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COLONIZATION TO RECONSTRUCTION

GRADE  
4

## The War is Over, but Life Still Isn't Easy

"The Civil War ended when General Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Court House," said Ms. Johnson. "There, General Lee of the Confederate Army and General S. Ulysses Grant of the Union Army talked about the surrender of the South. At that point in the war, the South was torn apart. One in four southern men had died. A huge amount of damage had also been done to property and roadways."

"Yes, I remember that," said Natalia to the class.

"You remember that? You talk a little as if you were there!" said Ms. Johnson.

Natalia blushed and shrugged. She turned to Steven. Steven's eyebrows raised. "You were there, weren't you?" he whispered.

"I sure was," said Natalia. "I'll fill you in after class."

"Steven, Natalia," said Ms. Johnson, "is there something you'd like to share with the class?"

"Well," said Natalia, "the main thing I remember about Appomattox is how respectful the generals were to each other. General Lee had lost the battle, but General Grant dealt with him in a way that let Lee's soldiers keep their dignity. Even though they were on different sides of the war, I think Grant really respected Lee. In the surrender, Grant let Lee's soldiers keep their horses, their food, and even some of their sidearms."

"Yes," said Ms. Johnson. Some of the respect that people would need to have for each other in the years after the war was on display between the two generals at Appomattox."

"After the war?" asked Steven. "Didn't everyone just go home and go about their lives?"

"They tried, but it took many years to heal the damage done by the war," said Ms. Johnson. "We use a special word to describe that time. We call it Reconstruction."

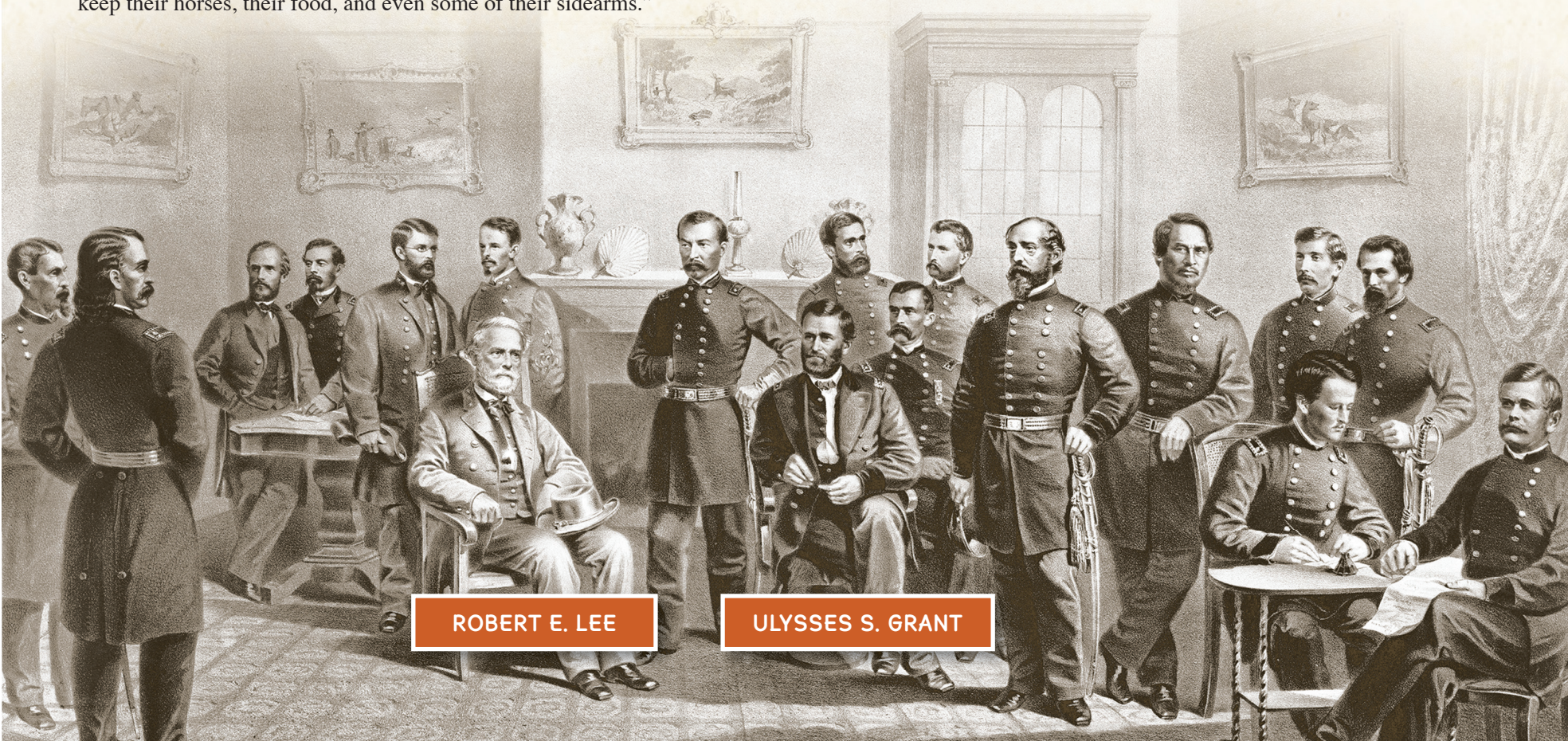
"Seems like a good name for it," said Natalia.

