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## The Current Reconstruction SRP Student Response Packet

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Essential Question:** To what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?

### Do Now:

What comes to mind when you think of the term “Reconstruction?” How would you define it in your own words? Try utilizing prior knowledge and paying close attention to the prefix, suffix, and root of the term.

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### Invest in the Essential Question:

What are the keywords in our Essential Question? Rewrite the Essential Question in your own words below:

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### Background and Context:

Read and annotate each excerpt from THE NEW RECONSTRUCTION. As you read, think about the defining moment of each Reconstruction and the goals of each Reconstruction.

#### The First Reconstruction

“The post–Civil War years were a moment of great peril<sup>1</sup> for the emancipated<sup>2</sup>, but also great promise. A stubborn coterie<sup>3</sup> of Republican Radicals—longtime abolitionists and their allies—were not content to have simply saved the Union. They wanted to transform it: to make a nation where “all men are created equal” did not just mean white men.”

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<sup>1</sup> serious and immediate danger

<sup>2</sup> free from slavery

<sup>3</sup> a small group of people with shared interests or tastes

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*Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The First Reconstruction? What were the goals of The First Reconstruction?

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### **The Second Reconstruction**

“When President John F. Kennedy introduced, in June 1963, what would become the Civil Rights Act, he saw it as fulfilling<sup>4</sup> the work of Reconstruction. “One hundred years of delay have passed since President Lincoln freed the slaves, yet their heirs, their grandsons, are not fully free. They are not yet freed from the bonds of injustice. They are not yet freed from social and economic oppression,” Kennedy declared. “And this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free.”

*Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The Second Reconstruction? What were the goals of The Second Reconstruction?

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### **The Third Reconstruction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has both illuminated and magnified the persistent<sup>5</sup> disparities<sup>6</sup> between different races and income groups in the United States. From our health care system being pushed to the brink of its capacity in many regions to the widening of the opportunity gap<sup>7</sup> in public schooling - the year 2020 reshaped the conciseness of America.

Concurrently<sup>8</sup> in our communities, we witnessed the killings of three people: Ahmaud Aubrey, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. The nation erupted. According to some polls, more than 23 million people participated in anti-police-brutality protests, potentially making this the largest protest movement in American history. The dream of remaking society was once again at the forefront of many dinner table conversations.

“Joe Biden has struck an ambitious note, invoking the legacy of Reconstructions past. “The history of this nation teaches us that in some of our darkest moments of despair, we’ve made some of our greatest progress,” Biden declared amid the Floyd protests in June. “The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth Amendments followed the Civil War. The greatest economic growth in world history grew out of the Great Depression. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of ’65 came on the tracks of Bull Connor’s vicious dogs ... But it’s going to take more than talk. We had talk before; we had protest before. We’ve got to now vow to make this at least an era of action and reverse the systemic racism with long-overdue concrete changes.”

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<sup>4</sup> bring to completion or reality

<sup>5</sup> continuing to exist or endure over a prolonged period

<sup>6</sup> a difference in level or treatment, especially one that is seen as unfair

<sup>7</sup> the way that uncontrollable life factors like race, language, economic, and family situations can contribute to lower rates of success in educational and career achievement

<sup>8</sup> at the same time; simultaneously

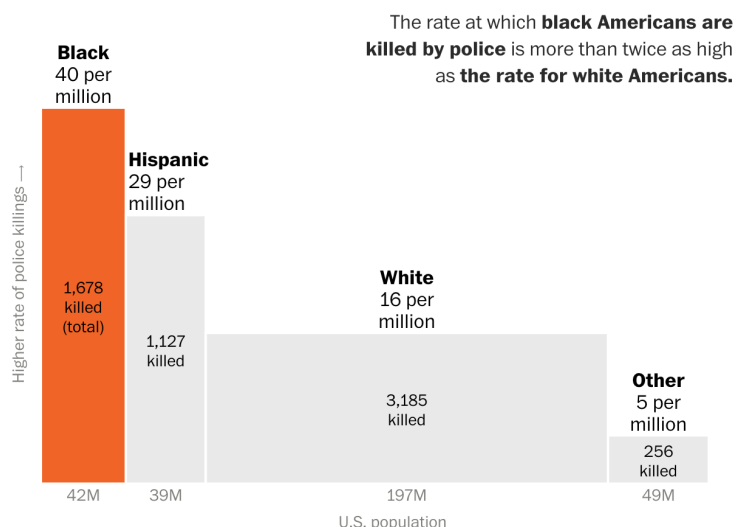
*Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The Third Reconstruction? What were the goals of The Third Reconstruction?

