Building a New South

Power, opportunity, and resistance after Reconstruction

SS24.US1.19 "Describe the emergence of the New South economy and Jim Crow era, and explain the corresponding efforts to secure civil rights by Black Americans after Reconstruction. 19a Explain how Jim Crow laws, Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle one law or court ruling, underline two effects on work or political power, and box two actions Black Americans took in response.

Whose New South?

1 After Reconstruction, southern promoters advertised a "New South" of railroads and textile mills, but cotton still depended heavily on poorly paid Black labor. Many Black farmers rented land through sharecropping and fell into debt. Jim Crow laws separated people in public spaces, while the Supreme Court's 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson ruling allowed segregation under the claim of "separate but equal." Lynchings and threats punished those who challenged white control. Together, these barriers restricted Black workers' choices and pushed Black citizens out of public life.

2 Alabama's 1901 constitution shows how this system was built into politics. Its writers openly sought white supremacy; many also wanted to protect the influence of wealthy landowners and industrial interests. Poll taxes and literacy tests sharply reduced Black voting and also excluded many poor white voters. With fewer voters able to challenge officials, political power narrowed. Limits on taxation, especially at the local level, made it harder to fund public services. Segregated Black schools received fewer resources, limiting opportunities for future workers.

3 Black Americans built responses rather than accepting these limits. At Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, Booker T. Washington expanded training for teachers and skilled workers, arguing that education and economic independence could strengthen Black communities. Journalist Ida B. Wells investigated lynchings and published evidence to challenge excuses for violence. W. E. B. Du Bois pressed for full voting rights and higher education. He helped found the NAACP in 1909, which organized legal and public campaigns against discrimination. These approaches differed, but each created tools for claiming rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Jim Crow laws, the Plessy ruling, and violence work together to limit Black Americans' public lives?

2. How did the goals of Alabama's constitution writers shape both voting and economic opportunity?

3. How did Washington's work at Tuskegee differ from Du Bois's efforts to secure rights?

4. Why was Wells's investigation of lynchings a civil rights effort, not simply a report of crimes?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence opening statement for a Black community meeting in 1909. Propose two different actions, connect each to a different barrier in the passage, and explain why the actions belong together.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 10 · SS24.US1.19

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle one law or court ruling, underline two effects on work or political power, and box two actions Black Americans took in response. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Jim Crow laws, the Plessy ruling, and violence work together to limit Black Americans' public lives?	**Jim Crow laws required segregation, Plessy allowed it to continue, and violence threatened people who challenged white control.**
2	How did the goals of Alabama's constitution writers shape both voting and economic opportunity?	**Seeking white supremacy and protecting powerful interests, they used voting restrictions to narrow political power. Tax limits made public services harder to fund, while underfunded Black schools limited opportunity.**
3	How did Washington's work at Tuskegee differ from Du Bois's efforts to secure rights?	**Washington expanded job and teacher training to build economic strength. Du Bois demanded voting rights and higher education and helped found the NAACP to challenge discrimination.**
4	Why was Wells's investigation of lynchings a civil rights effort, not simply a report of crimes?	**By publishing evidence that challenged excuses for violence, Wells confronted a tool used to enforce white control.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our neighbors face threats when they challenge unfair treatment. We should gather and publish evidence of violence, as Ida B. Wells has done, so officials cannot easily dismiss these attacks. We should also support teacher training at Tuskegee because underfunded schools leave young people with fewer opportunities. Public evidence can help us demand protection, while trained teachers can strengthen our communities over time. Together, these actions defend our rights now and expand what the next generation can achieve.

Accept other passage-supported links between barriers and responses. For the opening statement, look for five sentences, two distinct actions, two different barriers, and a reason the actions work together.