

**Unit Title: History is History, Isn't It?**

**Subject/Topic Area/ Grade Level(s):** Reconstruction of the United States/Grades 9-12

**Designed By:** Smyrna and Caesar Rodney School Districts

**Time Frame:** 1 Week

**Date:** March 2009

**Brief Summary of Unit** (This should include a brief unit summary including a description of unit goals, rationale for the approach taken, and where it appears in the course of study.)

In *Lesson 1*, students will be introduced to the different plans for Reconstruction, so that they can use this information to create their own plan for Reconstruction as if they lived in 1865. They will be presented with the same questions and problems that the President and Congress faced during Reconstruction. Once complete, they will then assess what elements of their personality made their plans different than others in the class. This will be an introduction into how our backgrounds play a role in the history that we create, while also introducing them to the different plans for Reconstruction

*Author, Melissa Buchanan, Smyrna High School*

In *Lesson 2*, students will examine the effects of Reconstruction policies on the U.S. Then, they will revisit the differences between an historical fact and an historical interpretation. Finally, students will apply the facts they have gathered to help them make their own interpretations about the effectiveness of Reconstruction policies following the American Civil War.

*Author, Zachary Taylor, Caesar Rodney High School*

In *Lesson 3*, students will explore different historical accounts of Reconstruction, so that they can understand why historians might arrive at different interpretations of the same event. They will evaluate interpretations of Reconstruction spanning from 1897 to 1995. Once complete, they will assess the factors that influence different historians' interpretations of Reconstruction and determine if there is such a thing as completely unbiased history.

*Author, Michael Feldman, Smyrna High School*

**Stage 1: Desired Results**  
(Determine What Students Will Know, Do and Understand)

**Delaware History Content Standard** (Write out the Delaware History standard for which instruction is provided in this unit and which are ultimately assessed in the unit.)

History Standard Three: Students will compare competing historical narratives, by contrasting different historian's choice of questions, use and choice of sources, perspectives, beliefs, and points of view, in order to demonstrate how these factors contribute to different interpretations.

**Big Idea** (This should include transferable core concepts, principles, theories, and processes that should serve as the focal point of curricula, instruction, and assessment. Ex: Manifest Destiny, fighting for peace.)

Reconstruction  
Interpretation

**Unit Enduring Understandings** (This should include important ideas or core processes that are central to the unit and transferable to new situations beyond the classroom. Stated as full-sentence statements, the understandings specify what we want students to understand about the Big Ideas Ex: All sources contain some level of bias.)

*Students will understand that...*

Students will understand that the backgrounds of historians and the strategies they employ produce biases that often lead to competing interpretations.

**Unit Essential Question(s)** (This should include open-ended questions designed to guide student inquiry and focus instruction for "uncovering" the important ideas of the content. Please consult the history clarification documents at [http://www.doe.k12.de.us/ddoe/files/pdf/History\\_Clarifications.pdf](http://www.doe.k12.de.us/ddoe/files/pdf/History_Clarifications.pdf) for a list of essential questions that the Delaware Department of Education has deemed to be in alignment with the standards.)

- Does the way research is conducted matter?
- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?
- Is there such a thing as completely unbiased history?

**Knowledge & Skills** (This should include key knowledge and skills that students will acquire as a result of this unit. Ex: difference between a primary and secondary source, historians use different sources.)  
It should also include what students will eventually be able to do as a result of such knowledge and skill Ex: analyze a primary source document,)

*Students will know...*

- The different views and plans of Reconstruction
- Identify the outcomes of Reconstruction policies.
- How a historian's backgrounds affected their beliefs
- How their own beliefs affect their opinions about history

*Students will be able to...*

- Create their own plan for Reconstruction based on historical examples.
- Create their own thesis about Reconstruction
- Analyze different historians' works for beliefs, perspectives, and background
- Write a textbook account based on historians' works in Reconstruction.

(Design Assessments To Guide Instruction)

(This should include evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not the Desired Results identified in Stage One have been achieved? [Anchor the unit in a performance task that requires transfer, supplemented as needed by other evidence – quizzes, worksheets, observations, etc.]

**Suggested Performance Task(s)** (Strive for an authentic task that will yield evidence of student mastery of the targeted benchmark. Ex: a book or movie review, closing statement, a Photo Story documentary, a student composed section of a history text, a timeline.)

The Performance Task below is *Handout #11*

### You're the Historian

"Reconstruction in the South was a complete failure. Vicious Northerners used the military to enact revenge and not reunion. Carpetbaggers took advantage of the depressed Southern economy and infrastructure for their personal gain. Rather than trusting experienced, white, Southern politicians, Northern Republicans thrust ignorant, illiterate blacks into positions of power for which they were entirely unfit. The Republicans were not interested in reconstructing the South, but in ensuring their domination over the defeated region."

--Jonathan "Reb" Stuart, *Richmond Examiner*, 1892

**Your role:** You are an historian of the Reconstruction era

**Situation:** In your research for your new book on Reconstruction you've uncovered the above historian's work.

**Product:** Write a letter challenging [Stuart's](#) interpretation of Reconstruction. [Do you see this as a "transfer" task i.e. the context is still Reconstruction.](#)

Your letter must include:

- *First Paragraph:* An introduction detailing your interpretation of the success of Reconstruction and why you agree or disagree with Jonathan Stuart's interpretation.
- *Second Paragraph:* Offer facts that you have learned in this lesson that counter or confirm Mr. Stuart's interpretation.
- *Third Paragraph:* Make *two* assumptions about the factors (choice of questions, use and choice of sources, point of view, background, perspective, beliefs) that may have positively or negatively influenced Stuart's work.
- *Fourth Paragraph:* Closing and summary of why your interpretation of Reconstruction is more accurate than Jonathan "Reb" Stuart's account.

