

## Reconstruction Amendments Student Worksheet

### Introduction:

After the end of the Civil War, Radical Republican leaders worked to safeguard rights granted to ex-slaves, but also worked to find ways to punish the South for the war. In order to assure the intent of the Radicals regarding freedmen was followed, three new Constitutional Amendments were added.

Directions: Use a textbook or the internet to find a copy of the Constitution and read Amendments 13, 14, and 15. Answer the following questions.

1. What else besides "slavery" was abolished by the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment?
2. What exception was made in the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment where slavery *might* be allowed?
3. What "loophole" exists in the amendment that might have allowed Southerners to "get around" the primary goals of the amendment?
4. Next, look at the text of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. How did the creators of this amendment wish to achieve "equal protection under law"?
5. How did the provisions of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment punish the former Confederates? Give at least three examples.
6. Did the creators of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment provide any method to "forgive" those who might have "engaged in rebellion" against the United States?
7. What do you believe the creators of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment meant by "privileges and immunities" as described in Section 1?
8. Next, look at the text of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment. According to the text of the amendment, under what conditions were the states and federal government not allowed to deny a person the right to vote?
9. Why do you think the creators of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment did not use language similar to that in the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which stated that "all persons born or naturalized in the United States" were entitled to the right to vote"?