

# Amnesty Proclamation

South Carolina History  
Standard 8-4.1



Source: [www.sonofthesouth.net](http://www.sonofthesouth.net)

*Objective:*

*Explain the purpose of Reconstruction with the attention to the political and social problems facing the South.*

*Overview:*

*This lesson is a role play in which Lincoln's cabinet is holding a hearing on Lincoln's Proclamation of Amnesty. The cabinet members will listen to a variety of people that want to voice their opinions about the proclamation. After listening to all sides of the issue, the cabinet members will make amendments to the Proclamation. After the amendments are made to the proclamation they will vote on them and then present the final recommendation to Abraham Lincoln.*

*Materials Needed:*

- ✓ Primary Source Letters from [www.memory.loc.gov](http://www.memory.loc.gov)
- ✓ Amnesty Proclamation from [www.history.umd.edu.Freedmen/procomm.htm](http://www.history.umd.edu/Freedmen/procomm.htm)
- ✓ Pre-Test (Activ-Vote)
- ✓ Post-Test
- ✓ Amendment Form

*Upon completion of this lesson the students will be able to:*

- Define the term Freedmen
- Define the term proclamation
- Define the term amnesty
- Summarize The Lincoln Reconstruction Plan
- Explain the reasons for Reconstruction
- Use primary source to learn about historical events
- Debate an issue in front of an audience

<i>Roles:</i>	<i>Russell A. Alger</i>	<i>E.D. Jennings</i>	<i>Salmon P. Chase</i>	<i>Bland W. Ballard</i>	<i>John F. Dent</i>
	<i>Cabinet Members</i>	<i>Horace Maynard</i>	<i>Norreddin Cowen</i>	<i>Abraham Lincoln</i>	

**Russell A. Alger: (Letter to John G. Nicolay, February 9, 1864)**

*Views the proclamation as an effective way to undermine the Confederacy.*

**Bland W. Ballard: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, June 11, 1864)**

*Recommends that the proclamation be revoked because the Rebels are using it to plot further treachery against the Union.*

**Horace Maynard: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, February 2, 1864)**

*He claims the men that are disloyal to the Union (Rebels) are being treated the same as the men that have always been loyal.*

**E.D. Jennings: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, January 22, 1864)**

*He wants to know what Lincoln has planned for the Freedmen.*

**John F. Dent: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, February 16, 1864)**

*He claims that the Freedmen are being lured off lands that needs workers*

**Norreddin Cowen: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, January 24, 1864)**

*Reporting on the conditions of the Freedmen in Louisiana and is requesting that seed be sent to them.*

**Salmon P. Chase: (Letter to Abraham Lincoln, April 11, 1865)**

*Argues that the Freedmen be equal to the whites and have the right to vote.*

*Procedures:*

*(Pre-Test will be administered before I begin the Unit on Reconstruction)*

*Day 1*

- ❖ *Discuss the Presidential and Congressional Reconstruction Plan*
- ❖ *Students will be assigned different roles*
  - *7 students will role play the individuals,*
  - *The rest of the class will role play the cabinet members*
  - *the teacher will role play President Abraham Lincoln*
- ❖ *Each of the seven students will be given actual letters written by their character and a copy of the Proclamation Amnesty.*
- ❖ *Each Cabinet member and President Lincoln will be given a copy of the Amnesty Proclamation*
- ❖ *The students will study their individual letter and prepare a 3 minute presentation to be given at the Hearing*

*Day 2*

- ❖ *Alger, Ballard, and Maynard will present their case to the cabinet members. Each person will be given 3 minutes to present.*
- ❖ *The Cabinet members will take a 10 minute break to discuss the presentations.*
- ❖ *Jennings, Dent, Cowen, and Chase will be given 3 minutes each to present their case.*
- ❖ *The cabinet members will take a 10 minute break to discuss the presentations*
- ❖ *Closure: President Lincoln calls for a meeting to discuss his engagement at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865*

*Homework Assignment: The cabinet members will use the information heard during the hearing and their copy of the proclamation to make amendments (changes) to the proclamation. The cabinet members should take in consideration the following topics when making the changes:*

- *Changes to the oath of loyalty*
- *Changes as to who is eligible or not eligible to be pardoned*
- *Changes as to the percentage of oath takers required to make a state eligible for reconstruction*
- *Changes as to who is eligible to vote in the reconstructed states*
- *Changes as to what will be provided to the Freedmen either by the Federal Government or the reconstructed states.*

*Day 3*

- ❖ *Each cabinet member will present their amendment. The other cabinet members will vote "Yes" or "No" to the amendments.*
- ❖ *The amendments that have a majority of "yes" votes will be given to President Lincoln so that he can consider changing the proclamation.*

*Conclusion:*

*Answer the following question in paragraph form. The paragraph must be at least five (5) sentences.*

*Do you think that the Lincoln Reconstruction Plan would have been used if Lincoln was not assassinated in April, 1865? Give three reasons to support your case.*

## Amnesty Proclamation Pre-Test

1. Which of the following best describes a freedman?
  - a. A slave that works on a rice plantation in South Carolina
  - b. A person born into slavery
  - c. A former slave who has been given his or her freedom
  - d. A person that used to Underground Railroad as a means to escape slavery
2. Which word is synonym to amnesty?
  - a. Forgiveness
  - b. Conviction
  - c. Harshness
  - d. Doubt
3. An order issued by a government official.
  - a. Amendment
  - b. Proclamation
  - c. Compromise
  - d. Authorize
4. Which of the following was a reason for Reconstruction?
  - a. To rebuild the Southern states
  - b. To readmit the Southern states to the Union
  - c. To help the Freedmen to be productive citizens of the United States
  - d. All of the above
5. The Reconstruction Era took place after which of the following wars?
  - a. The American Civil War
  - b. The Spanish American War
  - c. The Great War
  - d. The Korean War

*Amendment Form*

*I hereby submit the following amendment:*

*The following portion of the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction of December 8, 1863 which reads:*

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*Share henceforth read as follows:*

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*The reason for the suggested change is that:*

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*Signature*

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*Date*

## Amnesty Proclamation Post-Test

1. Which of the following best describes a freedman?
  - a. A slave that works on a rice plantation in South Carolina
  - b. A person born into slavery
  - c. A former slave who has been given his or her freedom
  - d. A person that used to Underground Railroad as a means to escape slavery
2. Which word is synonym to amnesty?
  - a. Forgiveness
  - b. Conviction
  - c. Harshness
  - d. Doubt
3. An order issued by a government official.
  - a. Amendment
  - b. Proclamation
  - c. Compromise
  - d. Authorize
4. Which of the following was a reason for Reconstruction?
  - a. To rebuild the Southern states
  - b. To readmit the Southern states to the Union
  - c. To help the Freedmen to be productive citizens of the United States
  - d. All of the above
5. The Reconstruction Era took place after which of the following wars?
  - a. The American Civil War
  - b. The Spanish American War
  - c. The Great War
  - d. The Korean War

## Rubric: Amnesty Proclamation

The student will be able to:	Possible Points	Earned Points
Define the term Freedmen	10 points	
Define the term proclamation	10 points	
Define the term amnesty	10 points	
Summarize the Lincoln Reconstruction Plan	10 points	
Explain the Reasons for Reconstruction	15 points	
Debate an issue in front of an audience and have a convincing argument for his case (Role Players Only)	15 points	
Write an amendment and support the argument to amend the Proclamation of Amnesty (Cabinet Members Only)	15 points	
Writing Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph form</li> <li>• At least five sentences</li> <li>• Three reasons to support their case</li> </ul>	10 points 10 points 10 points	
Total:	100 points	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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