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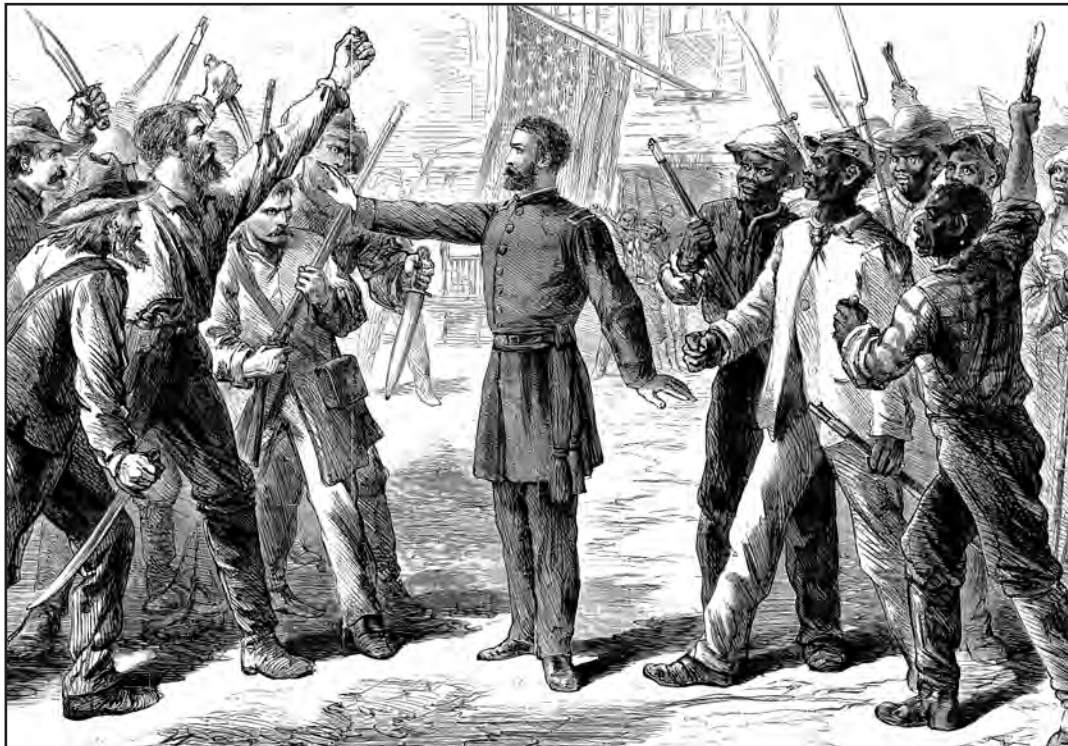
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THE WAY WE SAW IT

THE ERA OF RECONSTRUCTION

IN ILLUSTRATION AND ART

A Teacher's
Resource Booklet
with Lesson Plans and Reproducible
Student Activity Assignments



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CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN: 978-1-57596-089-0

Product Code: HS293

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Introduction

Binding Up the Nation's Wounds

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds..."

That was Abraham Lincoln's hope expressed in his second Inaugural Address in 1864, as he looked forward to the end of America's Civil War. But the years ahead would prove how hard it is to bind up the wounds after a long war has torn a nation apart. The war meant that the South was essentially a conquered land. That alone, would have generated bitterness and a sense of despair throughout the region. But of course, conquest, destruction and occupation were only some of the factors working against any easy reintegration of the South. The Civil War had also freed several million slaves. Even under the best of circumstances, it would have been hard to find a way to help them and their former owners adjust to a new social arrangement. Under conditions as they existed in the South, it was next to impossible.

Given this, perhaps we should wonder at the successes, not the failures, of Reconstruction. But in any case, those successes did not last. The North tired of its obligation to find a decent and just peace. And too many in the South were determined to prevent such an outcome.

The 12 visual displays we have chosen for this booklet/transparency set focus on some of the key aspects of this disappointing chapter in the nation's history. The visuals are presented in four lessons. Each lesson uses three visuals to explore one broad topic in the overall story. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

The Meaning of Emancipation

The end of the Civil War meant the end of slavery. But these illustrations suggest that the bitter legacy of slavery and racism would affect the nation for many decades to come.

Between Slavery and Freedom

Slavery was at an end. However, black codes, night riders and riots plagued African Americans and thwarted their efforts to take advantage of the freedom they had supposedly been granted.

Reconstruction and the South

Thousands of Northerners, blacks as well as whites, went South to help the freed slaves. While some took advantage of the South's political powerlessness, many went simply to lend a hand. And African Americans themselves quickly proved that they could accomplish much even under the limited freedom they had won.

The Retreat from Reconstruction

The North was soon distracted by political corruption and by its own mixed attitudes toward race and the South's racial conflicts. Soon after the end of Reconstruction, a new and rigid form of racial segregation was in place throughout the South. It would last nearly another century.

Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Most textbooks today are full of colorful visuals. But all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. But only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

CD-ROM WITH IMAGES The ImageXaminer allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions. The CD-ROM also includes a folder containing all of the discussion questions and follow-up questions in pdf format. All of the images are also in pdf format, should you wish to create overhead transparencies.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS FOR EACH ILLUSTRATION

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the images in the ImageXaminer. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small group or all-class activities.

**OBJECTIVES
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will understand how chaotic conditions were at the end of the Civil War.
 2. Students will better understand the mixed nature of attitudes about race and the freed slaves in the North at war's end.
-

The Meaning of Reconstruction

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

"With malice toward none, with charity for all..." That was Abraham Lincoln's hope in 1864, as he looked forward to the end of America's Civil War. But the years ahead proved how hard it would be to "bind up the nation's wounds." The other photo here gives only a small idea of the massive destruction, sadness and lingering anger throughout the reunited country. The South was in ruins — railroad tracks torn up, farms and homes destroyed, fields unplanted, hundreds of thousands of heads of families gone. The bitterness this left would have been a challenge even for a statesman like Lincoln. But on April 14, 1865, an assassin's bullet left the nation without that statesman.

Illustration 2

Even before the war ended, thousands of African American slaves left their farms and plantations and took to the road. Many followed the Union forces, as they are doing in one of the illustrations here. Freedom meant hope and an ability to pick up and leave. What else it would mean was probably unclear to most of the ex-slaves following Union lines. The Union soldiers fought and died in numbers never before imagined in America. And as the cartoon here suggests, the ex-slaves did have reason to be grateful for this sacrifice. Yet the cartoon's self-satisfied tone suggests that sympathy for African Americans might not last once the challenges of helping the freed slaves adjust became clear.