*\*Note to teacher, the passage above is an adaptation of the William Dunning quote from Handout #4*

**Rubrics for Performance Task** (Be sure to align your rubric to the benchmark. A student should not be able to score

O'Malley 6/9/09 9:33 PM

Deleted: their

O'Malley 6/9/09 9:34 PM

Deleted:

O'Malley 6/9/09 9:34 PM

Deleted: -

well on a rubric if he or she has not mastered the standard/benchmark itself.)

### Transfer Task Rubric

Scoring Category	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score point 1
Introduction details their interpretation of the success of Reconstruction.	Their interpretation is <b>well developed</b>	This interpretation is <b>partially developed</b>	The interpretation is <b>minimally developed</b>
Level and number of supporting facts contained in the letter.	There are <b>numerous, relevant</b> facts that <b>effectively</b> support their analysis	There are a <b>few, relevant</b> facts that support their analysis	There are <b>minimal, relevant or irrelevant</b> facts that <b>ineffectively</b> support their analysis.
Factors that influenced historian's interpretation	Two assumptions made with <b>well-developed</b> explanations.	Two assumptions made with <b>partially</b> developed explanations.	Less than two assumptions made with <b>minimal</b> explanation.
Closing details why their interpretation is more accurate	Their interpretation is <b>well developed</b>	This interpretation is <b>partially developed</b>	The interpretation is <b>minimally developed</b>
Uses content-appropriate vocabulary in order to demonstrate understanding	Content-appropriate vocabulary is <b>well developed</b> and evident	<b>Some</b> evidence of content-appropriate vocabulary usage	<b>Minimal</b> evidence of content-appropriate vocabulary usage

**Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Above the Standard: 13 to 15**

**Meets the Standard: 8 to 12**

**Below the Standard: 5 to 7**

**Other Evidence** (This could include tests, quizzes, prompts, student work samples, and observations used to collect diverse

evidence of student understanding.)

Formative Assessments are embedded into the lesson through Warm-ups and Checks for Understanding.

Teachers can collect these to use for assessment grades.

**Student Self-Assessment and Reflection** (This should include opportunities for students to monitor their own learning. Ex: reflection journals, learning logs, pre- and post-tests, editing own work.)

Opportunities for self-monitoring are found throughout the unit, primarily through warm-ups and checks for understanding. There are multiple opportunities for students to reflect upon their work, as well as that of their classmates.

**Lesson # 1**

***Creating your own Reconstruction***

**Author: Melissa Buchanan**

**Lesson Description:** Briefly describe what the students will be doing in this lesson and why.

- Students will be introduced to the different plans for Reconstruction, so that they can use this information to create their own plan for Reconstruction as if they lived in 1865. They will be presented with the same questions and problems that the President and Congress faced during Reconstruction. Once complete, they will then assess what elements of their personality made their plans different than others in the class. This will be an introduction into how our backgrounds play a role in the history that we create, while also introducing them to the different plans for Reconstruction.

**Time Required:** Approximately how long will it take to complete the instructional activities described in this lesson?

- 2-3 class periods

**Essential Question Addressed:** What is the essential question for this lesson?

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?

**Enduring Understanding:** What is the enduring understanding at which students should arrive?

- History and people are always influenced by their backgrounds and beliefs and as historians we should be wary of this fact.

**Materials:**

- Handout #1, *Plans for Reconstruction*
- Handout #2, *Creating your own plan for Reconstruction*
- Handout #3, *Determining Bias*

**Procedures:**

**Stage1: Introduction of Reconstruction Plans (Gathering Information)**

*(What were the plans of Reconstruction?)*

Post the following warm-up question for students to answer: "What effect did the Civil war have on the United States?"

- Potential answer could be: devastated southern economy, freed slaves, unemployment, many people in "limbo" such as southern citizens, freed slaves, etc.
- This warm-up should serve as a review for the Civil War.

Have the student complete a think/pair/share on what they believe the government should deal with first and explain why. (Freedmen rights, return of the south, [list all the key possibilities rather than "etc. Don't assume that users of this lesson have the content background](#)) etc.)

- During this activity students answer the question first on their own, then add to their partners paper and then share with the class.
- During the sharing have students explain why they believe that to be the most important thing to focus on.
- Use this time to explain the different theories that were present at this time as to what should be done with the south. Explain that much of it was based on the different backgrounds and political ideas of the leaders of the nation ([this piece needs to be developed as it provides the support needed to. Identify the supporters of the major plans then have the students "gather information" on aspects of their background that may have influenced their positions](#)).

Complete worksheet #1, *Plans for Reconstruction*, to show the different elements of the plans. Information can come from textbooks, videos, online resources, etc. The following resources could be used if textbooks are not available ([the value of the lesson increases enormously if you provide a summary of the plans?](#)):

- Aftershock, History Channel
- Reconstruction & Segregation, Video by Schlesinger Media
- United Streaming Video called *Reconstruction*. It reviews the end of the war and all of the plans. It also goes through the implementation of Johnson's plan. <http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=25832F53-4D5F-44E9-AC38-C1CC5E0C4892&blnFromSearch=1&productcode=US>

Once complete, have students create a Venn diagram comparing the different elements of the plans. For this the students should create a three-way diagram to compare. An example of this can be found at the bottom of Worksheet #1, *Reconstruction Plans*

**Check for Understanding:**

- Choose one of the plans that were discussed. What was the major influence of the plan ([unclear...which plan?](#))? Explain your answer.

