

Voices of Reconstruction: African American and Women’s Perspectives

Lesson Plan for 7th Grade Texas History (60-90 minutes)

The period of Reconstruction is often referred to as a “failure” in its attempts to reunify the nation and advance equality for the newly freed African Americans. All too often the positive impacts of individuals and organizations are overshadowed by the political turmoil of the time. This lesson will focus on the influences and contributions of women and African Americans during the Reconstruction era to shed light on some of the positive actions and progress during the era.

Lesson Topics

- Contributions of African American Legislators
- Role of Women during Reconstruction
- Education
- The Role of Churches

Essential Questions

1. In what ways can individuals or groups impact a society?
2. How did African Americans influence events and issues in Texas during the period of Reconstruction?
3. How did women influence events and issues in Texas during the period of Reconstruction?

Students will know the following information based on previous TEKS standards:

Identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, and explain the purpose of dividing the past into eras, including Civil War and Reconstruction.

Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas.

Explain the significance of the following dates: 1876, adoption of current state constitution.

Students will develop the following skills during this unit based on the TEKS standards:

Analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology, sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions.

Use social studies terminology correctly.

Identify bias and points of view from the historical context surrounding an event that influenced the participants.

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

Printable Lesson Materials	Material Description	Lesson Specific TEKS
Hook Exercise	<p>This printable hook exercise focuses on the desire for rights that women expressed during Reconstruction. Students will read and study quotes by a leading Women’s rights leader in Texas, Martha Tunstall.</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 per student</i></p>	7.5(C) 7.20(D)
Slideshow presentation	<p>This ready to use classroom presentation contains essential questions, the contributions of key groups and individuals, and one source document with guided questions to promote discussion among scholars (see lecture notes within the slides for specific details).</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 per student as needed for note taking accommodations</i></p>	7.5(C)
Guided Notes	<p>These printable guided notes were designed to be used in conjunction with the presentation. Students will use the graphic organizer to analyze the political, social, and economic contributions and influences of Reconstruction and interact with the primary source documents.</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 per student or allow students to create a three-column chart of their own</i></p>	7.5(C)

Printable Lesson Materials	Material Description	Lesson Specific TEKS
Freedmen’s Bureau	<p>This printable primary source document may be used in conjunction with the first “Think-Pair-Share” activity from the slideshow presentation or independently as a student activity to provide context for the role of the Freedmen’s Bureau in advancing education in Texas.</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 per group</i></p>	<p>7.5(C) 7.6(A)(C) ELA</p>
Exit Ticket	<p>This printable exit ticket uses the three essential questions above to provide a formative assessment opportunity at the end of the lesson.</p> <p><i>Suggested printing: 1 ticket per student (two tickets per page)</i></p>	<p>7.5(C)</p>