

Reconstruction

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources

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Introduction

Primary sources are the building blocks of history. Using these sources to introduce students to historical periods offers students the opportunity to become historians themselves—to analyze the evidence, form hypotheses, and learn how to support arguments based on evidence. They learn what it means to interpret the past in ways that provide meaning for the present. Textual primary sources can often be difficult for students to engage with because they are often couched in unfamiliar language from a different historical era. Visual primary sources can prove more appealing and accessible to students, and they also involve different types of “reading” skills.

How to Use This Product

This PowerPoint® presentation is designed to walk students through the process of primary source interpretation. Slides help to focus students’ attention and train them how to “read” visual primary sources. Targeted questions and enlarged insets from images help to train students to see deeper into the historical record, to uncover evidence that, though plainly before their eyes, is not always obvious at first glance.

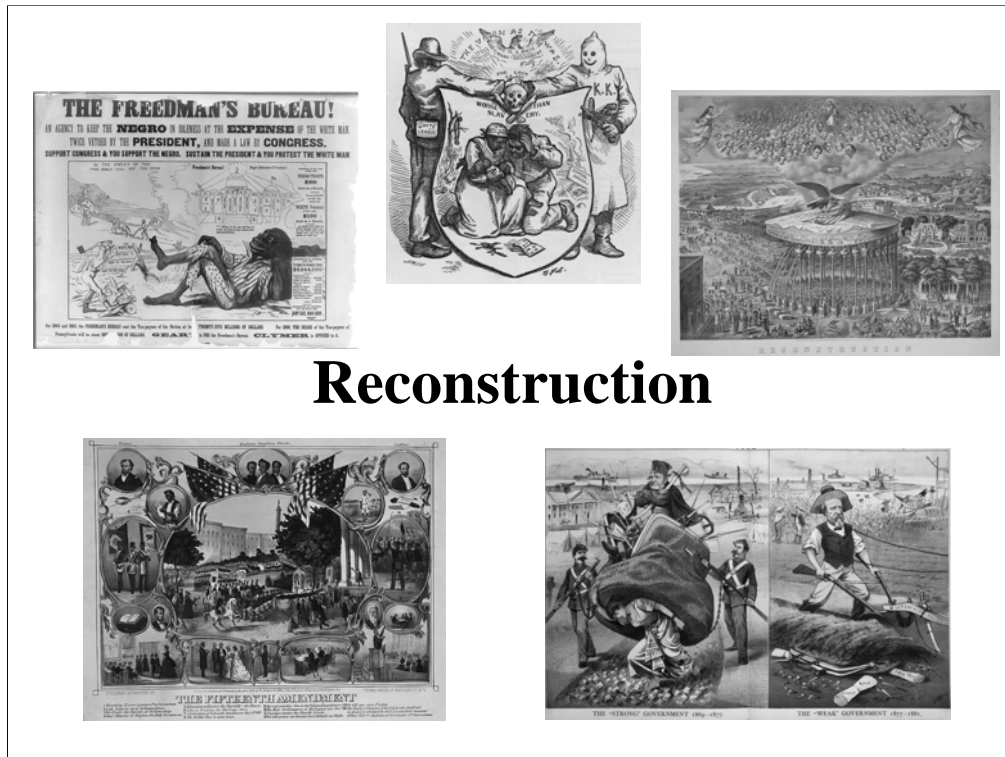
The posters provide visual reinforcement for the images analyzed in the presentation. Use them before or after the PowerPoint® analysis for either pre- or post-reading activities. In addition, we have provided extra images on each disc so that once the students are trained in the skills of analyzing visual primary sources they can further hone their skills. You can print them out and distribute as handouts for in-class or independent study, or you can import the images into PowerPoint® for students to analyze individually or with the class as a whole.

Let Us Know What You Think

At Social Studies School Service, we always strive to provide the best supplemental curriculum materials at a superior value. If you have feedback that could help us improve this product, requests for other titles in this series, or stories of how it has helped your students, please let us know. You can e-mail us at access@socialstudies.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Aaron Willis
Chief Education Officer
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Reconstruction

Reconstruction—the slow, painful process of bringing the Southern states back into the Union and rebuilding them after the Civil War—lasted from 1865 to 1877. Many had high hopes for the new, postbellum United States: ex-slaves, social reformers, Republican politicians, and many business interests. However, though the Confederacy had lost the war, many former rebels did all they could to ensure that they didn’t lose the peace as well. Northerners who came down to make their fortunes and reputations by taking part in the effort to rebuild the South politically, economically, and structurally were referred to derisively as “carpetbaggers,” so-called because of their “carpetbag” suitcases that they supposedly planned to stuff with Reconstruction money before heading back North again. Though some Northerners were motivated by a genuine desire to help the South recover, many others were shameless opportunists who only wanted to squeeze every dollar out of Reconstruction that they could; they eventually corrupted and undermined many of Reconstruction’s nobler goals. Ex-confederates also heaped abuse on Southerners who cooperated with the military and the Republicans, nicknaming them “scalawags.”

