Reconstruction Notes

Effects of the War
• After the Civil War ended, much of the South was in ruins
• Union troops destroyed major cities, railroads, farms, etc
  – Remember the destruction Sherman’s March to the Sea
  – Also remember how important crops and farming were to the south’s economy

Reconstruction
• Reconstruction - the process of reuniting the nation and rebuilding the southern states without slavery
  – The South’s land and the South’s economy had to be reconstructed.
• Ten Percent Plan - ten percent of voters had to swear an oath of loyalty to the U.S., before the state could rejoin the union

13th Amendment
• The Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in Confederate states
• The Thirteenth Amendment made slavery illegal throughout the United States
  – 13 was lucky for the slaves
• Even though slavery was illegal, former slaves still were not treated equally
  – Unequal Economic/political rights

Freedmen’s Bureau
• Created in order to help poor people in the South
• Established schools
  – Provided books and paid for teachers

Lincoln’s Assassination
• April 14th, 1865 Lincoln and his wife were attending a play at Ford’s Theatre in Washington D.C.
• John Wilkes Booth slipped into the President’s theater box and shot him
  – Booth was a southerner who opposed Lincoln’s policies
  – After he shot Lincoln in the back of the head, he jumped from the balcony to the stage, breaking his leg
  – On stage he screamed “Sic semper tyrannis!” Thus always to tyrants
• Lincoln was died at 7:30 a.m. the next morning

Andrew Johnson
• With Lincoln’s death, Vice President Andrew Johnson was sworn into office as the new President
• Black Codes - laws that greatly limited the freedom of African Americans
  – Blacks who would not prove they had a job could be arrested
  – Could not own guns
  – Restricted from renting property in some cities
**Fourteenth Amendment**
- To protect civil right laws for the future, the 14th amendment was passed:
  - **Fourteenth Amendment**: granted citizenship to all people born or nationalized in the United States
    - Guaranteed to citizens the equal protection of the laws
    - States could not deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of the law

**Reconstruction Acts**
- Divided the South into five military districts
- Each district has a military commander placed in control
- The military would remain there until the southern states were admitted into the union
  - States had to support the fourteenth amendment and give African American men the right to vote in order to become a state
- President Johnson disagreed with these acts
  - Said that African Americans did not deserve the same treatment as whites.

**Johnson’s Impeachment**
- Congress knew that Johnson did not support the Reconstruction Acts
- Congress passed a law to limit the president’s power
  - Limited the president from removing cabinet officials without the Senate’s approval
- Johnson broke the law by firing Edwin Stanton, secretary of war
- The House of Representatives voted to impeach the president
  - **Impeach**: bring charges of wrongdoing against a public official
    - **First time in US. History a president had been impeached**
  - The next step was a trial in the Senate; if found guilty, he would be removed from office
  - He needed 2/3 majority to be found guilty
  - Was failed to be convicted by a single vote

**Fifteenth Amendment**
- **Fifteenth Amendment**: Gave African American men throughout the U.S. the right to vote

**Opposition to Reconstruction**
- **Ku Klux Klan**: opposed civil rights, especially suffrage, for African Americans
  - Wore robes and hoods to disguise their identity
  - Used violence and terror against African Americans and public officials
- **Poll Taxes**: A special tax that people had to pay before they could vote
  - Targeted African American voters, in hopes of preventing them from voting
  - Some states also set up literacy tests to prevent African Americans from voting.
- **Segregation**: forced separation of whites and African Americans in public places
- **Jim Crow laws**: laws that required segregation
  - Applied in hotels, theaters, railroad cars, etc.