

Reconstruction: Unit Plan

(7-8 Estimated Instructional Days)

Era Overview

When the Civil War ended, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawed slavery in Texas. Yet three far-reaching questions still had to be answered, and the struggles over these questions would define Texas during the period of Reconstruction (1865-1876).

First, what would become of the newly freed 230,000 African Americans in Texas? They were no longer enslaved, but were they to become citizens or perhaps something else? Second, what was to become of the ex-Confederates in Texas who had waged war against the United States? Were they to regain their citizenship or perhaps take on a different status? Third, how would the United States restore states like Texas to the American Union? Was Texas to regain its full political representation immediately after the war, or would there be punishment for having rebelled against the United States?

During the first part of Reconstruction, commonly called “Presidential Reconstruction,” President Andrew Johnson attempted to answer these questions. Johnson promised that states like Texas could rejoin the Union simply by ratifying the 13th Amendment, he offered a pardon to nearly all ex-Confederates so they could regain their citizenship, and he left the status of African Americans to be decided by their former masters. Anglo-Texans, as a result, quickly passed laws that denied citizenship rights to the former slaves and elected ex-Confederate political leaders to represent Texas in the U.S. Congress.

All of this angered Northerners and led Republicans in the U.S. Congress to forcibly take over Reconstruction policy, which began a new phase commonly known as “Congressional Reconstruction.” After putting Texas and the other ex-Confederate states under military rule, the Congress stated that Texas could not be represented by ex-Confederates and could not rejoin the Union until it ratified the 14th Amendment, which gave African Americans citizenship rights under the Constitution. The Congress also passed the 15th Amendment that defined voting rights. In so doing, the U.S. Congress attempted to ensure citizenship rights for African Americans while reducing the political power of ex-Confederates in states like Texas.

Anglo-Texans reacted with outrage. Some ex-Confederates joined groups like the Ku Klux Klan and used violence to try to intimidate African Americans and their white Republican allies in Texas. These Anglo-Texans also organized themselves politically and, by the mid-1870s, began to regain political power within the state. In 1876, ex-Confederates passed a new Texas constitution that stripped power out of the state government in an effort to undo much of what the Republican Party had brought to Texas during Reconstruction.

Era Overview

Pacing

This unit is a 7-8 day study of the events of Reconstruction in Texas. Suggested pacing minutes are based on the average time it takes a class to complete each lesson; however, as the educator, use your best judgment based on the average pace of your class learning styles.

Unit Pacing by Day

Minutes	Essential Questions	Description	Student Learning Experiences	Lesson
45	Introduce Vocabulary and Key People of Reconstruction	Introduction to Unit Vocabulary	<p><i>Students will know the following information based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>How to use social studies terminology correctly, including black codes; carpetbaggers; freedmen; loyalty oath; poll tax; sharecropping; Juneteenth</p>	Lesson: Reconstruction Unit Vocabulary
60	<p>What were the conditions in Texas following the Civil War?</p> <p>How did Texans respond to Presidential plans to bring them back into the Union?</p> <p>What were some of the key challenges Texas faced following the Civil War and during Reconstruction?</p> <p>How had the</p>	The era of Reconstruction, overlapping with the end of the Civil War, was met with many obstacles by the government as they sought to reunite the nation. This lesson will focus on the aftermath of the Civil War in Texas including the political, economic, and social effects that the war had on Texas	<p><i>Students will know the following information based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, of Texas during Reconstruction. Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Reconstruction in Texas. Explain how the diversity of Texas is reflected in a variety of cultural activities and celebrations.</p> <p><i>Students will develop the following skills during this unit based on the TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Use social studies terminology correctly. Identify bias and points of view from the historical context surrounding an event that influenced the participants.</p>	Lesson: The Civil War Ends and Reconstruction Begins

