Reconstruction After the Civil War

Overview
Reconstruction was one of the most turbulent and controversial eras in American history. At the end of the Civil War, the physical destruction of the South was enormous, and the old social and economic order founded on slavery had collapsed completely, with nothing to replace it. In this lesson, students will learn about this period of history, examining the various historical perspectives regarding how to best restore life in the South. Students will also participate in an experiential exercise in which they role play a member of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction and attempt to determine how to restore the Confederate States to the Union, as well as devise a plan for the emancipated slaves.

Grade
8

NC Essential Standards for 8th Grade Social Studies
• 8.H.1.1 - Construct charts, graphs, and historical narratives to explain particular events or issues.
• 8.H.1.3 - Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives.
• 8.H.1.5 - Analyze the relationship between historical context and decision-making.
• 8.H.2.1 - Explain the impact of economic, political, social, and military conflicts (e.g. war, slavery, states’ rights and citizenship and immigration policies) on the development of North Carolina and the United States.
• 8.H.2.3 - Summarize the role of debate, compromise, and negotiation during significant periods in the history of North Carolina and the United States.
• 8.H.3.4 - Compare historical and contemporary issues to understand continuity and change in the development of North Carolina and the United States.
• 8.E.1.1- Explain how conflict, cooperation, and competition influenced periods of economic growth and decline (e.g. economic depressions and recessions).
• 8.C&G.1.4 - Analyze access to democratic rights and freedoms among various groups in North Carolina and the United States (e.g. enslaved people, women, wage earners, landless farmers, American Indians, African Americans and other ethnic groups).

Materials
• “America’s Reconstruction After the Civil War,” attached
• Southern Images During Reconstruction, attached
• Political Cartoon: Johnson and the Freedmen’s Bureau, attached
• Reconstruction Roles, attached

Essential Questions:
• What effect did the Civil War have on the Southern region in America?
• How did President Lincoln’s Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, President Johnson’s Reconstruction Plan, and Congress’s Joint Committee on Reconstruction compare and contrast to each other?
• What advancements and setbacks occurred during Reconstruction?
• Why were the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments important?
What were the 1868 revisions to the North Carolina Constitution?

Duration
• 60-90 minutes (This lesson can be split over two class periods if needed)

Student Preparation
Students should have an understanding of the South’s reasons for secession and the Civil War years. See the Carolina K-12’s “To Secede or Not to Secede,” available in the Database of K-12 Resources or by sending a request to CarolinaK12@unc.edu

Procedure
\section*{Warm Up: Putting Secession and the Civil War into a Modern Perspective}
1. As a review of secession and the Civil War, as well as an introduction into Reconstruction, explain the following scenario to students and engage them in discussion regarding the situation:
Imagine you are a parent, and your teenage daughter doesn’t like the rules you have in place at home (such as a curfew, behavior expectations, chores, homework expectations, etc.), even though you make the rules in her best interests. As a parent, you love your child and don’t want to see her hurt in anyway. You also want to make sure she is the best she can be at all times and grows up to be a successful adult. Your daughter gets incredibly upset over your rules and standards, and you spend several months in very ugly fights. There is a lot of screaming and yelling back and forth, and the tension becomes unbearable. You try various strategies to compromise with her and to make her understand your position, but ultimately, she refuses to obey. Finally, she becomes so angry she storms out of the house and runs away. By the next week, she has moved out of your house entirely, completely against your orders. You tried to keep her from removing her things from her room, since you bought everything and it is under your roof, but she pushes past you with her items and gets away. You feel that as your child, this is illegal and she has no right to be on her own. It is too dangerous for her, and it’s ripping your family apart. You feel that divided, your family is much weaker. Your entire family spends the next months worried sick, stressed out, and tense because of her leaving. Then, one day, she shows up on your doorstep because she is flat broke and hungry with no place to live. Begrudgingly, she asks if she can move back in the house. What would your decision be?

