

**UNIT OVERVIEW**

Unit Length	Six 60-minute Lessons
Grade Level(s)/Subject(s)	7th and 8th Grade Social Studies
Unit Overview	<p>“Reconstruction In Five Acts” extends the work of <i>The 1619 Project</i> by investigating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effects of slavery and its afterlives in the United States</li> <li>• The multiple legacies of Black resistance, agency, and power-building during Reconstruction and beyond.</li> </ul> <p>This unit is not an exhaustive account of Reconstruction. Instead, it moves thematically by highlighting key themes from the first Reconstruction period, the Civil Rights era (sometimes known as the U.S.’s “Second Reconstruction”), and the present day, encouraging students to consider whether the country is undergoing a third Reconstruction period.*</p> <p>Two essential questions drive the unit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did Black people and people of color wield power and resistance, rebuild their identity, and sustain agency throughout history?</li> <li>2. Is America currently undergoing a third Reconstruction? Why or why not?</li> </ol> <p>Throughout the unit, students engage with these questions by analyzing primary and secondary sources, including <i>1619 Project</i> content, and holding various forms of collaborative debate and discussion.</p> <p><u>Unit Structure:</u>          The first four lessons support the first essential question. The first lesson opens with an introduction to the Reconstruction period and a preview of the unit content. Lessons 2-4 highlight Black resistance, agency, and power-building during the Civil War itself, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights era respectively. These lessons examine the “general strike” of enslaved people during the Civil War that crippled the South and led to the Union victory, the flourishing of Black Southern economic and political power following the war, and the advent of radical BIPOC movements in the mid-20th century.</p>

	<p>In the fifth and final lesson, students consider the second essential question, examine present conditions, and evaluate ways to carry on the tradition of Black resistance.</p> <p><i>*Note: The ideas of the “afterlives of slavery” and the “general strike” of the enslaved come from <a href="#">Saidiya Hartman</a> and <a href="#">W.E.B. DuBois</a>, respectively.</i></p>
<p>Objectives &amp; Outcomes</p>	<p>Students will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Define the Reconstruction period by describing its key events and themes.</li> <li>● Formulate a working thesis as to whether the project of Reconstruction is complete today.</li> <li>● Closely read the text to identify how Enslaved Black Americans used their power and agency during enslavement.</li> <li>● Identify and describe the impact of Black political and economic leaders during the Reconstruction Period.</li> <li>● Explain how Black Americans and people of color resisted oppression and injustice, rebuilding their identities (socially, culturally, and politically) between the 1950-1980s.</li> <li>● Analyze the impact of mid-century movements led by Black Americans and people of color</li> <li>● Argue whether the U.S. is currently in a third Reconstruction period.</li> <li>● Identify and evaluate different methods of power-building and resistance according to their contemporary relevance.</li> </ul>

<p>Standards</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1</u></a> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2</u></a> Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6</u></a> Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).</p> <p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7</u></a> Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8</u></a> Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.</p> <p><a href="#"><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9</u></a> Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.</p>
<p>Facilitation Resources</p>	<p><b>Texts from <i>The 1619 Project</i></b>  <a href="#"><u>"The Idea of America" by Nikole Hannah-Jones</u></a>  <a href="#"><u>"The Wealth Gap" by Trymaine Lee</u></a></p> <p><b>Additional 1619 Texts:</b>  <a href="#"><u><i>The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story</i></u></a>  <a href="#"><u><i>The 1619 Project Supplementary Broadsheet</i></u></a></p> <p><b>Additional Resources</b>  Reconstruction Timeline on Padlet (Accessible <a href="#"><u>digitally</u></a> or printed)  <a href="#"><u><i>Civil Rights and the 1950s: Crash Course US History #39</i></u></a> (11:57)  <a href="#"><u>The Gilded Age   The Black Elite   HBO Clip</u></a></p> <p>Teacher-created packets, rubrics and presentations linked throughout the unit</p>

<p>Performance Tasks</p>	<p>Teachers may select either one or both Performance Task Options which allow students to demonstrate mastery of the content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Socratic Seminar</li> <li>2. Essay</li> </ol> <p>The following suggested prompts can be used for either performance task. Provide structured choices to students by allowing them to self-select from a pre-approved list, or craft a new prompt(s) to reflect targeted content objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What was Reconstruction? How did Reconstruction change America?</li> <li>● What were the key events and themes of Reconstruction?</li> <li>● What was the impact of Black political and economic leaders during the Reconstruction Period?</li> <li>● How did Black people and people of color wield power and resist white supremacy?</li> <li>● How did Black people rebuild their identity and sustain agency throughout history?</li> <li>● What was America’s second Reconstruction? How is it similar and different to America’s first Reconstruction?</li> <li>● How did Black people and people of color resist oppression and injustice while rebuilding their identities between the 1950-1980s? Reflect on the social, cultural, and political shifts.</li> <li>● How does popular music today, such as Drill, serve as an example of power and agency?</li> <li>● What were some key movements that we explored? What were their impacts?</li> <li>● To what extent is America currently undergoing a third Reconstruction? Why or why not?</li> <li>● Is the project of Reconstruction complete today?</li> </ul>
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<p>Assessment/Evaluation</p>	<p><u>Formative Assessment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Daily exit tickets serve as a check for understanding to assess student mastery</li><li>• Discussions and mini-presentations that drive academic discourse throughout the lesson and check for understanding as well as promote student engagement</li></ul> <p><i>Educator note: Use visual and audio components as well as accessible technology to accommodate and promote student differentiation.</i></p> <p><u>Summative Assessment:</u> Use the <a href="#">Performance Task Rubrics</a> handout to assess one or both of the performance task(s) students complete.</p>
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## DAILY LESSONS AND RESOURCES

### Day 1: Introducing Reconstruction–Yesterday and Today

#### Lesson Objectives & Essential Questions

##### Lesson Objectives:

Students will...