"Appropriate, isn't it?" said Ms. Johnson. "After all the damage done during the Civil War, the South needed to rebuild. The South was physically and politically torn apart. A lot of effort and planning went into rebuilding."

"Ms. Johnson, There's a video at Studies Weekly online about the rebuilding of the South, isn't there?" asked Steven.

"Yes, there is," said Ms. Johnson. "Perhaps we should watch it again."

**You can watch the video too! Visit Studies Weekly online and look for a video called, "From Radical Reconstruction to the New South Intro."**



ROBERT E. LEE

ULYSSES S. GRANT

Connections

## Lincoln's Death

After the war ended, a famous actor named John Wilkes Booth, along with a group of his supporters, plotted against the president. The group supported the South, and thought that Lincoln was an unjust ruler. At first, they planned to kidnap Lincoln. Then, when their kidnapping plans didn't work, they decided to murder him.

On April 14, 1865, just days after the surrender of the South, Booth shot Lincoln. He shot him from behind, as the president watched a play at Ford's Theater in Washington D.C. After firing the bullet,

Booth leaped to the stage of the theater shouting the Latin words, "Sic semper tyrannis!" That means "Thus always to tyrants!" Then John Wilkes Booth fled. It took lawmen almost two weeks to find him. On April 26th, 1865, he was found hiding in a barn. When he would not surrender, he was shot.

The country was shocked by the death of the president. His casket rode on a special train from Washington D.C. to Lincoln's home in Springfield, Illinois. The journey took three weeks. On the way, it stopped in many cities for memorial services.

Hundreds of thousands of mourners came to see Lincoln's casket. Many people believed that when Lincoln was killed, some of the progress made during the Civil War for the rights of African Americans slowed down.

Today, visitors can see Lincoln's tomb in Springfield, Illinois.

Booth is buried in an unmarked grave at the Booth family gravesite in Maryland. Visitors often leave pennies on the Booth family gravesite. Can you guess why? Think about who is on the front of every penny.





# Life After the Civil War

Steven and Natalia headed to Steven's house after school. They planned to study the Reconstruction. But first, they sat down and had some milk and cookies. As they ate, they chatted with Steven's mom.

"These cookies are delicious, Mom," said Steven. "Thanks," said Steven's mom. "The recipe was passed down by your great-great-great-great grandmother. In fact, this is her brooch I'm wearing today."

"You mean that brooch is as old as the Civil War?" asked Natalia.

"Even older," said Steven's mom. She took off the brooch for Steven and Natalia to look at. Steven and Natalia reached up and touched it at the same time. They felt a rush of wind. The kitchen disappeared. Steven's mother disappeared. Steven and Natalia found themselves in a small kitchen. There sat a woman. Steven immediately recognized the woman as his great-great-great-great grandmother.