O'Malley 6/9/09 9:41 PM

Deleted:

O'Malley 6/10/09 10:20 AM

Deleted: "



## Stage 2: Creating our own Plans (Extending and Refining)

(How would I do it?)

Post the following warm-up questions for the students to answer: "After viewing the plans for Reconstruction, what would have been your main focus (of your plan???) for Reconstruction? Why? Which plan did you most agree with? Why?" [Would a different question better prepare students for understanding the benchmark e.g. Identify one plan for Reconst and explain why a person might have supported that plan.](#)

- Some answers could be: quick reconstruction by allowing the states to come in quickly, rights for freed people, fixing the economy, etc. But allow students to be creative in their responses, as they will use this as the basis for their plans.

Give students Worksheet #2, *Creating your own Plan for Reconstruction*. Students will use this sheet to write their plans for Reconstruction. This will help them to brainstorm their ideas while keeping in mind the problems that they faced during Reconstruction.

Once complete, have students present their plans in one of three ways:

- Write a speech to Congress detailing the elements of their plan and then present this speech to the class.
- Create a bill to present to Congress that looks like an official aged document, complete with all of the elements of the plan
- Create a poster of your plan for the masses. It should cover all of the elements and be visually appealing.

### Check for Understanding:

- What in your background [may have influenced your choice of Reconstruction plans](#)? Explain your answer.

## Stage 3: Determining Bias (Application)

(Examining the historian)

While students are presenting their plans, have the other students work on Worksheet #3, *Determining Bias*.

Choose one of your classmates' plans that were presented and choose one of the following elements to explain how your classmate's plan was affected by that element: [Is there a way that students might be prepared for this earlier in the lesson e.g. asking a warm-up question such as why might some people in Delaware say that the Eagles are the best NFL team while others say that the Ravens are the best NFL team \(could do the same with Hollywood actors, movies, presidents, ice cream etc.\)](#) [The key is to get them thinking about what might influence conclusions in a context that they understand and find engaging BEFORE getting into a remote subject such as Reconstruction.](#)

- Background
- Opinions
- Perspectives
- Beliefs and Point of View

Explain what element affected [your classmate's](#) plan and why. Make sure to use examples from the plan.

### Check for Understanding:

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? Explain your answer.
- Why is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?

O'Malley 6/9/09 10:01 PM

Deleted: do you think helped to create your plan for

O'Malley 6/9/09 10:08 PM

Deleted: their

O'Malley 6/9/09 10:08 PM

Deleted: ir

Explain. [While the lesson prepares students to identify factors that might influence a person's conclusion, does it prepare them to explain "why" looking into a person's background might be important?](#)

**Debrief:**

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history?
- Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?
- Why might historians have arrived at different interpretations about Reconstruction?
- Is there such a thing as completely unbiased history?

From History Standard One (9-12), *Social Studies Clarification Document*:

In the 9-12 cluster, History Standard Three introduces students to the concept that historical accounts of the same event may differ because of research design decisions made by a historian and because of a historian's personal background. In cluster 6-8, students learned that the questions asked and how sources were used greatly influenced the historian's perspective. But there is more. What forces molded and shaped that historian? What did he/she live through? What were the major ideas floating in the air when they grew to intellectual maturity? It is almost impossible for us to imagine today, but in the Great Depression of the 1930s many people came to believe that capitalism had failed and could never be revived. Therefore, modern man faced two choices, fascism or communism, the only two -isms that had a chance to continue. Many intellectuals acquired a bias in favor of fascism or communism during the 1930s, which influenced their later research and writing. For example, since communism was considered such a horrible threat to our society, leaders were justified in restricting civil liberties to make certain we will win in the long run. A historian writing about McCarthyism might approach it from either side -- in favor of restricting or defending those civil liberties. The student gains great insight from becoming aware of what could have influenced that historian. Another example: Historians' accounts of slavery and the antebellum South that were written during the 1950s and 1960s were greatly shaped by the civil rights movement and the perspectives acquired by it.

## **Lesson # 2**

### ***Reconstruction: Using Facts to Make Interpretations***

**Author: Zach Taylor**

**Lesson Description:** Briefly describe what the students will be doing in this lesson and why.

- In this lesson, students will examine the effects of Reconstruction policies on the U.S. Then, they will revisit the differences between an historical fact and an historical interpretation. Finally, students will apply the facts they have gathered to help them make their own interpretations about the effectiveness of Reconstruction policies following the American Civil War.

**Time Required:** Approximately how long will it take to complete the instructional activities described in this lesson?

- 2-3 hours

**Essential Question Addressed:** What is the essential question for this lesson?

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?

**Enduring Understanding:** What is the enduring understanding at which students should arrive?

- History and people are always influenced by their backgrounds and beliefs and as historians we should be wary of this fact.

**Materials:**

- Handout #4, Outcomes of Reconstruction
- Handout #5, Fact vs. Interpretation
- Handout #6, Fact vs. Interpretation and Reconstruction
- Dictionary
- Textbook

## Procedures:

### Stage 1: Outcomes of Reconstruction

*(What actually happened as a result of Reconstruction policies?)*

Post the following warm-up question for students to answer: "If you were a United States Senator, which Reconstruction plan would you have supported? Why?" [Might/should a student ask about the background of the Senator after doing lesson 1?](#)

- This warm-up should serve as a review of the three plans for Reconstruction that were presented in the first lesson of the unit. It could also serve as the catalyst of a larger discussion about the difficulties in coming to a consensus in a democratic government.