- Build schema and understanding of the basics of Reconstruction
- Explore the ending of chattel slavery, the rise of reconstruction, and the multiple moments of “Reconstruction” and “Backlash” Black Americans faced as they exercised freedom

##### Essential Questions:

- What was the Reconstruction period?
- What were some of the successes and challenges of the Reconstruction period?
- How did Black people build power during the Reconstruction period?

#### Lesson Materials & Resources

##### Resources for this lesson:

- Introducing Reconstruction - Yesterday & Today Student Response Packet [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Introducing Reconstruction–Yesterday and Today Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Introducing Reconstruction - Yesterday and Today Slides (Accessible digitally or printed for Student Use) [[.pptx](#)][[pdf](#)]
- Reconstruction Timeline from *Padlet* (Accessible [digitally](#) or [printed](#))
- [Civil Rights and the 1950s: Crash Course US History #39](#) (11:57)

##### Excerpts from *The 1619 Project* from the following essays:

- [“The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones](#)  
Recommended excerpts include:
  - “Black Americans had long called for...” to “...in local positions.” (p. 21)
  - “These Black officials joined...” to “...’ regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”
  - “For this fleeting...” to “...not the Negroes.”
- [“The Wealth Gap” by Trymaine Lee](#)  
Recommended excerpts include:
  - “Today’s racial wealth gap...” (p. 83) to “...lost much of their savings.”
  - ““The origins of the racial wealth gap...” to “...incalculable amount of wealth.”

##### Differentiation Tips and Tools:

- Graphic organizers
- ELL Translated Text for Emerging Students
- Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text

#### Lesson Activities

**Lesson Plan Outline:**

1. Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question (10 minutes)
2. Background and Context (10 minutes)
3. Student Investigation & Independent Practice ( 30 minutes)
4. Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

**Do Now, Discourse, and Invest:**

1. **Do Now.** Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: Someone tells you, “Racism ended when slavery ended. Racism is a thing of the past.” How might you respond to this person?
  - a. Teacher will lead a whole group discussion for 4 minutes.
  - b. Students will share responses to the Do Now.

*Exemplar Response: Responses may vary. Teachers should connect shareouts to how slavery shaped American political, social, and economic institutions.*

2. **Invest in the Essential Question.** Lead students to invest in the essential question.
  - a. Encourage students to name and circle the key terms and provide definitions to ensure everyone is aligned on the historical investigation.
  - b. Have students rewrite the essential question in their own words to stamp the learning.
3. **Framing.** Teachers can utilize the following personal connection questions to frame student thinking before launching into content:
  - Have you ever had to recover from an injury? What was challenging about it?
  - Have you ever gotten into a fight with a friend? Did you try to fix it? How?
  - How does it feel when someone breaks a promise they made to you?

**Background and Content:**

*Teachers can use either or both of the two options to teach this portion of the lesson. The second option can also be assigned and/or modified for homework.*

1. **Option 1 - Words and Images of Power-Building During Reconstruction Activity.** Students explore how Black people built power during the Reconstruction period.
  - a. In small groups, students use the Introducing Reconstruction - Yesterday & Today Student Response Packet to analyze excerpts from W.E.B. DuBois's *Black Reconstruction in America*, [“The Wealth Gap” by Trymaine Lee](#), [“The Idea of America” by Nikole Hannah-Jones](#), and [Jeneen Interlandi](#).
  - b. Students match the excerpts to images from the Reconstruction period and provide a rationale for the choice they made.

**Exemplar Responses:**

- *Excerpt A, Image 3 - Black people built power by forming schools to fight ignorance among themselves and, per the text, to avoid becoming like their former enslavers. They believed that education was a path to wealth and respect.*
- *Excerpt B, Image 5 - Black people built power by creating free public schools for all people in the South. Since educating Black people was illegal during slavery, freedpeople invested in education.*
- *Excerpt C, Image 1 - Black people built power by getting rid of unfair laws once they had political power from voting. These laws benefited all people in the South. For example, they abolished laws that prevented men from voting if they did not own*

**Reconstruction in Five Acts**

Unit by Ascend Social Studies,

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property. They voted for public schools and for getting rid of unfair and brutal punishments.

- *Excerpt D, Image 4 - Black people built power by voting for and supporting Black lawmakers and political candidates. Just a short time after slavery ended, there were already Black leaders in states where they had been in chains.*
- *Excerpt E, Image 6 - Although Black people built power in the South in many ways, the US government stopped protecting these gains. Southern whites fought back against the gains Black Americans had made during Reconstruction.*
- *Excerpt F, Image 2 - Black people had built power by putting their money in the Freedman's bank. They had invested over \$1 million. Although the bank failed, this history shows that Black Americans immediately started to build wealth and savings after they and their parents had worked without pay for years under enslavement.*

- 2. Option 2 - Civil Rights as the Second Reconstruction.** Students view [Civil Rights and the 1950s: Crash Course US History #39](#) (start around 4:11 at the segment on segregation) about the Civil Rights period and respond to the following guiding question: *Why is the Civil Rights period sometimes called the U.S.'s Second Reconstruction?*

*Exemplar Response: The Civil Rights period is sometimes called the second Reconstruction because although slavery was over, segregation and inequality existed across the country. Reconstruction is a process of making the US a more equal and equitable place. The Civil Rights Movement attempted to achieve this because it worked against segregation and discrimination. This movement was led by and mainly interested in liberating Black people, but all citizens benefited from the laws against discrimination that it caused.*

**Student Investigation:**

Continue to utilize the presentation while leading this portion of the lesson plan.