"Henrietta!" said Steven.

"That's great-great-great-great grandmother Henrietta to you," said Henrietta.

"I remember visiting you when we were learning about the

Emancipation Proclamation!" said Natalia.

They hugged Henrietta, and Henrietta hugged them. "Would you like some cookies?" Henrietta said. "They're fresh out of the oven."

Steven took one. "These taste just like my mom's cookies!" he said.

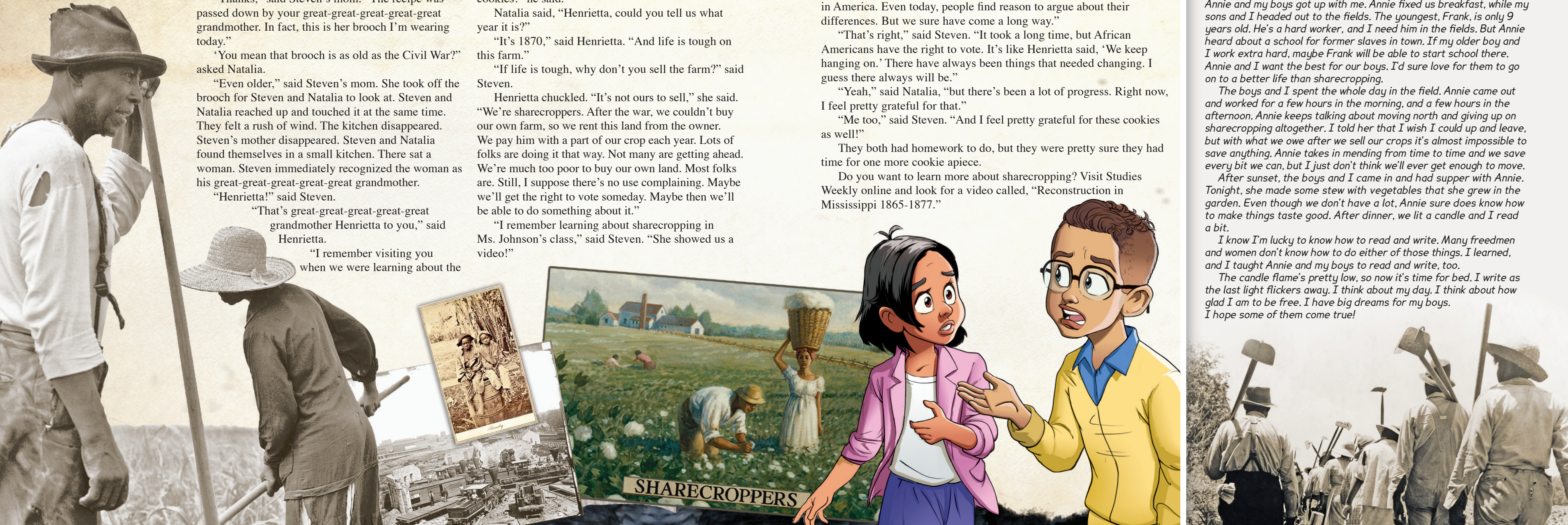
Natalia said, "Henrietta, could you tell us what year it is?"

"It's 1870," said Henrietta. "And life is tough on this farm."

"If life is tough, why don't you sell the farm?" said Steven.

Henrietta chuckled. "It's not ours to sell," she said. "We're sharecroppers. After the war, we couldn't buy our own farm, so we rent this land from the owner. We pay him with a part of our crop each year. Lots of folks are doing it that way. Not many are getting ahead. We're much too poor to buy our own land. Most folks are. Still, I suppose there's no use complaining. Maybe we'll get the right to vote someday. Maybe then we'll be able to do something about it."

"I remember learning about sharecropping in Ms. Johnson's class," said Steven. "She showed us a video!"



