

Day 5: The Current Reconstruction Lesson Plan

Lesson Objective(s) or Essential Question(s)
<p>Lesson Objective: Draw comparisons and connections across the three Reconstructions within the U.S. to determine the validity of a Third Reconstruction. Identify how Black Americans are sustaining power and agency in the current day</p> <p>Essential Question: To what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?</p>
Lesson Materials & Resources
<p><u>Resources for this lesson:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Current Reconstruction SRP Student Response Packet [.docx][.pdf] • Projector with sound and/or individual laptops <p><u>Differentiation Tips and Tools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossary Footnotes • Graphic Organizers • ELL Translated Text for Emerging Scholars • Adjust Lexile Level and/or Chunking of Text
Lesson Activities
<p><u>Lesson Plan Outline:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question (10 minutes) 2. Background and Context (10 minutes) 3. Scholar Investigation & Independent Practice (30 minutes) 4. Exit Ticket (10 minutes) <p><u>Do Now, Discourse and Invest in the Question:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do Now. Give students 4 minutes to respond to the prompt: 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/or paying close attention to the root and affixes of the term. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students will share their responses in a turn and talk. b. Lead a discussion for 4 minutes. <p><i>Exemplar Response: When you put something back together and rebuild it: The period following the Civil War. The prefix “re” means again. The root “construct” means to build and the suffix “ion” denotes an action or condition. The term refers to a time when Black Americans rapidly gained new rights following enslavement, etc.</i></p> 2. Invest in the Essential Question: Lead students to invest in the essential question. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage students to name and circle the key terms and provide definitions to ensure everyone is aligned on the historical investigation.

- b. Have students rewrite the essential question in their own words to stamp the learning.

Background and Context:

1. **Framing.** Say: “Over the course of this unit, we have been grappling with the echoes and reverberations of Reconstruction within the American narrative. Today we’re going to start with tracing the arc of multiple Reconstructions as well as zoom in on the ways Black Americans cultivate[d] power and agency during the Third Reconstruction. Historically, Black Americans have used resistance to build power and agency.”
2. Have students read and annotate excerpts from [“THE NEW RECONSTRUCTION,” by Adam Serwer for The Atlantic](#) in their student response packets. As students read, they should think about the defining moment of each Reconstruction and the goals of each Reconstruction

- a. **The First Reconstruction:** “The post–Civil War years were a moment of great peril for the emancipated, but also great promise. A stubborn coterie 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.”
 - i. *Stop and Jot:* What was the goal of The First Reconstruction? What was the defining moment of The First Reconstruction?

Exemplar Response: The goal of the First Reconstruction was to transform America into a more equal country. The defining moment was when Black Americans gained new rights, specifically the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment.

- b. **The Second Reconstruction:** “When President John F. Kennedy introduced, in June 1963, what would become the Civil Rights Act, he saw it as fulfilling 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.”
 - i. *Stop and Jot:* What was the defining moment of The Second Reconstruction? What were the goals of The Second Reconstruction?

Exemplar Response: The defining moment of the Second Reconstruction was the introduction of the Civil Rights Act. The goals included the end of segregation and our nation becoming just for all citizens.

- c. **The Third Reconstruction:** “The COVID-19 pandemic has both illuminated and magnified the persistent disparities between different races and income groups in the United States. From our healthcare system being pushed to the brink of its capacity in many regions to the widening of the opportunity gap in public schooling - the year 2020 reshaped the conciseness of America.

Concurrently 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.”

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

Exemplar Response: The defining moment of the Third Reconstruction was the anti-police-brutality protests that took place during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The goals included the end of police brutality and reversing systemic racism.

Student Investigation & Independent Practice: Students will work either in groups or independently to closely read and analyze the selected texts in the student response packet. Teachers should preview sources and identify which ones students should prioritize. Teachers could also provide structured choice and allow students to self-select a certain number of sources to analyze.

1. **Framing/Inquiry Launch:** Review the lesson objective and be sure that students understand the question by asking: What is this question asking us? What do we need to do, to be successful in answering it?

Exemplar Responses:

Source A: Police Brutality

Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by organizing the largest protest movement in America to shed light upon Police brutality and racial violence.

Source B: Immigration

Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by confronting the inhuman treatment Black migrants faced at the hands of the US Border Patrol. Haitians are often treated differently than other migrant groups. Haitians continue to work towards liberation.