1. **Engagement.** Ask students to speculate:
  - What do you think freed Black people did immediately after learning of their freedom?
  - What opportunities and challenges might freed Black people have faced right after emancipation?
2. Provide background information about the African diaspora in the Caribbean up to 1865 to set Reconstruction in a greater context. Cover the following important details:
  - a. The abolition of slavery in the British West Indies in 1834 and the subsequent oppression of Black people there into slavery-like conditions, leading to the Morant Bay rebellion of 1865.
  - b. The Dominican War of Independence of 1863-1865, where Afro-Dominicans fought with Haitian support to retake the country from Spanish control and the threat of the reinstatement of slavery.
3. Have students summarize responses to: How free were Black people in the West Indies by 1865?

*Exemplar Response: By 1865, Black people in the West Indies were free from the literal chains and some of the brutal punishments of slavery, but most remained at the bottom of the social pyramid because plantation owners retained most of the land and power in societies. Rebellions in the 1860s against the reinstatement of slavery and the plantation work regime show that although chattel*



*slavery was over, true equity and equality did not yet exist.*

4. Define and introduce Reconstruction as a time period.
  - a. Reconstruction was the process of re-constructing the United States after the Civil War.
  - b. More generally, Reconstruction was the process of turning the U.S. from a slave society to a place of freedom and equal opportunity for all its people.
5. **Frame.** Lead engagement through the rest of the slide deck.
  - a. As they engage with the presentation, students should keep track of key dates and events including:
    - The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments
    - The development of the Black Codes
    - The creation of the Freedman’s Bureau
    - The arrival and eventual withdrawal of federal troops to enforce Reconstruction mandates
  - b. Students should categorize each event as either “Reconstruction” or “Backlash”.
    - “Reconstruction” is the process of creating freedom, equity, equality, and power for Black Americans (and all Americans)
    - “Backlash” is any step taken to limit freedom, equity, equality, and power for Black Americans (and all Americans)
  - c. Push students to explain their answers using Think-Pair-Share and whole-group responses. (*See slide deck notes for anticipated responses to these questions*).

Exit Ticket Assessment & Discussion:

1. Students complete a variation on a 3-2-1 exit ticket: 3 advancements made during Reconstruction, 2 examples of backlash during Reconstruction, and 1 question about Reconstruction.

*Exemplar Response: Moments of Advancements include The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, Political Change, investment in Education, Rebuilding Families, and creating Black Communities and institutions. Moments of Backlash include The 13th Amendment and its legal loophole, White Terror, voting restrictions, and sharecropping*

2. End class by discussing the question: Is Reconstruction truly over?
  - a. Prompt students to think about recent and current struggles for racial justice in the U.S.?
  - b. Use the following guiding/back-pocket questions to support your discussion...
    - What forms of Reconstruction do you see in the world today? What forms of backlash?
    - U.S. policing kills over 1000 people per year, of all racial and ethnic identities. The Movement for Black Lives has been leading the fight against police violence. In light of this information, is the Movement for Black Lives continuing the work of Reconstruction today? Why?
    - Is the U.S. in general, and your community in particular, in need of “reconstruction” amid the ongoing COVID pandemic? Why or why not? What do you think such reconstruction might/should look like?

Day 2: Enslavement

Lesson Objectives or Essential Questions

**Lesson Objective:**

Students will...

- Describe how Black Americans used their power and agency during enslavement through close reading

**Essential Question:**

- How did Black Americans build and utilize power and agency during enslavement?
- How did Black Americans push back against white supremacy and move America towards its democratic ideal and identity?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Resources for this lesson:

- Lesson 2: Enslavement Slides [[.pptx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Enslavement Student Response Packet [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Day 2: Enslavement Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- [The 1619 Project Supplementary Broadsheet](#)
- Reconstruction Timeline from *Padlet* (Accessible [digitally](#) or [printed](#))

Differentiation Tips and Tools:

- Glossary Footnotes
- Graphic Organizers
- ELL Translated Text for Emerging Scholars
- Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text

Lesson Activities

Lesson Plan Outline:

1. Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question (10 minutes)
2. Background and Context (10 minutes)
3. Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice ( 30 minutes)
4. Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

Do Now, Discourse, and Invest in the Question:

1. **Do Now.** Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: What does power mean to you?
  - a. Students will share their responses in a turn and talk.
  - b. Lead a whole group share out and discourse for 4 minutes.

*Exemplar Response: Power means being able to force someone to do something, power means control, hierarchy, superior vs. inferior.*

2. **Invest in the Essential Question.** Lead students to invest in the essential question.
  - a. Encourage students to name and circle the key terms and provide definitions to ensure

everyone is aligned on the historical investigation.

- b. Have students rewrite the essential question in their own words to stamp the learning.

### Background and Context:

1. Review and introduce the following vocabulary to students; definitions can be provided in student work packets or written in notebooks:
  - Power: (n) a right or authority that is delegated to a person or a body, political or social authority, or the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events.
  - Agency: (n) action or intervention especially as such to produce a particular result.

2. **Activating Schema Discussion:** Pose the following question to the group for discussion and chart responses. This will allow gauging how much students know about resistance from the enslaved: Did enslaved Black people have power or agency? Why? Why not?

