

Name _____

Date _____

UNIT 4

WORKSHEET 5

The Reconstruction Amendments

Three amendments to the U.S. Constitution were ratified during the Reconstruction years. Here are their major provisions.

Amendment XIII

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Amendment XIV

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Amendment XV

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Directions: Answer these questions about the amendments.

Thirteenth Amendment

1. a. What is the basic provision of the Thirteenth Amendment? _____

- b. What does the Thirteenth Amendment *fail* to provide for? _____

Fourteenth Amendment

2. a. What people are U.S. citizens, according to the Fourteenth Amendment? _____

- b. What was the purpose of the statement of citizenship? _____

(continued)



Name _____

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UNIT 4
WORKSHEET 5

The Reconstruction Amendments (continued)

3. a. What are the "privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States"? _____

- b. Define "due process of law." _____

- c. Define "equal protection of the laws." _____

- d. Why were these clauses included in this amendment? _____

4. Summarize the other provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Section 2: _____

Section 3: _____

Section 4: _____

Fifteenth Amendment

5. a. What is the basic provision of the Fifteenth Amendment? _____

- b. Why was this amendment adopted? _____

- c. List some of the ways the South was able to avoid application of this amendment.

Extra Challenge: Find examples in news reports of the "due process" and "equal protection" clauses of the Constitution being applied today.



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UNIT 4
WORKSHEET 6

Black Codes

After the slaves became free, southern states passed laws to keep blacks from real freedom. Here are some examples of these "black codes."



Mississippi Vagrant Act (1865)

All freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes over the age of eighteen years, found with no lawful employment or business, or found unlawfully assembling themselves together, either in the day or night time . . . shall be deemed vagrants, and on conviction thereof shall be fined . . . and imprisoned.

In case any freedman, free Negro or mulatto shall fail for five days after the imposition of any fine . . . to pay the same, that it shall be . . . the duty of the sheriff . . . to hire out said freedman, free Negro or mulatto, to any person who will, for the shortest period of service, pay said fine.

Louisiana Farm Labor Act (1865)

Bad work shall not be allowed. Failing to obey reasonable orders, neglect of duty, and leaving home without permission will be deemed disobedience; impudence, swearing, or indecent language to or in the presence of the employer, his family, or agent, or quarreling and fighting with one another, shall be deemed disobedience [and fined]. . . . All difficulties arising between the employers and laborers shall be settled by the former.

Florida Act on Public Places (1866)

If any Negro, mulatto, or other person of color shall intrude himself into any religious or other public assembly of white persons, or into any railroad car or other public vehicle set aside for the exclusive accommodation of white people, he shall be deemed to be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be sentenced to stand in the pillory for one hour, or be whipped.

Mississippi Apprentice Law (1865)

It shall be the duty of all . . . civil officers . . . to report to the probate courts . . . all freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes under the age of eighteen . . . who are orphans, or whose parent or parents have not the means or who refuse to provide for and support said minors . . . the clerk of said court [will] apprentice said minors to some competent and suitable person . . . the former owner of said minors shall have the preference.

(continued)



Name _____

Date _____

UNIT 4
WORKSHEET 6

Black Codes (continued)



Mississippi Penal Law (1865)

Any freedman, free Negro, or mulatto committing malicious mischief . . . seditious speeches, insulting gestures, language, or acts, or assaults on any person . . . shall, upon conviction thereof . . . be fined . . . and may be imprisoned.

Directions: You are a free black person living under the provisions of the "black codes" you've just read above. Put a checkmark next to any of the things you do below that violate one of the codes. Also, note which part of what law you're violating.

- _____ 1. You leave work at noon to visit your sick grandmother.

- _____ 2. You get together with a group of friends for a game of dice.

- _____ 3. You join a group of whites meeting to discuss crop prices.

- _____ 4. A coworker hits you with her hoe, and you start yelling at her.

- _____ 5. A white man driving a wagon forces you off the road, and you shake your fist at him in anger.

- _____ 6. Your church isn't holding services this Sunday, so you attend the whites' Baptist church services instead.

- _____ 7. You're tired and it's extremely hot, so you take a 10-minute break from work.

- _____ 8. You're 16 and your parents have both died; you are running your family's small farm.

Challenge Question: Under the "black codes," why would a dispute between you and your employer almost certainly be decided in your employer's favor?

