

Reconstruction: A Two Act Play

By Jordan Geist

Act 1: Presidential Reconstruction

Key Components: Restore the Union, Leniency, Wade-Davis Bill, the 10% plan and Lincoln's constitutional argument, the 13th Amendment, Johnson's liberal use of the pardon

Act 2: Congressional Reconstruction:

Key Components: Strict, protect the rights of African Americans, Freedmen's Bureau, 14th Amendment, 15th Amendment.

Introduction: This lesson engages students in the time period following the Civil War known as Reconstruction. It is a brief play, presented in two acts; Presidential Reconstruction and Congressional or Radical Reconstruction. The first four objectives are achieved during the play and the activities and discussions that follow, while the last is achieved by using a chart to break down and analyze the evidence.

Time Frame: 4 class periods

Student Objectives: USI.40 Explain the policies and consequences of Reconstruction. (H, C)

- A. Compare and contrast Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction
- B. Explain how much of the Reconstruction process can be seen as a struggle between executive and legislative power that culminated in the impeachment of President Johnson
- C. Explain the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, as well as their legacy to the Civil Rights Movement
- D. the opposition of Southern whites to Reconstruction
- E. Evaluate the successes and failures of Reconstruction.

Background/Preparation: Students will have read at least one textual source prior to the play on Reconstruction.

Procedures: Students are designated roles based on the roles in the first and second act and follow the directions in the script. For example, step one applies to everyone at the same time. After each step is completed a discussion can take place in which the teacher questions the student about the specific events or issues that arise. This can also be done at the conclusion of Act 1 when students review the three sources: the 10% plan, the Wade-Davis Bill, and the 13th Amendment. At the Conclusion of act two the students read the 14th Amendment and the 15th Amendment and the teacher leads them through a series of questions similar to the ones at the conclusion of Act 1. Finally, the students break up into groups to research the successes and failures of reconstruction.

Act 1: Experiencing Presidential Reconstruction

Role: Teacher

Background Information- Prior to Act 1

December of 1863 marked a relatively inactive period for the Union armies in the East. Meanwhile, however the seizure and occupation of both Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tennessee by Federal forces in the West encouraged Lincoln's political maneuvers to initiate his terms towards a peaceful settlement with the South

Furthermore, Lincoln's confidence had been previously reinforced by the recent and pivotal military victories precipitated earlier that summer in 1863 at Gettysburg and Vicksburg—two crucial defeats of the Confederate Army that would allow Lincoln to both politically and morally elevate this 'great challenge remaining' and preserve the experiment of democracy as proclaimed so eloquently in his Gettysburg Address on November 19 of that same year. As a result of these 'measures of devotion' Lincoln was able to confidently focus on his plans of restoring the Union through the means of Reconstruction and Reconciliation with "malice towards none"

Therefore, on December 8, 1863, Lincoln issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction that would offer limited pardons to those who fought for the Confederacy and impose his "Ten Percent Plan" –a plan that allowed the rebelling states to be readmitted into the Union

After step two in Act 1:

In February of 1864, two Radical Republicans, Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio and Representative Henry W. Davis of Maryland, sponsored a bill in response to Lincoln's plans for Reconstruction. Particularly, the Wade-Davis bill was proposed to counteract three political factors that threatened their power in Congress.

First, the Radical Republicans believed that Lincoln's policy to Reconstruction and his 'Ten Percent Plan' was too weak and forgiving towards the rebellious southern states. Second, Radicals feared that once the southern states were restructured, the reorganized states would then be free to attend the Republicans' nominating convention and be represented in the electoral college—a power that the Radicals were reluctant to concede at this time. And third, the Radicals hoped to prevent Lincoln's re-nomination on June 8, 1864 in lieu of his lenient policies with the South.