*Exemplar Response: The question will spark many different perspectives: No they did not have either because all aspects of their lives were controlled by white people; Yes, because some used resistance in a range of forms: some physically fought back, some refused food, jumped overboard during the journey through the middle passage, some broke tools, etc. Some Black people maintained their culture and language and some purchased their freedom. Free Black people were abolitionists*

3. **Stamp:** Have students write the following key ideas in their packets or notebooks:
  - a. Both enslaved and free Black people actively resisted enslavement and fought to abolish it.
  - b. These acts of resistance were acts of power and agency because in all instances they caused an impact on the system of slavery.
  - c. Acts of resistance influenced some to work towards abolition on moral grounds, forcing economic losses for slaveowners, and negotiating and earning freedom for themselves and their families.

### Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice:

1. **Model/Guided Practice:** Read pages 1-5 of [The 1619 Project Supplementary Broadsheet](#). Teachers can choose to read the first 5 pages as a class or have scholars read and annotate independently or in pairs. They should read with the following questions in mind:
  - How did the system of slavery change after the 15th century?
    - *Exemplar Response: After the 15th century, the system became racialized, and commercialized, and the enslaved were viewed as commodities and/or property. This status was based on race.*
  - What action did the Roman Catholic Church take, and what impact did this have?
    - *Exemplar Response: The Roman Catholic Church split the world in half, politically and economically, advancing imperialism and European exploration. European nations sought to colonize the “other half” of the world to increase wealth and power.*
  - Who was Queen Njinga? Why was she significant?
    - *Exemplar Response: Njinga was the ruler of Angola who successfully fought and resisted Portuguese attack/colonization, provided shelter for runaway slaves,*

*eventually made peace with Portugal, and traded with them as equals.*

2. **Discuss & Debrief:** Reconvene the class and facilitate a discussion of the questions. Encourage students to use evidence from the text when sharing their responses.
3. **Model-Set up for Independent Practice:** Call student attention back to the actions of Queen Njinga and have them annotate text details that reflect her actions.
  - a. Use a think-aloud to highlight how Queen Njinga demonstrated both power and agency.
    - Use a specific annotation like underlining or highlighting to spotlight examples of Queen Njinga resisting the Portuguese.
    - In the margin note use P-for power.
    - For the text details demonstrating Queen Njinga’s eventual negotiation with Portugal, label it with an A-for agency.
  - b. Students should include these two details in the graphic organizer in their student response packet. Model how to complete the graphic organizer for students before holding time for independent practice.

*Example:*

<p>How did Black people demonstrate power or agency?</p> <p>List actions below</p>	<p>What was the result and impact?-Describe the result or the impact that these actions had, or what happened as a result.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Queen Njinga fought against the Portuguese for 2 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Queen Njinga managed to stop Portugal from capturing Angola and enslaving citizens</li> </ul>

- c. Students will work in groups to closely read the remainder of the text and complete their graphic organizers, using the same steps modeled for them. Encourage students to dive deep into the text and support all claims with textual evidence.
4. **Optional: Discuss and Debrief:** Students should share their findings with the group.
  - a. This debrief discussion can be based on the teacher's choice of students after circulating and hearing strong responses, or the teacher could opt to jigsaw out the debrief by chunking text and designating specific scholars to share about their assigned portion of text.
  - b. As groups are sharing, each student should be checking their jots/notes to include any key takeaways they may have missed.

Exit Ticket Assessment:

Students should craft a multi-paragraph response to the following prompt: How did Black people demonstrate power and agency during enslavement? Student responses should include:

- Background and context
- Thesis statement
- Two pieces of evidence and analysis

- Conclusion

*Exemplar Response: In the 15th century, the Roman Catholic Church split the globe in half and provided Portugal and Spain with realms to conquer and plunder. This decision would lead to the rise of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, which redefined slavery into a commodity system informed by race where people were to be purchased, owned, and exploited. By 1619, a Portuguese slave ship would descend upon the colony of Virginia and shift America's trajectory forever. Throughout enslavement, Black people continued to demonstrate power and agency by actively resisting white supremacy and working to abolish slavery.*

*Resistance took many forms such as physical retribution against enslavers, refusing food, jumping overboard during middle passage, and sabotaging tools. Enslaved Black people also maintained their culture and language, purchased their freedoms, and utilized their freedom to advance abolitionist work. Queen Njinga, of the kingdom of Ndongo, fought "fiercely against Portuguese forces in the region for many years, and she later provided shelter for runaway slaves." (No. 1 / Slavery, Power and the Human Cost). These acts of resistance and courage exemplify a resilient leader who refused to cede to imperial powers. Her struggles against the Europeans demonstrate her commitment to her people and kingdom.*

*In post-slavery New York, Peter Williams Jr. co-founded the "Freedom's Journal, the first newspaper owned and operated by African-Americans" (No. 3 / A Slave Nation Fights for Freedom) to push back against racist narratives and bring urgency to their abolitionist endeavors. The newspaper would serve as the blueprint for Frederick Douglass's newspapers which advocated for the end of slavery and a more just society.*

*Ultimately, These acts of resistance were acts of power and agency because in all instances they caused an impact on the system of slavery influencing some in society to work towards the abolition of slavery on moral grounds, forcing economic losses for slaveowners, and negotiating and earning freedom for themselves and families.*

Day 3: Reconstruction Figures

Lesson Objectives & Essential Questions

Lesson Objective:

Students will...

