p>W.E.B. Du Bois summarized the achievements of the period this way: “[I]t was Negro loyalty and the Negro vote alone that restored the South to the Union; established the new democracy, both for white and black.”</p> <p>Despite the loss of ground that followed Reconstruction, African Americans succeeded in carving out a measure of independence within southern society.</p>
<p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>1. Connect to History What are the two major arguments each side makes as to whether Reconstruction was a success or failure? Which perspective do you agree with, and why?</p>	<p>2. Connect to Today One historian has referred to Reconstruction as “America’s Unfinished Revolution.” Is the U.S. still dealing with issues left over from that period? Research Reconstruction’s legacy using newspapers, magazines, or other sources. Make a short persuasive presentation in class.</p>

The price they demanded was, first of all, the withdrawal of federal troops from Louisiana and South Carolina—two of the three southern states that Republicans still governed. Second, the Democrats wanted federal money to build a railroad from Texas to the West Coast and to improve southern rivers, harbors, and bridges. Third, they wanted Hayes to appoint a conservative southerner to the cabinet. In the **Compromise of 1877**, Republican leaders agreed to these demands. Hayes was peacefully inaugurated. The acceptance of this compromise meant the end of Reconstruction in the South.

HOME RULE IN THE SOUTH After the 1876 election, Republicans and Democrats disputed the results in Louisiana's and South Carolina's elections. Both states ended up with two rival state governments. When Hayes later removed the federal troops in those states, the Democrats took over. Florida also had questionable election returns, but the state supreme court ruled in favor of the Democrats. As a result, Republicans no longer controlled any southern state.

The Democrats had achieved their long-desired goal of **home rule**—the ability to run state governments without federal intervention. These so-called Redeemers set out to rescue the South from what they viewed as a decade of mismanagement by northerners, Republicans, and African Americans. As a result, old political and social structures reemerged in the South. State governments passed laws that restricted the rights of African Americans, wiped out social programs, slashed taxes, and dismantled public schools. Many of these new laws violated the principles of federal civil rights protections, but state leaders chose to ignore that fact. Within a few years, African Americans in the South were once again relegated to second-class status.

LEGACY OF RECONSTRUCTION Despite the efforts of African Americans and many Radical Republicans, Reconstruction ended without much real progress in the battle against discrimination. Charles Harris, an African American Union army veteran and former Alabama legislator, expressed his frustration in an 1877 letter.

"We obey laws; others make them. We support state educational institutions, whose doors are virtually closed against us. We support asylums and hospitals, and our sick, deaf, dumb, or blind are met at the doors by . . . unjust discriminations. . . . From these and many other oppressions . . . our people long to be free."

—Charles Harris, quoted in American Colonization Society Papers
in the *Congressional Record*

Although Radical Republicans wanted to help the former slaves, they made several serious mistakes. First, they assumed that extending certain civil rights to freed persons would enable them to protect themselves through participation in government, especially in lawmaking. However, Congress did not adequately protect those rights, and the Supreme Court undermined them. Second, the Radicals balked at giving land to former slaves, which prevented them from becoming economically independent of the planter class. Finally, the Radicals did not fully realize the extent to which deep-seated racism in society would weaken the changes that Congress had tried to make.



Medical students at Howard University, an African American institution founded in 1867

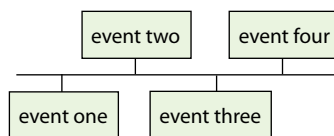
Reading Check
Analyze Causes
 How did the Compromise of 1877 bring about the end of Reconstruction?

But congressional Reconstruction was not a complete failure. The Thirteenth Amendment permanently abolished slavery in all of the states. Furthermore, Radical Republicans did succeed in passing the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Although the Supreme Court narrowed the interpretation of the amendments during the 1870s, they remained part of the Constitution. In the 20th century, the amendments provided the necessary constitutional foundation for important civil rights legislation.

During Reconstruction, African Americans had founded many black colleges and volunteer organizations, and the percentage of literate African Americans had gradually increased. The memory of this time of expanding opportunities lived on in the African American community and inspired the fight to regain civil rights.

Lesson 4 Assessment

- Organize Information** Record the major events that ended Reconstruction on a timeline.



Which event do you think was most significant and why?

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Analyze Effects** Do you think the political deal to settle the election of 1876 was an appropriate solution? Explain why or why not.