2. Ask students to consider, either as a class or in small groups:
\begin{itemize}
\item Would you let her move back in? Why or why not?
\item If you choose to let her move back in, consider whether or not there would be conditions she would need to meet.
\item Why might you have particular conditions and standards, and what would they be?
\end{itemize}

3. Chart their answers on the board and then assist them in drawing the following connections between the scenario presented and Secession, the Civil War, and Reconstruction (see chart of desired answers and connections below). You might ask questions such as:
\begin{itemize}
\item What was the daughter upset about? How might this apply to the situation between the North and the South?
\item How did the parents first try to appease the situation? Again, how does this relate to the situation experienced between the North and the South?
\item Did the parent’s attempts at compromise work? Did the government’s attempts at compromise with the South work?
\item How did the parents feel about her moving out? How did Lincoln feel about secession?
\item What did the parents do to make it harder for their daughter to move out? What did Lincoln do to make it harder on the South after they seceded?
\item How did both situations turn out?
\end{itemize}
g. What was it like for the teen once she moved away? What was it like for the South once they seceded?

h. Why did they both “come home,” so to speak?

i. Why did you feel it was important to have some conditions/standards for the teenager before she moved back in?

j. Why do you think Reconstruction Plans were created?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Child running away from home/moving out</strong></th>
<th><strong>Secession, the Civil War, and Reconstruction</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Child was upset about parent’s leadership, their rules and expectations, their decisions, etc.</td>
<td>Southern states upset over sectional interests such as slavery; infuriated by Lincoln’s election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Parent’s try various strategies to compromise with child</td>
<td>Congress attempts many compromises such as the Northwest Ordinance, the Compromise of 1850, and the Missouri Compromise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The child becomes so upset and frustrated that she runs away</td>
<td>The slave-owning southern states secede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The parents feel this is unacceptable, irresponsible, even illegal</td>
<td>Lincoln viewed secession as illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Parents try to keep child’s personal items in the house, believing they really belong to the parents since the parents have paid for everything</td>
<td>Lincoln seizes all federal possessions located in the South; he stations federal troops at Fort Sumter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Child takes items and leaves against orders</td>
<td>South Carolina soldiers fired on Lincoln’s federal troops at Fort Sumter, officially beginning the Civil War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. While living away from home, the child is at a loss of resources and ends up broke and hungry</td>
<td>The Union has superior resources in the Civil War; the southern states are largely destroyed throughout the war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. The child asks to return home</td>
<td>The southern states must re-enter the Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Parents outline certain conditions/standards that must be met</td>
<td>Congress’s Reconstruction Plan outlined particular steps southern states had to meet before rejoining the Union (i.e. Confederate states under military rule until delegates elected, citizens must take an Oath of Allegiance to the Union, etc.)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Background Information: Reconstruction**

4. Explain to students that they will be exploring the period of time after the Civil War ended, called **Reconstruction**, when the task of rebuilding the South awaited. Ask students to brainstorm:
   - By the time the Civil War officially ended on April 9, 1865, in what condition was the South?
   - How had the war affected both the North and the South?

5. To further discussion, project the attached “Southern Image Post-Civil War.” Ask students to discuss:
   - What do you see in these photos?
6. Provide students with a review of where the country stood right after the Civil War, sharing information such as:

The South had sustained immense damage after the Civil War. Entire cities lay in ruins. Many plantations and fields had been burned and homes had been gutted. Train tracks were blown up and many bridges were destroyed. Rivers were not navigable and needed to be dredged due to boats that had sunk in them. What lands were left unburned hadn’t been cultivated for four years and were thus in shambles. Thousands of people lacked the means to provide food, clothing, or shelter for themselves or their dependents and the Federal government did little to assist the needy. Not to mention, there were now thousands of freed slaves, many with no supplies to start a new life with. And the responsibility now was to come up with a plan to restore this devastated land and society.