The Wade –Davis bill challenged Lincoln's Reconstruction by demanding a more stringent plan of Reconstruction. Specifically, the bill endorsed:

1. the congressional control of Reconstruction
2. an end to slavery
3. the placement of Confederate states under temporary military rule;
4. the imposition of an ironclad oath of loyalty to the Union
5. the enforced readmission of any seceding states to an allegiance of at least 50% of the voters of 1860; and
6. the exclusion of more Confederate officials from government office that that of Lincoln's original plan

The bill won the support of congressional Republicans and it was passed by both the House and Senate by July 2, 1864. But thanks to the turning of the tide on the battlefield with Grant's relentless pursuit of Lee in Virginia, Lincoln as able to comfortably secure his re-nomination for the presidency on June 8. Consequently, Lincoln knew very well that southerners would never voluntarily adopt the stringent congressional plan in

preference to his own reconciliatory vision. He made a formal proclamation on the Wade-Davis Bill on July 8, 1864.

pass out the following sources: Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, The Wade-Davis Bill components, and the 13th Amendment. In groups, by themselves, or whole class, walk the students through each document.

10% plan questions:

1. How does Lincoln argue that the President is the one to determine the course of Reconstruction?
2. Do you agree with his reasoning? Explain.
3. Who does he pardon?
4. Who doesn't he pardon?
5. Is Lincoln being too lenient? Too harsh?
6. What should he have done differently?

Wade Davis Bill questions:

1. How do you suppose Congress argued that they should have control of Reconstruction?
2. Why was Congress unhappy with Lincoln's leniency?
3. How did their plan differ?
4. Which plan is more reasonable to you?

13th Amendment questions:

1. What does the 13th do?
2. How is it different than the Emancipation Proclamation?
3. Do you think outlawing slavery creates more equality? Does it guarantee equality? How? Why?
4. If you were a typical southerner, would you respect it? Follow it? Enforce it?
5. How do you think the Federal government would ensure that it was followed?

Teacher's intro to Act 2: The war came to end on April 9, 1865 and with Lincoln's assassination five days later, Vice president Johnson took the oath of office and supported Lincoln's 10% plan, but pardoned many confederate politicians and high ranking military officers, something that Lincoln was not willing to do. During the course of Lincoln and Johnson's presidency the defeated Confederate States had all been able to set up new state governments and elect officials to Congress. However, due to the fact that many elected politicians were former traitors holding similar posts, the radical members of Congress gained ground and sought to take over Reconstruction. Of particular importance to them was ensuring the civil rights of the recently freed slaves, which required more than the simple abolition of slavery that had won approval in the form of the 13th Amendment shortly after Lincoln's death. Many of the former confederate states passed Black Codes which were severely restricting the rights of the recently freed slaves so Congress repeatedly battled with President Johnson to pass meaningful legislation.

Teacher's Wrap up: Reconstruction officially ended when the last of the federal troops were recalled from the last of the southern states in the Compromise of 1877. Due to disputed electoral returns a bipartisan committee was formed and determined that in return for the Republican candidate R.B. Hayes, getting the electoral votes, the remaining troops would be removed from the democratic south.

Act I: Experiencing Presidential Reconstruction:

Roles to Assign:

President Abraham Lincoln

The States of:

Arkansas

Louisiana

Tennessee

Virginia

South Carolina

North Carolina

Georgia

Florida

Mississippi

Alabama

Texas

John Wilkes Booth

President Andrew Johnson

Directions: Follow the directions on YOUR assigned ROLE page.

Role: Abraham Lincoln

Perspective: As President you see it as your duty to bring the Union back together as rapidly as possible.

Directions: Make a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Read the following:

“ I, Abraham Lincoln, on December 8, in they year eighteen hundred and sixty-three, as President of the United States of America see it as my duty to unite the states as quickly as possible. The recent rebellion was the act of individuals, not of states, and as such, the Constitution grants me the authority to pardon criminals. As such I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known to all persons who have, directly or by implication, participated in the existing rebellion, except as hereinafter excepted, that a full pardon is hereby granted to them and each of them, with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves,... [and on] condition that every such person shall take and subscribe an oath...Therefore, when ten percent of the voters in a rebellious state swear an oath of allegiance, that state will be able to form a new state gov’t, hold elections and send its representatives to Congress.”

Step 2: Listen to the delegates from Arkansas and Louisiana pledge their loyalty, nod approvingly as they do so.

