

Deconstructing Reconstruction

The Reconstruction Era

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	90 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	1-2 periods
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How did Reconstruction shape America?

Summary

In this lesson, students analyze the legislation enacted immediately following the Civil War and examine the effects that legislation had, especially on newly freed slaves. Students will then make connections between the harsh realities of the Reconstruction Era and more current Civil Rights issues focusing on issues such as voting rights. Students will synthesize this new knowledge to address the ways in which Reconstruction shaped America.

Snapshot

Engage

Students complete a Bell Ringer and engage in a class discussion regarding the meaning of the word *reconstruction.*

Explore

Students read "A Freedman Writes His Former Master" and engage in the Say Something reading strategy with an Elbow Partner.

Explain

Students complete a Jigsaw reading about Reconstruction and share their new knowledge with their group.

Extend

Students watch a video about the effects of Reconstruction on voting rights and complete the S-I-T learning strategy.

Evaluate

Students complete an Exit Ticket answering the essential question "How did Reconstruction shape America?"

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States History (9th through 12th grade))

USH.1: The student will analyze the transformation of the United States through its civil rights struggles, immigrant experiences, and settlement of the American West in the Post-Reconstruction Era, 1865 to the 1920s.
USH.1.2: Analyze the post-Reconstruction civil rights struggles.
USH.1.2B: Examine the purposes and effects of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments.
USH.1.2C: Assess the impact of the Black Codes, Jim Crow laws,and the actions of the Ku Klux Klan.

Attachments

- Jigsaw Notecatcher—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.docx
- Jigsaw Notecatcher—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.pdf
- Jigsaw Notecatcher—Deconstructing Reconstruction.docx
- Jigsaw Notecatcher—Deconstructing Reconstruction.pdf
- Jigsaw Readings—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.docx
- Jigsaw Readings—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.pdf
- Jigsaw Readings—Deconstructing Reconstruction.docx
- Jigsaw Readings—Deconstructing Reconstruction.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Deconstructing Reconstruction.pptx
- Letter From Jourdon Anderson—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.docx
- Letter From Jourdon Anderson—Deconstructing Reconstruction - Spanish.pdf
- Letter From Jourdon Anderson—Deconstructing Reconstruction.docx
- Letter From Jourdon Anderson—Deconstructing Reconstruction.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides
- Jigsaw Readings (attached; one packet per group)
- Jigsaw Notecatcher (attached; one per student)
- Letter From Jourdon Anderson: A Freedman Writes His Former Master (attached; one per student)
- Sticky notes

5 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Begin the lesson by displaying **slides 2–3**, sharing the lesson title and objectives.

Transition to **slide 4** with the Bell Ringer question. Give students a few minutes to complete the Bell Ringer by answering the question on the slide: *What does it mean to reconstruct something?*

Once students have completed the Bell Ringer, invite a few to share their responses. After a few students have shared, move to **slide 5** and pose a follow-up question to the class: *When something needs to be reconstructed, what does that say about the original version?*

You can have students include this question in their Bell Ringer responses or just discuss it as a class.

Invite a few students to share out. After several students have shared their responses, draw connections between their responses and the state of the United States of America following the Civil War. Explain to students that the period following the Civil War is known as the Reconstruction Period. Ask students what *reconstruction* might mean in this historical sense. What was being reconstructed? What was broken?

Display **slide 6** with the essential question: *How did Reconstruction shape America?*

15 minutes

Explore

Give each student a copy of the attached **Letter From Jourdon Anderson: A Freedman Writes His Former Master**. Display **slide 7** for instructions associated with the reading activity. Have students read the letter with their Elbow Partner.

Once students have read the letter, display **slide 8** with the Say Something sentence starters. Using the sentence starters with their Elbow Partners, each pair should come up with one question or statement they have based on the reading. Give each pair sticky notes to write their question or statement and a few minutes to complete this task.

Once pairs have completed their Say Something statement or question, invite a few pairs to share out what they have written. Encourage every category of sentence starters, if possible. You can also use this time to open the floor to questions that may have arisen as students read and completed the activity.

Invite students to come up with questions. Ask them to pose the question to the class to see what responses they can generate. Guide the discussion as needed.

30 minutes

Explain

Slide 9 contains a timer for the Jigsaw activity. Divide the class into groups of six and distribute the attached **Jigsaw Readings** to each group. Have students divide the reading among group members, with each taking a different section. Give students about 7–10 minutes to read their section, jotting down notes, questions, and unfamiliar terms in the margins.

After students have read their sections, distribute the attached **Jigsaw Note Catcher** to each student. Have students spend 10–15 minutes moving through each item on the Note Catcher, discussing as a group what they learned from their own reading and filling in knowledge gaps for each other. Instruct groups to record their new knowledge on the Note Catcher, as well as any remaining questions they may have.

Teacher's Note

Unlike some jigsaws, the sections of the Jigsaw Readings and the items on the Note Catcher do not share a 1:1 equivalence. That is, there won't be one clear expert for any given Note Catcher item. Rather, the readings have different emphases, some defining important terms, others focusing on key concepts, political figures, or legislation. Students will have to engage in a hearty discussion to fill in each section of the Note Catcher.

After groups have discussed and completed their Note Catchers, move through each item as a class, having groups share out what they recorded and encouraging the rest of the class to fill in their Note Catchers with anything they missed.

10 minutes

Extend

Show **slide 10** and introduce the S-I-T strategy. Transition to **slide 11** and show the "Reconstruction: The Vote" video about the effects of the Reconstruction era. As students watch the video, ask them use the back of their Note Catcher to record one thing they found surprising, one thing they found interesting, and one thing they found troubling.

Once students have watched the video and completed their S-I-T, bring the class back together and have them share out their thoughts.

Allow student share-outs to generate a full class discussion. If the students don't get there on their own, explain how Reconstruction, despite being a time of hope and change, was far from a perfect solution to the problem of slavery and racism. Use this time to discuss the long-term repercussions of slavery and how we see these problems at work today.

5 minutes

Evaluate

To conclude the lesson, move to **slide 12** and review the essential question students were introduced to at the beginning of the lesson: *How did Reconstruction shape America?*

Using the information they have gathered from the readings and video, have students complete an Exit Ticket to respond to the question. Students may complete this in the same place they did their Bell Ringer at the beginning of class. Review Exit Tickets to assess students learning.

Resources

- Anderson, J. (n.d.). *Letter from Jourdon Anderson: A freedman writes his former master.* Facing History. https://www.facinghistory.org/reconstruction-era/letter-jourdon-anderson-freedman-writes-former-master
- Black History in Two Minutes or So (n.d.). *Reconstruction: The vote.* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7x_m1EkyB_E
- Editors, History.com. (2022, January 26). *Black codes.* History.com. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-codes
- Editors, History.com. (2022, January 11). *Reconstruction.* History.com. https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/reconstruction
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Say something. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/778
- K20 Center. (n.d.). S-I-T. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/926
- Library of Congress (n.d.). *Reconstruction and its aftermath.* The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship. https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african-american-odyssey/reconstruction.html
- Nittle, N. K. (2021, January 28). *How the black codes limited African American progress after the Civil War.* History.com. https://www.history.com/news/black-codes-reconstruction-slavery