

# Black Citizenship in the Age of Jim Crow

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LEE BOOMER, NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NCHE 2019



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MAKING HISTORY MATTER

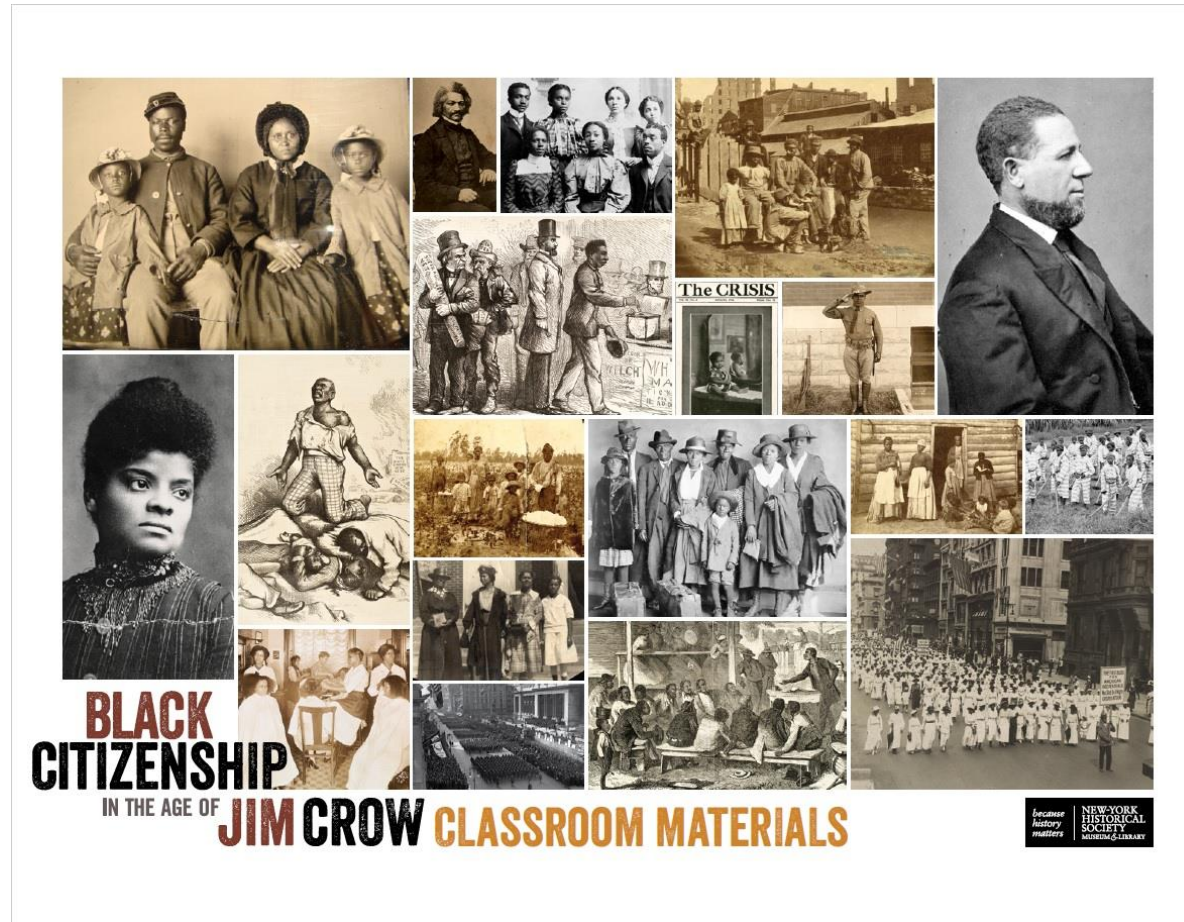
# Education at the New-York Historical Society

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- The New-York Historical Society organizes and presents an extensive range of school programs, teacher resources, and adult and child workshops.

# September 7, 2018 – March 3, 2019



# UNIT 1 RECONSTRUCTION 1865-1877

Reconstruction began with the Confederate surrender that ended the Civil War. America needed to reunite, heal, and change. Just at this crucial moment, a Southern sympathizer killed President Lincoln. Vice President Andrew Johnson took over.

A burning question faced the nation during Reconstruction. Would black people now be accepted as equals? The country was deeply divided. Some envisioned a radically new interracial democracy. Others wanted the old America, with strict racial lines intact and whites in control. President Johnson agreed with the latter. He brought his support for white supremacy to the helm of government. An urgent contest—over political power and the future of American society—erupted in Washington and throughout the country.

