

HANDOUT

Creating a Plan for Reconstruction

Create a proposal for a plan for Reconstruction after the Civil War. Your plan should seek to achieve two goals:

1. To reunite the nation, resolve the conflicts that led to the Civil War, and heal the wounds the war caused, and
2. To bring justice to the nation and its citizens.

Your plan should address each of the following dilemmas that the United States faced as the Civil War ended:

1. What will happen to each of the groups of ex-Confederates listed below? Will they be citizens? Will they be permitted to vote? Will they be permitted to hold office in the government?
 - Confederate leaders (government officials/military officers)
 - Wealthy, slave-owning planters
 - Women who ran plantation households
 - Low-ranking soldiers
 - Working-class and poor whites
2. What will happen to freedpeople and other African Americans? Will they be citizens? Will they be permitted to vote and hold office? What other rights will they be provided?
3. What will happen to the land and other property confiscated by the Union army or abandoned during the war? Who has the right to use it? Who has the right to own it?
4. What is the best way to ensure that white Southerners will be loyal to the United States and accept the end of slavery?

After you have created a plan that addresses the dilemmas above, evaluate it by answering these questions:

1. Who are the winners and losers in your plan?
2. How will your plan help to reunite and heal the country?
3. How will your plan bring about justice after the war? Does it deny justice to any group of Americans?