

Reconstruction Voices

Trace how key leaders shaped rights and federal action after the Civil War.

SS.68.AA.2.8 "Describe significant contributions made by key figures during Reconstruction (e.g., President Ulysses S. Grant, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Frederick Douglass, Lyman Trumbull)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the name of each key figure. Circle the action or policy that shows each figure's contribution, then write 1 through 4 beside the four key figures.

Leaders and Reconstruction

- ① After the Civil War, Reconstruction raised a central question: would freedom bring legal rights and safety for formerly enslaved people? Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois helped shape the legal answer. He wrote the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which declared that people born in the United States were citizens and had equal civil rights. President Andrew Johnson vetoed the bill, but Congress overrode his veto. Trumbull also supported the Fourteenth Amendment, which placed citizenship and equal protection in the Constitution.
- ② Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War under Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, supported stronger federal protection during Reconstruction. He disagreed with Johnson's plan to restore former Confederate states quickly and limit federal action. In 1867, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act, limiting a president's power to remove certain officeholders. When Johnson tried to remove Stanton, the conflict intensified the struggle between Congress and the president over Reconstruction policy. Stanton's resistance became part of the larger fight over who would direct Reconstruction.
- ③ Frederick Douglass used speeches, writing, and meetings with leaders to demand full citizenship for Black Americans. In 1866, he joined other Black leaders in meeting with President Johnson, urging voting rights. Douglass argued that freedom without the vote left people vulnerable. Later, he campaigned for the Fifteenth Amendment, which barred denying a citizen the vote because of race. As president from 1869 to 1877, Ulysses S. Grant supported the amendment and signed Enforcement Acts that gave the federal government tools to prosecute attacks on Black voters, including Ku Klux Klan violence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did Lyman Trumbull do to strengthen citizenship and civil rights during Reconstruction?

2 How did Edwin Stanton contribute to the struggle over Reconstruction policy?

3 Why did Frederick Douglass argue that Black Americans needed voting rights, and how did he work for that goal?

4 What actions did President Ulysses S. Grant take to protect Black voters?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two key figures from the passage. Write four sentences that describe each person's contribution, compare their methods, and explain one goal they shared.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the name of each key figure. Circle the action or policy that shows each figure's contribution, then write 1 through 4 beside the four key figures. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Lyman Trumbull do to strengthen citizenship and civil rights during Reconstruction?	He wrote the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and supported the Fourteenth Amendment.
2	How did Edwin Stanton contribute to the struggle over Reconstruction policy?	He supported stronger federal protection and resisted Johnson's attempt to remove him, highlighting the conflict over who would direct Reconstruction.
3	Why did Frederick Douglass argue that Black Americans needed voting rights, and how did he work for that goal?	He believed freedom without the vote left people vulnerable. He urged voting rights in meetings with leaders and campaigned for the Fifteenth Amendment.
4	What actions did President Ulysses S. Grant take to protect Black voters?	He supported the Fifteenth Amendment and signed Enforcement Acts that allowed the federal government to prosecute attacks on Black voters, including Ku Klux Klan violence.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Frederick Douglass pressed leaders to protect Black voting rights because he believed freedom needed political power. Ulysses S. Grant used presidential authority by signing Enforcement Acts to fight violence against Black voters. Douglass mainly persuaded people through advocacy, while Grant used federal law enforcement. Both worked to make citizenship safer and more meaningful for Black Americans.

Accept equivalent descriptions that accurately connect each figure to an action or policy in the passage. For Part 3, responses should name two figures, describe both contributions, compare methods, and state a shared Reconstruction goal.