Since the war had been fought almost entirely in the South, the North did not have the great task of rebuilding itself. Yet, the economy was struggling in the North as well. While the North’s economy had boomed during the war, bringing economic growth to both the factories and the farms, the war had been costly for the North. Three methods had been employed to raise funds: 1) Taxation: Protective tariffs, excise taxes on luxury goods, and an income tax were all employed during the war; 2) Printing paper money: The Union government printed more than $450 million in “greenbacks” during the war-these notes were not redeemable in gold and their value fluctuated widely during the conflict; 3) Selling bonds (borrowing): Union securities were marketed to investors both in the North and in Europe.

The Confederacy had printed more than $800 million in paper money during the course of the war and massive inflation had resulted. The currency and other government securities were worthless, destroying the savings of thousands.

Tensions between the North and South naturally lingered and there was no script for Reconstruction. In many ways, winning the war, by comparison, was easier than figuring out what to do about Reconstruction, which presented a massive logistical, political, Constitutional, and economical challenge that the country had never faced.

Discuss:

- What questions had to be figured out at the end of the Civil War? (Teachers are seeking answers such as: What authority would the federal government have? How would Southern states be restored to the Union? How quickly would they be restored to the Union? What about suffrage for black men? (Could you allow a people to fight and die in war, and not allow them to vote?) What about the four million freed slaves? What about the hundreds of thousands of starving white refugees? What was to be done first with a conquered, defeated, devastated Southern region and a destroyed economy?
- What issues do you think the federal government should prioritize during Reconstruction?

7. Tell students they are going to read about the various Reconstruction plans and actions that were discussed and implemented. Either as individuals or in partners, handout and tell students to read the attached “America’s Reconstruction After the Civil War” and to answer the included questions. Explain to students that it is important they read carefully, as they will need to use the information they learn to
participate in a role play activity. Students will likely need approximately 20 minutes to analyze the reading and respond to the questions. Instruct students to pay close attention to:
  - Lincoln’s Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction
  - Johnson’s Reconstruction Plan
  - Joint Committee on Reconstruction
  - Black Codes
  - Freedmen’s Bureau
  - Thirteenth Amendment
  - Fourteenth Amendment
  - Fifteenth Amendment
  - Carpetbaggers
  - Scalawags
  - Ku Klux Klan

8. Once students have completed their reading and responses to the questions, discuss the article and answers as a class to ensure understanding.

9. To apply some of their new understanding regarding Reconstruction, project the attached political cartoon, “Andrew Johnson and the Freedmen’s Bureau,” and ask students to discuss (either verbally or in writing):
  - What do you see in this political cartoon? (Encourage students to point out symbols, characters, objects, text, etc., that they notice. Try to keep them from jumping to interpretation until all pieces of the cartoon are pointed out.)
  - What do you think? What message is the artist trying to convey? What do the symbols represent? What techniques has the artist used and why? (i.e., exaggeration, caricatures, humor, sarcasm, etc.)
  - What statement does this cartoon make about Andrew Johnson and the Freedmen’s Bureau?

Teacher Note: Depending how long students take with their reading and discussion, teachers short on remaining time can explain the below Joint Committee on Reconstruction role play, assign the roles, and have students begin thinking about their character during class and for homework. Teachers can then wait to have students participate in the role play until the following day of class.

Joint Committee on Reconstruction Simulation

10. Point out to students that the image of Southern devastation and destruction they viewed earlier represents only a small piece of the mass devastation and destruction that was found in every Southern state. Considering this, tell students to imagine that they are a member of the government during Reconstruction and it is thus their responsibility to figure out how to get the South back on its feet. Divide students into groups of 5 and explain that they are going to each receive a role that they must play as they participate with their group members in a meeting of Congress’s Joint Committee on Reconstruction, which was comprised of members of both houses. The purpose of their group’s meeting is to come up with a plan of reconstructing the southern states and bringing them back to the Union. Tell students that their groups (in character) must consider the thousands of displaced families, the ruined Southern economy, the damage to Southern resources, the freed slaves, opposition to the 13th amendment, etc. Their goal will be to create at least 5 action items in their Plan of Reconstruction that they agree on.

