

Freedom After War

Read how work and rights changed during Reconstruction.

SS4H6.c "Explain how slavery was replaced by sharecropping and how freed African Americans or Blacks were prevented from exercising their newly won rights."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that explain how sharecropping worked or trapped families. Circle details that show how Black Americans were kept from using their rights, then number the two kinds of limits 1 and 2.

A New Kind of Control

- ① When the Civil War ended in 1865, slavery was abolished. Many formerly enslaved people hoped to choose jobs, earn pay, reunite families, buy land, and take part in public life. Most did not receive land, however. Large plantations still needed workers, and many freed families needed homes, food, tools, and a way to make a living.
- ② Sharecropping became a common system. A landowner supplied a small plot, seeds, and sometimes a cabin or tools. In return, a family worked the crop and gave the owner a share at harvest. Families often had to buy supplies on credit. High prices and low crop payments left many in debt, making it hard to leave.
- ③ Freedom brought new rights, including citizenship and voting rights for Black men. Yet Southern governments passed Black Codes and later Jim Crow laws that limited freedom. Some officials used poll taxes and literacy tests to block voting. White terrorist groups threatened and attacked Black voters and leaders. These laws and violence kept many African Americans from safely using rights that the law said they had.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did a sharecropping family pay the landowner for using land and supplies?

2 Why could sharecropping make it hard for a family to leave a plantation?

3 Name two ways Black Americans were prevented from voting or using other rights.

4 How did sharecropping debt and voting restrictions both limit freedom after the Civil War?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label about life after slavery. Explain one change after slavery ended, how sharecropping could trap a family, and two ways Black Americans were kept from using their rights.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that explain how sharecropping worked or trapped families. Circle details that show how Black Americans were kept from using their rights, then number the two kinds of limits 1 and 2. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did a sharecropping family pay the landowner for using land and supplies?	The family worked the crop and gave the landowner a share of the harvest.
2	Why could sharecropping make it hard for a family to leave a plantation?	Families often bought supplies on credit. High prices and low crop payments could leave them in debt.
3	Name two ways Black Americans were prevented from voting or using other rights.	Answers may include Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, poll taxes, literacy tests, and threats or attacks by white terrorist groups.
4	How did sharecropping debt and voting restrictions both limit freedom after the Civil War?	Debt could keep families tied to a plantation, while voting restrictions kept Black Americans from taking part in government. Both limited choices and rights.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After slavery ended, formerly enslaved people were free to seek work and take part in public life. Many families became sharecroppers because they needed land and supplies. Credit, high prices, and low crop payments could leave a family in debt. Poll taxes and literacy tests blocked many Black men from voting.

Accept accurate explanations that connect sharecropping debt to limited freedom and identify two passage-based barriers to rights. In the open response, accept different accurate wording as long as all required parts are included in four sentences.