Think About:

- the causes of the conflict over the election
- other possible solutions to the controversy
- the impact of the settlement

- Analyze Effects** What were the positive and negative effects of Reconstruction? Party?
- Form Generalizations** During Reconstruction, was the presidency weak or strong? Support your answer with details from the text.
- Summarize** How did politics and society in the South change with the return of home rule?

Module 10 Assessment

Key Terms and People

For each key term or person below, write a sentence explaining its connection to Reconstruction.

- 1. Andrew Johnson
- 2. Radical Republicans
- 3. Freedmen’s Bureau
- 4. Fourteenth Amendment
- 5. Fifteenth Amendment
- 6. carpetbagger
- 7. Hiram Revels
- 8. sharecropping
- 9. Ku Klux Klan (KKK)
- 10. Rutherford B. Hayes

Main Ideas

Use your notes and the information in the module to answer the following questions.

The Politics of Reconstruction

- 1. How did Andrew Johnson’s plan to reconstruct the Confederate states differ from Lincoln’s?
- 2. Why did some southern states create black codes in the 1860s?
- 3. How did the Civil Rights Act of 1866 become law?
- 4. Why did the Radical Republicans want to impeach Andrew Johnson?
- 5. What effect did the election of 1866 have on Republicans’ ability to carry out their plan for Reconstruction and on the Constitution?

Reconstructing the South

- 6. What three groups made up the Republican Party in the South during Reconstruction?
- 7. What were some similarities in the goals of scalawags and carpetbaggers? of carpetbaggers and African Americans?
- 8. Why did southern planters want to restore the plantation system? What factors limited their success?

- 9. What did Henry Grady mean by the “New South,” and what did he hope to accomplish by promoting it?

Life After Slavery

- 10. What led to the establishment of black colleges in the South during Reconstruction?
- 11. How did white southern landowners reassert their economic power over freed slaves in the decade following the Civil War?
- 12. In what ways did emancipated slaves exercise their freedom?
- 13. What were the economic and social effects of sharecropping and tenant farming?

The Collapse of Reconstruction

- 14. What were the goals of the Ku Klux Klan?
- 15. How did southern whites regain political power during Reconstruction?
- 16. What economic and political developments weakened the Republican Party during Grant’s second term?
- 17. How did the *Slaughterhouse* and *Reese* decisions affect African Americans’ pursuit of civil rights?
- 18. What significance did the victory by Rutherford B. Hayes in the 1876 presidential race have for Reconstruction?

Critical Thinking

- 1. **Categorize** Use a chart to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of various plans for Reconstruction, including the Ten-Percent Plan, the Wade-Davis Bill, and the creation of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Based on your analysis of the plans, which one do you think the country should have followed for Reconstruction?

Plan	Strengths	Weaknesses

Module 10 Assessment, continued

2. **Analyze Causes** Why did federal leaders agree that a Reconstruction program was necessary?
3. **Analyze Issues** How do you think Reconstruction could have been made more effective in rebuilding the South and ensuring the rights of the freed slaves?
4. **Summarize** Explain the significance of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to freed slaves.
5. **Draw Conclusions** What might Americans today learn from the civil rights experiences of African Americans during Reconstruction?
6. **Analyze Causes** How did the Supreme Court undermine support for Reconstruction in the 1870s?
7. **Analyze Events** How did the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment change the relationship between federal and state power?
8. **Form Generalizations** How did various groups of Americans react to the end of slavery and the expansion of civil rights after the Civil War?
9. **Summarize** What political, social, and economic factors helped bring about the end of Reconstruction?

Engage with History

Imagine that you are the owner of a small farm in the South in 1877. You have received a letter from a distant cousin living in the North asking your opinion of how the government handled Reconstruction. Write a letter back, expressing your opinion. In your response, consider the following questions:

- What goals did the government actually set for Reconstruction?
- How could the government have pursued its goals more effectively?
- What additional goals should the government have set? Why?

Focus on Writing

During Reconstruction, many leaders felt that it was the president's responsibility to restore the Union. Others felt it was the responsibility of Congress. Write a persuasive essay expressing your view on who should oversee Reconstruction in the former Confederacy. Be sure to include evidence that supports your position, while also highlighting the negative aspects of the alternative plan for Reconstruction.

Collaborative Learning

In a small group, read and discuss the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. With your partners, discuss the intention behind the passage of each of the amendments. Determine each amendment's effects on African Americans and others during and after Reconstruction. Then, choose one of the amendments and debate whether it helped American society move toward or away from the core American values established in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Did the amendment help African Americans and other groups achieve full citizenship? As a group, create an oral or visual presentation explaining your position. Be sure to support your opinion with information from the text or other resources.