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	population of Texas changed after the end of the Civil War?			
45-60	What is the significance of Juneteenth?	In this extension lesson for Reconstruction: The Civil War Ends and Reconstruction Begins, students will conduct research and make plans after being “hired” by your local city or town to assist in planning a Juneteenth celebration for residents.	<p>Students will know the following information based on TEKS standards:</p> <p>Explain how the diversity of Texas is reflected in a variety of cultural activities and celebrations.</p>	Lesson: The Civil War Ends and Reconstruction Begins Extension Lesson
120	<p>How would you define the period known as Reconstruction?</p> <p>What were some of the key differences in the policies of Reconstruction?</p> <p>How did Reconstruction policies impact the newly freed</p>	Reconstruction: The Challenges of Reunification focuses on how the United States proceeded in reinstituting states such as Texas back into the Union and the conditions that were in place to deal with seceding states.	<p>Students will know the following information based on previous TEKS standards:</p> <p>Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas. Explain how the diversity of Texas is reflected in a variety of cultural activities and celebrations.</p> <p>Students will develop the following skills during this unit based on the TEKS standards:</p> <p>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,</p>	Lesson: Reconstruction: Challenges of Reunification

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	people?		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.	
45-60	What were the conditions that faced newly freed people during Reconstruction?	In this extension lesson for Reconstruction: The Challenges of Reunification, students can research the role of the Freedmen’s Bureau in Texas. Students will review a primary source letter to determine some of the problems that the Freedman’s Bureau were expected to resolve.	<i>Students will know the following information based on TEKS standards:</i> Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas.	Lesson: Reconstruction: Challenges of Reunification Extension Lesson
60-90	In what ways can individuals or groups impact a society? How did African Americans influence events and issues in Texas during the period of Reconstruction? How did women influence events and issues in Texas	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. This lesson will focus on the influences and contributions of women and African	<i>Students will know the following information based on previous TEKS standards:</i> 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. <i>Students will develop the following skills during this unit based on the TEKS standards:</i>	Lesson: Voices of Reconstruction: African Americans and Women’s Perspectives

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	during the period of Reconstruction?	Americans during the Reconstruction era to shed light on some of the positive actions and progress during the era.	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.	
60-90	How did African Americans influence events and issues in Texas during the period of Reconstruction?	In this extension lesson for Voices of Reconstruction: African American and Women’s Perspectives, students can research the roles of key African Americans and Women during the Reconstruction era, creating a mural that represents their findings.	<i>Students will know the following information based on previous TEKS standards:</i> 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.	Lesson: Voices of Reconstruction: African Americans and Women’s Perspectives Extension Lesson
90-120	How did economic practices of Reconstruction impact Texans, including the newly freed African Americans? In what ways did forced labor	This lesson will examine the political, economic, and social impacts during the period of Reconstruction, and students will learn about the shifting political climate in Texas and the	<i>Students will know the following information based on previous TEKS standards:</i> Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Reconstruction in Texas. Explain how the diversity of Texas is reflected in a variety of cultural activities and celebrations. <i>Students will develop the following skills during this unit based on the TEKS standards:</i>	Lesson: The Impacts and Effects of Reconstruction in Texas

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	<p>continue in Texas following Reconstruction?</p> <p>How did Texans embrace or resist changes resulting from Reconstruction?</p>	<p>development of new economic systems such as sharecropping, tenant farming, and convict labor; all used to rebuild the Texas economy.</p>	<p>Use social studies terminology correctly.</p> <p>Identify bias and points of view from the historical context surrounding an event that influenced the participants.</p>	
45	<p>How did the post-Reconstruction political climate prevent or limit political participation by non-white male citizens?</p>	<p>In this extension lesson for Impacts and Effects of Reconstruction, students investigate their own community's leadership, to analyze the level of diversity in representation and how their communities have evolved over time.</p>	<p><i>Students will know the following information based on TEKS standards:</i></p> <p>Explain the political, economic, and social effects of Civil War and Reconstruction in Texas.</p>	<p>Lesson: The Impacts and Effects of Reconstruction in Texas Extension Lesson</p>