Illustration 3

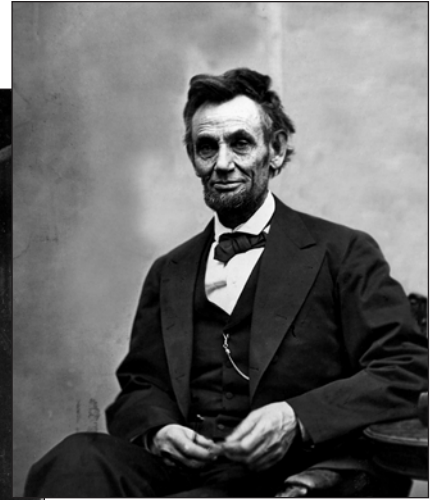
Millions in the North hated slavery and were glad to see it end. Many also regarded African Americans as full citizens, deserving of all the rights of citizens. Yet as these campaign ads make clear, hateful and bigoted feelings toward blacks existed in the North and were openly expressed. These ads are for Democrat Heister Clymer, a candidate running for governor of Pennsylvania in 1866. In the ads, Clymer presents himself as the candidate "for the White Man," against the Radical Republican candidates who support giving blacks the vote. Those Republican candidates are listed by name and condemned for being "for the Negro." The visual stereotyping on the posters is especially ugly.

Lesson 1 — The Meaning of Reconstruction

Illustration 1



The National Archives



The National Archives

Discussing the Illustration

1. The end of the Civil War left huge areas of the South in ruins, as the main photo here suggests. In what year did the Civil War end?
2. The era of Reconstruction that followed the Civil War might well have turned out differently had Abraham Lincoln finished his second term as president. When would he have finished that term and what kept him from doing so?
3. In his Second Inaugural Address in 1864, Lincoln had said, "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace." What do these words mean to you? Do you think they were a good enough guide to what the nation needed to do after the Civil War was over? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. One woman described the South in 1865 this way:

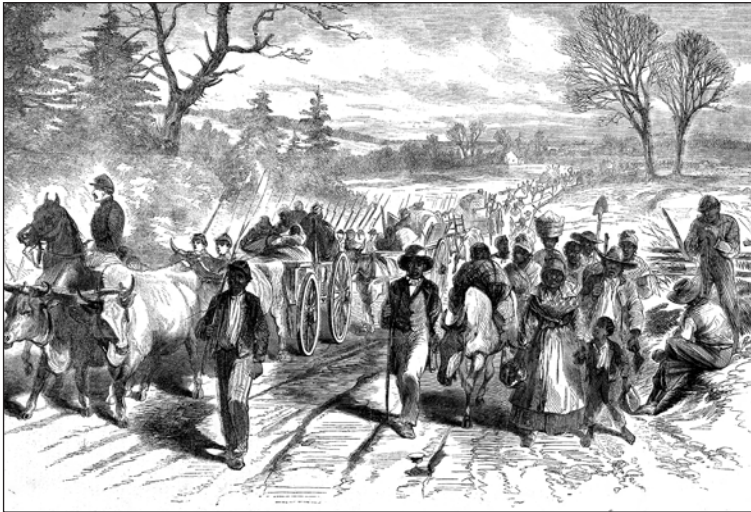
I can hardly give you a true idea of how crushed and sad the people are. You hear no bitterness towards the North; they are too sad to be bitter; their grief is overwhelming. Nothing can make any difference to them now; the women live in the past and the men only in the daily present, trying, in a listless sort of way, to repair their ruined fortunes.

— Francis Butler Leigh (Quoted in *The South: A Documentary History*, by Ina Woestemeyer Van Noppen, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc. 1958)

Your task is to write letters to this woman. Each group member should write one letter while pretending to be one of the following: Thaddeus Stevens, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, Hiram Revels, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth. Before writing this letter, learn more about the person you will pretend to be. Read and discuss your letters with the rest of the class.

Lesson 1 — The Meaning of Reconstruction

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Even before the end of the Civil War, thousands of slaves in the South began taking to the road following Union soldiers, as the drawing on the left shows them doing here. This was especially so after President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation at the beginning of 1863. Briefly summarize what the Emancipation Proclamation did and why that would have led so many slaves to act as they are seen doing here?
2. What various hopes and fears do you suppose the slaves following the Union soldiers must have felt?
3. In the editorial cartoon on the right, a female figure labeled “Columbia” is telling a freed slave, “Take thy freedom and be thankful, for it has cost me much.” Who is the figure of Columbia supposed to stand for when she appears this way in an editorial cartoon?
4. Do you agree with Columbia that the slave in this cartoon should be grateful? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: Use the illustration at left of blacks following Union soldiers in 1863 as the central feature in a bulletin board display entitled “The First Days of Freedom.” To complete the display, ask your teacher to help you get a copy of *Bullwhip Days: The Slaves Remember, an Oral History*, edited by James Mellon. Read the entries for the section “The Civil War and Statutory Freedom,” pp 335–354. Choose five to 10 entries that you feel go best with the illustration. Explain to the class why you chose those passages.
2. Small Group Activity: Read more about the July 18, 1863, attack of the 54th Massachusetts Colored Regiment on Fort Wagner, South Carolina. Pretend you are one of the surviving soldiers who fought in that battle. The war is over and you notice the political cartoon shown above in a local newspaper. Write a long letter to the editor expressing your feelings about the cartoon. Share these letters in a class discussion about the cartoon, 54th Massachusetts Colored Regiment, and the entire Union war effort.

Lesson 1 — The Meaning of Reconstruction

Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. The North fought the Civil War mainly to keep the South from leaving the Union and in order to end slavery. What Constitutional Amendment in 1865 did finally end slavery throughout the nation?
2. These two campaign ads show that feelings toward blacks even in the North were not always friendly. The ads were for Democrat Heister Clymer, a candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania in 1866. They attack his Republican opponent for being too friendly to blacks. The ads make use of ugly visual stereotypes in their portrayal of African Americans. What is a stereotype, and what aspects of these visual stereotypes makes them particularly insulting?
3. Compare and contrast the view of African Americans in these ads with the view presented in the previous cartoon showing Columbia and the freed slave.
4. From what you know about Lincoln, what do you think he would have said about these images of the African Americans the Civil War had freed from slavery?



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Follow-up Activities

1. The two ads here exaggerate and distort the features of African Americans in deeply insulting ways. The images present a typical stereotype of blacks as ignorant and lazy. Editorial cartoons often include stereotypes of groups. Some stereotypes are simply meant to be amusing or to make it easy to identify a group. Others are unfair and deeply insulting. Find several recent editorial cartoonst you think unfairly stereotype some group. The group need not be a racial minority. Share the cartoons in class and talk about why you think they are insulting stereotypes.
2. **Small Group Activity:** Can ugly stereotypes such as those shown here be used to teach younger children about stereotyping and visual propaganda? Or are these images too hateful to use with such children, even as teaching tools? Create a lesson plan to teach young children about visual stereotypes. Discuss your plan with the class and explain why you would or would not use images such as those shown here in your lesson for younger children.

