Voices That Shaped Alabama

Read how three Alabamians helped their state during Reconstruction.

SS24.4.15d "Recount the contributions of Alabamians who helped shape their state during Reconstruction."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each person's name and underline what that person did to help shape Alabama during Reconstruction.

Three Ways to Shape a State

1. After the Civil War, Alabama entered Reconstruction, a time of rebuilding and change. Many people who had been enslaved wanted a voice in government and a chance to learn. Benjamin S. Turner had once been enslaved in Alabama. In 1870, voters elected him to the U.S. House of Representatives. He became the first Black person from Alabama to serve in Congress, giving his community a voice in national decisions.

2. James T. Rapier also worked to make government listen to Black Alabamians. Voters sent him to the U.S. House in 1872. Rapier argued that Black travelers should be treated fairly on trains and in other public places. He supported a federal civil rights law to protect equal treatment. By speaking in Congress, Rapier pushed the country to make freedom mean more in daily life.

3. William H. Councill chose a different path: education. Born into slavery, he became a teacher after the war. In 1875, he led a new school in Huntsville that trained Black teachers. Those teachers could teach other Alabamians to read and learn new skills. Turner and Rapier worked in government; Councill worked in a classroom. Each helped shape a state where more people could take part.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What did Benjamin S. Turner do during Reconstruction, and why did it matter?

2. How did James T. Rapier try to change daily life for Black travelers?

3. What did William H. Councill do, and how could his work help other Alabamians?

4. How was Councill's way of helping Alabama different from Turner's way?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three- or four-sentence museum label called "What Changed?" Choose two people from the passage. Tell what each did, then explain how their work could act together to help Alabamians during Reconstruction.

ANSWER KEY

Voices That Shaped Alabama

GRADE 4 · SS24.4.15d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each person's name and underline what that person did to help shape Alabama during Reconstruction. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Benjamin S. Turner do during Reconstruction, and why did it matter?	**Turner served in Congress, giving Black Alabamians a voice in national decisions.**
2	How did James T. Rapier try to change daily life for Black travelers?	**Rapier argued for fair treatment on trains and in other public places and supported a federal civil rights law.**
3	What did William H. Councill do, and how could his work help other Alabamians?	**Councill led a school that trained Black teachers, who could then teach other Alabamians.**
4	How was Councill's way of helping Alabama different from Turner's way?	**Councill trained teachers through a school, while Turner represented Alabama in Congress.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During Reconstruction, Alabama was rebuilding after the Civil War. Benjamin S. Turner represented Alabama in Congress, giving Black Alabamians a voice in government. William H. Councill led a school that trained Black teachers. A voice in government and more teachers could work together to give more Alabamians chances to shape their state.

Accept any two people whose contributions are described accurately. The museum label should explain a reasonable connection between their work, not just list two actions.