"You can't vote?" said Natalia. "That's not fair at all!" "No," said Henrietta. "These times aren't fair. Not much." "It sounds like even though the war is over, a lot of troubles remain," said Steven.

"I guess that's right," said Henrietta. "But we keep hanging on. Maybe things will get better someday."

Natalia couldn't help herself. "They will! They will, Henrietta!" She put her arms around Henrietta. As she did, she bumped against a familiar brooch. The kitchen began to fade. Henrietta began to fade. Soon, they were sitting in Steven's kitchen. The plate of cookies was in front of them. They looked just like Henrietta's, but Steven and Natalia knew they had been made by Steven's mother.

Steven took a cookie. So did Natalia.

"You know," said Natalia, "there are still a lot of problems in America. Even today, people find reason to argue about their differences. But we sure have come a long way."

"That's right," said Steven. "It took a long time, but African Americans have the right to vote. It's like Henrietta said, 'We keep hanging on.' There have always been things that needed changing. I guess there always will be."

"Yeah," said Natalia, "but there's been a lot of progress. Right now, I feel pretty grateful for that."

"Me too," said Steven. "And I feel pretty grateful for these cookies as well!"

They both had homework to do, but they were pretty sure they had time for one more cookie apiece.

Do you want to learn more about sharecropping? Visit Studies Weekly online and look for a video called, "Reconstruction in Mississippi 1865-1877."

## The Black Codes

Even before the Civil War, many states passed laws that would restrict the freedom of African Americans. There were laws about all sorts of things, from where they could go to how they should be punished if they were guilty of a crime. From the colonial period up to the Civil War, hundreds of these laws were passed.

After the war, enslaved people were freed. This was a good thing. But many others still hoped they could figure out ways to keep African Americans from having equal rights. To do this, they used some of the laws that had been made before the war, and made new ones as well. People called them "Black Codes." Under these laws, black people who didn't have homes or jobs could be forced to work on farms or plantations. There were laws that said farms and work projects could use the labor of prisoners, and there were laws that made it easy to send black men to prison. If a black mom and dad had no home or job, courts could take their kids and assign them to work on farms

or plantations until they were grown up. The Black Codes made rules about all sorts of things, like owning property, doing business, renting land and even being in public spaces!

Most of the laws passed by Tennessee during this time don't talk about African Americans at all. In our state, black people could vote, get jobs, own stores, and use the courts when they had problems with the law. While this was not true all over the South, it was true in our state.

But even though many of our laws didn't mention race, African Americans were treated more harshly under them. Whatever the laws actually said, Tennessee officials used our state's laws in much the same way that other states used their Black Codes. The laws were enforced in ways that made it easy to keep using the labor of black people in industries like planting and farming.

Even after enslaved people were freed, there was a long way to go before people of all races and genders could live freely and equally.



## Suddenly, A New President

"I wish Lincoln hadn't been killed," said Steven. "Me too," said Natalia. "But he was. And Andrew Johnson was sworn in as the new president just three hours after Lincoln died."

"It must have been tough on Johnson, taking charge all of a sudden," said Natalia.

"I bet it was!" said Steven. "In some ways, Johnson's ideas were like Lincoln's. Like Lincoln, he was dedicated to emancipation. He had even freed all of his own slaves, on August 8, 1863."

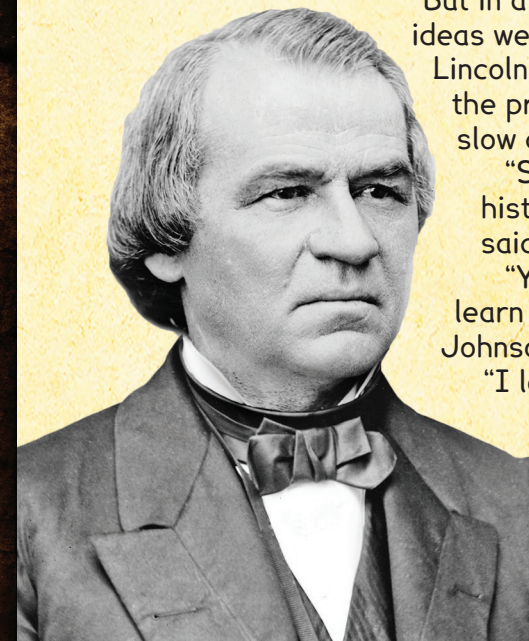
"That's right," said Natalia. "After that day, August 8 became kind of a holiday in Eastern Tennessee and beyond."

