

Howard on Freedmen's Rights

Headed by “the Christian General,” O. O. Howard, the Freedmen’s Bureau originally concerned itself with aiding black Americans in the South, distributing food and clothing, and building schools for black children. Howard seemed to sincerely seek the good of

the freedmen and the country—fighting both the freedmen’s poverty and illiteracy and the prejudices of Northerners and Southerners. Around the year 1865, Howard wrote about the freedmen’s rights.

Read the excerpt.

Freedmen’s Rights

The rights of the freedman, which are not yet secured to him, are the direct reverse of the wrongs committed against him. I never could conceive how a man could become a better laborer by being made to carry an over-heavy and wearisome burden which in no way facilitates his work. I never could detect the shadow of a reason why the color of the skin should impair the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

—Oliver Otis Howard



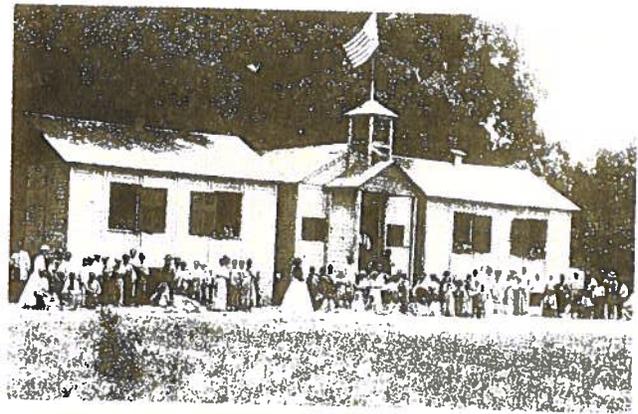
Use complete sentences to write the meaning of the excerpt in your own words.

The Freedmen's Schools

Read the article.

Before the Civil War black Americans were often denied an education. After the war there were nearly four million freed slaves. The war left former slaves, as well as many whites, without homes, enough food, or clothing. One way to help black Americans was to provide education to former slaves of all ages. Black people needed knowledge to interpret the meaning of legal papers and work contracts as they exercised their new freedom.

The Freedmen's Bureau oversaw the founding of schools for freed people in the South. It set aside formerly Confederate land to be used for school buildings. The Freedmen's Bureau, black Americans, and missionary societies gave money for schools. Over 1,000 black schools were built.



Teachers were black and white Southerners, both men and women, who could read and write. Most teachers in the freedmen's schools were white women who came south with missionary groups. The Freedmen's Bureau created or helped fund institutes for training teachers.

Answer the questions.

1. Why was there such a need for schools in the South after the Civil War? _____

2. Who paid for the schools that were built in the South? _____

3. Who taught in the freedmen's schools? _____

4. Why was it important to establish teacher-training institutes? _____

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Congress Intervenes

Write *True* if the statement is true.

If the statement is false, write the correction for the underlined words.

- _____ 1. Many of those who supported the equality of black and white citizens were influenced by the Bible.
- _____ 2. The Black Codes angered Democrats in Congress.
- _____ 3. Northern congressmen did not think that those who supported secession should be rewarded with more representatives in Congress than they had before the Civil War.
- _____ 4. Southern states would have to be readmitted to the Union.
- _____ 5. Congress passed a bill that said states could not take black people's citizenship away.
- _____ 6. The Freedmen's Bureau provided needed services to freed slaves and poor white Southerners.
- _____ 7. Certain Republicans proposed the Fourteenth Amendment to deny civil rights.
- _____ 8. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 enforced laws that Congress had passed.
- _____ 9. The Reconstruction Act divided the former Confederacy into five agricultural districts.
- _____ 10. Southern states had to write new constitutions that guaranteed the rights of black men to vote.
- _____ 11. The House of Representatives voted to impeach President Johnson.
- _____ 12. The Senate found Johnson guilty by one vote.