Reconstruction

One of the big questions regarding reconstruction after the Civil War was whether or not the former Confederacy should be punished, or brought back into the union with acts of forgiveness. There was also the question of justice for freed slaves, rebuilding cities and economies, and how to requirements for remittance into the union.

**Part I:**

Answer the following questions from information you hear and see from the Facing History video

1. What questions about Reconstruction remained unsolved as the war ended and Lincoln was assassinated?
2. Who was Andrew Johnson? What details about his background seemed to influence his thinking about Reconstruction?
3. What was Johnson’s plan for reconstruction?
4. What were the results of Johnson’s plan? What were the responses of different groups of Americans?

**Andrew Johnson’s Plan for Reconstruction**

* Former confederates who pledged loyalty to the union received amnesty and pardon; all of their property was restored, except slaves but including any land that had been provided to freed people in the closing months of the war.
* Some former confederates, including the highest officials in the confederacy and those who owned more than 20,000 dollars of property, had to apply to Johnson in person for pardon (Johnson granted pardons to nearly all that applied)
* States could be restored fully into the union after they wrote new constitutions that accepted the abolition of slavery, repudiated secession, and canceled the Confederate debt
* State conventions charged with writing new constitutions were not required to allow African Americans to participate.
1. Who benefits from President Johnson’s plan and who is harmed?
2. How does this plan propose to reunite and heal the country?
3. How will this plan bring about justice after the war? Does it deny justice to any group of Americans?

**Part II:**

Answer the questions as we watch the second half of the Facing History video

1. How did Republicans initially respond to president Johnson’s reconstruction? How did moderate and radical republicans differ in their response?
2. What specific position did radical republicans take that separated them from both the moderates and most other Americans in 1865?
3. How did Republicans seek to modify Johnson’s plans?
4. What happened to unite Republicans around a common vision for Reconstruction?
5. What specific laws and amendments did Republicans in Congress enact to redefine the nation’s plan for Reconstruction? What did those laws and amendments do?

**The reconstruction act of 1867**

Began a period of time known as radical reconstruction

* The south was divided into five military districts and governed by military governors until acceptable state constitutions could be written and approved by congress
* All males, regardless of race, but excluding former Confederate leaders, were permitted to participate in constitutional conventions that formed the new governments in each state.
* New state constitutions were required to provide universal manhood suffrage without regard for race
* States were required to ratify the 14th amendment in order to be readmitted to the union.
1. Who benefits from this plan? Who is harmed?
2. How will this plan help to reunite and heal the country?
3. How will this plan bring about justice after the war? Does it deny justice to any group of Americans?