"But in a lot of other ways, Johnson's ideas were very different from Lincoln's. A lot of people worried that the progress made by Lincoln would slow down under the new president."

"Some of these guys from history are pretty complicated," said Natalia.

"Yup," said Steven. "And we'll learn more about President Andrew Johnson next week!"

"I look forward to it!" said Natalia.



## A Day in the Life of a Sharecropper

Hello everyone! Steven here. Ms. Johnson gave me a tough assignment. She wants me to write a diary entry as if I'm a sharecropper after the Civil War. I thought about our visit to my great-great-great-great grandmother, Henrietta. I wondered what it would be like to live like she and her family did. I kept my own first name for Ms. Johnson's assignment, but I made up a last name for myself. For this assignment, call me Steve Tanner. Here's what I came up with:

*May 8, 1866, Diary of Steve Tanner*

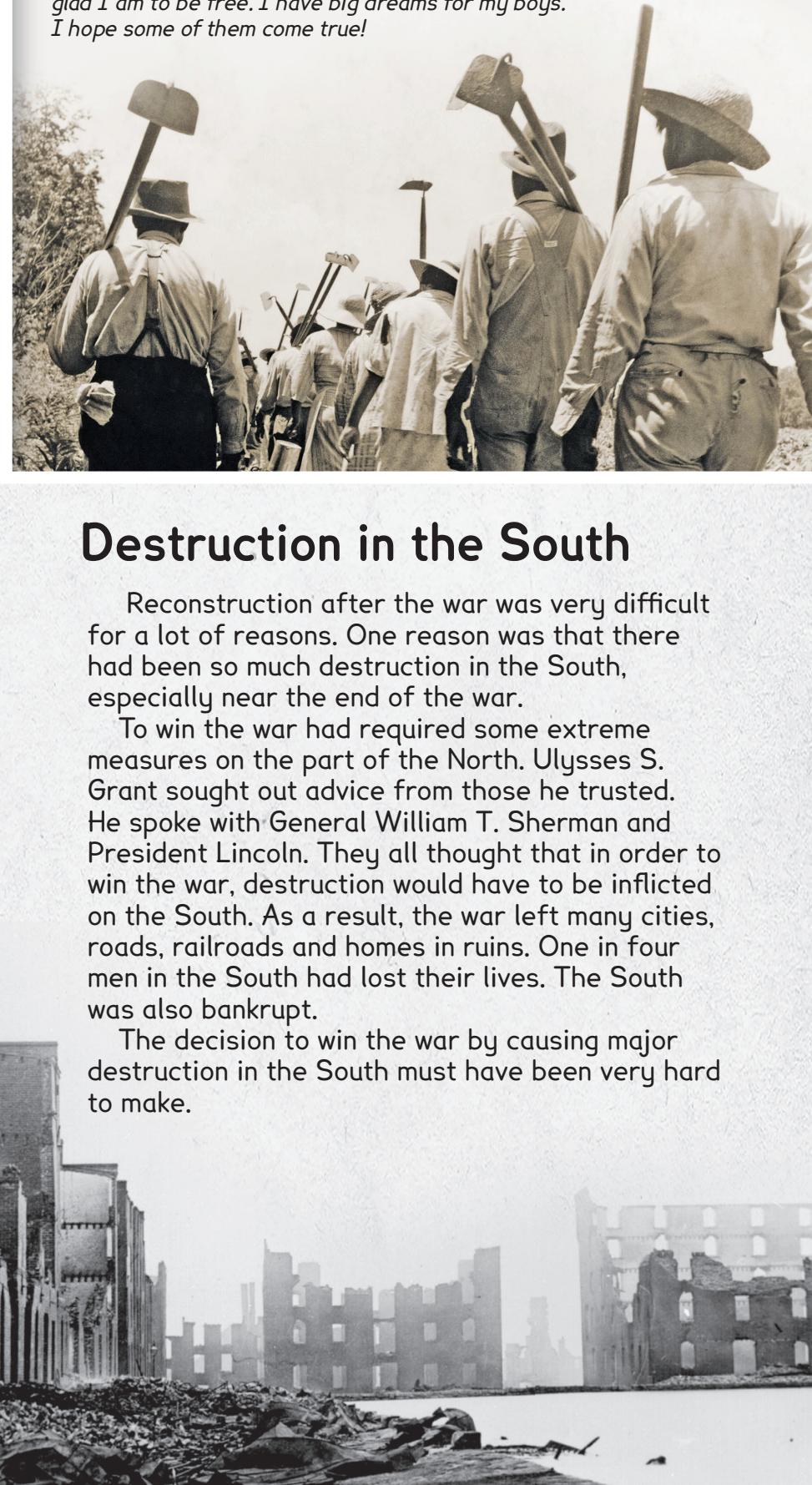
*This morning I woke up with the sun, just like every other day. Annie and my boys got up with me. Annie fixed us breakfast, while my sons and I headed out to the fields. The youngest, Frank, is only 9 years old. He's a hard worker, and I need him in the fields. But Annie heard about a school for former slaves in town. If my older boy and I work extra hard, maybe Frank will be able to start school there. Annie and I want the best for our boys. I'd sure love for them to go on to a better life than sharecropping.*

