

Rights Rewritten

Read how the Reconstruction Amendments changed rights and protections.

8.16.B “describe the impact of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline exactly five sentences that directly state a change required or protected by an amendment, one in paragraph 1, three in paragraph 2, and one in paragraph 3. Write 13, 14, or 15 beside each underlined sentence to show which amendment it describes.

Three Amendments, Lasting Effects

- ① In 1865, after the Civil War, the Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery and involuntary servitude in the United States, except as punishment for a crime after conviction. This changed the law by making ownership of people illegal. Freedom did not automatically provide land, safety, jobs, or equal treatment. Congress later used the amendment as a basis for laws against some forms of forced labor. The amendment was the first of three Reconstruction Amendments designed to reshape rights after slavery.
- ② Ratified in 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment made people born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to its jurisdiction, citizens of the nation and their state. It required states to give people due process before taking life, liberty, or property. It also required states to give every person equal protection of the laws. These promises gave Congress and courts a constitutional basis to challenge unfair state laws. Yet rights written in the Constitution were not always protected in daily life, especially when officials refused to enforce them.
- ③ Ratified in 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment said that the right to vote could not be denied or limited by the United States or a state because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. It aimed to protect Black men's voting rights during Reconstruction. The amendment did not yet protect voting rights from barriers based on sex, age, poll taxes, literacy tests, or violence. For decades, many Black citizens faced such barriers despite the amendment. Later federal laws and court decisions helped enforce voting protections more strongly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What legal change did the Thirteenth Amendment make, and what exception did it include?

2 What three protections did the Fourteenth Amendment provide or require?

3 According to the passage, whose voting rights did the Fifteenth Amendment aim to protect, and what governments could not deny or limit that right because of race?

4 Give one condition that limited the immediate effect of the Thirteenth or Fourteenth Amendment and one barrier that limited the Fifteenth Amendment's effect.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences about these situations: A business owner forces an adult worker to labor without being able to leave. A state official refuses to register a Black citizen to vote because the person is Black. A city takes a resident's property without a hearing. In one sentence for each situation, name the amendment and explain the protection it provides.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline exactly five sentences that directly state a change required or protected by an amendment, one in paragraph 1, three in paragraph 2, and one in paragraph 3. Write 13, 14, or 15 beside each underlined sentence to show which amendment it describes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What legal change did the Thirteenth Amendment make, and what exception did it include?	It ended slavery and involuntary servitude. The exception was punishment for a crime after conviction.
2	What three protections did the Fourteenth Amendment provide or require?	It made qualifying people citizens, required due process before states took life, liberty, or property, and required equal protection of the laws.
3	According to the passage, whose voting rights did the Fifteenth Amendment aim to protect, and what governments could not deny or limit that right because of race?	It aimed to protect Black men's voting rights. The United States and state governments could not deny or limit the right to vote because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.
4	Give one condition that limited the immediate effect of the Thirteenth or Fourteenth Amendment and one barrier that limited the Fifteenth Amendment's effect.	Freedom did not automatically provide land, safety, jobs, or equal treatment, and officials sometimes refused to enforce Fourteenth Amendment rights. Fifteenth Amendment barriers included poll taxes, literacy tests, violence, sex, and age requirements.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Thirteenth Amendment rejects the owner's claim because slavery and involuntary servitude are illegal except as punishment for a crime after conviction. The Fifteenth Amendment protects the citizen from being denied the right to vote because of race. The Fourteenth Amendment requires the city to provide due process before taking the resident's property.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect forced labor to the Thirteenth Amendment, race-based voting denial to the Fifteenth Amendment, and a hearing before loss of property to Fourteenth Amendment due process. For Question 4, accept any one accurate limitation or barrier stated in the passage for each required amendment area.