Reconstruction: The Promise and Failure

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Abstract:

This unit is designed for 10th grade students who are studying African American History and English. It can also be taught to 11th grade students studying American History. This curriculum unit is collaboratively designed to teach the period of Reconstruction at the high school level. It is intended to be approximately four weeks in length and is interdisciplinary in nature to promote optimum student engagement and student achievement.

By studying such a widely debated and controversial period, students will be exposed to the political, social, and economic tropes that shaped the era. The unit will chiefly be student-centered in an effort to challenge students to deconstruct the period for a more thorough analysis of its complexity. Additionally, the unit is steeped in primary documents in order to 1) increase literacy skills and 2) gain a more authentic understanding of historical contexts that shape our world.

This unit covers material that is highly debatable and more complex than what is common in high school English and History courses. With that said, although the content is abstract in nature, it offers strategies for differentiating materials, which is necessary for the success of all students.