- Identify how Black Americans used their power and agency during the Reconstruction era (1865-1877) and the Gilded Age of the late 1890s-early 1900s through close reading

Essential Questions:

Who were the key black figures during the Reconstruction Era and Gilded Age and how did they demonstrate power and agency?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Resources for this lesson:

- Reconstruction Figures Student Response Packet (SRP) [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Day 3: Reconstruction Figures Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Reconstruction Figures Slides (Accessible digitally or printed) [[.pptx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- [The Gilded Age | The Black Elite | HBO Clip](#)
- [The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story](#) (pages 269 - 269; selections excerpted in the SRP)

Differentiation Tips and Tools:

- Graphic Organizers
- ELL Translated Text for Emerging Students
- Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text

Lesson Activities

Lesson Plan Outline:

1. Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question (10 minutes)
2. Background and Context (10 minutes)
3. Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice ( 30 minutes)
4. Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question:

1. **Do Now.** Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: Based on what you know from prior classes, do you believe that there was a point in time when black Americans began to grow in power? Explain.
  - a. Students will share their responses in a turn and talk.
  - b. Lead a whole group discussion for 4 minutes.

*Exemplar Response: Responses may vary.*

*Yes - During enslavement, Black people resisted and fought against their oppressors through rebellion/education/music and dance/secret codes/escaping to freedom.*

*No- Due to enslavement and racism, Black people didn't have much power (If students say no, push them to think about if this consisted of ALL black people and think about the idea of resistance.)*

2. **Invest in the Essential Question.** Lead students to invest in the essential question.
  - a. Encourage students to name and circle the key terms and provide definitions to ensure everyone is aligned on the historical investigation.
  - b. Have students rewrite the essential question in their own words to stamp the learning.

Background and Context:

1. Students will have 2 minutes to turn and talk with a partner and discuss/take notes on the following prompt: What do you think is a black elite? What characteristics do they possess?

*Exemplar: Varies, Black Elite- Black people who were seen as role models or at the top within society/their community. Characteristics-Highly educated, leaders, wealthy, business owners, role models*

- a. Ask students if they have heard of the word, elite.
  - b. If needed, have a student define the word then have students apply that definition to the question, thinking about what a Black Elite was specifically during a time when Black people were officially emancipated from enslavement
2. Screen and discuss [The Gilded Age | The Black Elite | HBO Clip](#).
    - a. Play from 0:22 to the end of the video.
    - b. Have students respond to the following questions as they watch the clip:
      - What kind of jobs were African Americans getting during this time in America?  
*Exemplar Response: Business owners, scientists, lawyers, politicians, newspaper owners and writers*
      - Do you believe that African Americans gained power during this time? Explain.  
*Exemplar Response: Yes, because it was a moment of opportunity for black people where they had access to better jobs, business ownership, and were able to accumulate wealth.*
      - Based on the featurette, what surprised you the most and what did you already know from past lessons? *Responses Vary*

Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice:

1. Use the slide deck to introduce historical figures amongst the Black Elite. Print out the slides for students or present them on the board for students to read.
2. **Group/Partner Activity.** Students will identify the key black contributors to the Reconstruction Era and utilize the slides to summarize the impact of each of the contributors connecting it back to power and agency.
  - Robert B Elliott. *Exemplar response: Political figure, general of the S.C. National Guard, and helped to fight the KKK with the creation of a militia.*
  - Ida B Wells. *Exemplar Response: Feminist and journalist who spoke out against racism and violence towards Black people through writing.*
  - Frederick Douglass. *Exemplar Response: Advocate and supporter of the creation of banks for Black people (generational wealth)*
  - Hiram Rhodes Revels. *Exemplar Response: Member of the U.S. Senate and was outspoken about racial segregation.*

3. **Student Independent Activity:** Students read and annotate a range of texts about either Ida B. Wells or Hiram Revels and then answer questions based on their reading.
- Direct students to pages 3 - 7 of their student response packets.
  - Have students select either Ida B. Wells or Hiram Revels. As they read, they should closely annotate the text.
  - Students should answer questions on page 7 of the student response packet.

*Source A: Hiram Revels Exemplar Responses & Key Ideas*

- *Member of the U.S. Senate concerning the acceptance of Black senators and representatives from Georgia into Congress who were denied their seats.*
- *Advocating for the voices of Black people both dead and alive...now is the time for them to be heard. Specifically advocating for the Georgia elected men.*
- *These elected men should be allowed their seats in Congress and all black people be given their rights of “pursuit of liberty and happiness” as well as the right to vote and be a voice for their people.*
- *Revels is using his power and agency as a newly elected member of Congress to speak on behalf of his peers who are being denied the opportunity he has due to racism. He speaks to the entire U.S. Senate, a group of predominantly white men.*

*Source B: Ida B. Wells Exemplar Responses & Key Ideas*

- *The reading speaks to those who wronged Wells and discriminated against her because of her race as well as to her race of Black people who experience the same discrimination she does. The entire public is made aware of this injustice.*
- *To explain how Wells was a woman who rightfully bought a seat on the train car, and even though she may have “looked the part” of an elite, she was still discriminated against due to her race.*
- *Wells may not have been born a hero, but her simple act of denying being treated as a second-class citizen made her one.*
- *Wells used her power and agency by resisting oppression and defending herself on the train, suing the company that wronged her and bravely speaking out against it. This was rare and bold for not only a Black person, but a woman.*

**Exit Ticket Assessment:** Students should craft a written response to the following question: How did the Black elite demonstrate power and agency during the Reconstruction era?

- Student responses should include the following:
  - Background and context
  - Thesis statement
  - Two pieces of evidence and analysis
  - A conclusion

*Exemplar Response: The Black Elite demonstrated power and agency using their newfound freedom to seek roles in politics, journalism, education, financial wealth, and business ownership. Despite racism still being a major obstacle, Black Elites did not let this hinder them from speaking out about the injustices targeting them in front of white and black audiences as well as taking action.*



Day 4: Power, Agency, and The Civil Rights Era

Lesson Objective & Essential Question

Lesson Objective:

Students will...