### Student Investigation

#### Source A: Police Brutality

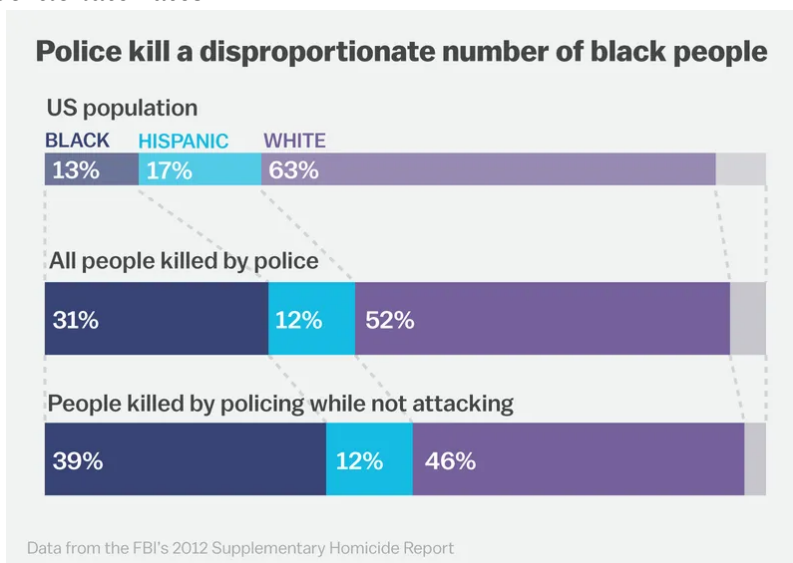
[The Washington Post Police Shootings Database](#)

*The Washington Post is compiling a database of every fatal shooting in the United States by a police officer in the line of duty since 2015.*



Source: [There are huge racial disparities in how US police use force - VOX](#)

*An analysis of the available FBI data by Dara Lind for Vox found that US police kill black people at disproportionate rates*



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Source: [Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History](#)

“The recent Black Lives Matter protests peaked on June 6 [2020], when half a million people turned out in nearly 550 places across the United States. That was a single day in more than a month of protests that still continue to today.

Four recent polls — including one released this week by Civis Analytics, a data science firm that works with businesses and Democratic campaigns — suggest that about 15 million to 26 million people in the United States have participated in demonstrations over the death of George Floyd and others in recent weeks.

These figures would make the recent protests the largest movement in the country’s history, according to interviews with scholars and crowd-counting experts.

... Half of those who said they protested said that this was their first time getting involved with a form of activism or demonstration. A majority said that they watched a video of police violence toward protesters or the Black community within the last year. And of those people, half said that it made them more supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement.

“Really, it’s hard to overstate the scale of this movement,” said Deva Woodly, an associate professor of politics at the New School.

Professor Woodly said that the civil rights marches in the 1960s were considerably smaller in number. “If we added up all those protests during that period, we’re talking about hundreds of thousands of people, but not millions,” she said”

**Based on Source A, to what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?**

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**Source B: Immigration**Source: [Why America keeps turning its back on Haitian migrants](#)

The images left many sickened and outraged: Border Patrol agents on horseback hounding Haitian migrants near the US-Mexico border, more than 14,000 of whom were camped under the Del Rio bridge on September 19. The uniformed men swung their long horse reins — which many interpreted as whips — to keep the migrants from crossing into Texas. In one photo, an agent grabbed the T-shirt of a migrant, while another shouted in a video, “Get out now! Back to Mexico!”

Condemnation<sup>9</sup> of the agents’ behavior was swift, with advocates drawing parallels to slave patrols, or the white men on horses who whipped enslaved people in cotton fields. But inhumane treatment of Black migrants, particularly Haitian migrants, is not new; it’s closely linked to the history of immigrant detention in the United States.