Wait for teacher’s background info

Step 3: Read the following: “Whereas, at the late Session, Congress passed a Bill, To guarantee to certain States, whose governments have been usurped or overthrown, a republican form of Government.” a copy of which is hereunto annexed: And whereas, the said Bill was presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, less than one hour before the sine die adjournment of said Session, and was not signed by him: And whereas, the said Bill contains, among other things, a plan for restoring the States in rebellion to their proper practical relation in the Union, which plan expresses the sense of Congress upon that subject, and which plan it is now thought fit to lay before the people for their consideration: Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known, that, while I am, (as I was in December last, when by proclamation I propounded a plan for restoration) unprepared, by a formal approval of this Bill, to be inflexibly committed to any single plan of restoration; and, while I am also unprepared to declare, that the free-state constitutions and governments, already adopted and installed in Arkansas and Louisiana, shall be set aside and held for naught, thereby repelling and discouraging the loyal citizens who have set up the same, as to further effort; or to declare a constitutional competency in Congress to abolish slavery in States, but am at the same time sincerely hoping and expecting that a constitutional amendment, abolishing slavery throughout the nation, may be adopted, nevertheless, I am fully satisfied with the system for restoration contained in the Bill, as one very proper plan for the loyal people of any State choosing to adopt it; and that I am, and at all times shall be, prepared to give the Executive aid and assistance to any such people, so soon as the military resistance to the United States shall have been suppressed in any such State, and the people thereof shall have sufficiently returned to their obedience to the Constitution and the laws of the United States,-in which cases, military Governors will be appointed, with directions to proceed according to the Bill.”

Step 4: Listen to the delegates from Tennessee and Virginia pledge their loyalty, nod approvingly as they do so.

Step 5: Fall to the floor dead when John Wilkes Booth shoots you.

Experiencing Presidential Reconstruction

Role: The recently defeated Confederate state of Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Perspective: The confederate states wish to rejoin the Union as quickly as possible if the terms are lenient.

Directions: Make a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Listen as the President makes his announcement. Nod your approval to his lenient ten percent plan.

Step 2: Arkansas, Louisiana, delegates approach the President and swear the following oath “ *I, (state your name), do solemnly swear, in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder, and that I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves. So help me God.*”

Step3: Listen to President’s speech on the Wade Davis Bill

Step 4: Tennessee, and Virginia delegates approach the President and swear the following oath “ *I, (state your name), do solemnly swear, in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder, and that I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves. So help me God.*”

Step 5: Watch as Lincoln get assassinated

Step 6: Listen to Vice-President Andrew Johnson take the oath of office.

Step 7: Listen and watch

Experiencing Presidential Reconstruction

Role: The recently defeated Confederate state of South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas.

Perspective: The confederate states wish to rejoin the Union as quickly as possible if the terms are lenient.

Directions: Make a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Listen as the President makes his announcement. Nod your approval to his lenient ten percent plan.

Step 2-6 Listen and watch.

Step 7: : Listen and watch Andrew Johnson propose his reconstruction plan. Nod approvingly as he finishes

Step 8: Approach the President and take the following oath, “ *I, (state your name), do solemnly swear, in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States thereunder, and that I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves. So help me God.*”

Experiencing Presidential Reconstruction

Role: President Andrew Johnson

Perspective: You agree with the recently assassinated Lincoln that as President it is your duty to bring the Union back together as rapidly as possible, as a southerner from Tennessee you are especially gracious in handing out pardons.

Directions: Follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Steps 1-5 : Listen and watch.

Step 6: When the President is dead read the following oath of office: *“I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.”*

Step 7: Read the following: *“ As President of the United States of America it is my duty to unite the states as quickly as possible. The recent rebellion was the act of individuals, not of states, and as such, the Constitution grants me the authority to pardon criminals. When ten percent of the voters in a rebellious state swear an oath of allegiance and ratifies the 13 Amendment freeing the slaves, that state will be able to form a new state gov’t, hold elections and send its representatives to Congress.”*

Step 8: Listen to the delegates pledge their loyalty, nod approvingly as they do so.

