

Doors to Learning

How Freedmen's Schools supported African Americans in postwar Virginia

VS.8.c "describing the role that the Freedmen's Schools played in the lives of African Americans in Virginia after the Civil War;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show what students learned or how Freedmen's Schools helped African Americans in daily life and in their communities.

Schools After Freedom

- ① After the Civil War ended in 1865, many African Americans in Virginia wanted an education. During slavery, laws and customs had kept many Black people from learning to read and write. Freedmen's Schools opened in towns and rural communities. These schools gave formerly enslaved people, often called freedpeople, a chance to learn skills that had been denied to them.
- ② Classes taught reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. Children attended, but many adults came too, sometimes after working all day. Learning to read helped people understand letters, newspapers, and signs. Learning to write helped them send messages and keep records. Arithmetic helped with jobs, buying and selling, and managing money. Education gave families useful tools for daily life.
- ③ Freedmen's Schools also brought communities together. The Freedmen's Bureau, Northern aid groups, churches, and local African American communities supported schools in different ways. Community members helped find places for classes and worked to keep schools open. Some students later became teachers themselves. By building knowledge and leadership, the schools helped African Americans take part more fully in Virginia's postwar society.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Who attended Freedmen's Schools, and name two subjects taught there.

2 How could learning to read and write help a person in daily life? Give two examples from the passage.

3 Name two groups that supported Freedmen's Schools. What did community members do to help?

4 How did Freedmen's Schools help African Americans take part more fully in Virginia's postwar society?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine that you are helping open a Freedmen's School in Virginia after the Civil War. Write three sentences that name one skill the school will teach, explain how that skill will help people, and tell one way the community can support the school.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show what students learned or how Freedmen's Schools helped African Americans in daily life and in their communities. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who attended Freedmen's Schools, and name two subjects taught there.	Children and adults attended. Subjects included reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic.
2	How could learning to read and write help a person in daily life? Give two examples from the passage.	Reading helped people understand letters, newspapers, and signs. Writing helped people send messages and keep records.
3	Name two groups that supported Freedmen's Schools. What did community members do to help?	Answers may name the Freedmen's Bureau, Northern aid groups, churches, or local African American communities. Community members found places for classes and worked to keep schools open.
4	How did Freedmen's Schools help African Americans take part more fully in Virginia's postwar society?	They built knowledge and leadership and gave people useful skills for daily life, work, and managing money.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school will teach arithmetic. It will help families manage money when they buy and sell goods. Church members and local families can find a room for classes and help keep the school open.

Accept answers that accurately connect a school subject to a practical benefit and name a realistic form of community support from the passage. Students may use different examples of the listed subjects, benefits, and supporting groups.