

# Chapter Summary

## The Reconstruction Era

### Lesson 1 *Planning Reconstruction*

- As the Civil War came to a close, the United States needed a plan to readmit Southern states to the Union. The plans to do so, as well as this time period, are called Reconstruction.
- Leaders proposed several different plans for Reconstruction. President Lincoln's plan was lenient. A group of Republican leaders wanted to treat the South more harshly. These leaders were called the Radical Republicans.
- After Lincoln was assassinated, Andrew Johnson became president. He also wanted to be strict with the South, but he did not support the Radical Republicans.
- Another postwar challenge was the fate of the formerly enslaved. Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau to help former enslaved people adjust to life as free persons.

### Lesson 2 *The Radicals Take Control*

- Southern states did not easily accept their defeat and the end of slavery. They passed laws called black codes to limit African Americans' rights. To safeguard these rights, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which gave the federal government power to get involved in state affairs to protect African Americans.
- The Fourteenth Amendment granted citizenship to all people born in the United States, including persons who had been born into slavery.
- Congress passed Reconstruction Acts that divided the South into military districts and demanded that the Southern states ban slavery, write new constitutions, and ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
- Radical Republicans battled with President Johnson over the details of Reconstruction. Radical Republicans impeached Andrew Johnson in 1868, but he was not convicted.
- The Fifteenth Amendment gave African American men the right to vote.

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### Lesson 3 *The South During Reconstruction*

- During Reconstruction, African Americans in large numbers were able to vote and serve in government for the first time.
- *Scalawags* was a term used for Southerners who supported Reconstruction. *Carpetbaggers* was the term used for Northerners who moved to the South during Reconstruction.
- Many white Southerners resisted Reconstruction. African Americans were widely mistreated. The Ku Klux Klan terrorized African Americans and their white supporters. In this way, African Americans were kept from voting and having a voice in Southern politics.
- Many former enslaved people became sharecroppers. This system proved unjust and trapped many sharecroppers in debt.

### Lesson 4 *The Post-Reconstruction Era*

- Anti-Reconstruction politicians began to gain power in the 1870s. In the South, these politicians called themselves “redeemers” because they wanted to redeem their states from Republican rule.
- In the election of 1876, Republican Rutherford B. Hayes ran against Democrat Samuel Tilden. Amid controversy about the electoral vote in several states, neither side won a majority. A congressional commission recommended awarding the election to Hayes. In return, Republicans promised to withdraw troops from the South. The last troops left in 1877, which marked the end of Reconstruction.
- Southern leaders envisioned a “New South” with a strong industrial and agricultural economy. Southern industry made great gains, aided by abundant resources, cheap labor, and new railroads. Southern agriculture, in contrast, failed to advance under the sharecropping system.
- As Reconstruction ended, Southern whites increased their mistreatment of African Americans. To deny African Americans their right to vote, Southern states used poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses. Jim Crow laws required segregation.

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- Some African Americans left the South. Exodusters were former enslaved people who migrated from the South to a new life in Kansas. Other African Americans escaped conditions in the South by joining the army, serving in units such as the Buffalo Soldiers.