##### Unit 6: Civil War (1861-1865) and Reconstruction (1865-1877)

The American Civil War (1861-1865) changed the United States forever. For four years the South tried to fight for its independence. Despite the North having more people, more money, better technology and more railroads, the South, through excellent generals was able to defeat the Northern armies many times, even to the point of being on the verge of victory and invading the North to win the war, before being turned back at the Battle of Gettysburg. The North used its vast resources to implement the strategies of the **Anaconda Plan** and **Total Warfare** to eventually wear the South down and force their eventual surrender. The federal government showed that the U.S. was a union of people and that states are not allowed to **secede** from the country.

As the Southern Confederacy lay in ruins after its defeat, the American North had to decide on how to reintroduce the South back into the United States. **Abraham Lincoln’s Reconstruction Plan** wanted to make it easy for the South to rejoin the US and slowly give rights to the freed African Americans. The **Radical Republicans Reconstruction Plan** (the Republicans in Congress) wanted the South punished for their actions during the Civil War, wanted to make it difficult to reenter the Union and wanted to create equality right away. When Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865, his Vice President, Andrew Johnson became President. Johnson (who shared Lincoln’s view) and the Radical Republicans would continue to fight over the two competing visions of reconstruction.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln issued **The Emancipation Proclamation**, which only freed slaves in the rebelling states. After the Civil War, Congress issued the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which ended slavery throughout the United States and granted all slaves freedom. The Radical Republicans also passed the **Fourteenth Amendment** that granted former slaves’ citizenship and that states could not deny citizens due process (fair treatment under the law). The **Fifteenth Amendment** was supposed to protect voting rights for all adult males, regardless of race or color. Congress also created the **Freedman’s Bureau** to help freed Blacks find work and living. Although slaves were officially “free,” they suffered persecution. To protect Blacks from the South and to punish the South, Congress passed **The Reconstruction Act** that kept soldiers in the South and kept the army in charge of the South until they ratified their new Constitutions (that didn’t have slavery) and became states in the United States again. Andrew Johnson did not like any of these efforts and continually tried to **veto (cancel/disapprove of laws)** Congress, but Congress kept overturning his veto with a 2/3 majority vote (as allowed by the Constitution). Congress then tried to **impeach** (remove from office) Johnson for violating the Constitution by not helping the freed Blacks, but fell one vote shy. Reconstruction would not end until 1877 with the election of Alexander Hayes, during a complication, when there was a tie and Congress decided to elect him President if he removed soldiers from the South and ended Reconstruction.

 Even though Reconstruction would end after 12 years, there were lasting problems during and after, as the South also tried to stop all of the improvements that Congress was creating for the freed Blacks. To keep them working on the plantations, they developed a system known as **Sharecropping.** Citizens joined the **Ku Klux** Klan to use terror tactics (such as **lynching**) to intimidate African Americans to leave the South and to not practice voting rights. States tried to prevent them from voting by passing **literacy tests, poll taxes and grandfather clauses.** States also tried to prevent Blacks from becoming equal by creating **Black Codes and Jim Crow Laws** which **segregated** them. In 1896, in the Supreme Court case of ***Plessy v. Ferguson,***the Supreme Court held that segregation was legal as long as it was separate but equal. With so much resistance, early Civil Rights leaders **Booker T. Washington** and **W.E.B. DuBois** offered two different opinions on how African Americans should try to achieve equal rights. However, it would not be until ***Brown vs. Board of Education in 1954*** that this case was overturned and segregation was illegal. Yet, it would not be until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950’s and 1960’s that African Americans would truly gain equal rights.

**Vocabulary Words**

**1) Reconstruction**- 12-year period after the U.S. Civil War where the southern states were rebuilt and allowed back into the U.S. Soldiers were kept in the South, Civil Rights laws were passed and the South tried to fight the legislation. It ends in the “backdoor” deal of the election of 1876 when President Hayes agrees to remove soldiers from the South in exchange for being elected President by Congress in the tie-breaker.

**2) Freedmen**- term used after the Civil War that referred to recently freed slaves.

**3)** **Radical Republicans**- group of Congressmen who wanted to punish the South after the Civil War and who pushed for immediate equality of African Americans.

**4) Emancipation Proclamation** – a letter that President Lincoln signed ending slavery during the Civil War

**5) Thirteenth Amendment**- officially ended slavery, except as punishment for a crime, in the U.S.

**6) Fourteenth Amendment**- gave citizenship to **Freedmen** and “equal protection under the law.”

**7) Fifteenth Amendment**- gave voting rights to all adult male citizens regardless of race or color

**8) Freedmen's Bureau** – organization that created schools and work training for Freedmen

**9) Reconstruction Act –** Act that keeps the military in charge of the South during Reconstruction.

**10) Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**- a group that terrorized and killed **Freedmen** after the Civil War

**11) Lynching** – a group led hanging meant to terrorize black citizens in the South

**12) Jim Crow Laws and Black Codes**- state laws in the South that restricted the rights of African Americans and created segregation.

**13) Sharecropping/Tenant Farming**- a system of renting land that kept many Freedmen poor farm workers after slavery was made illegal

**14) Literacy tests**- confusing exams given only to blacks in the South to prevent them from voting

**15) Poll taxes**- fees that kept poor **Freedmen** from voting.

**16) Grandfather clauses**- a racist southern law that said you can vote only if your grandfather could vote. This prevented Freedmen from voting.

**17) Segregation**- the separation of people based on color, race, or religion

**18) Plessy v. Ferguson** (1896) - U.S. Supreme Court case that legalized **segregation,** saying that segregation is legal as long as it is **separate but equal**.

**19) Jim Crow Laws**- laws that enforced segregation in southern places (restaurants, train cars, bathrooms)

**20) Booker T. Washington** - African American leader who accepted segregation, and believed that working from the bottom up and education was the best way to achieve equality.

**21) W.E.B. Dubois** - African American leader who rejected segregation and believed that blacks must fight for equality through the court system and by protest.

**22) Brown v. Board of Ed (1954) –** Supreme Court case that **overturns *Plessy v. Ferguson*** stating that “separate but equal in inherently unequal.”

**23) Lincoln/Johnson Reconstruction Plan –** Post-Civil War plan that was forgiving on the South, slower to introduce equality, quicker to readmit the Southern States.

**24) Impeach** – to remove a president from office for breaking the Constitution. This is part of checks and balances.

**25) Veto** – When the President refuses to sign a bill from Congress into law. This is part of checks and balances.

**Study Questions – Answer the following two study questions in one full T.E.A.L. paragraph each (4-7 sentences) and use at least TWO Documents in each paragraph.**

1. **Describe the historical context of the passage of the Reconstruction Amendments?**

**2. To what extent were the rights contained in these Amendments realized for African Americans living in the South?**

**Document #1: Reconstruction Amendments**

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| **13th Amendment** | **14th Amendment** | **15th Amendment** |
| “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime where the party shall have been duly convicted shall exist within the United States.” | “All persons born in the United States are citizens of the United States. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges of the citizens of the US nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property.” | “The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied by the US or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” |

**Document #2: Thomas Nast,** The Union as it was / The Lost Cause, worse than slavery." Harper’s Weekly, 1874

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**Document #3:**

*We think the enforced separation of the races...neither abridges (limits) the privileges or immunities (protections) of the colored man, deprives him of his property without due process of law, nor denies him the equal protection of the laws with the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment.”*

**-Justice Henry Brown Majority Opinion, Plessy vs. Ferguson, 1896**