According to Carl Lindscoog, the author of *Detain and Punish: Haitian Refugees and the Rise of the World’s Largest Immigration Detention System*, the United States’ inhumane treatment of Haitian refugees, whom the country has often cast as criminals, unskilled, diseased, and poor, has been a central part of the immigration detention story.

Haitians have sought asylum<sup>10</sup> at US borders for decades, but every presidential administration since the 1970s has treated Haitians differently than other migrant groups, rejecting asylum claims, holding them longer in detention, and making it harder for them to settle down in safety. In the early 1990s, for example, when the United States detained more than 12,000 Haitian refugees at Guantanamo indefinitely, Immigration and Naturalization Services denied the vast majority of them asylum.

<sup>9</sup> the expression of very strong disapproval

<sup>10</sup> Political protection granted to refugees

The Biden administration is under intense political pressure from different sides and from different interests, just as previous administrations have been. The administration is trying to maintain its image as being very different from the Trump administration, especially when it comes to racism and anti-immigrant nativist xenophobia, but I don't believe that his policies have yet proven to be very different.

Many activists have used the phrase "Haitians are owed." There's this idea that the world owes Haiti and has played a role in its plight. We do all owe Haitians for the Haitian Revolution, which successfully ended in 1804 and was the most sweeping human rights revolution in all of human history. Haitian liberation, first from slavery and then from colonialism and achieving independence, was a victory for all enslaved, oppressed people, including Black Americans.

In many ways, Haitians, sadly, because they've so often been targeted by racism and injustice, have kept fighting in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s in this country and in others. Their determination to liberate themselves and other people they've struggled alongside continues to be a model for how all incarcerated, enslaved, and otherwise abused people can find their liberation. That's one major reason we owe a debt of gratitude to Haitians.

That's even more reason to fight alongside them for justice today at the US-Mexico border and wherever they encounter racism and discrimination.

**Based on Source B, to what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?**

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### Source C: Music

Listen to [1619 Podcast Episode 3: "The Birth of American Music"](#) [0:00-8:54].

Watch/Read [How Pop Smoke and Fivio Foreign Took Brooklyn Drill Global](#) | [Diary of a Song](#)

*Stop and Jot:*

1. Do you recognize any of the songs played in both segments? Where have you heard them before? What do they make you think of?  

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2. The Podcast and Video both explore a lot of metaphor and imagery rooted in Black tradition and culture. List two-three examples.  

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3. Black music and identity is such a big part of American popular music. Why does seeing our identities represented in art and media make us feel proud? How did Brooklyn Drill

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develop into the soundtrack to a summer of unrest?

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4. What additional research do you want to do about Black American music after engaging with Source C
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5. Based on Source C, to what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?
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### Source D: Youth Action

Source: [Today's Activism: Spontaneous, Leaderless, but Not Without Aim](#)

Today's Activism: Spontaneous, Leaderless, but Not Without Aim

Welcome to 21st-century activism, where social media is the strongest organizer. At the core is an egalitarian spirit, a belief that everyone's voice matters.

Welcome to 21st-century activism, where spontaneous and leaderless movements have been defined by their organic births and guided on the fly by people whose preferences, motivations and ideas may not always align.

But the absence of organized leadership does not mean the movements — from the Arab Spring to Occupy Wall Street to Black Lives Matter — are rudderless.

Leveraging technology that was unavailable to earlier generations, the activists of today have a digital playbook. Often, it begins with an injustice captured on video and posted to social media. Demonstrations are hastily arranged, hashtags are created and before long, thousands have joined the cause.

At the core is an egalitarian spirit, a belief that everyone has a voice, and that everyone's voice matters.

"This is much more than an organization. This is much more than an individual," said Nejah Ibrahim, 26, sitting on the pavement at the intersection where Mr. Floyd was arrested, sporadically leading chants or delivering messages from a megaphone.

"This is collective people who came together," he continued, "to stand against a systematic oppression that we have endured for so long."



These days, social media is the strongest, most prominent leader. Young activists announce the location of an action or protest on Twitter or Instagram, and within an hour, scores of people are there.