**OBJECTIVES
FOR THIS LESSON:**

1. Students will understand the extent of the threats blacks faced in trying to exercise their newly won rights.
 2. Students will appreciate the role the North played in protecting blacks in the South during the brief period of Reconstruction.
-

Between Slavery and Freedom

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

At the end of the Civil War, “black codes” were enacted in many Southern states. These codes strictly limited the freedom of black workers and actually re-created many of the conditions they faced under slavery. Blacks who complained or tried to use their newly won rights took the risk of provoking any of a number of secret societies, such as the Ku Klux Klan. These groups terrorized blacks in secret night-time raids. And in open daylight, terrible riots occasionally broke out. The one shown here, in Memphis in 1866, resulted in the slaughter of a number of innocent black men, women and children. Disorder and injustice of this sort was part of the reason given by Republicans in Congress to once again send troops to impose military rule on the defeated South.

Illustration 2

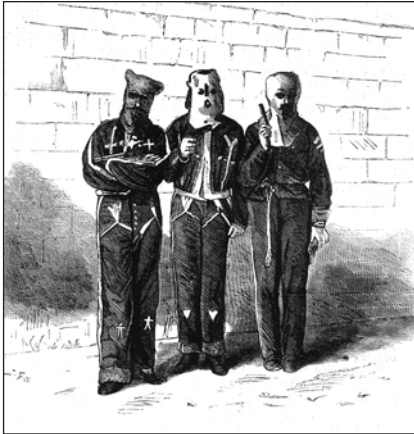
Reconstruction was in part an effort to help millions of former slaves adjust to freedom, but it was also the military occupation of a conquered land. Both goals angered many white Southerners. They could not lash out at Northern soldiers, but they often took out their anger on the ex-slaves in their midst. This illustration shows a figure representing the Freedmen's Bureau standing between a mob of whites and an angry group of blacks. The Freedmen's Bureau sent thousands of Northerners south to help the freed slaves set up schools and deal with many other problems. Actually, it was ultimately the occupying soldiers, not the Freedmen's Bureau, that stood between blacks and their enemies.

Illustration 3

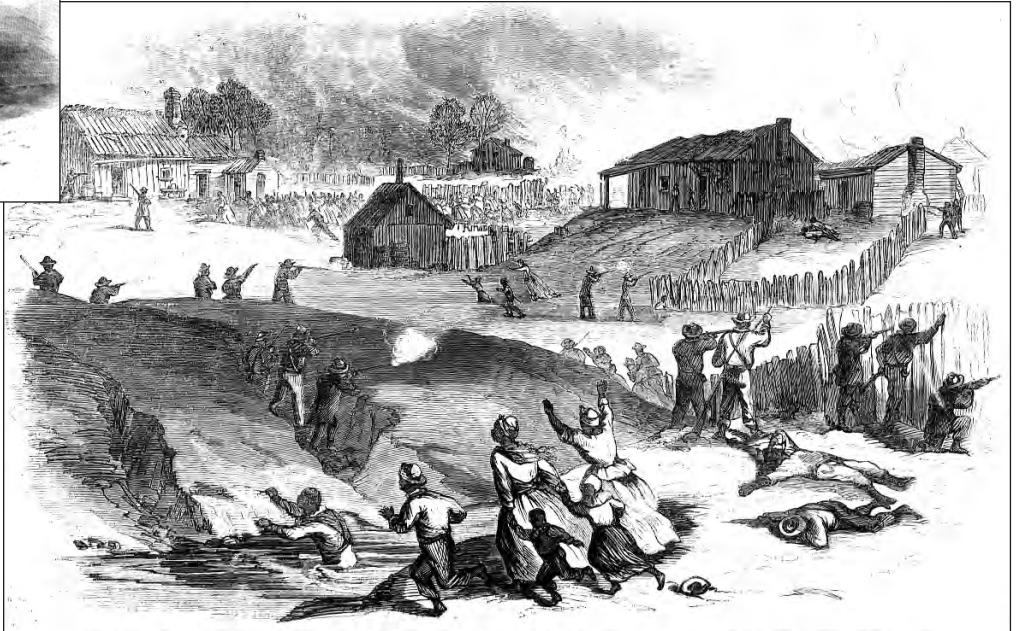
Reconstruction could not last forever, even had the North's support for black civil rights remained strong. But Northerners soon began to lose interest in the South. Political corruption in the Grant administration, plus economic troubles in the mid-1870s, added to doubts about Reconstruction. By 1870, the Southern states had all won readmission to the union. The troops began to be taken out. They left the last two states as part of a deal between Republicans and Democrats over the disputed 1876 presidential election. The Democrats accepted Republican Rutherford B. Hayes as president in exchange for a final end to Reconstruction. This illustration shows the last troops leaving New Orleans on April 24, 1877.

Lesson 2 — Between Slavery and Freedom

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the
Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. After 1865, many Southern states tried to hold on to certain aspects of slavery through labor rules in the so-called “black codes.” Describe some of the rules common to these codes, and explain how they could be similar to slavery?
2. Congress soon took steps to outlaw the black codes. But this did not keep many angry whites from finding other ways to frighten blacks and keep control over them. The three disguised men on the left belong to a group that Southern blacks soon came to fear. Can you identify that group and explain how it helped whites keep control over black people in the South?
3. In addition to raids by groups like the KKK and the Knights of the White Camellia, ugly riots broke out at times — such as the one shown here in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1866. Whites went on a rampage in this riot, killing many black men, women and children. Why do you suppose so many whites were so angry and afraid of African Americans in these years after the Civil War?

