

Freedom and Change

Analyze how major events shaped African American lives from the Revolution through Reconstruction.

SS.68.AA.2 "Analyze events that involved or affected Africans from the founding of the nation through Reconstruction."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number three events in the order they happened, and underline the effect each event had on Africans or African Americans.

A Long Fight for Rights

- ① During the American Revolution, many Black people faced a difficult choice. Enslaved people heard British officials promise freedom to those who joined British forces, while some fought for the Patriots. Others sought safety behind either army's lines. The Revolution challenged ideas about liberty, but it did not end slavery. In northern states, gradual emancipation laws began to reduce slavery. In the South, plantation owners continued to rely on enslaved labor as cotton farming expanded rapidly.
- ② At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, delegates protected slavery through compromises. The Three-Fifths Compromise counted three fifths of enslaved people when states calculated representation, although enslaved people could not vote. The Constitution also required the return of people who escaped slavery. These decisions increased political power for slaveholding states and made slavery a national issue. Congress banned the overseas slave trade beginning in 1808, yet the domestic sale of enslaved people continued. Families were separated as enslaved labor was forced westward.
- ③ During the Civil War, emancipation became a Union war aim. The Emancipation Proclamation, effective in 1863, declared freedom for enslaved people in Confederate-held areas, but not in loyal border states. Nearly 200,000 Black men served in the Union Army and Navy, helping the Union fight. After the war, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. The Fourteenth Amendment established citizenship and equal protection, and the Fifteenth Amendment barred denying voting rights because of race. During Reconstruction, Black men voted and held office, even as violence and discriminatory laws threatened these gains.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the American Revolution create both an opportunity and a limit for Black people? Use details from the first paragraph.

2 How did the Three-Fifths Compromise affect the political power of slaveholding states?

3 How did Black military service during the Civil War affect the Union's fight for emancipation?

4 How did Reconstruction expand rights for African Americans, and what threatened those gains?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two events from different periods in the passage. Write a six-sentence paragraph explaining how each event affected African Americans, then compare whether the events expanded or limited rights.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number three events in the order they happened, and underline the effect each event had on Africans or African Americans. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the American Revolution create both an opportunity and a limit for Black people? Use details from the first paragraph.	British officials offered freedom to enslaved people who joined British forces, and some Black people fought or sought safety with armies. However, the Revolution did not end slavery, especially in the South.
2	How did the Three-Fifths Compromise affect the political power of slaveholding states?	It counted three fifths of enslaved people for representation even though they could not vote, increasing the political power of slaveholding states.
3	How did Black military service during the Civil War affect the Union's fight for emancipation?	Nearly 200,000 Black men served in the Union Army and Navy, helping the Union fight after emancipation became a Union war aim.
4	How did Reconstruction expand rights for African Americans, and what threatened those gains?	The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, the Fourteenth established citizenship and equal protection, and the Fifteenth protected voting rights based on race. Violence and discriminatory laws threatened these gains.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Three-Fifths Compromise affected enslaved people by increasing representation for slaveholding states although enslaved people could not vote. It helped protect slavery within national politics. After the Civil War, the Fourteenth Amendment made formerly enslaved people citizens and promised equal protection. This changed their legal status in a major way. Both events show that federal decisions shaped Black Americans' lives. However, one strengthened slaveholders' power, while the other expanded rights.

Accept accurate explanations that connect an event to its effect on Africans or African Americans. For Part 3, accept any two events from different periods if the response includes an accurate comparison of rights, power, freedom, or legal status.