

A low-angle photograph of the Georgia State Capitol building, showing the golden dome and the statue of Liberty on top. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Georgia Studies

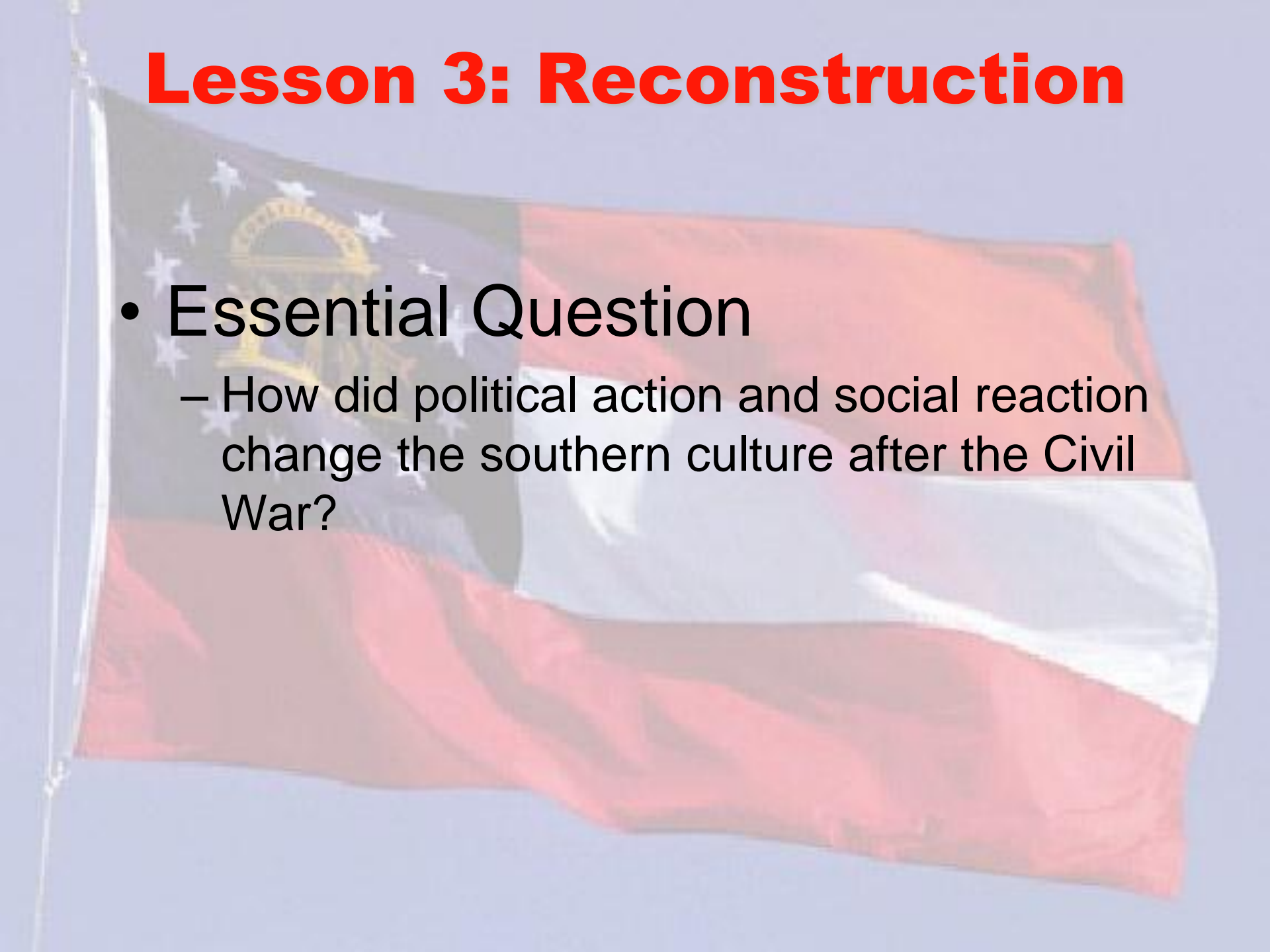
Unit 5: Georgia in a Divided Nation

Lesson 3: Reconstruction

Study Presentation

Lesson 3: Reconstruction

- Essential Question
 - How did political action and social reaction change the southern culture after the Civil War?



