Rights and Resistance

How some Southerners resisted changes brought by Reconstruction

USH.C.1.2.C "Describe how some Southerners responded to political and social change brought about by Reconstruction, including the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, its methods of intimidation and terror, including lynching, disenfranchisement..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two changes brought by Reconstruction. Circle one example each of violence, voting barriers, and segregation to show how some Southerners resisted those changes.

Changes Met With Resistance

1. After the Civil War, Reconstruction brought new political rights to formerly enslaved people. The Fourteenth Amendment recognized citizenship, and the Fifteenth Amendment barred denying the vote because of race. Black men voted, held office, and helped shape state governments. Some white Southerners supported these changes, but others feared losing political power and opposed racial equality. At a courthouse election, a Black voter might face hostility simply for trying to cast a ballot.

2. The Ku Klux Klan formed in Tennessee in 1866 and spread across the South. Its members used threats, night raids, beatings, and killings to frighten Black voters and white people who supported Reconstruction. Some attackers burned homes or schools. Lynching, killing someone without a legal trial, was another form of racial terror. Such violence aimed to keep people from voting, teaching, or organizing. Federal laws and troops sometimes challenged the Klan, but attacks did not end.

3. After federal troops stopped protecting the remaining Reconstruction governments in 1877, many white-led state governments tightened control. Poll taxes and literacy tests, often applied unfairly, blocked many Black citizens from voting despite the Fifteenth Amendment. Later segregation laws required separate public spaces, including railroad cars and schools, for Black and white people. These laws denied equal access and reinforced white supremacy. Violence, voting barriers, and segregation worked in different ways, but each restricted freedoms gained during Reconstruction.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did some white Southerners oppose Black men voting and holding office?

2. How did Klan violence target political participation?

3. How did poll taxes and literacy tests challenge a Reconstruction-era right?

4. How did later segregation laws restrict social change?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label comparing violent intimidation with later voting or segregation laws. Explain what changed during Reconstruction, how each response restricted freedom, and one difference between the responses.

ANSWER KEY

Rights and Resistance

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two changes brought by Reconstruction. Circle one example each of violence, voting barriers, and segregation to show how some Southerners resisted those changes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did some white Southerners oppose Black men voting and holding office?	**They feared losing political power and opposed racial equality.**
2	How did Klan violence target political participation?	**Threats and attacks frightened Black voters and their allies to keep them from voting.**
3	How did poll taxes and literacy tests challenge a Reconstruction-era right?	**They blocked many Black citizens from voting despite the Fifteenth Amendment.**
4	How did later segregation laws restrict social change?	**They required separate public spaces for Black and white people and denied equal access.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During Reconstruction, Black men gained the right to vote and served in government. Klan members used threats and beatings to scare voters away from elections. Later, states used poll taxes and literacy tests to block many Black citizens from voting. Unlike the Klan's violence, these state rules used government power to restrict political participation.

Accept accurate examples of Klan intimidation, unfair voting barriers, or segregation laws. The museum label should connect a Reconstruction change to two responses and distinguish their methods.