Follow-up Activities

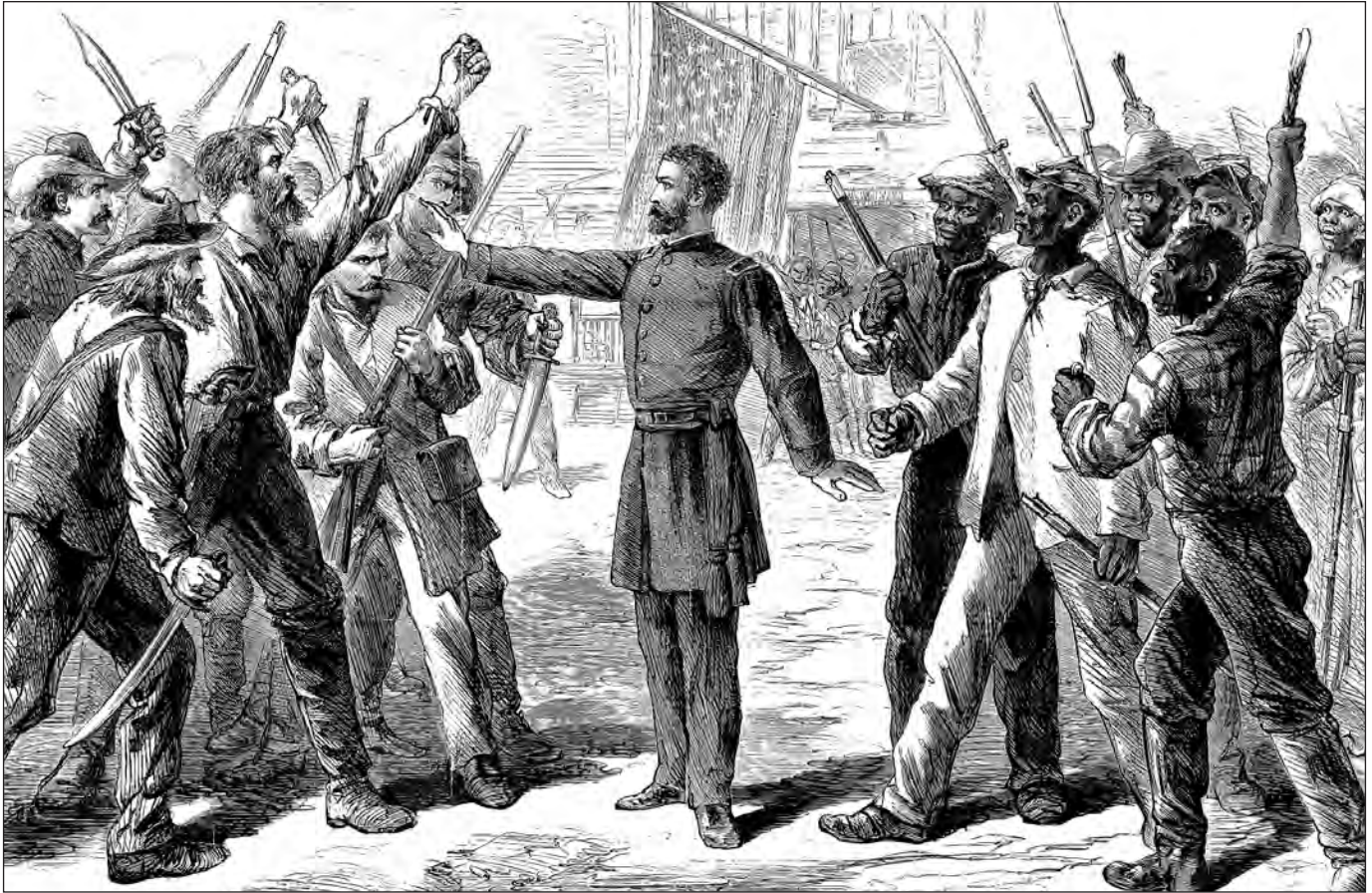
1. Small Group Activity: First learn more about the May 1866 riot in Memphis. You should be able to find information about it in the library. A good Web site is the *Freedmen’s Bureau Online*. The URL is:

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

The site will guide you to useful accounts of the riot. Pretend it is 1866 and you are on the editorial board of a local newspaper. You have received reports of the Memphis riot. Use these to design an entire front page devoted to news about the riot. On your front page, include the two illustrations above, along with two or three articles you write and a special editorial.

2. Starting in 1865, many states in the South enacted black codes. Do some extra research to find out the most common rules in these codes. Create a wall chart to explain how the black codes weakened the 13th Amendment. Include the words to the amendment at the top of the chart. The rest is up to you.

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. In this 1868 illustration, a crowd of angry whites is trying to attack an equally angry group of blacks. The figure between them stands for the Freedmen's Bureau. From what you know about Reconstruction, can you explain what the Freedmen's Bureau did?
2. Many Southern whites at the time blamed the Freedmen's Bureau in part for the anger between blacks and whites in the South. But probably, Southerners would also have said it was the army, much more than the Freedmen's Bureau, that stood between these two angry mobs. What do you think they meant? Do you agree with their view? Why or why not?
3. Some black Southerners probably felt the Freedmen's Bureau, however noble, was not what they really needed to help themselves in the years just after the Civil War. What do you think they meant? What might the North have done differently to deal with whites and blacks in the South after the Civil War? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activities

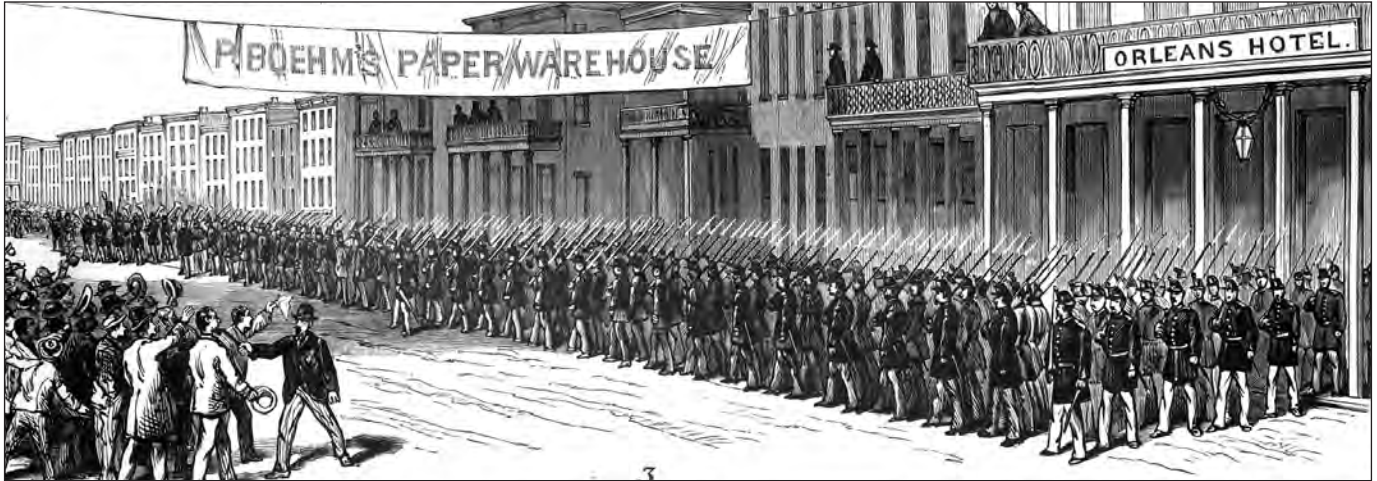
1. In 1866, a Southern writer named James DeBow testified to Congress about the Freedmen's Bureau with these words:

The Freedmen's Bureau, or any agency to interfere between the freedman and his former master, is only productive of mischief. There are constant appeals from one to the other and continual annoyances. It has a tendency to create dissatisfaction and and disaffection on the part of the laborer, and is ... most unfavorable to the system of industry that is now being organized under the new order of things in the South.