- Identify how Black people and People of Color used their power and agency during the Civil Rights Movement (1950s-1980s) to rebuild during times of oppression by closely reading and analysis of historical artifacts

Essential Question:

How did Black people and people of color use their power and agency during the Civil Rights Movement (1950s-1980s) to rebuild during times of oppression?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Resources and Materials for this Lesson:

- Power, Agency & The Civil Rights Era (1950s - 1980s) Student Response Packet [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Power, Agency, and The Civil Rights Era Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- Sticky Chart Paper
- Chart Markers

Differentiation Tips and Tools:

- Glossary Footnotes
- Graphic Organizers
- ELL Translated Text for Emerging Scholars
- Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text

Lesson Activities

Lesson Plan Outline:

1. Do Now & Discourse (10 minutes)
2. Framing & Invest in the Question (5 mins)
3. Student Investigation | Independent Practice (25 mins)
4. Group Presentation and Discourse (10 minutes)
5. Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

Do Now & Discourse:

Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: In your own words, define the words, power and agency. Utilizing your prior knowledge, how have people resisted assimilation and oppression?

- c. Students will share their responses in a turn and talk.
- d. Lead a whole group discussion for 4 minutes.

Framing & Invest in the Question:

Say: “We have spent time exploring how Black people used power and agency during times of oppression to rebuild their lives and community between the 1600s and 1800s. Today, we continue to explore how this is seen throughout the mid-late 1900s.”

**Student Investigation | Independent Practice:** Students will analyze a series of primary source documents and then craft a poster in small groups to share their takeaways with the class.

1. Direct students to pages 2 - 10 in the student response packet. Choose to either print the seven exhibits captured in the packet or encourage students to use the packet.
2. Split students into small groups and assign each a unique exhibit to present to the class. Teachers could also provide structured choice and allow students to self-select a certain number of sources to analyze. Students should craft a poster that captures key takeaways from their specific exhibit.
  - a. Students should use the following questions on page 10 of the student response packet to prepare their presentation:
    - What was the key focus of your Exhibit? Explain
    - How does your Exhibit connect to resistance?
    - How did the people involved in the Exhibit demonstrate power and agency?
    - How does the Exhibit demonstrate that people of color used their power and agency to resist and rebuild during the Civil Rights Movement?
    - Bonus: What is the connection and impact to the present?
3. Have each group present their poster to the class. Encourage students who are listening to take notes.
4. Have students respond to the following questions in the student response packet independently or use the questions for a guided small group or whole group conversation:
  - a. How do all of these movements connect to the topic of resistance, power, and agency?
  - b. What impact did these events have on society during that time and even now in the current day?
  - c. Based on the other exhibits/presentations, which Exhibits(s) interest you the most? Why?
  - d. Why do they think some of these events aren't highlighted and taught commonly in schools? Why do you think these people or movements are unfamiliar to the minds of the average person?

**Exit Ticket Assessment:** Students should craft a written response to the following question: How did Black people and people of color use their power and agency during the Civil Rights Movement (1950s-1980s) to rebuild during times of oppression?

- a. Student responses should include the following:
  - Background and context
  - Thesis statement
  - Two pieces of evidence and analysis
  - A conclusion

Day 5: The Current Reconstruction

Lesson Objectives & Essential Questions

Lesson Objectives:

Student will...

- Draw comparisons and connections across the three Reconstructions within the U.S. to determine the validity of a Third Reconstruction
- Identify how Black Americans are sustaining power and agency in the current day

Essential Question:

To what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?

Lesson Materials & Resources

Resources for this lesson:

- The Current Reconstruction SRP Student Response Packet [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]
- The Current Reconstruction Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)] [[.pdf](#)]
- Projector with sound and/or individual laptops

Differentiation Tips and Tools:

- Glossary Footnotes
- Graphic Organizers
- ELL Translated Text for Emerging Scholars
- Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text

Lesson Activities

Lesson Plan Outline:

1. Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question (10 minutes)
2. Background and Context (10 minutes)
3. Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice ( 30 minutes)
4. Exit Ticket (10 minutes)

Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question:

1. **Do Now.** Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: What comes to mind when you think of the term “Reconstruction?” How would you define it in your own words? Try utilizing prior knowledge and/or paying close attention to the root and affixes of the term.
  - a. Students will share their responses in a turn and talk.
  - b. Lead a discussion for 4 minutes.

*Exemplar Response: When you put something back together and rebuild it: The period following the Civil War. The prefix “re” means again. The root “construct” means to build and the suffix “ion” denotes an action or condition. The term refers to a time when Black Americans rapidly gained new rights following enslavement, etc.*

2. **Invest in the Essential Question:** Lead students to invest in the essential question.

- a. Encourage students to name and circle the key terms and provide definitions to ensure everyone is aligned on the historical investigation.
- b. Have students rewrite the essential question in their own words to stamp the learning.

**Background and Context:**

1. **Framing.** Say: “Over the course of this unit, we have been grappling with the echoes and reverberations of Reconstruction within the American narrative. Today we’re going to start with tracing the arc of multiple Reconstructions as well as zoom in on the ways Black Americans cultivate[d] power and agency during the Third Reconstruction. Historically, Black Americans have used resistance to build power and agency.”
2. Have students read and annotate excerpts from [“THE NEW RECONSTRUCTION,” by Adam Serwer for \*The Atlantic\*](#) in their student response packets. As students read, they should think about the defining moment of each Reconstruction and the goals of each Reconstruction
  - a. **The First Reconstruction:** “The post–Civil War years were a moment of great peril for the emancipated, but also great promise. A stubborn coterie of Republican Radicals—longtime abolitionists and their allies—were not content to have simply saved the Union. They wanted to transform it: to make a nation where “all men are created equal” did not just mean white men.”
    - i. *Stop and Jot:* What was the goal of The First Reconstruction? What was the defining moment of The First Reconstruction?

