Chains of Change

Trace causes and effects from slavery through Reconstruction

USH.1.2 "Identify and summarize the causes and effects of slavery, the Civil War, abolitionism, social reform movements, and Reconstruction."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three causes in the passage and circle an effect of each one. Number each matching cause and effect 1, 2, or 3.

From Cotton Fields to Reconstruction

(1) By the 1800s, cotton from Southern plantations fed textile mills in the United States and Europe. The cotton gin made processing cotton faster, increasing demand for land and enslaved labor. Laws treated enslaved people as property, while slaveholders used violence to control their work and movement. Enslaved people resisted by protecting family ties, escaping, and sometimes rebelling. Profits from cotton strengthened slavery even as its human costs spread through families and communities.

(2) Frederick Douglass, who escaped slavery, used speeches and newspapers to demand abolition. Abolitionist campaigns spread antislavery arguments and helped turn slavery into a national political issue. Women denied equal legal rights also organized reform conventions, using skills and networks gained in abolition campaigns. As slavery expanded westward, disputes over its place in new states grew. After Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860, eleven Southern states seceded to protect slavery. Fighting began at Fort Sumter in 1861.

(3) The Civil War killed hundreds of thousands and devastated much of the South. Union victory helped make the Thirteenth Amendment's 1865 ban on slavery possible. During Reconstruction, federal laws and troops sought to protect formerly enslaved people as Southern states rejoined the Union. The Fourteenth Amendment established birthright citizenship and equal protection, while the Fifteenth barred denying voting rights based on race. Black communities built schools and elected representatives, but white supremacist violence undermined these gains. Federal troops withdrew in 1877, weakening enforcement.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the cotton gin strengthen slavery?

2. How did abolition campaigns affect both national politics and women's rights reform?

3. What dispute intensified before the Civil War, and why did Southern states secede?

4. Name one Reconstruction gain and one force that weakened it.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write four sentences tracing a cause-and-effect chain from cotton production to a setback during Reconstruction. Include abolitionism as one link, and explain how it affected what came next.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three causes in the passage and circle an effect of each one. Number each matching cause and effect 1, 2, or 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the cotton gin strengthen slavery?	**It sped up cotton processing, increasing demand for land and enslaved labor.**
2	How did abolition campaigns affect both national politics and women's rights reform?	**They helped make slavery a national political issue and gave women skills and networks they used to organize reform conventions.**
3	What dispute intensified before the Civil War, and why did Southern states secede?	**Disputes grew over slavery in new states. Eleven Southern states seceded to protect slavery.**
4	Name one Reconstruction gain and one force that weakened it.	**For example, Black communities built schools, but white supremacist violence undermined their gains.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Faster cotton processing increased demand for enslaved labor on Southern plantations. Abolitionist campaigns challenged slavery and made it a national political issue as disputes over its expansion grew. Southern states seceded to protect slavery, and the resulting war ended in a Union victory that helped make the Thirteenth Amendment possible. Reconstruction then sought to protect formerly enslaved people, but white supremacist violence undermined those gains.

Accept other accurate gains, such as new constitutional protections or elected Black representatives. For the chain, look for four connected sentences that include abolitionism and a Reconstruction setback.