

## 4 Reconstruction

### Getting the Main Idea

Read each paragraph below. Choose which of the three sentences following each paragraph best states the main idea of that paragraph. Write the letter of that sentence in the blank.

\_\_\_\_ 1. The period after the Civil War is known as Reconstruction. During that time, it was important to heal the South and restore it to the Union. Thousands of miles of railroad tracks had to be repaired. Towns and cities destroyed during the war had to be rebuilt. Slave owners had to find new workers to take the place of the freed slaves. The defeated southern states also had to form new governments before they could join the Union again.

- A. The South had to be rebuilt and restored to the Union during Reconstruction.
- B. Reconstruction was involved with the physical repairs of the North.
- C. The Civil War ended at the Battle of Reconstruction.

\_\_\_\_ 2. The presidential and congressional plans for reconstruction were very different. President Lincoln, and later President Johnson, planned to allow the southern states to return to the Union without punishing them. All but a few of the southern leaders would be pardoned after taking a loyalty oath. Part of this oath was a promise to obey laws dealing with slavery. On the other hand, leaders in Congress known as the Radical Republicans wanted to punish the South severely. They planned to take the right to vote away from anyone who had served in the southern army or government. The southern states would have to meet certain requirements before they could come back into the Union. The congressional plan centered much of its attention on the freed slaves. It demanded equal rights for blacks.

- A. The presidential and congressional plans for Reconstruction were very much alike.
- B. The presidential and congressional plans for Reconstruction were not alike.
- C. When Johnson became President, he threw out Lincoln's plan for reconstruction.

\_\_\_\_ 3. On April 14, 1865, only five days after the end of the Civil War, President Lincoln was shot and killed by John Wilkes Booth. Booth believed that Lincoln was an enemy of the South and that the South would be better off with him dead. Booth was wrong. Instead of helping the South, the assassination of Lincoln harmed the South. Lincoln had wanted to heal the wounds caused by the war. He had intended that the southern states be treated leniently. Some people in the North believed that southern leaders were behind Lincoln's murder. This idea helped the Radical Republicans. They pushed harder for treating the South harshly.

- A. President Lincoln wanted to punish the South for causing the Civil War.
- B. Lincoln's death hurt the South instead of helping it.
- C. John Wilkes Booth was a great admirer of President Lincoln.

\_\_\_\_ 4. In 1867, Congress passed a number of harsh laws known as the Reconstruction acts. The South was divided into five districts. Each district was ruled by an army officer, backed up by soldiers. These acts also ordered the defeated southern states to meet certain demands before they could escape army rule and join the Union again. The southern states had to form constitutions giving blacks the right to vote. Only citizens who took an oath that they had never willingly aided the Confederacy were allowed to take part in writing these constitutions. Southern states also had to accept the Fourteenth Amendment. This law gave equal rights to blacks.

- A. The Reconstruction acts set up state governments in the South.
- B. The Reconstruction acts welcomed the South into the Union at once.
- C. The Reconstruction acts were very harsh.

## 5 Problems of Reconstruction

### Getting the Main Idea

Read each paragraph below. Then write what you think is the main idea of each paragraph on the lines provided.

1. President Andrew Johnson did his best to keep Congress from carrying out its reconstruction plans. This angered the Radical Republicans. They began to look for an excuse to remove him from office. In 1867, Congress passed the Tenure of Office Act. Under this act, the President had to get the Senate's approval before he fired any high government officers. It was intended to trap him into breaking the law. In 1868, Johnson fired Secretary of War Edward Stanton. The House of Representatives brought impeachment charges against Johnson. When Johnson was tried before the Senate, it became clear that he had not done anything illegal. Johnson was really impeached because he did not agree with Congress.

The main idea of this paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_

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2. After the war, some northern Republicans moved south to take part in southern politics. These people were called carpetbaggers. Some of them were very crooked. Many received huge salaries on which they paid no taxes. They used state money to buy luxuries. South Carolina even paid back one lawmaker for the thousand dollars he had lost on a horse race. Some carpetbaggers sold their votes. Several southern states were put into debt after state money was given to companies for railroads and canals which were never built.

The main idea of this paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_

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3. After the war, anyone who had served in the Confederate army or government was not allowed to vote or hold public office. This kept most whites out of government. Blacks, who had just been given the right to vote, began to hold office. To stop blacks from taking over the South, southern whites formed the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan tried to keep blacks from voting or taking government jobs. It warned blacks that they would be hurt or murdered if they did not obey the Klan. Many times, Klan members beat or lynched the blacks or burned their houses.

The main idea of this paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_

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4. After the slaves were freed, they faced terrible hardships. They had no homes, food, or jobs. In 1865, over 100,000 ex-slaves died of starvation or disease. At last, the government stepped in and set up the Freedmen's Bureau to help these freed slaves. The Bureau gave them food and clothing. It helped them find jobs. It also gave them free legal advice. Since slaves had not been allowed to read or write, the Bureau built schools and started classes for them.

The main idea of this paragraph is \_\_\_\_\_

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