11. Tell students that once you provide them with a role, they should spend 5-10 silent minutes thinking about how their character would speak, act, feel regarding Reconstruction, advocate for their ideas regarding Reconstruction, etc. Encourage students to expand their character beyond the information given to them, thinking about the personality their character would have, what their goals would be, etc. Tell students that it’s possible they will not agree with the opinion of the character assigned to them, but that they must
do their best to act as this person would act, advocating as best they can for their character’s idea for Reconstruction. Also point out to students that beyond sharing their character’s views at the meeting, they will also have a duty to perform (such as Facilitator, Summarizer, etc.) Students should also use the time provided to review what they have learned about Reconstruction and gather any facts that will help them advocate for their beliefs.

12. Once students have spent time developing their character and ideas regarding Reconstruction, review your expectations for group work and allow them to start their congressional meeting. Monitor the groups as they work, assuring they are in character. The teacher should expect many groups to have great difficulty in coming to any type of agreement, since the characters provided have directly opposite views in some cases. The goal of the activity is to let students experience the reality of what a difficult and frustrating task Reconstruction was, so if the groups are unable to come to an agreement on any Action Steps, the activity is still successful.

Teacher Note: It is important to remind students that everyone is acting and playing a character, since the roles represented are true to perceptions in the 1860s and can be offensive to our modern sensibilities. While students should assume the mentalty of a person during Reconstruction, it is recommended that teacher’s set some guidelines regarding student portrayals. For example, even though some of these characters may have used racial slurs in reality, students should not use such language as part of this activity.

13. Once you feel sufficient time has been allotted for the role play (around 15-20 minutes), stop the meetings and have the class applaud themselves for their hard work. Debrief the activity as a class by discussing:
   • What was that experience like?
   • Why was it difficult to create a Reconstruction plan that everyone could agree on?
   • Summarizers, please share your Action Steps (assuming you were able to agree on any.)
   • What was the process of compromise like for your group?
   • How do you think this activity compares and contrasts to the experiences of those living in 1865 who were given this task of unification? Would you have wanted to be a government official responsible for making these decisions? Why or why not? (Point out that while it can be difficult and frustrating, if it weren’t for people participating, unfair laws like the Black Codes would not have been changed.)
   • Based on the article you read, how did Reconstruction come to an end? Do you think this period was handled effectively by the government? Why or why not? What improvements do you feel should have been made? Are your suggested improvements realistic to that time period? Why or why not?

14. End class by connecting Reconstruction to current events. Of particular relation is the Iraq war (2003-2011), the debate over whether it was a Civil War or a situation of sectarian violence, and America’s struggle to reconstruct the area. Discuss with students:
   • In what ways do the events of America’s Civil War and Reconstruction compare/contrast to the situation in Iraq?
   • In your opinion, how should our government handle the current situation in regards to the ongoing struggles in Iraq and the Middle East?
   • What level of responsibility do we have to reconstruct Iraq? How does this relate to the level of responsibility the federal government had in reconstructing the South?

15. Teachers may wish to find a current newspaper article regarding the Iraq War to assign for reading that develops this discussion.

Additional Activities
Focus on the Black legislators that were elected to state and federal offices during the period of Reconstruction. See the Carolina K-12’s lesson “African American’s in the United States Congress During Reconstruction,” available in the Database of K-12 Resources.
America's Reconstruction after the Civil War

Reconstruction, one of the most turbulent and controversial eras in American history, began during the Civil War in 1865 and ended in 1877. At the end of the Civil War, the defeated South was a ruined land. The physical destruction wrought by the invading Union forces was enormous, and the old social and economic order founded on slavery had collapsed completely, with nothing to replace it. The 11 Confederate states somehow had to be restored to their positions in the Union and provided with loyal governments, and the role of the emancipated slaves in Southern society had to be defined.

