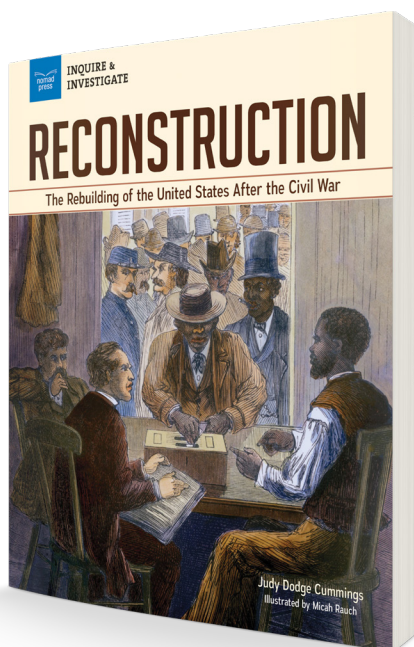


# Nomad Press

## CLASSROOM GUIDE



How does a country rebuild the infrastructure, government, and economy of a huge region while taking steps to resolve the status of 4 million newly freed people?

In *Reconstruction: The Rebuilding of the United States After the Civil War*, middle schoolers examine the era from 1865 to 1877, a time when the United States wrestled with questions that still plague the country today. Who should get access to citizenship and voting rights? How should the power of the federal government be balanced against the rights of the states? What is the proper government response to white supremacy?

Essential questions guide readers' investigations while hands-on activities promote critical and creative problem solving and text-to-world connections highlight the way the past provides context for the present-day world.

Learn more at [nomadpress.net/nomadpress-books/reconstruction](http://nomadpress.net/nomadpress-books/reconstruction)

**Softcover:** 9781619309760, \$17.95  
**Hardcover:** 9781619309739, \$22.95  
**eBook:** all formats available, \$12.99  
**Specs:** 8 x 10, 128 pages, color interior

**Reading Level:** Ages 12–15  
**Interest Level:** Grades 7–10  
**Focus:** U.S. History  
**GRL:** Z+



The period of Reconstruction after the Civil War has much in common with today's world, including a collective wish to see more social, political, and economic equality. We also share many of the same challenges. By paying attention to history, people of the present have a better chance of affecting positive change.

**A divided public.** Lawmakers with competing visions for the future. Bold newspaper headlines about voting rights, citizenship, and domestic terrorism. While this may sound like the United States of today, these sentences describe the country between 1865 and 1877, during the era called Reconstruction. Similar to the present, Reconstruction was a time of division and turmoil, when Americans struggled to define freedom and determine who should get it.

Reconstruction was a turning point in American history. During the Civil War, from 1861 to 1865, the North and South had fought about two central questions. Should the United States remain one nation? Should enslaved people be freed?

The North won the war. As a result, the 11 Confederate states of the South had to return to the Union on terms set by the North, while the 4 million enslaved people in the South were freed.

These two momentous changes raised critical questions that would shape the country's future.

- Should the Southern states be welcomed back with open arms or should they be punished?
- Should former slaves enjoy the same rights and freedoms as American citizens?
- Should the federal government compensate former slaveholders for the "property" they had to free?
- Should the freed people be compensated for years of stolen labor?

This book tells the story of how nineteenth-century Americans tried to answer these questions. As African Americans gained new political, economic, and social freedoms, the moment felt ripe with the promise of true equality. However, the more Black people asserted their new powers, the more Southern whites resisted. By 1877, the reforming spirit of Reconstruction was gone, and white supremacists regained control in the South.

**WHOSE HERITAGE MATTERS**

Although Confederates lost the Civil War 150 years ago, more than 1,700 Confederate markers dot the United States landscape from Florida to Washington State. From 1924 to 2021, a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee (1807–1870) sat astride a horse in Emancipation Park in Charlottesville, Virginia. When City Councilor Kristin Szakos suggested in 2012 that perhaps it was time to remove the statue from the park, people gasped.

**PRIMARY SOURCES** PS

Primary sources come from people who were eyewitnesses to events. They might write about the event, take pictures, post short messages to social media or blogs, or record the event for radio or video. The photographs in this book are primary sources, taken at the time of the event. Paintings of events are usually not primary sources, since they were often painted long after the event took place.

What other primary sources can you find? Why are primary sources important? Do you learn differently from primary sources than from secondary sources, which come from people who did not directly experience the event?

**RECONSTRUCT**

From 2008 to 2018, the United States spent at least \$40 million to maintain Confederate statues, museums, cemeteries, homes, and libraries. Very few of these sites mention the lives of enslaved people.

