USING PRIMARY SOURCES TO EXAMINE RACIAL ATTITUDES IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY

2-3 Days
Ninth Grade American History

DESIRE RESULTS:
What are the “big ideas” that drive this lesson?
• Race and race relations continued to be a critical issue for American society in the years after the Reconstruction.

What are the “essential questions” that students must answer in order to understand the “big ideas”?
• Why was Reconstruction implemented? What was the purpose of Reconstruction?
• Was Reconstruction successful in meeting its goals?
• How did the issue of racial bias impact Reconstruction and its ability to meet its goals?

Core understandings:
Students will need to know:
• Americans held different political and social beliefs, and this impacted the course of Reconstruction.
• The reasons why Reconstruction lost support at the end of 1876.
• The end of Reconstruction impacted the lives and social position of African Americans.

Students will need to be able to:
• Identify bias in written and visual primary sources.
• Identify ways that bias and perspective shape events and the interpretation of events.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT(S):
• Assessment: Students will respond to the following prompt in paragraph/essay form:

In light of the key objectives of the Reconstruction, was Reconstruction a success or a failure? Support your thesis using at least three different pieces of evidence based on the secondary and primary sources examined throughout the unit.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES:

1. Day One:
   - Distribute three to four copies of each primary source among students. Students will first independently examine a single primary source, but for visual primary sources students can be given multiple sources.
o Independently, students will read/examine the source with the objective of describing the source and developing a basic understanding of its meaning.
Students independently response to the prompt; in a short informal paragraph or list describe this source by addressing the following: What is a source? What publication or authorship information do you have? If it is a written source, what is the basic message? If it is a picture, describe the contents.

2. Day Two:

Students next meet in small groups; students who have the same primary source work together. Small groups work together to complete the analysis chart in which students identify the perspective/bias, the purpose and the audience.

Each group should also identify elements to support each of their suppositions.

3. Day Three:

Each student group presents their primary source to the whole group, using the chart. If a smart board is available, the primary source should be projected for the class to examine during the presentation.

COMMON CORE” CONNECTIONS:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- CCSS.LA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6: Assess how point of view or purposes shapes the context and style of a text.

SUGGESTED LESSON EXTENSION:

- Examine the popular press (newspapers and magazines) from both the North and the South in the late 1800s. How were the major events of the Reconstruction era interpreted by observers thereof?
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<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Short Description of Primary Source</th>
<th>What is the basic “purpose” of the source? What information does the author/artist want you to believe?</th>
<th>What can you infer about the perspective or bias of the creator/author?</th>
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By this sudden system of Emancipation, this spasmodic transformation of the ignorant Negro from a peaceful laborer who has been accustomed to have all needs...provided...both in sickness & health to a self reliant citizen will paralyze the productive resources of the South. It...can cause a famine in this our fertile land. If we could have a system of gradual emancipation & colonization our people would universally rejoice & be glad to get rid of slavery which has ever been a cancer upon the body politic of our social organization.... We would gladly substitute white for slave labor but we can never regard the Negro our equal either intellectually or socially. The doctrine of "Miscegenation" or as the word which is a Latin compound ("Misco" to mix & "genus" race) signifies an amalgamation of the races, is odious, destructive & contrary to the laws of God & Man. If such a detestable dogma becomes a law we shall soon have a race of mulattoes as fickle & foolish as the Mongrel population of Mexico never content with their present condition but always desiring a change of government & rulers. The government ought to pursue a magnanimous merciful & conciliatory course toward those who have striven to be honorable ...& who have acknowledged ourselves fairly beaten. Let the northern people arise in the majesty of their power & stay the uplifted hand of official oppression & hatred...
Amy Fagnilli

Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race

http://www.everydaycitizen.com/2008/12/capitol_men_the_book_of_the_fi.html

“These Congressmen, Hiram Revels of Mississippi, Benjamin Turner of Alabama, Jefferson Long of Georgia, Robert De Large, Robert Brown Elliott, and Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina, and Josiah Walls of Florida faced great odds in battling their white opponents and were a source of pride to the newly emancipated African American populace.” from Philip Dray’s book “Capitol Men: The Epic Story of Reconstruction Through the Lives of the First Black Congressmen” (2008). This picture is an original drawing.
Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race
Confederate Military History is a 12-volume series of books written and/or edited by former Confederate general Clement A. Evans published by the Confederate Publishing Company, Atlanta, GA, in 1899.

Page 297 [black codes]
The Southern people had lived with the negroes; they understood them far better than did the Northern people and the politicians of the North. Some legislatures, to meet this condition of affairs, passed certain laws known as vagrant laws, similar to many found on the statute books of the Northern States, possibly a little different because the surroundings were different. The North, however, in the desire to protect the negro from imposition, not fully understanding matters, took great offense at this, and felt that it was an effort to re-enslave the negro, and defeat the purpose of his freedom… These laws were of little import anyway, for the bureaus of refugees, freedmen and abandoned lands, backed by military force, were overriding everything in a supposed protection of the rights of the negroes, encouraging them in idleness and inculcating vicious ideas and hostility toward the Southern whites.