You can find more of DeBow's remarks in a booklet called *Reconstruction: Binding the Wounds*, edited by Cheryl Edwards (Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1995). Ask your librarian or teacher to help you get a copy of this book. Read DeBow's remarks. Pretend you are DeBow and write a letter to the editor commenting on the illustration shown here. Then pretend you are the artist who drew the picture, and write a letter in reply.

Lesson 2 — Between Slavery and Freedom

Illustration 3



Courtesy of Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Reconstruction really came to an end in 1877. These scenes show the last federal troops leaving New Orleans on April 24, 1877. What do you suppose the whites and the blacks looking on at these troops were thinking and feeling at that time?
2. Actually, most troops had left the South earlier, as one state after another was readmitted to the union. Briefly, what did these states have to do to be allowed back into the union as regular states?
3. All of the Southern states were readmitted by 1870. And by the early 1870s, many Northerners were losing interest in the problems of the South. Political scandals and economic troubles added to this loss of interest. Can you explain why? What else might account for this loss of interest in the South?
4. Troops were taken out of the states that still had them in 1877. This was part of a complicated deal between Republicans and Democrats having to do with the 1876 presidential election. Briefly explain this deal.

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: The 1876 election of Rutherford B. Hayes as president was not settled by the vote alone. Learn more about this highly controversial election. Also, find out how it was finally settled. Now pretend it is early in 1877. Pretend also that you are a group of distinguished Americans who have been asked by the President and Congress to advise them on what to do to resolve the problem. As a group, write a report. Submit it to class and discuss it. Take a vote in class. Compare your solution with the decision actually taken and discuss any differences.
2. Small Group Activity: It is April 24, 1877. Each group member is one of the following imagined residents of New Orleans: a white missionary worker who has been teaching blacks in Louisiana for two years; a black Louisiana state legislator; a former white plantation owner; a former black plantation cook and mother of two; a poor white farmer. As one of these figures, write a diary entry reflecting fully on the events of the day. Share the diary entries in a class talk.

The Era of Reconstruction

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON:

1. Students will gain a better understanding of the impact of Reconstruction on the South.
 2. Students will assess the conflicting interpretations of Reconstruction and its accomplishments.
-

Reconstruction and the South

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

After the war, thousands of Northerners, whites and blacks, went south to help the newly freed slaves. Like the teacher shown here, many did so by working for the Freedmen's Bureau. Others worked for missionary societies and other church groups. They provided much help, above all with schools and education. They took real risks by choosing to live in the South and work with the freed slaves. And as this illustration suggests, they worked with limited resources to help blacks cope with huge problems.

Illustration 2

Lincoln did not want to punish the South harshly after the war, and President Andrew Johnson also tried to follow this principle. But the Radical Republicans in Congress disagreed. Their desire to punish the South and change it completely resulted in the Reconstruction Acts, passed over Johnson's vetoes. These returned military rule to the South, and under these rules, blacks could vote in safety. Naturally, most voted for the party that had given them freedom. As a result, state governments in the South were controlled by Republicans, often aided by Republican "carpetbaggers" from the North. This cartoon portrays the black vote as a workhorse that Republican President Ulysses S. Grant could use to maintain his party's political power.

Illustration 3

For decades, the Reconstruction governments in the South were seen as horribly corrupt. Black voters and legislators were portrayed as ignorant and easily controlled by their Republican masters. Today, we know the record was much more complicated than that. A number of blacks in Congress and in the Southern legislatures made real efforts to help their states cope and rebuild. Others quickly began to make a mark elsewhere in society. As these illustrations suggest, many of them offered a leadership of which African Americans could be proud.

Lesson 3 — Reconstruction and the South

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Like the Freedmen's Bureau teacher shown in this illustration, thousands of Northerners, both blacks and whites, went south to teach the newly freed slaves and white children as well. Why do you suppose so many did that? Why do you think the Freedmen's Bureau put so much emphasis on education as a part of its efforts?
2. What else do you know about the Freedmen's Bureau and its efforts to help African Americans in the South?
3. What kinds of difficulties do you think teachers like the one you see here faced in doing their jobs? What problems do you think such teachers faced in living in their chosen communities in the South?
4. What do you suppose whites felt about the presence of these Northerners in their midst? How do you think you would have felt about the Freedmen's Bureau had you been a Southerner, either black or white, in those years? Why?

Follow-up Activities

1. Thousands of whites and blacks went south to teach African Americans and help them in other ways. Some worked for the Freedmen's Bureau; others were sent by Baptist, Methodist, Quaker and many other church groups and missionary societies. Suppose you had been a Northerner in 1865. Would you have gone South to do this work? Pretend the woman in the illustration here is a relative or friend. She has written to you inviting you to come South and help. Write a long letter back to her explaining why you do or do not want to do this.
2. One of the greatest African American educators was Booker T. Washington. His autobiography is called *Up from Slavery* (Dover Publications, 1995). It has a chapter on Reconstruction. Read this and prepare a brief report on Booker T. Washington and his views on the education of African Americans. In your report, explain what you think Washington would have said about the illustration here and the classes taught by the Freedmen's Bureau.