Pass out Handout #4, *Outcomes of Reconstruction*

- Divide the class into pairs. Assign each pair TWO of the outcomes from Handout #4.
- Instruct the students to use their textbook to explain the effects of the two outcomes they were assigned on Handout #4.
- After students have completed their analysis, call on pairs to share their answers and write them on the board so the class can complete Handout #4.
- As the answers are written on the board, discuss with students whether these effects could be interpreted as successes or failures of reconstruction. [Have students categorize the effects and relate these effects to the benchmark's attention to "choice of sources." After categorizing into "Effects that Support Success of Reconstruction" and "Effects that Support Failure of Reconstruction," ask students take a stand i.e. do you think Reconstruction was a success or a failure? Assuming that there is some disagreement, note how this illustrates how a choice of sources might impact any historians interpretations and explain why historians often disagree.](#)

**Check for Understanding:** Have students create a table to categorize the successes and failures of Reconstruction using the outcomes on Handout #4.

### Stage 2: Interpreting Reconstruction

*(How can we develop interpretations about Reconstruction?)*

Post the following warm-up question for the students to answer: "In your own words, what is the difference between a fact and an interpretation? Provide an example of each." [Distinguishing facts from interpretations is the focus of History 2. How can you connect this activity to History 3.](#)

- This warm-up will allow the teacher to gain an understanding of what the students already know about the difference between historical facts and interpretations. It will also [springboard into](#) a class discussion on why historians must distinguish between the two terms.

Give students Handout #5, *Fact vs. Interpretation*. Students will use this sheet to first define the difference between a fact and an interpretation, and then identify current examples of the two terms.

O'Malley 6/9/09 10:25 PM

Deleted: introduce

This assignment will clarify any uncertainties [regarding the difference between facts & interpretations](#).

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:29 PM

Deleted: left over from the warm-up

Next, students will be asked to take the information that they recorded on Handout #4 to complete Handout #6, Fact vs. Interpretation and Reconstruction. Students will be informed that the information on Handout #6 ([check this – Handout 6 contains student interpretations?](#)) represents historical facts, and that those facts will be used to make historical interpretations on Handout #6. They will make these interpretations by composing thesis statements about Reconstruction that could potentially be used for a research paper.

**Check for Understanding:** Students will present their thesis statements to the class, and then submit them to the teacher. During their presentations, students will be asked to defend their interpretations, and explain what influenced them to make the interpretations they did. This will lead into the third lesson of this unit.

**Debrief:**

- Does differentiating between fact and interpretation matter? ([History Standard 2](#))
- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history?
- Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?
- Why might historians have arrived at different interpretations about Reconstruction?

**Lesson # 3**

***Interpreting Reconstruction***

**Author: Michael Feldman**

**Lesson Description:** Briefly describe what the students will be doing in this lesson and why.

- Students will explore different historical accounts of Reconstruction, so that they can understand why historians might arrive at different interpretations of the same event. They will evaluate interpretations of Reconstruction spanning from 1897 to 1995. Once complete, they will assess the factors that influence different historians' interpretations of Reconstruction and determine if there is such a thing as completely unbiased history.

**Time Required:** Approximately how long will it take to complete the instructional activities described in this lesson?

- 2 class periods

**Essential Question Addressed:** What is the essential question for this lesson?

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?

**Enduring Understanding:** What is the enduring understanding at which students should arrive?

- History and people are always influenced by their backgrounds and beliefs and as historians we should be wary of this fact.

**Materials:**

- Handout #7, *Textbook Accounts of Reconstruction*

- Handout #8, *Deciphering Historical Interpretations*
- Handout #9, *Historical Interpretations of Reconstruction*
- Handout #10, *Changing Interpretations of Reconstruction*
- Handout #11 *The Pursuit of History?*

**Procedures:**

**Stage 1: Introduction of Interpretations of Reconstruction (Gathering Information)**  
*(How do interpretations of Reconstruction differ?)*

Post the following warm-up question for students to answer: Suppose there is a food fight in the cafeteria. Afterwards a group of people are hauled into the office and asked, "What happened?" How might their stories differ and why?

- *Potential answer could be:* one person might lie to avoid getting in trouble, maybe one person didn't see it happen and heard the story second hand, maybe one person thought it was a lot of fun and another is angry because he/she got hit with food, maybe one is a student and one is a teacher or administrator, etc.
- This warm-up should serve as a correlation to the forces that shape an historian's interpretations of events. Explain to students that several factors played into each person's story about the food fight. The same factors affect an historian's account of an event. They include the historian's choice of questions, use and choice of sources, perspectives, beliefs, and points of view.
- List these factors on the board. Tell student's to suppose the principal had to prepare a report on the food fight. Ask them the following questions:
  - How might the principal's report on the food fight be affected by his/her:
    - Choice of questions about the food fight?
    - Use and choice of sources of information about the food fight?
    - Personal perspective?
    - Personal experience(s)?
    - Personal beliefs? [Nice activity.](#)

Pass out Handout #7, *Textbook Accounts of Reconstruction* and Handout #8, *Deciphering Historical Interpretations*.