*Exemplar Response: The goal of the First Reconstruction was to transform America into a more equal country. The defining moment was when Black Americans gained new rights, specifically the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment.*

- b. **The Second Reconstruction:** “When President John F. Kennedy introduced, in June 1963, what would become the Civil Rights Act, he saw it as fulfilling the work of Reconstruction. “One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons, are not fully free. They are not yet freed from the bonds of injustice. They are not yet freed from social and economic oppression,” Kennedy declared. “And this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free.”
      - i. *Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The Second Reconstruction? What were the goals of The Second Reconstruction?

*Exemplar Response: The defining moment of the Second Reconstruction was the introduction of the Civil Rights Act. The goals included the end of segregation and our nation becoming just for all citizens.*

- c. **The Third Reconstruction:** “The COVID-19 pandemic has both illuminated and magnified the persistent disparities between different races and income groups in the United States. From our healthcare system being pushed to the brink of its capacity in many regions to the widening of the opportunity gap in public schooling - the year 2020 reshaped the conciseness of America.

Concurrently in our communities, we witnessed the killings of three people: Ahmaud Aubrey, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. The nation erupted. According to some polls, more than 23 million people participated in anti-police-brutality protests, potentially making this the largest protest movement in American history. The dream of remaking society was once again at the forefront of many dinner table conversations.

Joe Biden has struck an ambitious note, invoking the legacy of Reconstructions past. “The history of this nation teaches us that in some of our darkest moments of despair, we’ve made some of our greatest progress,” Biden declared amid the Floyd protests in June. “The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth Amendments followed the Civil War. The greatest economic growth in world history grew out of the Great Depression. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of ’65 came on the tracks of Bull Connor’s vicious dogs ... But it’s going to take more than talk. We had talk before; we had protest before. We’ve got to now vow to make this at least an era of action and reverse the systemic racism with long-overdue concrete changes.”

- i. *Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The Third Reconstruction? What were the goals of The Third Reconstruction?

*Exemplar Response: The defining moment of the Third Reconstruction was the anti-police-brutality protests that took place during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The goals included the end of police brutality and reversing systemic racism.*

**Student Investigation & Independent Practice:** Students will work either in groups or independently to closely read and analyze the selected texts in the student response packet. Teachers should preview sources and identify which ones students should prioritize. Teachers could also provide structured choice and allow students to self-select a certain number of sources to analyze.

1. **Framing/Inquiry Launch:** Review the lesson objective and be sure that students understand the question by asking: What is this question asking us? What do we need to do, to be successful in answering it?

*Exemplar Responses:*

Source A: Police Brutality

*Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by organizing the largest protest movement in America to shed light upon Police brutality and racial violence.*

Source B: Immigration

*Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by confronting the inhuman treatment Black migrants faced at the hands of the US Border Patrol. Haitians are often treated differently than other migrant groups. Haitians continue to work towards liberation.*

Source C: Music

*Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by creating music that represented their diverse communities. Brooklyn Drill music served as the soundtrack for the summer of unrest in 2019. Black music has developed into the sound of America.*

Source D: Youth Action

*Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by embracing the spontaneous, digital and leaderless activism practiced by youth organizers. Social media has redefined protest and organizing.*

Source E: Health & Care

*Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by fighting against racial health disparities. Informal and local mutual aid networks continue to power communities of color.*

2. **Optional: Discuss and Debrief:** Have students share their findings.
  - a. The debrief discussion can be based on the teacher's choice of students after circulating and hearing strong responses. Alternatively, the teacher could opt to jigsaw out the debrief by

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chunking text and having designated scholars share about that portion of the text.

- b. As groups are sharing, other students should check their jots/notes to include any key takeaways they may have missed.

Exit Ticket Assessment:

Students should write a response to the following question: To what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?

- b. Student responses should include the following:

- Background and context
- Thesis statement
- Two pieces of evidence and analysis
- A conclusion

*Exemplar Response:*

*Reconstruction represents the historical period directly following the Civil War. This period represented America's transition from a slave society to a society striving to still realize a nation where "all men are created equal." Reconstruction can also be characterized as a period of rapid change where new rights transform the lived experience of so many. The Civil Rights Era draws many parallels to the original post-Civil War Reconstruction where racial progress was palpable. Some historians have called the current era, a Third Reconstruction with the pandemic and anti-police brutality protests serving as catalysts for change. Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by redefining activism, crafting black art, and organizing together to illuminate disparities and drive local change.*

*To begin with, Black Americans have redefined activism within the Third Reconstruction. In the United States, police continue to murder black people at disproportionate rates. Fatal shootings at the hands of the police have gained a new degree of transparency with the rise of mobile devices and their recording ability. The Black Lives Matter protests drew about "15 million to 26 million people in the United States" (Source A) which would represent "the largest movement in the country's history" (Source A) according to scholars and crowd-counting experts. Police Brutality has become a dinner-table conversation as more Americans start to acknowledge the roots of racial violence. This increased visibility is shifting the way police departments are operating. Through embracing the spontaneous, digital and leaderless activism practiced by youth organizers, Black power and agency have gone digital. Social media is redefining traditional protest and organizing. Information is broadcasted through informal networks and organic conversations and happens more frequently. The New York Times explains that through leveraging technology that was absent "to earlier generations, the activists of today have a digital playbook. Often, it begins with an injustice captured on video and posted to social media. Demonstrations are hastily arranged, hashtags are created and before long, thousands have joined the cause(Source D)." Youth activism is bringing new and vital voices into the conversation.*

