

Slavery, the Civil War & Reconstruction Reconstruction

During the Civil War, the South was **crippled**.¹ Many men had died. Many farms were destroyed. Slavery no longer ran southern plantations. Once the South surrendered, the states were treated as part of the Union again. They were punished, but they also had to be rebuilt. Reconstruction is the time period after the Civil War. During this time, the Southern way of life changed.

At first, President Lincoln was going to be in charge of Southern Reconstruction. His plan was to welcome the southern states back into the Union. He did not want them to become bitter. Then, on April 14, 1865, Lincoln was shot. He was at a theater watching a play when John Wilkes Booth jumped on stage and killed him. The North went into mourning.

After Lincoln died, the U.S. Congress took over reconstruction. Congress was not as **lenient**² as Lincoln. Many Southerners did become bitter about the changes happening at their homes. They nicknamed Southerners who cooperated with Reconstruction as “scalawags” out of **disdain**.³ Many Northerners also came south to take part in Reconstruction. Some of the men were greedy but others really did want to help build a new, free South. The Southerners weren’t friendly to these men either. Southerners nicknamed them “carpetbaggers” because they often carried ugly suitcases that looked like they were made from a piece of carpet.

During Reconstruction, three **amendments**⁴ were added to the Constitution. Southern states had to agree to these amendments to be part of the United States again. The 13th amendment ended slavery. The 14th amendment gave black people all the rights that white people had and said that the federal government—not just the government of the states—would protect those rights. The 15th amendment allowed black men to vote.

¹ **crippled** – damaged or disabled

² **lenient** – gentle or merciful

³ **disdain** – contempt, looking down on

⁴ **amendments** – a change made to improve or add something

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the main idea of the 4th paragraph?
 - a. The 15th amendment allowed black men to vote.
 - b. The 14th amendment gave black people all the rights that white people had.
 - c. Three amendments were added to the Constitution.
 - d. The 13th amendment ended slavery.

2. In this passage, which of these events happened first?
 - a. Three amendments were added to the Constitution.
 - b. President Lincoln was going to be in charge of Southern Reconstruction.
 - c. John Wilkes Booth jumped on stage and killed President Lincoln.
 - d. Carpetbaggers from the North traveled to the South to help in Reconstruction.

3. In the second paragraph, the pronoun *his* in the sentence “His plan was to welcome the southern states back into the Union” refers to
 - a. President Lincoln
 - b. Congress
 - c. John Wilkes Booth
 - d. a northern Carpetbagger

4. In the passage it says that after President Lincoln was shot “the North went into mourning.” What do you think **mourning** means?
 - a. It means to have a celebration.
 - b. It means to feel sad.
 - c. It means to spend time with family.
 - d. It means to get angry and fight.

5. The passage “Reconstruction” is mostly about
 - a. the time period after the Civil War in the South
 - b. building weapons during the Civil War
 - c. how buildings were built in the South
 - d. how plantations in the South were different after the war

6. How were the 3 amendments to the Constitution helpful to black people?

7. In what ways was the South in bad shape after the Civil War?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

The U.S. Congress took over Reconstruction _____ President Lincoln was shot.

- a. in spite of
- b. before
- c. after
- d. although

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

After the Civil War, President Lincoln wanted to welcome the southern states back into the Union to avoid more fighting.

Who? President Lincoln

(wanted) What? _____

Why? _____

When? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** lenient: gentle or merciful.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____