- Divide the class in half. Assign each half of the class one the two textbook accounts on Handout #1.
- Instruct the students to read their assigned passage and answer the questions on Handout #2 according to what they have read.
- After students have completed their analyses, call on students to share their answers.
- Use this time to emphasize the different factors that may have contributed to the differences in the textbook accounts. They include the choice of questions, use and choice of sources,

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:39 PM  
 Deleted: y

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:42 PM  
 Deleted: 1

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:42 PM  
 Deleted: 2

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:40 PM  
 Deleted: i

perspectives, beliefs, and points of view.

**Check for Understanding:** Have students answer the following: In your opinion, which of the factors discussed had the most influence on the differences in the two textbook accounts. Explain your answer.

**Stage 2: Changing Interpretations of Reconstruction (Extending and Refining)**  
(How have interpretations of Reconstruction changed over time?)

Post the following warm-up questions for the students to answer: "Describe something (person, food, sport's team, type of music...) that you have changed your opinion of since you were a child. Why has your opinion changed?"

- *Potential answers could be related to changes in their:* attitudes, perspectives, points of view, experiences, sources of information, etc...
- Use this opportunity to explain how historical interpretations of the same event change over time.

Give students Handout #3 ([check the #s assigned to your handouts in this unit](#)), *Historical Interpretations of Reconstruction*. Students will use this sheet to analyze a series of historical interpretations of the Reconstruction era. Explain that the questions they see at the top of each column were the same questions they used in their previous analysis of the textbook accounts.

Divide the class into five groups. Next, pass out Handout #4, *Changing Interpretations of Reconstruction* and assign each group one of the historical interpretations.

Each group of students must complete the following for their passage:  
(These steps also appear on Handout #2, *Deciphering Historical Interpretations*.)

**Step 1: Decode the Vocabulary**

Read the entire passage. After reading go back and highlight terms that you did not understand. Define those terms using your textbook, a dictionary, or other classroom resources.

**Step 2: Re-read the Passage**

Now that you have decoded any difficult vocabulary, re-read the entire passage.

**Step 3: Answer the following questions on Handout #3, *Historical Interpretations of Reconstruction***

- What is the author's theory/interpretation about Reconstruction?
- What reasons did the author give to support their theory?
- What assumptions can you make about the author's background that may have

contributed to their interpretation?

After each group has completed their passage, bring the class together and share their findings with the other groups. Each group should fill out the rest of the chart on Handout #3. Use this opportunity to emphasize the differences in the interpretations, how they have changed over time, and factors about the author's background that may have contributed to the differences.

**Check for Understanding:** After evaluating all interpretations and placing them on the chart, ask students:

- Why might historians have arrived at different interpretations about Reconstruction?
- Is there such a thing as completely unbiased history?

### **Stage 3: History is History, Isn't It? (Application/Formative Assessment)**

*(History is History, Isn't It?)*

Pass out Handout #5 ([check Handout # below](#)), *History is History, Isn't It?* Have students complete the assignment.

#### **Additional/Alternative Assessment:**

#### **These two historians have opposing opinions about Reconstruction:**

*"Reconstruction governments were charged with the responsibility of securing hard-won rights guaranteed to former slaves by constitutional amendments, but they failed to make these guarantees stick." --Historian A*

*"Reconstruction was an attempt to create a social and political revolution despite economic collapse and the opposition of a large portion of the white South. Under these conditions its accomplishments were extraordinary." --Historian B*

Why would these two historians disagree about Reconstruction? *Support your answer with evidence from the quotes.*

#### **Debrief:**

- To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history?
- Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read?
- Why might historians have arrived at different interpretations about Reconstruction?
- Is there such a thing as completely unbiased history?

From History Standard Three (9-12), *Social Studies Clarification Document:*

In the 9-12 cluster, History Standard Three introduces students to the concept that historical accounts of the same event may differ because of research design decisions made by a historian and because of a historian's personal background. In cluster 6-8, students learned that the questions



asked and how sources were used greatly influenced the historian's perspective. But there is more. What forces molded and shaped that historian? What did he/she live through? What were the major ideas floating in the air when they grew to intellectual maturity? It is almost impossible for us to imagine today, but in the Great Depression of the 1930s many people came to believe that capitalism had failed and could never be revived. Therefore, modern man faced two choices, fascism or communism, the only two -isms that had a chance to continue. Many intellectuals acquired a bias in favor of fascism or communism during the 1930s, which influenced their later research and writing. For example, since communism was considered such a horrible threat to our society, leaders were justified in restricting civil liberties to make certain we will win in the long run. A historian writing about McCarthyism might approach it from either side -- in favor of restricting or defending those civil liberties. The student gains great insight from becoming aware of what could have influenced that historian. Another example: Historians' accounts of slavery and the antebellum South that were written during the 1950s and 1960s were greatly shaped by the civil rights movement and the perspectives acquired by it.

**Resources & Teaching Tips** (Consider the two questions below when completing this section.)

- **What text/print/media/kit/web resources best support this unit?**
  - **America: Pathways to the Present**. Prentice Hall, 2003 (textbook)
  - **Reconstruction: The Second Civil War**. PBS, 2004 (video)
  
- **What tips to teachers of the unit can you offer about likely rough spots/student misunderstandings and performance weaknesses, and how to troubleshoot those issues?**

**Differentiation** (This should include a list or description of ways that you will differentiate instruction according to students' needs. This can include any curricular adaptations/accommodations that are needed to meet the needs of ALL students, including students with disabilities. Ex: using reading materials at varying readability levels, putting text materials on tape, using spelling or vocabulary lists at readiness levels of students, meeting with small groups to re-teach an idea or skill for struggling learners, or to extend the thinking or skills of advanced learners.)