Lincoln's Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction

Even before the war ended, President Lincoln began the task of restoration. Motivated by a desire to build a strong Republican party in the South and to end the bitterness engendered by war, he issued (Dec. 8, 1863) a Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction for those areas of the Confederacy occupied by Union armies. It offered pardon, with certain exceptions, to any Confederate who would swear to support the Constitution and the Union. Once a group in any conquered state equal in number to one tenth of that state's total vote in the presidential election of 1860 took the prescribed oath and organized a government that abolished slavery, he would grant that government executive recognition.

Lincoln's plan aroused the sharp opposition of the radicals in Congress, who believed it would simply restore to power the old planter aristocracy. They passed (July, 1864) the Wade-Davis Bill, which required 50% of a state's male voters to take an "ironclad" oath that they had never voluntarily supported the Confederacy. Lincoln's pocket veto kept the Wade-Davis Bill from becoming law, and he implemented his own plan. By the end of the war it had been tried, not too successfully, in Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Virginia. Congress, however, refused to seat the Senators and Representatives elected from those states, and by the time of Lincoln's assassination the President and Congress were at a stalemate.

Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, at first pleased the radicals by publicly attacking the planter aristocracy and insisting that the rebellion must be punished. His amnesty proclamation (May 29, 1865) was more severe than Lincoln's; it disenfranchised all former military and civil officers of the Confederacy and all those who owned property worth $20,000 or more and made their estates liable to confiscation. The obvious intent was to shift political control in the South from the old planter aristocracy to the small farmers and artisans, and it promised to accomplish a revolution in Southern society.

With Congress in adjournment from April to Dec., 1865, Johnson put his plan into operation. Under provisional governors appointed by him, the Southern states held conventions that voided or repealed their ordinances of secession, abolished slavery, and (except South Carolina) repudiated Confederate debts. Their newly elected legislatures (except Mississippi) ratified the Thirteenth Amendment guaranteeing freedom for blacks. By the end of 1865 every ex-Confederate state except Texas had reestablished civil government.

The control of white over black, however, seemed to be restored, as each of the newly elected state legislatures enacted statutes severely limiting the freedom and rights of the blacks. These laws, known as black codes, restricted the ability of blacks to own land and to work as free laborers and denied them most of the civil and political rights enjoyed by whites. Many of the offices in the new governments, moreover, were won by disenfranchised Confederate leaders, and the President, rather than ordering new elections, granted pardons on a large scale.

Congress's Joint Committee on Reconstruction

An outraged Northern public believed that the fruits of victory were being lost by Johnson's lenient policy. When Congress convened (Dec. 4, 1865) it refused to seat the Southern representatives. Johnson responded...
by publicly attacking Republican leaders and vetoing their Reconstruction measures. His tactics drove the moderates into the radical camp. The 1866 Civil Rights Act (Apr. 9, 1866), designed to protect African Americans from legislation such as the black codes, and the Freedmen's Bureau Bill (July 16), extending the life of the Freedmen's Bureau, were both passed over Johnson's veto. Doubts as to the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Act led the radicals to incorporate (June, 1866) most of its provisions in the Fourteenth Amendment (ratified 1868).

The newly created Joint Committee on Reconstruction reported (Apr. 28, 1866) that the ex-Confederate states were in a state of civil disorder, and hence, had not held valid elections. It also maintained that Reconstruction was a congressional, not an executive, function. The radicals solidified their position by winning the elections of 1866. When every Southern state (except Tennessee) refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and protect the rights of its black citizens, the stage was set for more severe measures.

