

# HOW WOULD YOU GRADE THE RECONSTRUCTION PLANS?

There were many reasons that the North wanted to reunite with the South. Most importantly, they wanted to make the United States whole again.

To accomplish the reunion, plans for Reconstruction were created. They helped to establish the guidelines for the Southern states to reenter the union and to provide liberties to the freedmen (former slaves).

**Directions:**

- For each Reconstruction Issue introduced, read President Johnson's plan and the Congressional Radical Republican plan.
- Keep in mind that the goal of Reconstruction was to reunite the country in a stable and fair way.
- Then, give each plan a letter grade and explain your reasoning for assigning that grade.

A= Excellent plan, no weaknesses

B= Good plan, has only minor weaknesses

C= Some good parts and some weaknesses

D= Only limited strengths and major weaknesses

E= Plan is doomed for failure

*I would give this plan a grade of \_\_\_\_\_ because...*

Issue #1— Radical Republican Plan What grade?	Issue #1— President Johnson's Plan What grade?	Issue #2— Radical Republican Plan What grade?	Issue #2— President Johnson's Plan What grade?	Issue #3— Radical Republican Plan What grade?	Issue #3— President Johnson's Plan What grade?
Why?	Why?	Why?	Why?	Why?	Why?

What do YOU think would have been the "ideal" or best plan? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Issue 1:

# What should be done to Southerners who rebelled?

### Radical Republican's Plan

- Southerners should be punished so they would not rebel again. One idea was to confiscate (take away) all the plantations, divide up the land, and give it to the recently freed slaves (freedmen).
- Leaders of the South should lose their governmental positions. A new set of leaders should be brought in to reconstruct the South. Any person who held a leadership position before or during the war could not hold public office until forgiven by Congress.

### President Johnson's Plan

- Southerners had to take an oath (promise) to support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the U.S.. The oath also included a promise to obey all laws passed during the war, especially regarding the emancipation of slaves.
- Confederate officers, large landowners, and any other leaders of the South had to seek a special pardon (forgiveness from the government) if they wanted to regain their rights of citizens.
- Lincoln's idea of "Malice toward none" was a good one. Being kind and forgiving towards Southerners would heal wounds of the nation more effectively and quickly.

## Issue 2:

# What should Southern states be required to do to be readmitted into the Union?

### Radical Republican's Plan

- Southern states had given up statehood by seceding from the union. They needed to be punished for their actions.
- In order to come back into the union as a state, they would have to meet these conditions:
  - Call a convention (meeting) to write a new constitution
  - Guarantee African Americans full citizen rights
  - Guarantee African Americans the right to vote
  - Former Confederate officials and officers could not vote on these issues.

### President Johnson's Plan

- Individual leaders of the Southern states had made the decision to secede. Therefore, states should not be punished harshly for secession. It was in the best interest of the U.S. to reunite as quickly and easily as possible.
- In order to come back into the union, a state would have to meet these conditions:
  - Call a convention (meeting) to write a new constitution
  - Repeal (cancel) secession
  - Cancel (pay) all Confederate debts
  - Approve 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which abolished slavery

## Issue 3:

# What should be done for the freedmen (former slaves)?

### Radical Republican's Plan

- African Americans should be guaranteed equal rights and be assisted in establishing new lives as free people. Congress should pass laws giving land to freedmen and build schools for them. It is Congress' duty to help until African Americans could provide for themselves.
- Freedmen will only receive justice and security if they are considered full citizens. The right to vote is key.
- The military should have control over enforcing all laws in former Confederate states helping the freedmen. Without troops, the new laws could be ignored and discrimination would continue.

### President Johnson's Plan

- African Americans should be guaranteed equal rights only if individual states wanted to grant them to the freedmen. The federal government should not force Southern governments to accept new laws regarding freedmen.
- African Americans should not be guaranteed the right to vote. Only certain African Americans should be given the right to vote, like those who could read or write.