Differentiation is provided throughout the unit.

**Technology Integration**

When appropriate, technology is integrated in the unit. If teachers would like to add technology power points could be substituted for speeches, or videos can be used instead of readings.

<b>Content Connections</b>

*Historical Literacy Project Template adapted from Delaware Recommended Curriculum*

## **Reconstruction Plans** (Handout #1)

### **Lincoln's Plan: The Ten Percent Plan**

<b>Overall Purpose of the Plan</b>	
<b>What will the southern states have to do to be readmitted?</b>	
<b>What will be done about or for the freed slaves?</b>	
<b>What will be done with the ex-confederate leaders?</b>	
<b>Unique features of this plan</b>	

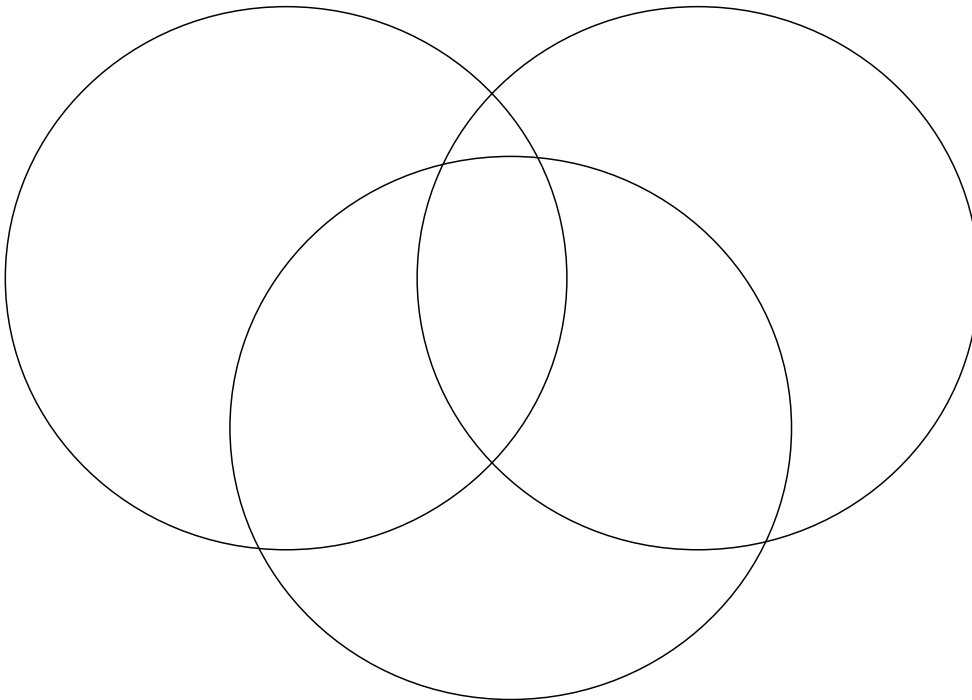
### **Congressional Reconstruction Plan (Wade Davis Bill)**

<b>Overall Purpose of the Plan</b>	
<b>What will the southern states have to do to be readmitted?</b>	
<b>What will be done about or for the freed slaves?</b>	
<b>What will be done with the ex-confederate leaders?</b>	
<b>Unique features of this plan</b>	

### Johnson's Reconstruction Plan

<b>Overall Purpose of the Plan</b>	
<b>What will the southern states have to do to be readmitted?</b>	
<b>What will be done about or for the freed slaves?</b>	
<b>What will be done with the ex-confederate leaders?</b>	
<b>Unique features of this plan</b>	

Compare the three plans using the Venn diagram below. What do they have in common, where do they differ?



## **Create your own plan for Reconstruction** (Handout #2)

Discuss the following questions with your group and write your common answers in the space provided:

1. What is your overall purpose for your plan? (What is your main goal?) Why?
  
2. How will you reintegrate the southern states? What will the Southern states have to do to be readmitted?
  - a. Do you believe that the southern states committed suicide or that they never actually left?
  
3. What will you do with the high ranking officials and the war criminals?
  - a. Who should be punished (if anyone) for the war?
  - b. How should they be punished?
  
4. What will you do to help the freed slaves?
  - a. Will you help them to get jobs, money, housing etc.? What will the reaction be to that?
  - b. Will you ensure the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment is accepted? How?
  - c. Will you ensure that freed slaves get their right to vote? That they will have citizenship?
  - d. What will you do if people (southern states) refuse to cooperate with your plan?
  
5. Who do you think your opponents will be? Why will they not like your plan? Who will like your plan? Why?
  
6. How will you pay for the expensive portions of your plan?
  
7. What will be the title of your plan? Why did you pick that?

## Determining Bias (Handout #3)

Choose one of your classmates' plans and answer the following questions.