304 [on reconstruction governments]
The Fourteenth amendment was now presented to the Southern people again. Its behests and the reconstruction acts were carried out in legislation by the bayonet. The States were negroized in succession. " Its practical operation was of course revolutionary in its effects upon the Southern State governments. The most influential white men were excluded from voting for the delegates who were to compose the constitutional conventions, while the negroes were all admitted to enrollment. Unscrupulous adventurers appeared to act as the leaders of the inexperienced blacks in taking possession first of conventions, and afterward of State governments; and in States where the negroes were most numerous or their leaders most shrewd and unprincipled, an extra-ordinary carnival of public crime set in under the form of law. Negro majorities gained complete control of State governments, or rather negroes constituted the legislative majorities and submitted to the unrestrained authority of small but masterful groups of white men, whom the instinct for plunder had drawn from the North. Page 309-310 UNION LEAGUES. The Union League in the South was formed to establish the black man’s party, and bind the negroes by secret organization to the Republican party, so they could be [cont’d below]
detached and taken entirely from under the control of the white people of the South. …
This league, in practice, taught that the white men of the South were enemies of the negroes, and it excited the latter to deeds of disorder and interference in every way with the whites. The poor negro could not withstand the strong will of the whites from the North, who were controlling him, against all advice and friendly appeal from the Southern whites. Friction, conflict, disorder between whites and blacks were incited to prolong the important and lucrative offices held by the carpet-baggers…
"But there was a companion to this abominable dynasty in the dangerous order of the Ku Klux Klan. The one caused the other. The Ku Klux Klan was the perilous effect of which the odious league was the unhealthy cause. The Klan was a veritable body, founded in a holy object, and often prostituted to violence under great provocation. The writer knows all about it, and shared page 311 [the KKK]
in its legislative work. It combined the best men of the State, old, virtuous, settled, cautious citizens. Its object was the preservation of order and the protection of society. It used mystery as its weapon. It was intended to aid the law, and prevent crime. In the license of the era, it was a matter of self-defense against plunder, assassination, and rape. Both the league and the Ku Klux Klan were excrescences of reconstruction, and the natural outcome of abnormal politics and abortive government." (A very's History of Georgia.) The writer of this chapter never knew personally of this Klan. He saw the effect of it in a negro county of Mis-sissippi (Noxubee), where there were ten negroes to one white person. The lawlessness and tendency to riot and override the laws of social life, became so great that a crisis appeared to be near, as shown by abusive language, disorderly meetings, and incendiary proceedings. This existed for months. One night about two hundred white men clothed in white sheets, in single file on horseback, without uttering a word, rode through the thickly-settled negro portions of the county. They appeared without warning at dark. They disappeared just before dawn. The effect was electrical. The negroes gave little more trouble in that county, notwithstanding the league and their secret organization.
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Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race

http://historyofcivilrights.wordpress.com/unit-iv-reconstruction/freedmens-bureau/
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Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race

http://examiningushistory.tripod.com/id6.html

check this website for a link to the Harper’s website
Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race

http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/odyssey/archive/05/0511001r.jpg
We, the undersigned members of a Convention of colored citizens of the State of Virginia, 
would respectfully represent that, although we have been held as slaves, and denied all 
recognition as a constituent of your nationality for almost the entire period of the duration of 
your Government, and that by your permission we have been denied either home or country, 
and deprived of the dearest rights of human nature: yet when you and our immediate oppressors 
met in deadly conflict upon the field of battle -the one to destroy and the other to save your 
Government and nationality, we, with scarce an exception, in our inmost souls espoused your 
cause, and watched, and prayed, and waited, and labored for your success.

When the contest waxed long, and the result hung doubtfully, you appealed to us for help, and 
how well we answered is written in the rosters of the two hundred thousand colored troops 
now enrolled in your service; and as to our undying devotion to your cause, let the uniform 
acclamation of escaped prisoners, "whenever we saw a black face we felt sure of a friend," 
answer.

Well, the war is over, the rebellion is "put down," and we are declared free! Four fifths of our 
enemies are paroled or amnestied, and the other fifth are being pardoned, and the President has, 
in his efforts at the reconstruction of the civil government of the States, late in rebellion, left us 
entirely at the mercy of these subjugated but unconverted rebels, in everything save the privilege 
of bringing us, our wives and little ones, to the auction block . . . . We know these men-know 
them well-and we assure you that, with the majority of them, loyalty is only "lip deep," and that 
their professions of loyalty are used as a cover to the cherished design of getting restored to their 
former relations with the Federal Government, and then, by all sorts of "unfriendly legislation," 
to render the freedom you have given us more intolerable than the slavery they intended for us.

We warn you in time that our only safety is in keeping them under Governors of the military 
persuasion until you have so amended the Federal Constitution that it will prohibit the States 
from making any distinction between citizens on account of race or color. In one word, the only 
salvation for us besides the power of the Government, is in the possession of the ballot. Give us 
this, and we will protect ourselves . . . . But, μis said we are ignorant. Admit it. Yet who denies 
we know a traitor from a loyal man, a gentleman from a rowdy, a friend from an enemy? The 
twelve thousand colored votes of the State of New York sent Governor Seymour home and 
Reuben E. Fenton to Albany. Did not they know who to vote for? . . . All we ask is an equal 
chance with the white traitors varnished and japanned with the oath of amnesty. Can you deny us 
this and still keep faith with us? .

We are "sheep in the midst of wolves," and nothing but the military arm of the Government 
prevents us and all the truly loyal white men from being driven from the land of our birth. Do 
not then, we beseech you, give to one of these "wayward sisters" the rights they abandoned and 
forfeited when they rebelled until you have secured our rights by the aforementioned 
 amendment to the Constitution. .
Primary Source Collection: Post-Civil War Attitudes about Race

Trusting that you will not be deaf to the appeal herein made, nor unmindful of the warnings which the malignity of the rebels are constantly giving you, and that you will rise to the height of being just for the sake of justice, we remain yours for our flag, our country and humanity.