The struggle for black freedom and equality during Reconstruction produced long strides forward and bruising setbacks. Promises were both made and betrayed. But those twelve years changed the meaning of citizenship fundamentally, for black people and for all Americans.

## UNIT 1 MATERIALS

Life Story: Andrew Johnson  
 Life Story: Hiram Revels  
 Resource 1: Sacrifice and Citizenship  
 Resource 2: Early Jim Crow  
 Resource 3: Black Rights on Paper  
 Resource 4: Celebrating Civil Rights  
 Resource 5: Learning to Read  
 Resource 6: Searching for Relatives  
 Resource 7: A Right to the Land  
 Resource 8: The Right to Vote  
 Resource 9: Reconstruction Abandoned  
 Appendix: Citizenship Timeline

## 6 Life Stories

- Short biographies of well-known and lesser-known individuals

## RESOURCE 8

### THE RIGHT TO VOTE

**B**etween January and March 1867—three years before the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment—Congressional legislation granted the vote to black men in Washington, DC, all the western territories, and the former Confederate states. The bills passed over President Johnson's vetoes.

In this drawing, the cartoonist explores the immediate aftermath of those laws. On the left, President Johnson stands next to an ex-Confederate with his veto power represented as a club. Both men are disgruntled by what they see: a black Union veteran casting his vote. America did not yet have a secret ballot, so the two glass ballot boxes are clearly marked for the opposing candidates. The scene was not real, but this mayoral election was, and black men did vote. When the results were in, Republican Charles D. Welch defeated the incumbent, Henry Addison.

White resistance to black suffrage was swift. In 1867, the two-year-old Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and other vigilante groups began using violence and threats to prevent black men from voting or running for office. In 1870 and 1871, Congress passed enforcement acts to protect black voters. These measures crushed the KKK, but other white groups carried out intimidation campaigns to keep black men from the polls. Four decades later, the KKK revived.

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What does the illustration communicate about this black voter?
- About the white men watching him?
- Who is the voter casting his ballot for? How do you know?
- How does the illustration show the sharp disagreements over black suffrage?



“I have had but one idea for the last three years to present to the American people, and the phraseology in which I clothe it is the old abolition phraseology. I am for the ‘immediate, unconditional, and universal’ enfranchisement of the black man, in every State in the Union. Without this, his liberty is a mockery. . . . He is at the mercy of the mob, and has no means of protecting himself.”  
 —Frederick Douglass, “What the Black Man Wants,” January 26, 1865, Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society



“The Georgetown election—The Negro at the ballot-box,” *Harper’s Weekly*, March 16, 1867. New York Historical Society Library

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## LIFE STORY

### HIRAM REVELS 1827–1901 The First Black US Senator

#### FREE AND BLACK IN THE SOUTH

Hiram Revels was America’s first black senator, representing Mississippi in 1870–71, the midpoint of the Reconstruction era. He had an unusual background, even before his unprecedented election. Hiram and his parents were free at a time when most Southern blacks were enslaved. The family lived in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and many of their ancestors were Croatan Indians, who some scholars believe absorbed the “lost” British settlers of sixteenth-century Roanoke Colony in North Carolina. In his teens, Hiram learned barbering from his brother and inherited the barbershop when his brother died, so even as a young man he was able to earn a living.

But Hiram had attended school, and he had other dreams. He headed to the Midwest, studied at seminaries in Indiana and Ohio, was ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and later enrolled at Knox College in Illinois. He was one of the best-educated black men of his time.

When the Civil War began, Hiram was the principal of an all-black school in Baltimore. After the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation opened the Union’s military to blacks, he raised three regiments of black volunteers from Maryland. Then he traveled to Mississippi to serve as a chaplain for what were called “colored regiments” and remained there when the war ended.

#### ENTERING POLITICS

During Reconstruction, Congress set requirements that former Confederate states had to meet before they could be readmitted to the United States: ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, write new state constitutions, and give black men the right to vote in state and local elections. Until they took these steps, they would be under the control of the US military, with governors assigned by Washington.

The South was undergoing dramatic changes that shaped the future of Hiram’s life. He worked with the Freedmen’s Bureau, the relief agency set up to aid former slaves and rent them land seized from former Confederates. Because of his education and experience, he was appointed to the city government in Natchez

Matthew Brady, *Hiram Revels carte de visite*, ca. 1870s. New York Historical Society Library

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Choosing Hiram Revels was an extraordinary step for the state of Mississippi, where more than half the population was black and where many whites’ allegiance to the Confederacy remained unshaken.