1. Summarize their plan.

2. Which elements of their plan seem to be different than your other classmates?

O'Malley 6/9/09 2:15 PM

Deleted: at

O'Malley 6/9/09 2:15 PM

Deleted: in

3. What elements of their plan appear similar?

O'Malley 6/9/09 2:19 PM

Deleted: seem to be the same

4. Choose one of the following elements and interview your classmate to get information on why those things may have influenced their plan (has there been sufficient scaffolding for this? Where in the lesson have they engaged in this type of activity. Noting that this is the core aspect of the benchmark, you need to prepare students for this activity?):

- Background
- Opinions
- Perspectives
- Beliefs and Point of View

O'Malley 6/9/09 2:27 PM

Deleted: -

5. Explain which element(s) affected their plan and why. Make sure to use examples from their plan. (On the back)

O'Malley 6/9/09 2:17 PM

Deleted: at

## Outcomes of Reconstruction (Handout #4)

**Directions:** Using your textbook, explain the effects (both positive and negative) of the following outcomes of Reconstruction:

OUTCOME	EFFECTS
Creation of the Freedman's Bureau	
Establishment of black codes	
Passage of the 14 <sup>th</sup> Amendment	
Passage of the Reconstruction Act of 1867	
Impeachment of President Johnson	
Passage of the 15 <sup>th</sup> Amendment	
Public Education for African Americans	
Growth of Southern Cities/Industry	
Creation of Sharecropping system	
Establishment of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)	

## Fact vs. Interpretation (Handout #5)

**History Standard Three:** Students will compare competing historical narratives, by contrasting different historian's choice of questions, use and choice of sources, perspectives, beliefs, and points of view, in order to demonstrate how these factors contribute to different interpretations.

Use a dictionary to define the following terms:

Fact:

Interpretation:

For the statements below, write "F" if you think the statement represents a fact, and "I" if you think it represents an interpretation.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Barack Obama is the first African American President of the United States.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Affirmative Action laws have been successful in promoting equality for minority groups and women.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Pittsburgh Steelers have won 6 Super Bowls.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ In 1998 Bill Clinton became only the second U.S. President to be impeached.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ The United States was attacked on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 by members of the terrorist group al-Qaeda.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ The internet is the single most important invention of the last 50 years.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ The Iraq War is a failure because no weapons of mass destruction have been discovered.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ The current economic recession was caused primarily by the collapse of the housing market.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Michael Jordan is the greatest basketball player of all time.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Over 11 million Nintendo Wii's have been sold in the U.S.



## Fact vs. Interpretation and Reconstruction (Handout #6)

**Directions:** Historians write thesis statements to serve as the foundation of their research and to persuade readers to believe in their interpretation of events. An example of a thesis statement could be:

*“During the Civil War, Southerners fought to defend their right to self-government, while Northerners fought to reunite the Union.”*

For this assignment, you will create FIVE possible thesis statements about Reconstruction based on [possible interpretations](#) of events [and the effects of Reconstruction that you analyzed in Handout #4](#). [How does this task relate to distinguishing fact v interpretations \(see title of handout\)?](#) [Might you label it “possible interpretations of Reconstruction?”](#)

O'Malley 6/11/09 9:26 PM

Deleted: your own

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## Textbook Accounts of Reconstruction (Handout #7)

### Account 1

#### *Six States Re-admitted; Negro Legislators and "Carpet-Baggers"*

In some of the restored states, especially in South Carolina, there were more negroes than white men. The negroes now got control of these states. They had been slaves all their lives, and were so ignorant that they did not even know the letters of the alphabet. Yet they now sat in the state legislatures and made the laws. After the war many industrious Northern men settled in the South, but, besides these, certain greedy adventurers went there eager to get political office and political spoils.

These "Carpet-Baggers," as they were called, used the ignorant freedmen as tools to carry out their own selfish purposes. The result was that the negro legislators, under the direction of the "Carpet-Baggers," plundered and, for the time, well-nigh ruined the states that had the misfortune to be subject to their rule.\*

After a time the white population throughout the South resolved that they would no longer endure this state of things. Partly by peaceable and partly by violent means they succeeded in getting the political power into their own hands, and the reign of the "Carpet-Bagger" and the negro came to an end.<sup>32</sup>

Source: *The Leading Facts of American History* by David H. Montgomery (Boston: Ginn & Co. 1897 p 329)

### Account 2

#### AFRICAN AMERICANS IN OFFICE

African Americans were key, though underrepresented, members of the Republican party in the South. Determined to win their share of political power, they organized to promote the interests of their community. In 1865 the African American state convention addressed these words to the people of South Carolina:

Now that we are free men, now that we have been lifted up by the providence of God to manhood, we have resolved to come forward, and, like MEN, speak and act for ourselves.

Many southern whites criticized the presence of African Americans in Reconstruction governments. They accused African American officials of being corrupt or incompetent. In reality, the South's African American officials appeared to have been no worse and no better than their white counterparts. Many served with distinction.

Source: *America* by Clayton, Perry, and Winkler (327–328) 1995.



*Historical Interpretations of Reconstruction* (Handout #9)

Account/Author	What is the author's theory/interpretation about Reconstruction?	What reasons did the author give to support their theory?	What assumptions can you make about the author's background that may have contributed to their interpretation?
William Dunning, 1907			
W.E.B. DuBois, 1935			
Anonymous, 1960's			
Leon Litwack, 1979			
Eric Foner, 1980's			

## Changing Interpretations of Reconstruction (Handout #10)

1907, William Dunning

Reconstruction was an outrage perpetrated on the prostrate South by a large group of vindictive Northern Radical Republicans. It was a period of great corruption during which unprincipled and self-serving carpetbaggers flooded the South so they could profit from the misery of the defeated region. At the same time, ignorant and illiterate blacks obtained positions of power for which they were entirely unfit. The Reconstruction experiment survived only because of the Republican party's determination to keep itself in power

*From Reconstruction, Political and Economic*

1935 W.E. B. Dubois

Southerners, both black and white, used Reconstruction to create a truly democratic society. The misdeeds of the Reconstruction governments are greatly exaggerated and their achievements almost entirely overlooked. The money expended by the Southern governments did not go to the politicians. Rather, it went to areas such as education and other public services that had never been funded on such a large scale.

