

Reconstruction Intro

Learning Target:

I can explain the purpose of Reconstruction and identify the major issues Americans faced after the Civil War.

Do Now (5 minutes)

The Civil War ended in 1865, but many problems remained.

What do you think should have been the government's first priority after the war? Explain your answer.

Lesson (10–15 minutes)

Presentation introducing Reconstruction:

- Definition of Reconstruction (1865–1877)
- Why Reconstruction was necessary
- Rebuilding the South
- Reuniting the nation
- Determining rights and opportunities for formerly enslaved people
- Rebuilding state governments

Students complete guided notes throughout the lesson.

Activity: Reconstruction Decision Makers (20 minutes)

Students work in groups of 3–4.

Each group receives one Reconstruction scenario card.

Examples:

- A former Confederate state wants to rejoin the Union.
- A formerly enslaved family is seeking housing, education, and employment.
- Southern communities need to rebuild homes, businesses, and roads.
- Government leaders must decide who should be allowed to vote.

Groups discuss and answer:

1. What is the issue?
2. What decision should be made?

3. Why do you think your solution is the best option?
4. Who might disagree with your solution?

Groups record their answers and share with the class.

Class Discussion (5 minutes)

After sharing, discuss:

- Did every group agree on the best solution?
- Why might Americans in 1865 have disagreed about Reconstruction?
- What challenges would leaders face when making these decisions?

Close by explaining:

Although most Americans agreed the country needed to rebuild after the Civil War, they disagreed on how Reconstruction should happen. Next week, we will examine the different plans proposed by Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and the Radical Republicans.

Exit Ticket

Which Reconstruction issue do you think would have been the most difficult for Americans to solve? Explain your answer.

Assignment

No homework. All work will be completed during class.