ACT 2: Experiencing Congressional Reconstruction

Roles to Assign:

Thaddeus Stevens

Charles Sumner

Various Radical Republican Representatives: assign a bunch- this group gains control

President Andrew Johnson

The Reconstructed Southern Government Politicians from:

Arkansas

Louisiana

Tennessee

Virginia

South Carolina

North Carolina

Georgia

Florida

Mississippi

Alabama

Texas

Directions: Follow the directions on YOUR assigned ROLE page.

Experiencing Congressional Reconstruction

Role: Radical Republican Representatives Thaddeus Stevens of Pa. and Charles Sumner of Ma
(Two people- just take turns reading)

Perspective: You believe that Presidential Reconstruction was much too lenient on the South. Not only should the South be punished severely, Reconstruction should ensure political rights and economic stability for freedmen.

Directions: Create a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Make the following speech before Congress when directed to do so *“The past and current President each asserted that the rebellious states did not in fact leave the union. They argued that they therefore had the right to pardon those citizens’ rebellious acts. But the confederate states **did** leave the union and the Constitution clearly states that only Congress has the authority to admit states into the union. Therefore it is hereby declared that all the so-called reformed governments of the defeated south are found to be null and void”*

Step 2: When the Southern delegates attempt to enter close the door on them.

Step 3: Stand and deliver the following speech: *“ Fellow Representatives, once again we are challenged. We have tried repeatedly to create better economic and social conditions in the South with the passage of the Freedmen’s Bureau and the Civil Rights Act of 1866 but the President vetoed both those efforts. We had to work together to override these vetoes and now we must come together again as he is lobbying to kill our proposed 14th Amendment which would ensure rights and privileges to all citizens.”*

Step 4: Shake your head, boo and hiss after the President finishes his speech.

Step 5: Shake your head, boo and hiss as each state refuses to sign the 14th Amendment

Step 6: Stand and deliver the following speech: *“Once again I stand before you to thank you for passing the Reconstruction Act of 1867 which recognizes Tennessee as the only confederate state back in the Union. More importantly this Act which now sits on the Presidents desk for his approval, will ensure that the political, economic and civil rights of the freedmen are protected by dividing the remaining rebellious states into military districts! Furthermore this act requires of the rebellious states not only the ratification of the 14th Amendment, but also requires the states to grant freedmen the right to vote.”*

Step 7: Go wild with anger!!!!!!

Step 8: Stand and deliver the following speech. *“Once again the President has vetoed our most important legislation!! Once again I stand before you to ask you to override his veto. I ask you to raise your hands in an informal vote if you wish to override the President’s veto.”*

Step 9: Stand and deliver the following speech, *“The president’s continuous refusal to work against this Congress has gone on long enough! He has clearly violated the Tenure of Office Act when he fired Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. As President it is his duty to uphold the law. If he will not then we must! We voted to impeach him, now it is time to remove him from office for his blatant disregard for this Congress and the laws of the United States!”*

Experiencing Congressional Reconstruction

Role: Various Radical Republican Representatives

Perspective: You believe that Presidential Reconstruction was much too lenient on the South. Not only should the South be punished severely, Reconstruction should ensure political rights and economic stability for freedmen.

Directions: Create a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Listen and knock on your desks as Sumner finishes his speech to show your support.

Step 2: Cheer loudly when the southern delegates are kept from Congress.

Step 3: Cheer loudly when Stevens/Sumner finishes his speech.

Step 4: Shake your head, boo and hiss after the President finishes his speech.

Step 5: Shake your head, boo and hiss as each state refuses to sign the 14th Amendment

Step 6: Cheer loudly when the speech is finished. Go Wild!!!!

Step 7: Go Wild with anger!!!!!!

Step 8: Raise your hand when asked to vote.

Step 9: Fill in the ballot as you see fit.

Experiencing Congressional Reconstruction

Role: President Andrew Johnson

Perspective: A southerner from Tennessee, you are not happy with the legislation being developed by the Radical Republicans during Congressional Reconstruction that interferes with the south's laws and customs. You don't have the support in Congress that Lincoln had and are forced to use your veto power often.