“I think it kind of does make it hard to manage because you don’t know who’s coming,” said Maryan Farasle, a 17-year-old high school senior who lives in the Minneapolis suburbs and is an activist organizer. “You don’t know the people showing up and what their intentions are.”

But at the same time, she added, “I think it is a way to get a lot of people together quickly.”

The young generation of activists also uses social media to police one another and help keep everyone safe. On Thursday night, after protesters set fire to the Third Police Precinct headquarters in Minneapolis, one Twitter user warned people to leave the area.

**Based on Source D , to what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?**

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**Source E: Health & Care**

Source: [Why doesn't the United states have universal health care? the answer has everything to do with race.](#)

In 2010, the Affordable Care Act brought health insurance to nearly 20 million previously uninsured adults. The biggest beneficiaries of this boon were people of color, many of whom obtained coverage through the law's Medicaid expansion. That coverage contributed to a measurable decrease in some racial health disparities, but the success was neither as enduring nor as widespread as it might have been. Several states, most of them in the former Confederacy, refused to participate in Medicaid expansion. And several are still trying to make access to the program contingent on onerous new work requirements. The results of both policies have been unequivocal. States that expanded Medicaid saw a drop in disease-related deaths, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. But in Arkansas, the first state to implement work requirements, nearly 20,000 people were forced off the insurance plan.

One hundred and fifty years after the freed people of the South first petitioned the government for basic medical care, the United States remains the only high-income country in the world where such care is not guaranteed to every citizen. In the United States, racial health disparities have proved as foundational as democracy itself. "There has never been any period in American history where the health of blacks was equal to that of whites," Evelyn Hammonds, a historian of science at Harvard University, says. "Disparity is built into the system." Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act have helped shrink those disparities. But no federal health policy yet has eradicated them.

Seal points out that a reason why racial disparities in health care are more pronounced in the South is the fact that a number of governors, including former Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal, rejected Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. "It wasn't until Jon Bel Edwards came in that Medicaid expansion was accepted. That helped a lot," Seal says.

The 2016 expansion, which covers 10 percent of people in the state, has been proven to decrease annual mortality in Louisiana, cut uninsurance rates in half, and expand access to care. Louisiana is the only state in the Deep South to embrace the legislation. Still, Seal suggests that a lack of access to primary care for generations may have added to the Covid-19 risk factors the black community was already facing.

"It's almost like structural racism has made black people sick," Uché Blackstock, an emergency medicine physician in Brooklyn and the founder and CEO of Advancing Health Equity, an organization that fights health care inequity, tells Vox.

Blackstock, who works in a gentrifying neighborhood in central Brooklyn, says she is used to seeing a mix of people at her clinic, but with Covid-19, it's lately "been all black people" — essential workers who don't have the luxury of leveraging wealth to escape to homes on Long Island, upstate New York, Connecticut, or Rhode Island. Environmental racism, including practices like toxic dumping, has worked in tandem with other kinds of oppression (racial restrictive housing covenants and anti-busing measures, to name two) to produce stress and contribute to high rates of chronic illness.

Historically, in the United States, mutual-aid networks have proliferated mostly in communities that the state has chosen not to help. The peak of such organizing may have come in the late sixties and early seventies, when Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries opened a shelter for

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homeless trans youth, in New York, and the Black Panther Party started a free-breakfast program, which within its first year was feeding twenty thousand children in nineteen cities across the country. J. Edgar Hoover worried that the program would threaten “efforts by authorities to neutralize the BPP and destroy what it stands for”; a few years later, the federal government formalized its own breakfast program for public schools.

In March, even before widespread workplace closures and self-isolation, people throughout the country began establishing informal networks to meet the new needs of those around them. In Aurora, Colorado, a group of librarians started assembling kits of essentials for the elderly and for children who wouldn’t be getting their usual meals at school. Disabled people in the Bay Area organized assistance for one another; a large collective in Seattle set out explicitly to help “Undocumented, LGBTQI, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, Elderly, and Disabled, folxs who are bearing the brunt of this social crisis.”

**Based on Source E, to what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?**

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