*The boys and I spent the whole day in the field. Annie came out and worked for a few hours in the morning, and a few hours in the afternoon. Annie keeps talking about moving north and giving up on sharecropping altogether. I told her that I wish I could up and leave, but with what we owe after we sell our crops it's almost impossible to save anything. Annie takes in mending from time to time and we save every bit we can, but I just don't think we'll ever get enough to move.*

*After sunset, the boys and I came in and had supper with Annie. Tonight, she made some stew with vegetables that she grew in the garden. Even though we don't have a lot, Annie sure does know how to make things taste good. After dinner, we lit a candle and I read a bit.*

*I know I'm lucky to know how to read and write. Many freedmen and women don't know how to do either of those things. I learned, and I taught Annie and my boys to read and write, too.*

*The candle flame's pretty low, so now it's time for bed. I write as the last light flickers away. I think about my day. I think about how glad I am to be free. I have big dreams for my boys. I hope some of them come true!*



## Destruction in the South

Reconstruction after the war was very difficult for a lot of reasons. One reason was that there had been so much destruction in the South, especially near the end of the war.

To win the war had required some extreme measures on the part of the North. Ulysses S. Grant sought out advice from those he trusted. He spoke with General William T. Sherman and President Lincoln. They all thought that in order to win the war, destruction would have to be inflicted on the South. As a result, the war left many cities, roads, railroads and homes in ruins. One in four men in the South had lost their lives. The South was also bankrupt.

The decision to win the war by causing major destruction in the South must have been very hard to make.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

ACROSS

1.

The Confederate Army represented the \_\_\_\_.
2.

Abraham Lincoln was killed by an actor named John Wilkes \_\_\_\_.
3.

One out of four men in the South lost their \_\_\_\_ during the Civil War.
5.

Many people wondered if Andrew \_\_\_\_ was up to the task of being president after Lincoln was killed.
6.

Ulysses S. Grant was the commanding general for the army of the \_\_\_\_ states.
8.

Robert E. Lee was the commander for the army of the \_\_\_\_ states.
9.

The South surrendered at the \_\_\_\_ Courthouse.