**The Reconstruction Acts**
On Mar. 2, 1867, Congress enacted the Reconstruction Act, which, supplemented later by three related acts, divided the South (except Tennessee) into five military districts in which the authority of the army commander was supreme. Johnson continued to oppose congressional policy, and when he insisted on the removal of the radical Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, in defiance of the Tenure of Office Act, the House impeached him (Feb., 1868). The radicals in the Senate fell one vote short of convicting him (May), but by this time Johnson's program had been effectively scuttled.

Under the terms of the Reconstruction Acts, new state constitutions were written in the South. By Aug., 1868, six states (Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida) had been readmitted to the Union, having ratified the Fourteenth Amendment as required by the first Reconstruction Act. The four remaining unreconstructed states—Virginia, Mississippi, Texas, and Georgia—were readmitted in 1870 after ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment as well as the Fifteenth Amendment, which guaranteed the black man's right to vote.

**The Radical Republican Governments in the South**
The radical Republican governments in the South attempted to deal constructively with the problems left by the Civil War and the abolition of slavery. Led by so-called carpetbaggers (Northerners who settled in the South) and scalawags (Southern whites in the Republican party) and freedmen, they began to rebuild the Southern economy and society. Agricultural production was restored, roads rebuilt, a more equitable tax system adopted, and schooling extended to blacks and poor whites. The freedmen's civil and political rights were guaranteed, and blacks were able to participate in the political and economic life of the South as full citizens for the first time.

The bitterness engendered by the Civil War remained, however, and most Southern whites objected strongly to the former slaves' new role in society. Organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan arose. Their acts of violence kept African Americans and white Republicans from voting, and gradually the radical Republican governments were overthrown.

**Reconstruction's End**
By 1876 only Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana remained under Republican domination. The Republican presidential candidate that year, Rutherford B. Hayes, promised to alleviate conditions in the South, but the feeling there had already led to the formation of the "solid South" in support of his Democratic opponent, Samuel J. Tilden. In those three states the presidential contest was the occasion for a determined effort to throw off Republican rule, and on their electoral votes (and on one disputed electoral vote in Oregon) hung the fate of the famous disputed election of 1876. It is practically certain that at least one of the three gave a majority, and thus the presidency, to Tilden, but two sets of returns were sent in from each of the three states.
A specially constituted electoral commission (composed of eight Republicans and seven Democrats) accepted the Republican returns, and Hayes was given the presidency.

Reconstruction officially ended as all federal troops were withdrawn from the South. White rule was restored, and black people were over time deprived of many civil and political rights and their economic position remained depressed. The radicals’ hopes for a basic reordering of the social and economic structure of the South, beyond the abolition of slavery, died. The results, instead, were the one-party "solid South" and increased racial bitterness. The nearly complete elimination in the lengthy post-Reconstruction years (late 1870s to early 1950s) of the advances made by African Americans during Reconstruction has led many to argue that it had few ramifications, but others have countered that the ideal of racial equality formed during Reconstruction set an important goal that the country is still striving to reach.

Please answer:

1. Compare and contrast Lincoln’s Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, Johnson’s Reconstruction Plan, and Congress’s Joint Committee on Reconstruction.

2. Why do you think that President Lincoln was assassinated?

3. Summarize the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. Why are they important?

4. What services did the Freedmen’s Bureau offer to Southerners, and why were these services so crucial at this particular time?

5. Characterize the Black Codes. In what ways were they restrictive to the rights and livelihood of African Americans? Why do you think some white Southerners wanted these laws enacted?

6. Why did Congress want to impeach Andrew Johnson? Why was he not impeached? If you were a member of Congress in 1865, would you have voted to impeach President Johnson? Why or why not?
8. In your own words, describe carpetbaggers and scalawags.