Directions: Create a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Sit and Listen

Step 2: Sit and Listen

Step 3: Sit and Listen

Step 4: Stand and deliver the following speech: "The republicans are trying to force you, my southern brothers, to ratify an amendment that you had no part in making! Do not ratify it!"

Step 5: nod approvingly as each state refuses to sign the 14th Amendment.

Step 6: shake your head in disbelief when the speech is finished.

Step 7: Write "Veto" across the Reconstruction Act when it is placed on your desk

Step 8: Sit and listen.

Experiencing Congressional Reconstruction

Role: Southern presidential reconstructed delegates: Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas

Perspective: You swore your oaths and have created new state constitutions. You also were elected as representatives to the US Congress.

Directions: Create a name tag and follow the procedures in each one of the steps below.

Step 1: Listen and keep quiet.

Step 2: Try to take your seats when told to.

Step 3: sit and listen

Step 4: (all but Tennessee) When the president finishes his speech stand cheer, and stomp your feet in support.

Step 5: All southern delegates except Tennessee refuse to sign the 14th Amendment.

Step 6: Shake your head in disbelief.

Step 7: sit and listen.

Step 8: sit and listen.

Step 9: fill in the ballot as you see fit.

As a representative of one the rebellious states you need to read the following proposed amendment and decide if you should ratify it. If you do, you are allowed back into the Union. If you do not you are not.

Amendment 14.Civil Rights

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.

Section 2. When the right to vote is abridged by any state, that state will forfeit a corresponding percentage of its representatives.

Section 3. Any person who committed a rebellious act and had previously taken an oath as an elected or appointed state or federal official to uphold the Constitution, may not hold such an office again.

Section 4. The confederate debt is null and void.

Section 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Arkansas _____

Louisiana _____

Tennessee _____

Virginia _____

South Carolina _____

North Carolina _____

Georgia _____

Florida _____

Mississippi _____

Alabama _____

Texas _____

Reconstruction Act of 1867

1. Only Tennessee is admitted back in the Union.
2. Rebellious South is divided into five military districts to protect the freedmen and ensure their rights.
3. States must ratify the fourteenth Amendment.
4. States must grant voting rights to freedmen.

President's Signature: _____

Ballot to Remove President Andrew Johnson from Office

Check one option below. Need 2/3rds (36 Of 54) of Congress' approval to remove him from office.

_____ President Johnson should **not** be removed from office.

_____ President Johnson **should be** removed from office.

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
A PROCLAMATION. (10% Plan)**

WHEREAS, in and by the Constitution of the United States, it is provided that the President "shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment;" and

Whereas, a rebellion now exists whereby the loyal state governments of several states have for a long time been subverted, and many persons have committed, and are now guilty of, treason against the United States; and

Whereas, with reference to said rebellion and treason, laws have been enacted by congress, declaring forfeitures and confiscation of property and liberation of slaves, all upon terms and conditions therein stated, and also declaring that the President was thereby authorized at any time thereafter, by proclamation, to extend to persons who may have participated in the existing rebellion, in any state or part thereof, pardon and amnesty, with such exceptions and at such times and on such conditions as he may deem expedient for the public welfare; and

Whereas, the congressional declaration for limited and conditional pardon accords with well-established judicial exposition of the pardoning power; and

Whereas, with reference to said rebellion, the President of the United States has issued several proclamations, with provisions in regard to the liberation of slaves; and

Whereas, it is now desired by some persons heretofore engaged in said rebellion to resume their allegiance to the United States, and to reinaugurate loyal state governments within and for their respective states: Therefore—

I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, do proclaim, declare, and make known to all persons who have, directly or by implication, participated in the existing rebellion, except as hereinafter excepted, that a full pardon is hereby granted to them and each of them, with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves, and in property cases where rights of third parties shall have intervened, and upon the condition that every such person shall take and subscribe an oath, and thenceforward keep and maintain said oath inviolate; and which oath shall be registered for permanent preservation, and shall be of the tenor and effect following, to wit:—

"I, , do solemnly swear, in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Union of the States hereunder; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all acts of congress passed during the existing rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by congress, or by decision of the supreme court; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all proclamations of the President made during the existing rebellion having reference to slaves, so long and so far as not modified or declared void by decision of the supreme court. So help me God."