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. In 1868, the Civil War general shown here won election as president. Name him, his party and the president he replaced.
2. Before Grant became president, The Republicans in Congress passed the Reconstruction Acts, which set up harsh rules to tightly control the South. Can you explain what some of these rules were?
3. Under Reconstruction, blacks could vote. Many in the South charged that “carpetbaggers” and “scalawags” used these black voters only to help the Republican Party in the South. That’s the point of this cartoon. Define the terms “carpetbagger” and “scalawag,” and explain how they were seen using blacks to help themselves and the Republicans.
4. Some say this cartoon includes another insulting stereotype of African Americans. Do you agree or disagree? Why? Aside from the stereotype, do you think the artist has a point in criticizing Grant and the Republicans as he does here? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

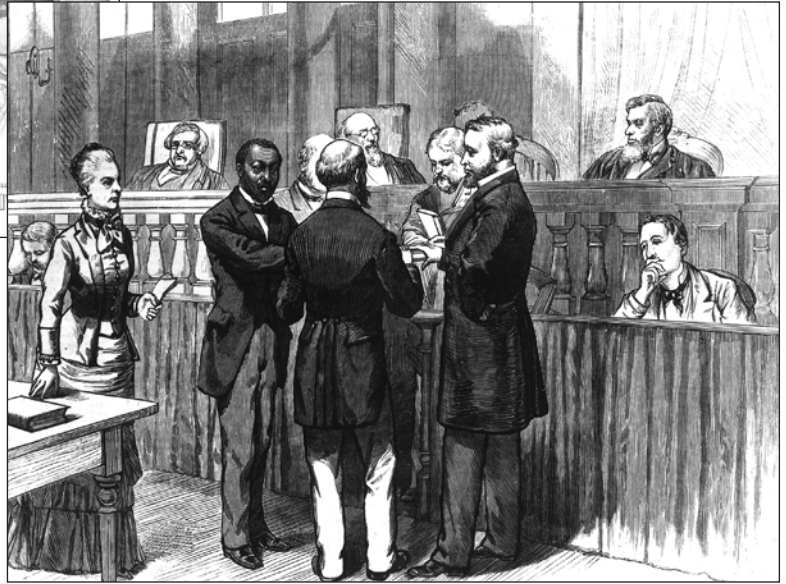
1. Small Group Activity: Read a biography or long encyclopedia article on Ulysses S. Grant. Pay attention to Grant’s views about, and actions on behalf of, African Americans in the South. Also pay attention to his views about the Reconstruction state governments there. Now, pretend you are President Grant. Write letter to the editor expressing what you believe Grant would have said about the above editorial cartoon. Share these letters with the rest of the class in a discussion about this cartoon.
2. The cartoon shown here includes another insulting stereotype of blacks. A large number of drawings and cartoons used in this booklet/transparency set depict African Americans in a variety of ways. Study all of them as a group. Taken together, what do the images tell you about the general attitudes of Americans at the time toward African Americans. Write a brief essay analyzing these images in this way as visual primary source documents on the Reconstruction era.

Lesson 3 — Reconstruction and the South

Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. During Reconstruction, blacks in many parts of the South were able to vote for the first time. In some places, blacks were actually a majority of the voters. They helped elect several members of Congress, including those shown on the left. If you had been one of these lawmakers, what would your most important goal have been in Congress? Why?
2. On the left in this group is Hiram Revels, the first black Senator. He actually was elected to fill out the term of the man who had led the South in the Civil War. Can you name that man?
3. The illustration on the right shows John S. Rock, the first African American accredited as a lawyer before the nation's highest court. What court is that?
4. Despite complaints that the South's Reconstruction governments were corrupt, many historians now say blacks such as those seen here were often effective and honest leaders. What else have you read about black political leaders during Reconstruction?

Follow-up Activities

1. In addition to black leaders in Congress, many blacks also served in state Reconstruction governments. For a long time, many historians viewed these state governments as failures — though that is less true today. Here is the view of Myrta Lockett in *Dixie After the War*, published in 1937:

The most lasting wrong reconstruction inflicted upon the South was in the ... political demoralization of the white man. No one could regard the ballot box as the voice of the people, as a sacred thing. It was a play thing, a jack-in-the-box for the darkeys, a conjurer's trick that brought drinks, tips and picnics. It was the carpetbagger's stepping-stone to power. The votes of a multitude were for sale.

Learn more about one state government during Reconstruction. Decide whether the above charge (aside from its insulting language) is fair with regard to the state you have studied. Sum up your findings in a brief class talk.

The Era of Reconstruction

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS LESSON:

1. Students will better understand the reactions of whites and blacks in the South to the end of Reconstruction.
 2. Students will discuss the impact on the nation of the aftermath of the Reconstruction era.
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The Retreat from Reconstruction

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS:

Illustration 1

Most white Southerners saw the end of Reconstruction as a time for celebration. But for African Americans it was a time of concern, and for many of them it was time to leave. Some moved North, but like many other Americans, a large number of blacks looked to the frontier for a new start. A huge exodus to Kansas was soon under way. In the years ahead, African Americans would play a major role in settling Kansas and many other parts of the American West.

Illustration 2

This 1880 cartoon sums up a view of Reconstruction common throughout the nation by then. The left half of the cartoon shows the South groaning under the weight of a corrupt President Grant riding a huge carpetbag. The right half shows the South reviving during the presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes. In fact, it would be a long time before the South would truly revive. Reconstruction was not the real problem. More to blame may have been the South's unwillingness to use the talents of all its citizens, blacks and whites. For in the years after Reconstruction, a new and destructive system of racial segregation was soon put in place.

Illustration 3

These two illustrations together tell the story of a great opportunity lost. For a time after Reconstruction ended, blacks continued to be able to vote in many parts of the South. But this was not to last. Soon, at another troubled point in the late 1800s, new restrictions began to be put in place to take away black voting rights. The 1890 cartoon on the right shows Massachusetts lawmaker Henry Cabot Lodge as a porcupine. He had introduced a law to use troops to protect black voting rights now under threat again in the South. As the cartoon suggests, this effort was now seen only as a grab for Republican political power. It got nowhere. Blacks in the South would have to wait nearly eight decades for a new civil rights upheaval before this most basic right would be theirs.

Lesson 4 — The Retreat from Reconstruction

Illustration 1

All Colored People
THAT WANT TO
GO TO KANSAS.
On September 5th, 1877,
Can do so for \$5.00

IMMIGRATION

WHEREAS, We, the colored people of Lexington, Ky., knowing that there is an abundance of choice lands now belonging to the Government, have assembled ourselves together for the purpose of locating on said lands. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we do now organize ourselves into a Colony, as follows:— Any person wishing to become a member of this Colony can do so by paying the sum of one dollar (\$1.00), and this money is to be paid by the first of September, 1877, in installments of twenty-five cents at a time, or otherwise as may be desired.

RESOLVED, That this Colony has agreed to consolidate itself with the Nicodemus Towns, Solomon Valley, Graham County, Kansas, and can only do so by entering the vacant lands now in their midst, which costs \$5.00.

RESOLVED, That this Colony shall consist of seven officers—President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees. President—M. M. Bell; Vice-President—Isaac Talbott; Secretary—W. J. Niles; Treasurer—Daniel Clarke; Trustees—Jerry Lee, William Jones, and Abner Webster.

RESOLVED, That this Colony shall have from one to two hundred militia, more or less, as the case may require, to keep peace and order, and any member failing to pay in his dues, as aforesaid, or failing to comply with the above rules in any particular, will not be recognized or protected by the Colony.