Source C: Music

Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by creating music that represented their diverse communities. Brooklyn Drill music served as the soundtrack for the summer of unrest in 2019. Black music has developed into the sound of America.

Source D: Youth Action

Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by embracing the spontaneous, digital and leaderless activism practiced by youth organizers. Social media has redefined protest and organizing.

Source E: Health & Care

Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by fighting against racial health disparities. Informal and local mutual aid networks continue to power communities of color.

2. **Optional: Discuss and Debrief:** Have students share their findings.
 - a. The debrief discussion can be based on the teacher's choice of students after circulating and hearing strong responses. Alternatively, the teacher could opt to jigsaw out the debrief by chunking text and having designated scholars share about that portion of the text.
 - b. As groups are sharing, other students should check their jots/notes to include any key

takeaways they may have missed.

Exit Ticket Assessment:

Students should write a response to the following question: To what extent are Black Americans sustaining power and agency during the Third Reconstruction?

a. Student responses should include the following:

- Background and context
- Thesis statement
- Two pieces of evidence and analysis
- A conclusion

Exemplar Response:

Reconstruction represents the historical period directly following the Civil War. This period represented America's transition from a slave society to a society striving to still realize a nation where "all men are created equal." Reconstruction can also be characterized as a period of rapid change where new rights transform the lived experience of so many. The Civil Rights Era draws many parallels to the original post-Civil War Reconstruction where racial progress was palpable. Some historians have called the current era, a Third Reconstruction with the pandemic and anti-police brutality protests serving as catalysts for change. Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by redefining activism, crafting black art, and organizing together to illuminate disparities and drive local change.

To begin with, Black Americans have redefined activism within the Third Reconstruction. In the United States, police continue to murder black people at disproportionate rates. Fatal shootings at the hands of the police have gained a new degree of transparency with the rise of mobile devices and their recording ability. The Black Lives Matter protests drew about "15 million to 26 million people in the United States" (Source A) which would represent "the largest movement in the country's history" (Source A) according to scholars and crowd-counting experts. Police Brutality has become a dinner-table conversation as more Americans start to acknowledge the roots of racial violence. This increased visibility is shifting the way police departments are operating. Through embracing the spontaneous, digital and leaderless activism practiced by youth organizers, Black power and agency have gone digital. Social media is redefining traditional protest and organizing. Information is broadcasted through informal networks and organic conversations and happens more frequently. The New York Times explains that through leveraging technology that was absent "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 (Source D)." Youth activism is bringing new and vital voices into the conversation.

In addition, Black Americans sustain power and agency by creating music that represents their diverse communities. Brooklyn drill and trap have served as the soundtrack of the youth uprising during the summer of 2019. The Brooklyn drill sound is a combination of trap, Chicago drill, and UK drill. Pop Smoke took "Brooklyn Drill Global" (Source C) and introduced countless new listeners to drill and demonstrated the power of black expression as explained. In exploring the historical narrative of America's sound, it's hard to separate the African American influence that lives in almost every "American" song. Black music has developed into the sound of America. Jazz, blues, and gospel music all grew from African roots and are mimicked today in some of our country's greatest hits. Ragtime paved the way for jazz, and elements from all these various styles continue to influence rock

and roll and hip-hop music.

*Furthermore, Black Americans continue to organize to illuminate disparities and drive local change. Carl Lindskoog, author of *Detain and Punish: Haitian Refugees and the Rise of the World’s Largest Immigration Detention System* explores how 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 (Source D).” This discriminatory immigration policy towards Haitian migrants is another attack on blackness. Haitians led the world with Haitian liberation with the first successful enslaved rebellion and yet they are still being targeted by racism and injustice. Haitians continue to fight against this system which consistently denies their asylum requests. Black Americans have also organized mutual aid systems to drive change within their local realities. Source E explains that historically within the US, “mutual-aid networks have proliferated mostly in communities that the state has chosen not to help.” Through local organizing, mutual aid groups can sustain power and uplift the community.*

Ultimately, the work of the Third Reconstruction is not fully complete. The Covid-19 pandemic coupled with a summer of activism has illuminated the progress we have made and the work that still lies uncompleted. Black Americans sustained power and agency during the Third Reconstruction by redefining activism, crafting black art, and organizing together to illuminate disparities and drive local change..

Differentiation

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- Graphic Organizers
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