

The Impacts and Effects of Reconstruction in Texas

Extension Lesson Plan for 7th Grade Texas History (60 minutes)

The period of Reconstruction was met with an increase in representation by African American men in both the national and state legislatures. During Radical Reconstruction, African American political participation was at an all-time high, but it was short lived due to increased violence and the political shift that resulted in Democratic party leadership in Texas for over a decade.

Following Reconstruction, African American political participation declined, and several African American appointed or elected officials stepped down, never to return to politics again. Many decades passed before anyone other than white male citizens were able to freely hold office or participate in the political process in America. As time progressed, citizens advocated for the protection of voting rights and political participation for minorities and women. Today we see diversity in representation across many levels of government.

This enrichment activity will allow students to investigate their own community's leadership, to analyze the level of diversity in representation of various demographics (i.e. by race/ethnicity, gender, disability, etc.). The goal of this enrichment exercise is for students to understand how the post-Reconstruction political climate prevented political participation by non-white male citizens, but also to analyze the ways in which circumstances have evolved in their communities.

Essential Questions

1. How did the post-Reconstruction political climate prevent or limit political participation by non-white male citizens?

Table 1. Lesson Materials, Descriptions, and TEKS for Lesson Content

| Printable Lesson Materials | Material Description | Lesson Specific TEKS |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Research Guide | <p>Provide students with a printed copy of the research guide to assist them in conducting online research about their local government.</p> <p>Students should be encouraged to present their findings to the class in a format of their choice (presentation, display, graphs, etc.)</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 per student</i></p> | 7.5(D) |