2 RECONSTRUCTION | INTRODUCTION

THE PAST INFORMS THE PRESENT 3

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# SAMPLE GLOSSARY

**abhorrence:** extreme hatred.

**abolish:** to completely do away with something.

**abolitionist:** a person who supported ending slavery.

**acquit:** to find someone not guilty of a crime.

**activist:** a person who works to bring about social or political change.

**adjourn:** to temporarily suspend a meeting until a future time.

**ally:** a partner in support of a cause.

**amendment:** a change made to a law or document.

**amnesty:** a government pardon for a person who has committed a crime.

**aristocracy:** a class of people who hold high rank and privilege.

**arsonist:** someone who deliberately sets a fire to destroy property.

**article:** a document.

**assassination:** murder committed for political rather than personal reasons.

**bankrupt:** to be unable to repay debts.

**barrage:** to bombard someone.

**bias:** the tendency to see or think of things a certain way based on previously held prejudices or beliefs.

**biracial:** involving members of two races.

**birthright citizenship:** citizenship automatically granted to a child born in a particular country, regardless of whether the child's parents are citizens.

**Black Codes:** a series of laws imposed in the South after the Civil War that tried to force Blacks back into plantation work.

**boycott:** to refuse to use, buy, or deal with a business as a protest of that company's policies.

**bribery:** money or other favors given to influence a person in a position of authority or power.

**brokerage house:** a company that provides financial services.

**cabinet:** senior advisers to the president who administer the policies of federal departments.

**capacity:** the ability to do something.

**carpetbagger:** a negative term used to label Northerners who moved to the South after the Civil War.

**censor:** to examine a book or movie before publication and remove unacceptable parts.

**citizen:** a person who has all the rights and responsibilities that come with being a full member of a country.

**citizenship:** legally belonging to a country and having the rights and protection of that country.

**civil rights:** rights of citizens to have political and social freedom and equality.

**Civil Rights Movement:** a struggle during the 1950s and 1960s in the United States for Blacks to gain equal rights under the law.

**Civil War:** the war in the United States, from 1861 to 1865, between the states in the North and the slave-owning states in the South. A civil war is a war between citizens of the same country.

**commemoration:** serving as a memorial.

**commoner:** an ordinary person without rank or title.

**compensate:** to give something, usually money, in recognition of loss, suffering, or injury incurred.

**compulsory:** something that must be done.

**concession:** to yield or give up a right, privilege, or point in an argument.

**condemn:** to express disapproval of or sentence someone to punishment.

**Confederate:** the government established by the Southern slave-owning states of the United States after they left the Union in 1860 and 1861. Called the Confederate States of America or the Confederacy. Also someone who worked for or believed in the cause of the Confederate States of America.

**confiscate:** to take property.

**conservative:** someone who prefers traditional customs and laws rather than major change.

**conspire:** to secretly plan to do something wrong or harmful.

**constitution:** the basic principles and laws of a nation or state.

**constitutional convention:** a meeting during which a constitution is created or changed.

**controversial:** an issue that causes disagreement.

**convention:** a formal meeting to discuss a certain issue.

**convict:** to declare someone guilty of a criminal offense.

# ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

## BEFORE READING:

### Establish Background Knowledge

- What do you already know about the Civil War? About the period of Reconstruction right after the Civil War?
- Why is it important to study history?
- When you study history, do you ever find the topics and subject matter familiar? Do we struggle with some of the same questions in the present as we have in the past?

### Skill Introduction

- What do you do when you come to a word or phrase you do not know?
- How do photographs, videos, and maps help someone learn about a topic?

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.*

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.9-10.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.*

## DURING READING:

### Check for Understanding

- Why might people raise statues to controversial historical figures? Should we honor and celebrate people who did harm?
- How can we use knowledge about history to make better choices about our world today?
- Why do we need to stay aware of how much history we still have to learn? How do we resolve conflicting information?

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.*

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.*

## AFTER READING:

### Summary and Expansion

- Why was education, especially education for Black people, such a major part of rebuilding the South after the war?
- Why did many white people in the South try to prevent Black people from voting after the war? How did this contribute to the struggle for power?
- What is white supremacy? Does white supremacy mean something different now than it did then?
- How are today's political parties different from the parties during Reconstruction?
- What was nature of the struggle between the federal government and states' rights? What is the nature of that struggle today?
- Did the promise of 40 acres and a mule help former enslaved people? Why or why not?
- How did former enslaved people find their families after the Civil War?
- What were the Black Codes? How do they relate to Jim Crow? How do they relate to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s?
- What role did President Andrew Johnson play in Reconstruction? How did his actions and decisions affect Black people?

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.*

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1d Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.*

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.*

*CCC: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.*



## ACTIVITY!

Inquire &  
Investigate

## EVALUATING MEDIA BIAS

The media plays a major role in shaping public opinion, especially about controversial topics. Because a democracy depends on a well-informed public to hold government accountable, citizens must know how to evaluate the media in order to detect potential bias. Evaluate news sources about the impeachment of President Donald Trump in December 2019.

- **Use the internet to locate three articles about Trump’s impeachment.** Select articles from Fox, MSNBC, and the Associated Press.
- **As you read the three articles, record the following information in a chart: media name, author, date, main argument, and two facts that support the main argument.**
- **Assess each source for its reliability and accuracy.** Crosscheck the facts in each article by looking for confirmation or rejection of these facts in other sources. Examine the background of the author—are they a professional journalist, a politician, or have some expertise that makes them qualified to report on this issue? What is the point of view of the article and is it one-sided? What is the purpose of the article and who was its intended audience? What information does the source leave out that would help you better understand Trump’s impeachment?
- **Evaluate the articles.** Based on your analysis, which of the three media sources do you think presents the most balanced, factual, unbiased viewpoint of Trump’s impeachment?