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party also tried to recover from the war. In the 1860 election, it had split into Northern and Southern factions. Healing that division and becoming a viable national party again proved a difficult task, especially with Republican politicians reminding the public at every opportunity that the most ardent secessionists and Confederates had been Democrats. The tactic of blaming the Democrats for the bloodshed of the Civil War became known as “waving the bloody shirt,” and Republicans used it nearly up through the end of the 19th century.

Though Reconstruction had several shining moments—the most important of which involved African Americans finally voting and holding public office—the potential it had offered eventually gave way to political maneuvering, corruption, and social strife.

Reconstruction



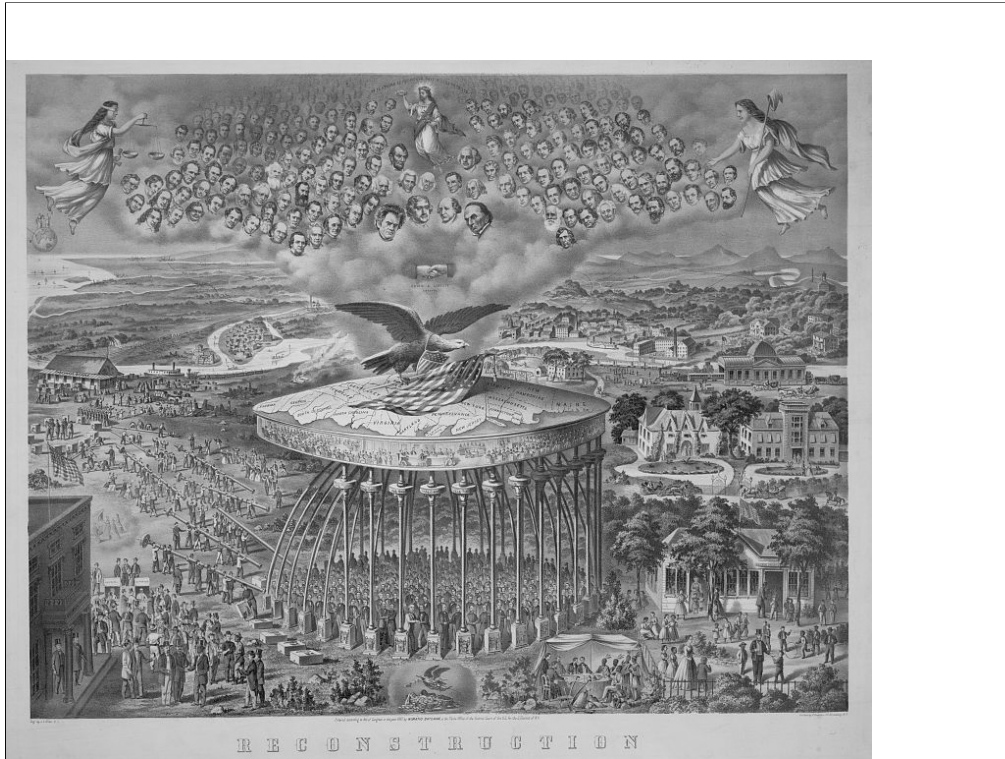
- Reconstruction
- Postwar Amendments
- The Freedmen's Bureau
- The KKK
- The End of Reconstruction

Reconstruction

- How would Southern states be readmitted to the Union?
- Would Congress or the president set the terms?
- Lincoln's plan: relatively lenient; "restoration"
- Radical Republican plan: harsher terms; "reconstruction"

Even before it became clear that the Union would win the Civil War, Northern politicians began to grapple with the question of how to readmit the Southern states to the U.S. In addition to coming up with the terms under which the Southern states could rejoin the Union, agreement had to be reached as to whether the president or Congress had the power and responsibility to set the guidelines for and supervise the process. In 1863, President Lincoln had issued a proclamation that set forth relatively lenient conditions for Southern states to be readmitted to the Union: essentially, when 10% of eligible voters swore an oath to support the Constitution and received a presidential pardon, a rebel state could rejoin the Union and create a new state government. This moderate plan, known as "restoration" or "presidential reconstruction," aimed to get the Southern states back in the Union as quickly as possible, with the entire process falling under the jurisdiction of the executive branch. In Lincoln's view, secession had been illegal, and therefore the Southern states had never really left the Union; instead, he saw them as "out of their proper practical relation with the Union," and his plan was designed to return them to this "proper practical relation."

