

Reconstruction's Uneven Promise

Trace problems and compare their effects on different groups.

8.9.C "explain the economic, political, and social problems during Reconstruction and evaluate their impact on different groups."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each phrase that names a problem, circle each group affected, and write E, P, and/or S in the margin beside each sentence that shows an economic, political, and/or social effect.

Rebuilding After the Civil War

- ① After the Civil War, much of the South's railroads, farms, and towns were damaged. Formerly enslaved families hoped to own land, but most received none. Instead, many became sharecroppers, renting land and paying the owner with part of a crop. To buy seed and food, families often used credit from merchants. High interest and low cotton prices could trap them in debt. Planters also depended on this system, but they usually controlled the land and had more power than the workers.
- ② Southern states passed Black Codes in 1865 and 1866 to limit the freedom of formerly enslaved people. Congress responded with the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which established citizenship rights and protected Black men's voting rights. Black voters elected representatives and helped build public schools. Many white southern Democrats opposed these changes. Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan used threats and violence to frighten Black voters and white Republican supporters. Federal laws and troops sometimes protected elections, but protection was uneven.
- ③ By 1877, federal troops had left the former Confederacy, ending Reconstruction. White Democratic governments, often called Redeemers, regained control of southern state governments. They reduced many Black citizens' political influence through intimidation and unfair election practices. In later decades, segregation laws and voting restrictions deepened racial inequality. Black communities built churches, schools, businesses, and mutual-aid groups despite these barriers. Poor white farmers also faced debt and low crop prices, although racism gave them social advantages that Black farmers did not have. Reconstruction's problems therefore affected groups differently.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did sharecropping and credit affect many formerly enslaved families economically?

2 Identify one political or social problem that limited Black citizens' voting power. Explain its effect.

3 How did congressional action expand political opportunities for Black citizens, and why were those opportunities still limited?

4 Compare the effects of Reconstruction-era economic problems on poor white farmers and Black farmers.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence explanation that evaluates which economic, political, or social problem had the strongest lasting impact on Black southerners. Use two details from the passage and explain how Black southerners were affected differently from one other group.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each phrase that names a problem, circle each group affected, and write E, P, and/or S in the margin beside each sentence that shows an economic, political, and/or social effect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did sharecropping and credit affect many formerly enslaved families economically?	Families often had to rent land and use credit for supplies. High interest and low cotton prices could trap them in debt.
2	Identify one political or social problem that limited Black citizens' voting power. Explain its effect.	The Ku Klux Klan used threats and violence to frighten Black voters. Intimidation made it harder for Black citizens to vote and use their political rights.
3	How did congressional action expand political opportunities for Black citizens, and why were those opportunities still limited?	The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments established citizenship rights and protected Black men's voting rights, and Black voters elected representatives. Violence, threats, and uneven federal protection limited those opportunities.
4	Compare the effects of Reconstruction-era economic problems on poor white farmers and Black farmers.	Both poor white farmers and Black farmers could face debt and low crop prices. Black farmers did not have the social advantages that racism gave poor white farmers, and many formerly enslaved families were trapped in sharecropping debt.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Political violence had the strongest lasting impact on Black southerners. The Ku Klux Klan used threats and violence to frighten Black voters. After 1877, intimidation and unfair election practices reduced Black citizens' political influence. These actions made citizenship rights harder to use, even though the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments existed. White Republican supporters also faced danger, but Black southerners faced both this violence and later segregation and voting restrictions.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately identify a passage-based problem, effect, and affected group. For Part 3, accept any supported judgment that uses two accurate details and a clear comparison with another group.