

Virginia Changes

Read how Reconstruction changed opportunities and challenges in Virginia.

VS.8.b "examining the effects of Reconstruction on life in Virginia;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways Reconstruction changed life in Virginia. Circle one problem that made life difficult, so you can compare new opportunities with continuing barriers.

Life in Virginia After the War

- ① When the Civil War ended in 1865, slavery ended in Virginia. Newly freed African Americans could make choices about work, family, worship, and education that slavery had controlled. During Reconstruction, Virginia had to create new laws and a new state constitution before returning to the Union. These changes offered new rights, but daily life did not become fair or easy for everyone.
- ② The 1869 Virginia Constitution created a free public school system. With help from the Freedmen's Bureau, churches, and community leaders, schools opened for Black children and adults. Many Black children and adults enrolled to learn reading and other skills. Black men could vote, and some served in Virginia's constitutional convention and General Assembly. In 1870, Virginia rejoined the Union.
- ③ Reconstruction also brought hard problems. Many freed families had little land or money, so they rented farms or worked as sharecroppers. They often paid rent or supplies with part of a crop, and debts could keep them poor. White Virginians who opposed equal rights used unfair laws, threats, and violence. Later, segregation separated Black and white people in many public places.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the 1869 Virginia Constitution change education for Black Virginians?

2 What were two ways Black men could take part in Virginia's government during Reconstruction?

3 How could sharecropping keep a family poor?

4 What did people who opposed equal rights do to make life less fair for Black Virginians?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence diary entry from a Virginia child or adult in 1870. Include one change caused by Reconstruction, one problem, and how each affects daily life.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two ways Reconstruction changed life in Virginia. Circle one problem that made life difficult, so you can compare new opportunities with continuing barriers. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the 1869 Virginia Constitution change education for Black Virginians?	It created a free public school system. Schools opened for Black children and adults, and many enrolled to learn reading and other skills.
2	What were two ways Black men could take part in Virginia's government during Reconstruction?	They could vote, and some served in the constitutional convention and General Assembly.
3	How could sharecropping keep a family poor?	Families paid rent or supplies with part of their crop, and debts could keep them poor.
4	What did people who opposed equal rights do to make life less fair for Black Virginians?	They used unfair laws, threats, and violence. Later, segregation separated Black and white people in many public places.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town opened a free school, so I can begin learning to read. My father rents a farm and must pay for supplies with part of his crop. School gives me hope, but the farm debt makes our family worry about money.

Accept equivalent descriptions of new schools, voting and public service, sharecropping debt, or opposition to equal rights. For the diary entry, accept any accurate three-sentence response that includes one opportunity, one challenge, and an effect on daily life.