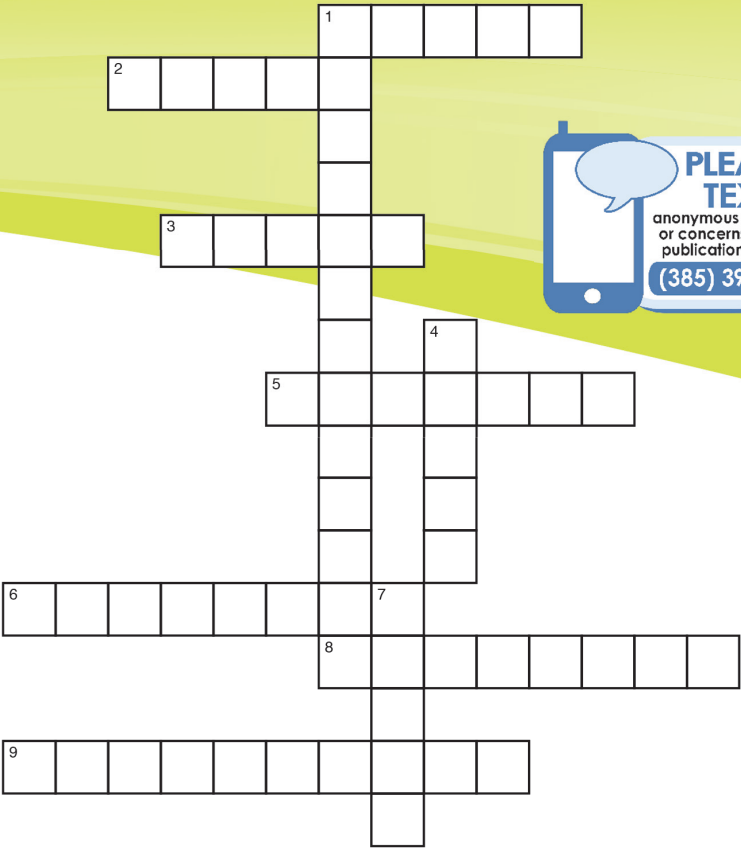
DOWN

1.

After slavery ended many former slaves became \_\_\_\_.
4.

General William Sherman was another general in the \_\_\_\_ Army.
7.

The Union Army represented the \_\_\_\_.



What a Coin Can Tell Us



Abraham Lincoln and other presidents and historically significant people appear on different forms of U.S. currency. It is one of the highest honors. It takes a lot of

1.

List 5 things you can see or infer from the front of the coin.
2.

List 4 things you can see or infer from the back of the coin.
3.

Infer what is important in American culture through your observations of the coin.

work and time to create a new bill or coin. Look at what is on the front, or obverse (“heads”) of a penny. Look on the back, or reverse (“tails”). Answer the questions:

4.

Tell what qualities Abraham Lincoln had that made him worthy of appearing on a coin.
5.

The U.S. Treasury has made plans to place an image of Harriet Tubman on the \$20 dollar bill, replacing Andrew Jackson. Women’s rights activists will appear on \$5 and \$10 dollar bills. Who else do you think should be honored with their image on currency that hasn’t yet been? Create your design of a new coin or bill in the space here!

Activity

Teachers:

Your **FREE** Studies Weekly online subscription is waiting for you! [www.studiesweekly.com/register](http://www.studiesweekly.com/register)

Language Arts Connection

As you read this week’s lesson, use any color to circle or highlight all of the conjunctions.

1.

In your own words, explain the word sharecropper.
2.

What were some of the ways Lincoln wanted to make it easy on the South after the war? Why or why not?
3.

Even though the slaves were freed after the war, how were their lives still difficult?

4.

Do you think that it was right for the Union to destroy so much property in the south during the Civil War? Why or why not?

Let’s Write

Think about the situation of freedpeople after the Civil War. Now think about the world you live in today. If you could write a letter to freedpeople after the Civil War, what would you want them to know about the future?



As you read this week’s lesson, circle or highlight all proper nouns with any color pen or highlighter. This will help you find some of the crossword answers and get ready for this week’s test.

If you’d like to make any editorial comments about our paper, please write to us at [feedback@studiesweekly.com](mailto:feedback@studiesweekly.com).