*In addition, Black Americans sustain power and agency by creating music that represents their diverse communities. Brooklyn drill and trap have served as the soundtrack of the youth uprising during the summer of 2019. The Brooklyn drill sound is a combination of trap, Chicago drill, and UK drill. Pop Smoke took "Brooklyn Drill Global" (Source C) and introduced countless new listeners to drill and demonstrated the power of black expression as explained. In exploring the historical narrative of America's sound, it's hard to separate the African American influence that lives in almost every "American" song. Black music has developed into the sound of America. Jazz, blues, and gospel*

*music all grew from African roots and are mimicked today in some of our country's greatest hits. Ragtime paved the way for jazz, and elements from all these various styles continue to influence rock and roll and hip-hop music.*

*Furthermore, Black Americans continue to organize to illuminate disparities and drive local change. Carl Lindscoog, author of *Detain and Punish: Haitian Refugees and the Rise of the World's Largest Immigration Detention System* explores how the "United States' inhumane treatment of Haitian refugees, whom the country has often cast as criminals, unskilled, diseased, and poor, has been a central part of the immigration detention story (Source D)." This discriminatory immigration policy towards Haitian migrants is another attack on blackness. Haitians led the world with Haitian liberation with the first successful enslaved rebellion and yet they are still being targeted by racism and injustice. Haitians continue to fight against this system which consistently denies their asylum requests. Black Americans have also organized mutual aid systems to drive change within their local realities. Source E explains that historically within the US, "mutual-aid networks have proliferated mostly in communities that the state has chosen not to help." Through local organizing, mutual aid groups can sustain power and uplift the community.*

*Ultimately, the work of the Third Reconstruction is not fully complete. The Covid-19 pandemic coupled with a summer of activism has illuminated the progress we have made and the work that still lies uncompleted. Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by redefining activism, crafting black art, and organizing together to illuminate disparities and drive local change.*

Day 6: Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment

Lesson Objectives

Lesson Objectives:

Student will...

- Engage with essential questions in class discussions and/or essay composition
- Gather information to support an argument

Lesson Materials & Resources

Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment Socratic Seminar Student Response Packet [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]  
Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment Performance Task: Essay [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]  
Performance Task Rubrics [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]  
Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment Lesson Plan [[.docx](#)][[.pdf](#)]

Lesson Activities

Lesson Plan Outline:

1. Introduce the performance task(s)
2. Socratic Seminar
3. Essay
4. Review rubrics

Additional Administration Information:

Our goal is to optimize individual choice and autonomy while still ensuring students can demonstrate their mastery of the content. Teachers should select and offer the assessment option(s) that:

- Gathers information and data about their students' performance
- Supports students in attaining high learning goals
- Is differentiated and supports students' learning needs
- Informs future instructional design

Introduce the performance tasks: Using the Reconstruction in Five Acts Performance Task handout, share the goals and two options for the performance task with students.

1. Performance Task Option 1: Socratic Seminar
  - a. If needed, introduce the Socratic Seminal model by screening [AVID Socratic Seminar by Jennifer Madland](#). Use the video to discuss the keys to a successful Socratic Seminar.
  - b. Review the Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment Socratic Seminar Student Response Packet which includes the following:
    - Socratic Seminar prompts
    - Partner assessment
  - c. The content of the discussion will set students up well for writing a nuanced argument if you select both Performance Task options.
  - d. Equally important to the content is a focus on the process for discussion. The primary activity is a full class discussion, with multiple breakpoints within the whole class format to evaluate the discussion in the moment, refocus if necessary, and help students prepare for the next question.



- e. Use the student response packet and student participation to evaluate student performance in this activity.
2. Performance Task Option 2: Essay
  - a. Use the Reconstruction in Five Acts Assessment Performance Task: Essay handout to review the suggested prompts with students. The prompts are designed to mirror the Socratic Seminar prompts. Teachers may select from a prompt listed, provide structured choices to students by allowing them to self-select from a pre-approved list, or design a brand new prompt to reflect targeted content objectives.
  - b. Review the rubric from the handout.

Performance Task Option 1 - Socratic Seminar:

1. Desks should be arranged in a fish-bowl style where students are divided up into an inner and outer circle.
2. Students should have their annotated primary source packets and any discussion norms you have created. If this proves too challenging, set up the room in a single circle and monitor scholars by noticing their note-taking and the way they are following the discussion, as it will be difficult for every scholar to directly participate.
3. Review the suggested pacing guides below in *administrative information*.

Suggested Pacing for Socratic Seminar:

1. Suggested pacing model 1:
  - a. Launch, Framing, Planning - 15 minutes
  - b. Round 1 Socratic Seminar - 20 minutes
  - c. Transitioning between Inner and Outer Circle Partners - 5 minutes
  - d. Round 2 Socratic Seminar - 20 minutes
2. Suggested pacing model 2:

Part	Brief Description	Testing Time
1	Review Content and Plan	15 min
2	Performance Task	45 min
	Total Time	60 min

Performance Task Option 2 - Essay:

1. In the first part of the performance assessment, students prepare to demonstrate mastery by accomplishing the following goals in their composition:
  - a. breaking down a historical question
  - b. contextualizing the question using knowledge learned in the unit
  - c. analyzing primary source documents
  - d. logically organizing relevant evidence from the documents with the aid of a graphic organizer.
2. In the second part of the performance assessment, students independently craft their responses to the historical question in various mediums. Teachers should provide independent work time, student work

and materials from Part 1, and the resources included here to students, but they should not provide additional assistance or scaffolding.

Suggested Pacing for Essay Performance Task:

<b>Part</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Testing Time</b>
1	Read and Plan	45 min
2	Performance Task	45 min
	Total Time	90 min