After the Guns

Reunion, rights, and competing plans for Reconstruction

8.C.13.1 "Examine the challenges of rebuilding the nation following the end of the Civil War. Evaluate Lincoln's plans for reconciliation, as expressed in his Second Inaugural Address, and the impact of his assassination on Reconstruction..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Lincoln's goal for reunion and circle one Johnson policy and one congressional policy. Write 1 beside a possible consequence of the Johnson policy and 2 beside a possible consequence of the congressional policy.

What Would Rebuilding Require?

1. In March 1865, the Civil War was nearly over, but victory did not settle what peace would mean. Southern towns and farms lay damaged, and formerly enslaved people needed freedom protected by law. In his Second Inaugural Address, Abraham Lincoln said slavery had caused the war. He urged Americans to act "with malice toward none" and "with charity for all," to "bind up the nation's wounds." His earlier plan had offered a quick path back for Southern states after a small share of voters pledged loyalty and accepted the end of slavery.

2. On April 14, 1865, Lincoln was shot; he died the next morning. His assassination ended his leadership before his approach could be tested in peacetime. Vice President Andrew Johnson became president and offered most former Confederates pardons. He allowed Southern states to form new governments quickly, with little federal protection for formerly enslaved people. Many of those governments passed Black Codes, laws that restricted Black people's work and movement. Johnson's policy aimed to restore the Union rapidly, but it let former Confederate leaders regain power and left freedom vulnerable.

3. Congressional Republicans argued that rejoining the Union was not enough if Black Americans lacked rights and safety. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and proposed the Fourteenth Amendment, which defined national citizenship and promised equal protection under the law. In 1867, Reconstruction Acts placed most former Confederate states under military rule until they met conditions that included new state constitutions and voting rights for Black men. Johnson opposed key congressional measures, but Congress overrode some of his vetoes. These policies could better protect freedom, yet they faced violent resistance and disputes over federal power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Lincoln's earlier plan fit his call to "bind up the nation's wounds"? What question about freedom did the plan leave open?

2. How did Lincoln's assassination affect who led Reconstruction, and what direction did that leader take?

3. What was Johnson trying to achieve by letting Southern governments form quickly? What consequence described in the passage worked against freedom?

4. How did congressional Republicans' approach differ from Johnson's? Give one possible benefit and one challenge of their approach.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise Congress in 1867. In four or five sentences, propose one additional step not named in the passage for rebuilding the South, explain how it fits Lincoln's call for healing and addresses a weakness of Johnson's approach, and identify one possible obstacle.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.13.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Lincoln's goal for reunion and circle one Johnson policy and one congressional policy. Write 1 beside a possible consequence of the Johnson policy and 2 beside a possible consequence of the congressional policy. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Lincoln's earlier plan fit his call to "bind up the nation's wounds"? What question about freedom did the plan leave open?	**A quick path back for Southern states could help reunite the country. The passage does not say how the plan would protect formerly enslaved people's freedom after slavery ended.**
2	How did Lincoln's assassination affect who led Reconstruction, and what direction did that leader take?	**Lincoln's death made Andrew Johnson president before Lincoln's approach could be tested in peacetime. Johnson favored pardons and the rapid return of Southern state governments.**
3	What was Johnson trying to achieve by letting Southern governments form quickly? What consequence described in the passage worked against freedom?	**He aimed to restore the Union rapidly. Many new governments passed Black Codes that restricted Black people's work and movement.**
4	How did congressional Republicans' approach differ from Johnson's? Give one possible benefit and one challenge of their approach.	**Congress tied states' return to protections such as new constitutions and voting rights for Black men, while Johnson favored a faster return with fewer federal protections. Congressional policies could better protect freedom but faced violent resistance.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Congress should fund local schools open to all children in the South. Learning together could help heal the country while giving newly free families more opportunities. Johnson let states rebuild quickly even as Black Codes limited freedom, so schools would need support from laws protecting students' rights. Some residents might resist shared schools, making them difficult to open and keep safe.

Accept supported inferences about the trade-off between rapid reunion and protecting freedom. For Part 3, accept a plausible additional step if the response connects it to healing, Johnson's approach, and a realistic obstacle.