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## 3 Dynamic Units

- Reconstruction, 1865-1877
- The Rise of Jim Crow, 1877-1900
- Challenging Jim Crow, 1900-1919

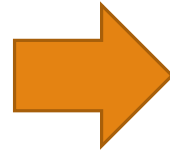
## 24 Primary Resources

- Paintings
- Photographs
- Documents
- Political Cartoons
- Timelines
- And more!

# Essential Questions

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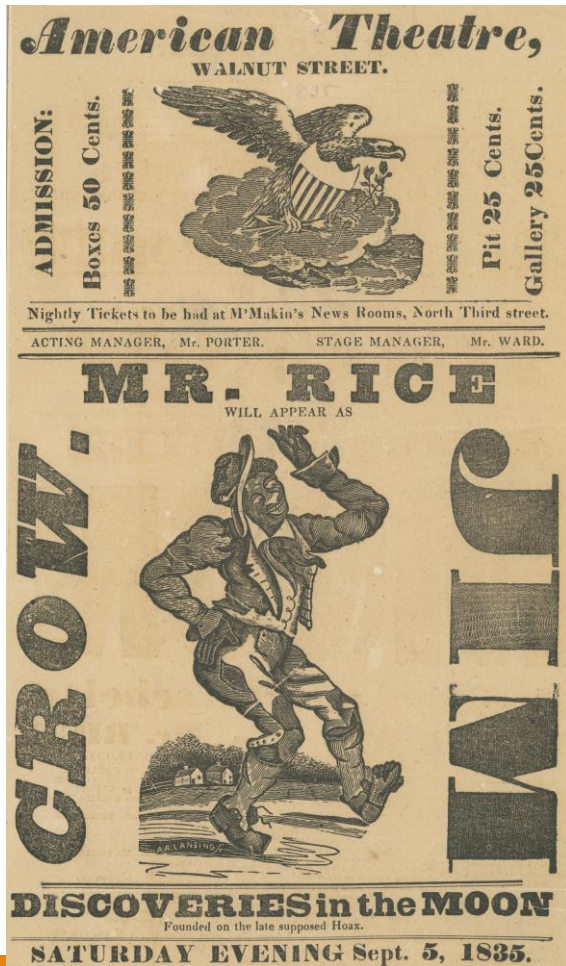
How were the citizenship rights of African Americans suppressed following the end of the Civil War?



What methods were used to combat this suppression?

Why is it important to use primary resources in the social studies classroom?

# Interrogating Primary Sources



## FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT (excerpts)

Ratified 1868

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote . . . is denied to any of the male inhabitants of [a] state, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, . . . the basis of representation therein shall be reduced. . . .

Section 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any state, who . . . shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion.

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**Left:** "Mr. Rice will appear as Jim Crow," 1835. New-York Historical Society Library, Gift of Bella C. Landauer  
**Right:** "Amendment XIV," *National Constitution Center*, <https://constitutioncenter>

# Interrogating Primary Sources

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## IMAGE

**Observation:** *What do you see?*

**Interpretation:** *What do those details tell you about this source?*

**Inference:** *What does the image teach you about the topic?*

## DOCUMENT

**Observation:** *Read the document.*

**Interpretation:** *Determine what the document is and what it is saying.*

**Inference:** *What does the document tell us about the past?*

# Primary Source Study

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Select one image or document from each packet of images.

Use the Observation/Interpretation/Inference strategy to investigate your primary source.

Introduce yourself to a neighbor, and discuss what the primary source you looked at teaches you about the topic.

# Primary Source Reflection

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What do the resources you selected reveal about the ways black citizenship rights were suppressed and how African Americans resisted that suppression?

# Life Stories

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IDA B. WELLS



Cihak and Zima, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett*, ca. 1893-1894. University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center.

JANET RANDOLPH



"Mrs. Norman V. Randolph," *A Souvenir Book of the Jefferson Davis Memorial Association and the Unveiling of the Monument*, Richmond, Va., June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1907. The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

# Pair-Share

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Who did you learn about?

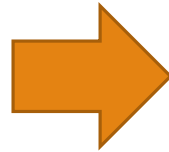
What was life like for this person growing up?

In what ways did this individual act in support of or against black citizenship rights?

# Wrapping Up

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How were the citizenship rights of African Americans suppressed following the end of the Civil War?



What methods were used to combat this suppression?

Why is it important to use primary resources in the social studies classroom?

# Thank you!

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