Courtesy of the
Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Most whites welcomed the end of Reconstruction in the South. However, most blacks felt differently. Like those in the drawing here, many left the South to go north or west to places like Kansas. Why do you think Kansas was so attractive to many of them?
2. Groups like the Klan were one reason so many blacks wanted to leave the South. Another had to do with the sharecropping system that replaced slavery as a way work was organized for African Americans in many rural areas. Briefly explain this system and the problems it often caused the former slaves.
3. In many places, whites actually tried to keep blacks from leaving the region. Why do you suppose that was so?
4. After the Civil War, many blacks hoped to be given confiscated land and farm equipment. For the most part, they did not get these things. Should they have? In what ways might the South's history have been different if they had?

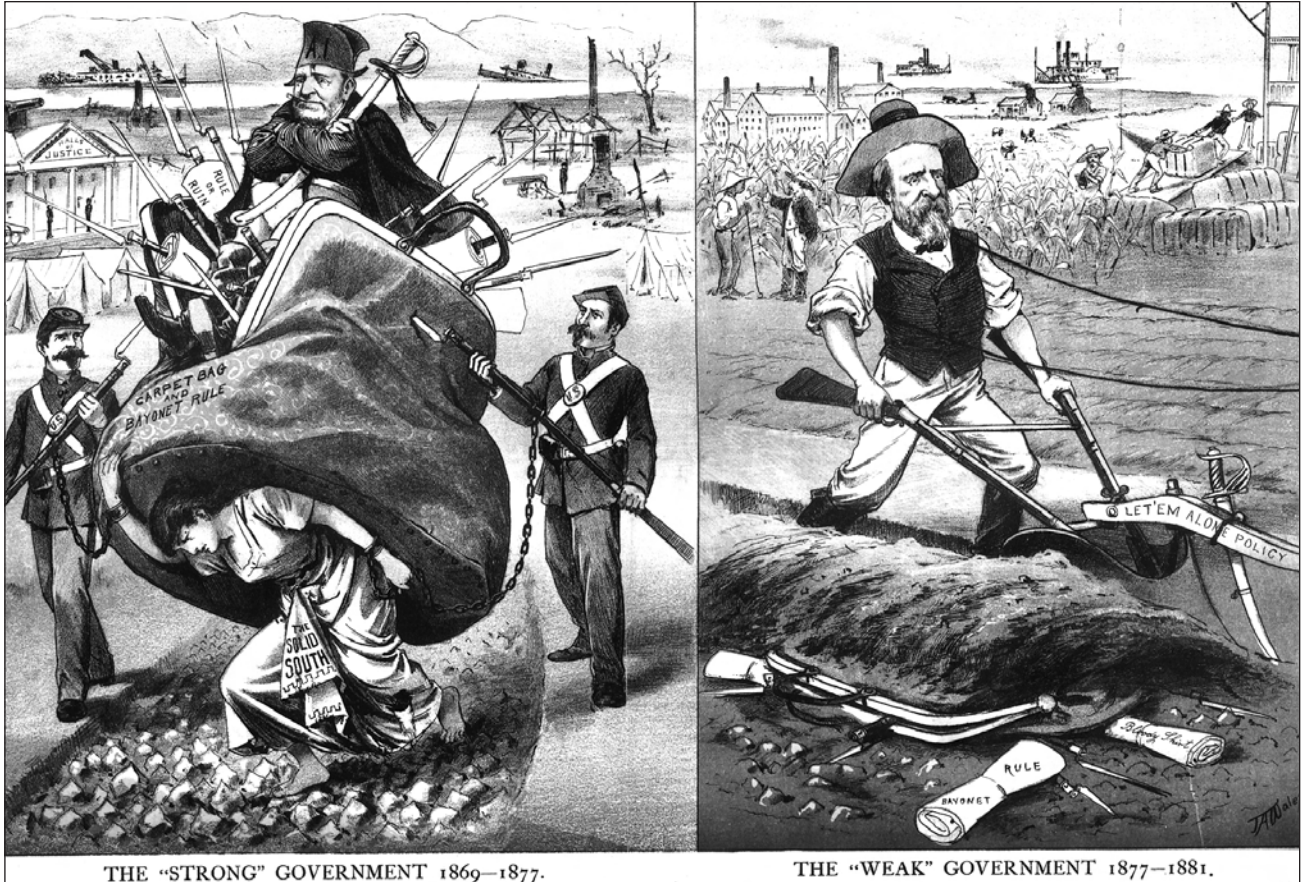
Follow-up Activities

1. First, read more about the economic difficulties that faced blacks in the South once slavery had ended. Then pretend you are in the line of migrants to Kansas shown here. It is your first night on the road after leaving the plantation where you were a slave. Based on what you know about Reconstruction, write a long letter back to a close friend or family member who decided to stay and work as a sharecropper instead of going West with you.
2. Frederick Douglass said of the African American after slavery had ended:

He was free from the individual master, but he had nothing but the dusty road under his feet. He was free from the old quarter that once gave him shelter, but a slave to the rains of summer and to the frost of winter. He was turned loose, naked, hungry, and destitute to the open sky.

As a class, discuss this statement and the questions it raises about the way Reconstruction was handled.

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. The two halves of this cartoon compare the South during Reconstruction with the South in the years just after Reconstruction ended. On the left is President Grant. The man who became president after him is guiding a plow on the right. Can you name that man?
2. On the left, Grant is riding a huge “carpetbag” guided by union soldiers, through a ruined landscape. A figure labeled “the Solid South” is groaning under the weight of Grant and his carpetbag. How do all these elements add up to a rather harsh view of the effects of Reconstruction?
3. On the right, Hayes pushes a plow labeled “Let ‘em alone policy.” From what you know about Hayes and his years as president, explain how his dealings with the South could be called a “Let ‘em alone policy.”
4. Look at the landscape behind Hayes. What point does it make about the South after Reconstruction? From what you know of the South’s history, do you think the cartoon’s point is accurate? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