9. Why was the KKK formed? What other groups can you connect them to that exist today?

Sources: [http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraid=8&smtid=1](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraid=8&smtid=1)  
President Johnson depicted in Thomas Nast cartoon kicking "freedman's bureau" down stairs with his veto, with scattered black people falling out of it. Source: HarpWeek
Southern Image Post-Civil War
Character: Andrew/Alice
Duty: Secretary
You are a representative from New York. Having toured the damage down south, you understand that there is much work to be done in a successful plan of Reconstruction. However, your focus is on taking care of all of the innocent, displaced persons living in the South. You are a firm supporter of the Freedmen’s Bureau. You are very concerned about all of the freed slaves and the hardships they are now facing. Many of them are starving and have no opportunity for work. Not to mention, many are being mistreated by former slave owners. You think it is very important to institute laws and opportunities to help them, as well as other poor people.

Beyond sharing your views for Reconstruction with your fellow Congressmen, you are also responsible for taking detailed notes at this meeting. At the end of these notes (which will be turned in) list your group’s 5 action items for a Plan of Reconstruction.

Character: Leonard/Lisa
Duty: Summarizer
You are a representative from Georgia, and you believe that taxes are too high right now because of all the aid that is being given to freed slaves and poor whites. You begrudgingly agreed to the passing of the 13th Amendment. However, now that African Americans are free, you certainly don’t think you should have to pay for them to live. The government needs to lower taxes and use any money that does come in to rebuild government buildings and forts. You also think the Black Codes are a good idea, since freed slaves need some structure and laws to abide by. This new freedom just might be a little much for them.

Beyond sharing your views for Reconstruction with your fellow Congressmen, you are also responsible for summarizing your group’s conversation and presenting your 5 action steps to the remainder of Congress (the class) at the end of this activity.

Character: Jeff/Jill
Duty: Meeting Facilitator
You are a representative from North Carolina. Although you did not fight in the war, you are a southerner who loves the south and is very passionate about it being restructured. You believe that taxes should be raised to rebuild the southern economy, since you are worried that it will never bounce back now that slavery has been eliminated. You also believe the Union should help pay the Confederate debt, rather than making things more difficult for the ruined South. Without financial assistance, the Freedman’s Bureau will never be able to help anyone.

Beyond sharing your views for Reconstruction with your fellow Congressmen, you are responsible for facilitating the discussion. Begin by asking each group member to introduce themselves and give a 1 minute summary of their feelings regarding Reconstruction. After each person has introduced themselves and shared their initial feelings, lead the group in determining 5 action steps that you can submit to the president as your Plan for Reconstruction.
### Character: Seth/Sarah
**Duty: Responder**

You are a **Radical Republican** from Pennsylvania who wants to protect the rights of African Americans. You believe that black men should be allowed to vote as well, and you hope that they will vote for Radical Republican candidates such as yourself. You also think the Confederate states should be punished, since their secession was illegal and caused all of this mess to begin with. The Southern states should have to pay back every dime this war cost the Nation. You think placing Southern States under military control is crucial, because you feel they’ll never free their slaves or allow African Americans to vote otherwise.

Beyond sharing your views for Reconstruction with your fellow Congressmen, you are also responsible for answering any questions other groups may have regarding your Plan of Reconstruction after the Summarizer presents it to the class. Likewise, if any questions arise during your group’s meeting, you are responsible for helping ensure the answer if found, either by consulting a resource, such as your textbook or by asking the President (your teacher).

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### Character: Bernard/Betsy
**Duty: Moderator**

You are a representative from South Carolina and you are a secret member of the **Ku Klux Klan**. You do not want to see any radical changes made during reconstruction. You are worried about the South’s terrible economy without slavery and about all these freed slaves running around. You want things as close to the way they used to be as possible. You are furious that some people think that Confederate states should be put under military rule, and you can’t believe that some people think that African Americans should be given the right to vote. You want all these Northern **carpetbaggers** to go back home and leave the decisions made down south to the Southerners.

Beyond sharing your views for Reconstruction with your fellow Congressmen, you are also responsible for being a **Moderator**, which means helping the Facilitator keep the conversation going, ensuring that everyone participates and has a chance to express their ideas, and keeping track of the time left for completing the activity.