To investigate more, locate other types of sources about Trump’s impeachment, such as news videos, blogs, or interviews. How do these sources explain Trump’s impeachment and how do they compare with the coverage of the three articles you read?

## ACTIVITY!

## Inquire &amp; Investigate



## VOCAB LAB



Write down what you think each word means. What root words can you find to help you? What does the context of the word tell you?

**disenfranchise, intimidation, Jim Crow, jurisdiction, neutralize, paramilitary, and redemption.**

Compare your definitions with those of your friends or classmates. Did you all come up with the same meanings? Turn to the text and glossary if you need help.

To investigate more, present your infographic to a group of social studies teachers, parents, or the school board. Do they think the history of lynching should be taught as part of American history?

## HARD HISTORY

Between the Civil War and World War II, thousands of African Americans were lynched. This means they were murdered by white mobs. These acts of racial terrorism were a method whites used to control Black people. It is an ugly side of American history that is not often taught in school. Experts believe that until Americans recognize the history of racial terror and how it led to inequality, we cannot address the racial divisions that still plague society today.

Work with a group of peers to create a series of infographics about the history of lynching, from the end of the Reconstruction era to the 1950s.

- **Develop a series of questions to guide your research.** Divide these questions among your group so each person's infographic focuses on a different question.

- **Visit the library and research on the internet to answer your questions.** Remember to evaluate your sources to make sure they are trustworthy. Two valuable websites include Lynching in America and State Sanctioned. **NOTE: These websites may include disturbing images.**



lynching America



state sanctioned

- **Determine the purpose of data you want to display.** Here are some tips. Use large colorful fonts and icons to display statistics or facts. Use charts or pictograms to show similarities or differences. Use a line graph, timeline, or thematic map.
- **Design your infographic.** Use a digital template or create your own from scratch.

# AUTHOR INTERVIEW



## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT WRITING CHILDRENS' BOOKS?

My favorite part about writing a book for kids is imagining the story. When a book is still in the idea phase, the sky is the limit.

## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET STUCK WITH

### THE RESEARCH OR THE WRITING?

I'm not the kind of person to give up when I hit a stumbling block. If I hit a hole in my research, I dig deeper. If I struggle with a writing passage, I start over. Eventually, my path becomes clear.

## HOW DO YOU COME UP WITH GREAT ACTIVITY IDEAS?

I was a teacher for many years and working with young people helped me hone my skills at developing interesting and meaningful hands-on activities.

## HOW DO YOU TACKLE THE REVISION PROCESS?

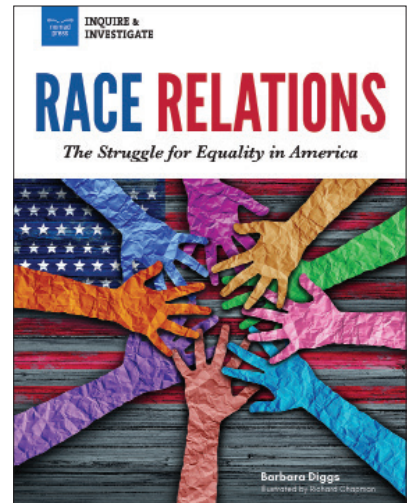
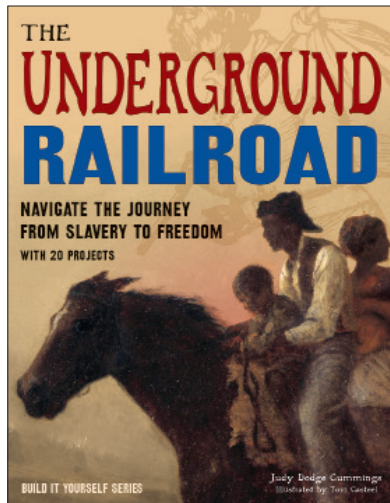
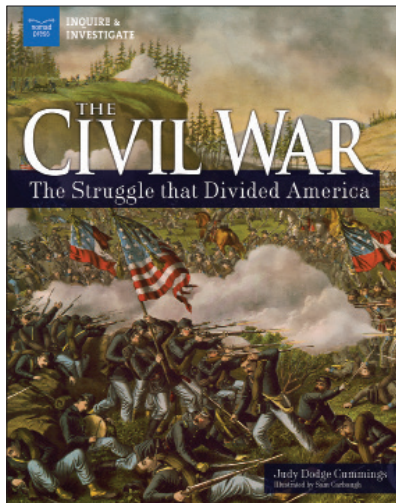
I revise in stages. First, I fix the major structural problems. Then I revise for clarity and flow. Finally, and the part that is most fun, I polish my prose until it shines.

## WHEN YOU RESEARCH AND WRITE ABOUT AMERICAN HISTORY, HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY?

My knowledge of American history gives me hope for the nation's future. While history does not repeat itself, it does echo. I believe it is important study how our nation overcame similar problems in the past and apply these lessons to the present.



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