Conditions in Georgia (and the South) at the end of the war:

- Farms were in ruins; not enough food
- Homes, railways, bridges, roads were destroyed or in need of repair
- Banks were closed – Confederate money was worthless
- The state owed \$20,000,000 in war debt
- 25,000 Georgians had died of wounds or disease – many more were crippled and could not work

Freed Slaves (Freedmen)

- Problems of freedmen (former slaves):
 - Homeless
 - Hungry – Not enough food
 - Uneducated
 - Free for the 1st time
 - No property or goods; many freedmen began working in **sharecropping** or **tenant farming** to survive
- Many former slaves feared re-enslavement
- Most whites had difficulty treating freedmen as free persons since they had previously been slaves and were treated as property

Sharecropping and Tenant Farming

Sharecropping

- Landowner provides a house, land, equipment, animals, fertilizer and seeds.
- The landowner issued credit to the worker to buy medicine, food, clothing and other supplies.
- The landowner gets a share of the crop and crops to pay any debt owed.
- Sharecroppers rarely had any cash.

Tenant Farming

- Landowner provides house and land.
- Landowner received a set amount of cash or a portion of the crop at the end of the season.
- Tenant farmers usually made a small profit.

The Freedmen's Bureau

- Started as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands by U.S. government in 1865
- Its purpose was to help freed slaves and poor whites with the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter
- The purpose shifted to education:
 - Set up 4,000 primary schools
 - Started industrial schools for jobs training
 - Started teacher-training schools
- Missionaries started schools like Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Clark College to give freedmen opportunities at higher education

Reconstruction Plans: Lincoln's Plan

- Lincoln wanted to rebuild and return the south to the Union as soon as possible
- “Reconstruction” would have two parts:
 - 1.Southerners would be pardoned after taking an oath of allegiance;
 - 2.When 10% of voters had taken the oath, the state could rejoin the Union and form a state government.
- Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865 during a play at Ford's Theater by actor John Wilkes Booth.
- Vice President Andrew Johnson took over as President.

Reconstruction Plans: Lincoln's Plan (Cont.)

- Lincoln's plan to reconstruct the south was challenged. Some northerners called "Radical Republicans" thought the south should be more severely punished.
- The Radical Republicans wanted to make sure the freedmen retained their new rights.
- Confederate President Jefferson Davis was captured and imprisoned.

Reconstruction Plans: Johnson's Plan

- In addition to Lincoln's requirements, President Johnson added a few more. Southern states had to:
 - Approve (ratify) the **13th Amendment** (outlawing slavery);
 - Nullify their ordinances of secession;
 - Promise not to repay money borrowed during the war.

The Constitutional Convention of 1865

- President Johnson appointed James Johnson as Georgia's provisional Governor.
- Governor Johnson held a Constitutional Convention. The representatives voted to abolish slavery and repeal the ordinance of secession.
- Elections were held in November 1865 for a new legislature.
- The General Assembly voted to extend rights to freedmen.

Congressional Reconstruction

- Congress was angry about Georgia's Black Codes, so it passed the Civil Rights Act of 1866. This law gave:
 - citizenship to all freedmen;
 - the federal government power to intervene any time civil rights were taken from freedmen.
- The 14th Amendment was passed granting citizenship to freedmen and required “equal protection under the law.”

Congressional Reconstruction

- Congress required southern states to ratify the **14th Amendment**.
- Georgia and most of the other southern states refused.
- Congress abolished these states' governments and put them under military rule.
- Georgia was ruled by General John Pope.
- Pope was required to register all male voters – black and white. These voters would elect new representatives to form a new state government.

Constitutional Convention of 1867

- Georgia male voters elected delegates to the convention to create a new state constitution.
- Delegates were carpetbaggers (northerners who had moved south), scalawags (southerners who sided with the Republicans), and blacks.
- Accomplishments of the Convention:
 - A new constitution ensuring civil rights for all citizens;
 - Free public education for all children;
 - Women were allowed to control their own property.
- Georgia had satisfied Congress, so General Pope and his troops left the state.

Henry McNeal Turner and Black Legislators

- The election of 1867 was the first time African Americans in Georgia were able to vote.
- Several African Americans were elected to Georgia's General Assembly (Legislative Branch).
- Rev. **Henry McNeal Turner** was one of the first black men elected in Georgia.
- The African Americans elected to the General Assembly were expelled (kicked out of office) in 1868.
- It was argued by whites that civil rights laws gave blacks the right to vote but not to be elected to office.

Ku Klux Klan

- Secret organization – originally started as a social club for men returning from the war.
- Members hid behind robes and masks.
- The group terrorized blacks to keep them from voting.
- As a result, Congress passed “The Georgia Act” and sent troops back to Georgia.
- The act required Georgia to pass the 15th Amendment giving all males the right to vote.

The End of Reconstruction

- The African Americans who had been expelled from the General Assembly in 1868 were readmitted by the Georgia Supreme Court in 1870.
- Georgia's General Assembly approved the 14th and 15th Amendments.
- Georgia was readmitted to the Union, ending Reconstruction in Georgia.