

## APPLYING My KNOWLEDge

**F**inding your own point of view: Writing a persuasive paragraph.

### What Is Your Opinion?

Whether or not Reconstruction was a success or failure will depend on what you believe was the main goal of Reconstruction.

*Was the goal of Reconstruction to bring the seceded states back into the nation?*

OR

*Was the goal of Reconstruction to give freed African Americans civil rights?*

**DIRECTIONS:** Use the information in the boxes below, and any other information you have learned about Reconstruction, to write a persuasive paragraph.

#### Was Reconstruction a Success?

- ✓ By 1877, Reconstruction rejoined the states to a unified nation.
- ✓ The Confederate states drafted new constitutions acknowledging the outlaw of slavery
- ✓ The Thirteenth Amendment was passed abolishing slavery.
- ✓ The Fourteenth Amendment was passed, providing citizenship rights and equal protection under the law.
- ✓ The Fifteenth Amendment was passed, making it illegal to deny a citizen the right to vote based on that citizen's "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."
- ✓ Majority of Southern citizens pledged their loyalty to the U.S. government.
- ✓ States' rights and the federal government's powers were more clearly defined - an issue that had been debated since the 1790s.

#### Was Reconstruction a Failure?

- ✓ The laws Radical Republicans passed during Reconstruction failed to produce a lasting change with regard to how slavery and blacks were viewed in the South.
- ✓ When federal troops were removed from the South in 1877, former Confederate officials and slave owners quickly returned to power.
- ✓ The laws passed during Radical Reconstruction were reversed as white Southern politicians passed black codes to keep African Americans powerless, and laws to keep them from voting.
- ✓ A conservative Supreme Court did nothing to uphold the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments when civil rights cases were brought before them, such as Plessy v. Ferguson.
- ✓ Very little was done to help poor African Americans in the South during Reconstruction, which resulted in a cycle of poverty tied to the sharecropping system – a legal form of slavery.

**Persuasive Paragraph: Was Reconstruction a Success or a Failure?**

## Applying My Knowledge

**F**inding your own point of view: Writing a persuasive paragraph.

### What Is Your Opinion?

1. Do you believe Reconstruction was a success or a failure? Choose a side.

I believe Reconstruction was a \_\_\_\_\_.

The main reason I believe this is because \_\_\_\_\_

(Write what you believe was the main goal of Reconstruction here. Do you believe Reconstruction's goal was to unite the country or to give African Americans rights?)

2. Why was Reconstruction a success or failure? Come up with at least three facts from the list written in your own words, and from other sources to support the main reason why you believe it was a success or failure. Emotion is wonderful, but facts and logic are what will persuade others!

✓ Fact #1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

✓ Fact #2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

✓ Fact #3: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Persuasive Paragraph: Was Reconstruction a Success or a Failure?**