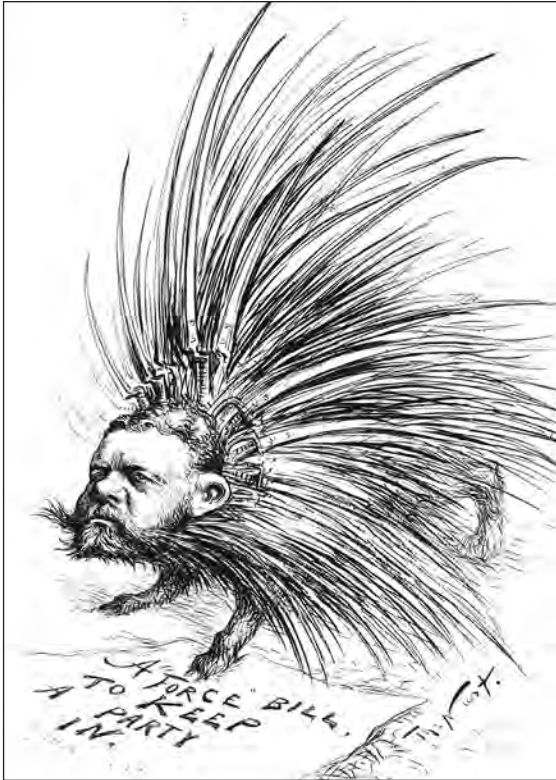
1. This cartoon compares the Reconstruction years in the South with the years just after Reconstruction. But is the comparison valid? What does your history textbook say about this? Read your history textbook’s account of the end of Reconstruction in the South. Prepare a brief talk comparing the cartoon’s point of view with your textbook’s point of view.
2. One former “carpetbagger” speaking years later about the era of Reconstruction said:

Republicans gave the ballot to men without homes, money, education, or security, and then told them to use it to protect themselves. ... It was cheap patriotism, cheap philanthropy, cheap success.”

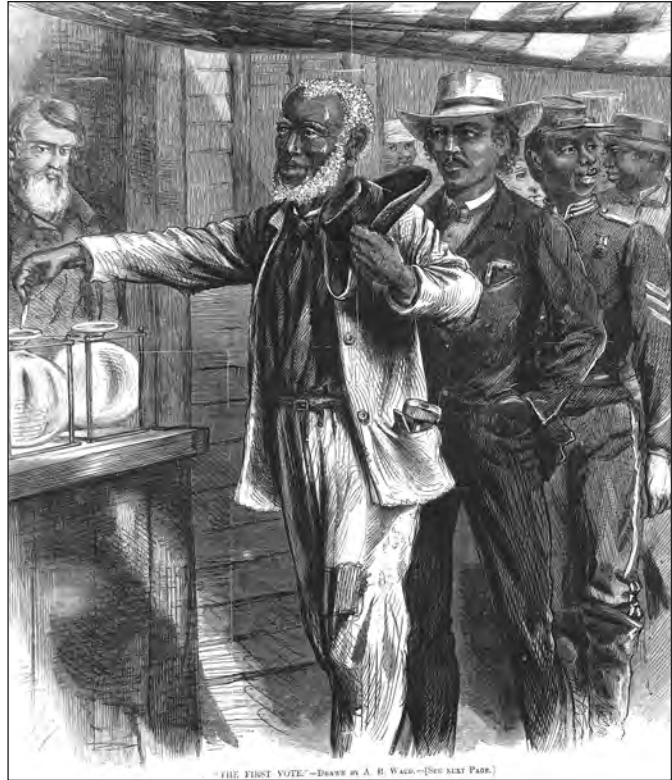
Do you agree or disagree? Write a brief essay answering this question. In the essay, refer to at least three of the illustrations in this set as adding in some way to the point you wish to make.

Lesson 4 — The Retreat from Reconstruction

Illustration 3



Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. During Reconstruction, former slaves had a chance to vote in many elections. How does the drawing on the right help to show how they must have felt about this?
2. In what way does the drawing also make the point that African Americans had earned this right?
3. After Reconstruction, states throughout the South took away the voting rights of blacks. They were able to do this, in spite of 15th Amendment, by methods such as poll taxes and literacy tests. Explain how these methods could deprive blacks of the vote.
4. In 1890s, Republican Congressman Henry Cabot Lodge called for federal supervision of elections to protect black voters. In the cartoon on the right, Lodge is a porcupine with swords and bayonets. He stands on a document labeled "A Force Bill to Keep a Party In." This label shows what the artist felt the real aim of Lodge's bill was. Can you explain? Do you think this bill could have made a difference in the history of the South and the nation? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. Small Group Activity: During Reconstruction, the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution were passed to protect the rights of the newly freed slaves. Unfortunately, decisions by the Supreme Court in the late 1800s weakened the effect of the amendments. As a group, study these two amendments. Then learn more about these following Supreme Court cases: *United States v. Cruikshank* (1876); *The Civil Rights Cases* (1883) and *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). Prepare a brief report to the class on the two amendments, and explain how the three Supreme Court decisions helped weaken them.
2. In a way, the 14th and 15th Amendments would not get the full backing of the federal government until the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965 were passed. Read more about those two laws. In a brief talk to the class, explain why blacks would have to wait until 1964 and 1965 to get the benefits of the amendments passed during Reconstruction.

Answers to Factual Questions

(Answers provided only to questions requiring a single correct answer)

Lesson 1

- Illustration 1** Question 1: 1865
Question 2: 1869; he was assassinated in 1865.
- Illustration 2** Question 1: It freed all slaves in areas still at war with the Union.
Question 3: The United States; the entire nation
- Illustration 3** Question 1: The 13th Amendment
Question 2: A stereotype is an oversimplified idea about some group, and it may be insulting as well.

Lesson 2

- Illustration 1** Question 1: Many of these codes limited a black person's ability to change jobs, tied children to apprenticeships, punished vagrancy, etc.
Question 2: Ku Klux Klan; it tortured and killed blacks in secret raids, often targeting those who were seen as too assertive.
- Illustration 2** Question 1: Set up schools for blacks, provided food and clothing, helped some find land or work, etc.
- Illustration 3** Question 2: The states had to ratify the 14th Amendment, accept black voting rights, etc.
Question 4: In the election of 1876, an agreement was reached to award disputed electoral votes to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes in return for a promise to remove the remaining troops in the South.

Lesson 3

- Illustration 1** (no fact questions)
- Illustration 2** Question 1: Ulysses S. Grant; Republican; Andrew Johnson
Question 2: Dividing the South into military districts, limiting the rights of former Confederate officials, etc.
Question 3: "Carpetbagger" was a term for a Northerner who went South to take advantage of Northern control of the South. "Scalawags" were Southerners who worked with these Northerners and helped them.
- Illustration 3** Question 2: Jefferson Davis
Question 3: Supreme Court

Lesson 4

- Illustration 1** Question 1: Sharecropping, the land owner gives tools, seed, equipment, etc., to the farmer in exchange for a share of the final crop.
Question 2: This system often left the sharecropper in debt at the end of the season.
- Illustration 2** Question 1: Rutherford B. Hayes
- Illustration 3** Question 1: Blacks could rarely afford the money to pay a poll tax. Literacy tests could be made unfairly difficult for blacks, etc.