The persons excepted from the benefits of the foregoing provisions are all who are, or shall have been, civil or diplomatic officers or agents of the so-called Confederate government; all who have left judicial stations under the United States to aid the rebellion; all who are, or shall have been, military or naval officers of said so-called Confederate government above the rank of colonel in the army or of lieutenant in the navy; all who left seats in the United States congress to aid the rebellion; all who resigned commissions in the army or navy of the United States and afterwards aided the rebellion; and all who have engaged in any way in treating colored persons, or white persons in charge of such, otherwise than lawfully as prisoners of war, and which persons may have been found in the United States service as soldiers, seamen, or in any other capacity.

And I do further proclaim, declare, and make known that whenever, in any of the States of Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina, a number of persons, not less than one tenth in number of the votes cast in such state at the presidential election of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty, each having taken the oath aforesaid, and not having since violated it, and being a qualified voter by the election law of the state existing immediately before the so-called act of secession, and excluding all others, shall reestablish a state government which shall be republican, and in nowise contravening said oath, such shall be recognized as the true government of the state, and the state shall receive there under the benefits of the constitutional provision which declares that "the United States shall guaranty to every state in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or the executive, (when the legislature cannot be convened,) against domestic violence."

And I do further proclaim, declare, and make known that any provision which may be adopted by such state government in relation to the freed people of such state, which shall recognize and declare their permanent freedom, provide for their education, and which may yet be consistent as a temporary arrangement with their present condition as a laboring, landless, and homeless class, will not be objected to by the National Executive. And it is suggested as not improper that, in constructing a loyal state government in any state, the name of the state, the boundary, the subdivisions, the constitution, and the general code of laws, as before the rebellion, be maintained, subject only to the modifications made necessary by the conditions hereinbefore stated, and such others, if any, not contravening said conditions, and which may be deemed expedient by those framing the new state government.

To avoid misunderstanding, it may be proper to say that this proclamation, so far as it relates to state governments, has no reference to states wherein loyal state governments have all the while been maintained. And, for the same reason, it may be proper to further say, that whether members sent to congress from any state shall be admitted to seats constitutionally rests exclusively with the respective houses, and not to any extent with the Executive. And still further, that this proclamation is intended to present the people of the states wherein the national authority has been suspended, and loyal state governments have been subverted, a mode in and by which the national authority and loyal state governments may be reestablished within said states, or in any of them; and while the mode presented is the best the Executive can suggest, with his present impressions, it must not be understood that no other possible mode would be acceptable.

Given under my hand at the city of Washington the eighth day of December, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-eighth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State*.

The Wade –Davis Bill

The Wade –Davis bill challenged Lincoln’s Reconstruction by demanding a more stringent plan of Reconstruction. Specifically, the bill endorsed:

1. the congressional control of Reconstruction
2. an end to slavery
3. the placement of Confederate states under temporary military rule;
4. the imposition of an ironclad oath of loyalty to the Union
5. the enforced readmission of any seceding states to an allegiance of at least 50% of the voters of 1860; and
6. the exclusion of more Confederate officials from government office than that of Lincoln’s original plan

The bill won the support of congressional Republicans and it was passed by both the House and Senate by July 2, 1864. But thanks to the turning of the tide on the battlefield with Grant’s relentless pursuit of Lee in Virginia, Lincoln was able to comfortably secure his re-nomination for the presidency on June 8. Consequently, Lincoln knew very well that southerners would never voluntarily adopt the stringent congressional plan in preference to his own reconciliatory vision.

To What Extent was Congressional Reconstruction a Success?

Group 1: Was Reconstruction a success socially?

How much did it change lives in the South?

Create a chart showing evidence using pages 195-197.

Group 2: Was Reconstruction a success economically?

How much did it provide for ensured economic success?

Create a chart showing evidence using pages 198-199.

Group 3: Was Reconstruction a success politically?

How much did it ensure rights for the freedmen?

Create a chart showing evidence using pages 199-201.

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