Culminating Project: Reconstruction

Overview of Project

For this project, you will be creating displays for a museum exhibit entitled, “Reconstruction: Success or Failure?” Your exhibit will show the changes that occurred in America during Reconstruction. Your exhibit will include artifacts, visuals, and maps that show how the United States changed after the Civil War.

Requirements for Project

You will have a total of 8 items included in your museum exhibit. You will create each item to help show the impact of Reconstruction. There are 6 required items listed below. Then you may choose the remaining 2 items you would like to include.

Each item must have a 3-5 sentence caption underneath that explains why the item was included in the exhibit.

Every project must include:

1. An artifact related to the Freedmen’s Bureau. You could create an advertisement for the services of the Bureau, a letter to the Bureau asking for help, or a story about how the Bureau has helped an emancipated slave.

2. A map that shows the Military Reconstruction Act and how it divided up the South. In your caption, explain what the law was, why it was enacted, and how Southerners reacted to the law.

3. One of these illustrations relating to the political role of African Americans during Reconstruction:
   - http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/odyssey/archive/05/0507001r.jpg
   - http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/odyssey/archive/05/0506001r.jpg
   Identify the significance of the person or persons in the picture. Explain how the 15th Amendment helped make the person’s achievements possible. (A file with copies of these images and bibliographic information is attached.)

4. A diary entry that explains how life has changed since the end of the Civil War. Your diary entry should be written from one of the following perspectives: an emancipated slave, a former plantation owner or Confederate leader, or a Northerner who has moved to the South during Reconstruction.

5. A newspaper article that announces the Compromise of 1877 and explains how it brought Reconstruction to an end.
- An artifact that shows how progress toward Civil Rights was reversed after Reconstruction ended. Pick a primary source and explain how it shows one of the changes that took place after Reconstruction.

Then, you may choose the last item you would like to include. (You may include more if you like.) Possible items you may include:
- An obituary (death notice) for Abraham Lincoln
- A timeline that shows the key events of Reconstruction
- additional artifacts, such as letters, newspapers, political cartoons, or diary entries
- pictures, visuals, tables, maps, or charts

Your project also must include:
- a creative title for your museum exhibit
- a 1-2 paragraph statement that explains your answer to the question “Was Reconstruction a success or failure?”