

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and its importance as a major turning point in American history by c) examining the political, economic, and social impact of the war and Reconstruction, including the adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Reconstruction

The war and Reconstruction resulted in Southern resentment toward the North and Southern African Americans and ultimately led to the political, economic, and social control of the South by whites

Political effects

Lincoln's view that the United States was one nation indivisible had prevailed.

Lincoln believed that since secession was illegal, Confederate governments in the Southern states were illegitimate and the states had never really left the Union. He believed that Reconstruction was a matter of quickly restoring legitimate state governments that were loyal to the Union in the Southern states.

Lincoln also believed that once the war was over, to reunify the nation the federal government should not punish the South but act "with malice towards none, with charity for all... to bind up the nation's wounds...."

The assassination of Lincoln just a few days after Lee's surrender at Appomattox enabled Radical Republicans to influence the process of Reconstruction in a manner much more punitive towards the former Confederate states. The states that seceded were not allowed back into the Union immediately, but were put under military occupation.

Radical Republicans also believed in aggressively guaranteeing voting and other civil rights to African Americans. They clashed repeatedly with Lincoln's successor as President, Andrew Johnson, over the issue of civil rights for freed slaves, eventually impeaching him, but failing to remove him from office.

13th Amendment: abolished slavery.

14th Amendment: citizenship & due process.

15th Amendment: race, color, or previous condition of servitude could not be used to restrict voting rights.

The Reconstruction period ended following the extremely close presidential election of 1876. In return for support in the electoral college vote from Southern Democrats, the Republicans agreed to end the military occupation of the South. Known as the Compromise of 1877, this enabled former Confederates who controlled the Democratic Party to regain power. It opened the door to the "Jim Crow Era" and began a long period in which African Americans in the South were denied the full rights of American citizenship.