*From Black Reconstruction*

1960's

Post-war Republicans engaged in a genuine, if flawed, effort to solve the problems of race in the South by providing much-needed protection to the freedmen. The Reconstruction governments, for all their faults, had been bold experiments in interracial politics. The congressional Radicals were not saints, but they had displayed a genuine concern for the rights of slaves. Andrew Johnson was not a martyred defender of the Constitution, but an inept, racist politician who resisted reasonable compromise and brought the governments to a crisis. There had been no such thing as "bayonet rule" or "negro rule" in the South. Blacks had played only a small part in Reconstruction government and had generally acquitted themselves well. The Reconstruction regimes had, in fact brought important progress to the South, established to region's first public school system and other important social changes. Corruption in the South was not worse than corruption in the North at that time. What was tragic about Reconstruction, the revisionist view claimed, was not what it did to Southern whites but what it did not do for Southern blacks. By stopping short of the reforms necessary to ensure blacks genuine equality, Reconstruction had consigned them to more than a century of injustice and discrimination.

1979 Leon Litwack

During Reconstruction, former slaves used their new found freedom to develop a certain independence for themselves within the Southern society. They built up their churches, reunited their families, and refused to work within the “gang labor” system that replaced slavery. Instead they created a new labor system in which they had more control over their lives. Reconstruction gave blacks a certain amount legal and political power in the South.

*From *Been in the Storm So Long**

1980's Eric Foner

The striking aspect of Reconstruction is not how little was accomplished, but how far the former slaves moved toward freedom and independence in a short time, and how large a role African Americans played in shaping Reconstruction. During Reconstruction, blacks won a certain amount of legal and political power in the South, and even though they held that power temporarily, they used it for a time to strengthen their economic and social positions and to win a position of limited but genuine independence. Through Reconstruction they won, if not equality, a measure of individual and community autonomy, building blocks of the freedom that emancipation alone had not guaranteed.

Source: Brinkley, Alan (2003). American History: A Survey. McGraw-Hill. Boston M.A.

## The Pursuit of History (Handout #11)

Historian James McPherson is considered one of the foremost experts on the Civil War era. In an interview for a book entitled *Great Minds of History* with the History Channel's Roger Mudd, the two historians had the following exchange.

**Question (Mudd):** With history being revised, constantly revised, broken down into gender studies, gay studies, black studies, labor studies, of new interpretations coming out all the time, why should any of us trust all you historians? I mean, history is history isn't it?

**Answer (McPherson):** No, history isn't history. There is no way that we can recapture absolutely, literally, what happened in the past. There's just too much of it, and there are multiple witnesses to what happened in the past. Take the analogy of an automobile accident to which there were ten witnesses. All ten of those people are going to tell a different story about what they saw. History consists of the effort by, in this case, the police investigator to make sense out of what those ten different witnesses saw. What is the most plausible explanation of what happened in this automobile accident?

On a larger scale, that's what the historian is trying to do. There are multiple witnesses that we call evidence to what happened in the past, and why it happened, and what it means, and what its consequences were. Historians, like the police officer, have to try to make sense out of these often conflicting explanations. To take just a very small example of what I mean: in almost any set of reports of a particular action in a Civil War battle, you'll get one officer saying at 10:27 we did this, and another officer describing the same action saying, this took place at 10:14, or somebody else will say it took place at 11:02. There's no agreement.

So what's the historian going to say about when this happened? This is small potatoes, but it's an example of what I'm talking about. Now why should you trust us? Well, if you think that I, as an historian, or any other historian you're reading, is honest, if we exude some aura of honesty and integrity, then you'll have to trust us. You'll have to trust us as you trust this police officer to make some honest sense out of the conflicting reports he gets about an automobile accident.

Source: Mudd, R (Ed.). (1999). *American Heritage Great Minds Of History/Interviews by Roger Mudd*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

**After reading the above passage answer each of the following questions.**

1. History is history, isn't it? *Explain.*
2. To what degree is historical investigation about the historian as much as the history? *Explain.*
3. Is it necessary to include an investigation of the writer in regard to what we read? *Why?*
4. Reflection: How does the information above influence your thoughts about the study of history? *Explain.*

## You're the Historian (Handout #11)

"Reconstruction in the South was a complete failure. Vicious Northerners used the military to enact revenge and not reunion. Carpetbaggers took advantage of the depressed Southern economy and infrastructure for their personal gain. Rather than trusting experienced, white, Southern politicians, Northern Republicans thrust ignorant, illiterate blacks into positions of power for which they were entirely unfit. The Republicans were not interested in reconstructing the South, but in ensuring their domination over the defeated region."

--Jonathan "Reb" Stuart, *Richmond Examiner*, 1892

**Your role:** You are an historian of the Reconstruction era

**Situation:** In your research for your new book on Reconstruction you've uncovered the above historian's work.

**Product:** Write a letter challenging their interpretation of Reconstruction.

*Your letter must include:*

- *First Paragraph:* An introduction detailing your interpretation of the success of Reconstruction and why you agree or disagree with Jonathan Stuart's interpretation.
- *Second Paragraph:* Offer facts that you have learned in this lesson that counter or confirm Mr. Stuart's interpretation.
- *Third Paragraph:* Make *two* assumptions about the factors (choice of questions, use and choice of sources, point of view, background, perspective, beliefs) that may have positively or negatively influenced Stuart's work.
- *Fourth Paragraph:* Closing and summary of why your interpretation of Reconstruction is more accurate than Jonathan "Reb" Stuart's account.