A powerful group of Republican congressmen felt that Lincoln's plan did not require enough of the Southern states. Known as the "Radicals," these congressmen wanted to set conditions for readmission that would make substantial changes in Southern society and its electorate—"reconstructing" the South rather than simply restoring it to the Union. They felt that by seceding, the Southern states had forfeited their civil and political rights; they also felt that strong precautions had to be taken to prevent secessionists from taking over the state governments again. Radicals wanted to deny the vote to many ex-Confederate political and military officials, and to make ex-slaves full citizens and give them the right to vote. When Andrew Johnson succeeded to the presidency after Lincoln's assassination, battles between the executive branch and legislative branch over competing plans for the South—Radical reconstruction versus presidential reconstruction—would prove severely divisive, culminating in Johnson's impeachment and trial in 1867.



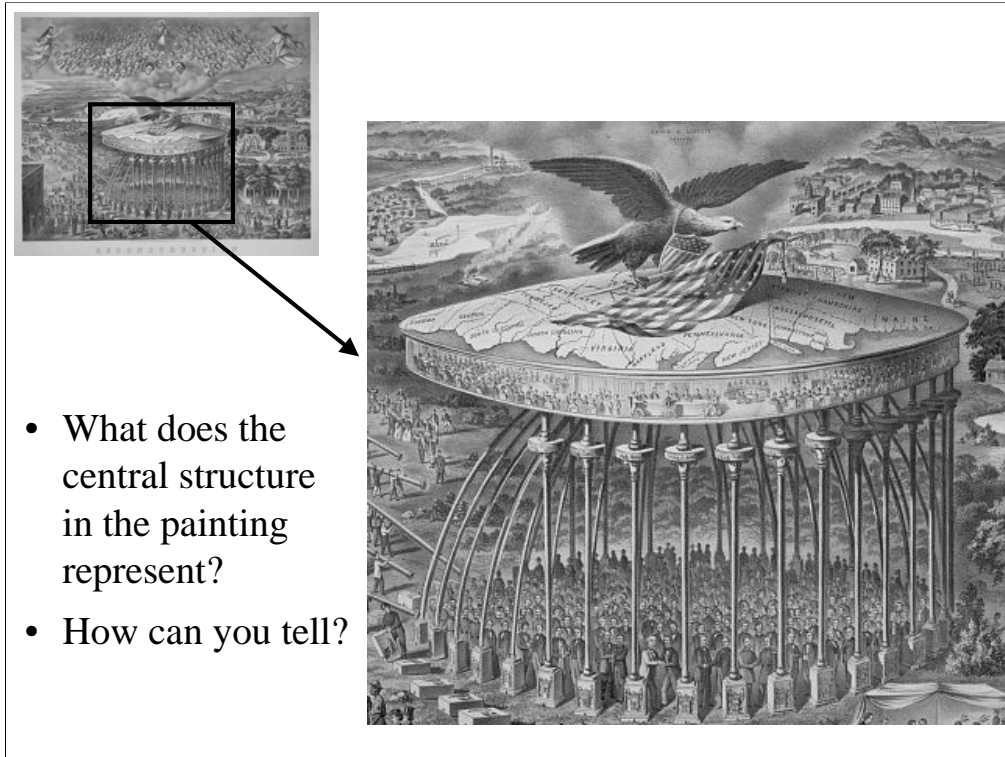
Give students about one minute to look at this image, then proceed to the following slides.



- What type of source is this?

- Does it appear to realistically depict something, or is it symbolic?

This source appears to be a painting. It is an allegory—a symbolical representation not meant to be realistic.



This structure represents the United States. We know this because of a couple of clues: First, the top of the structure has a sort of map with state names listed. Second, an eagle wearing a stars-and-stripes shield and clutching an American flag sits atop the structure.