
DOCUMENT 12.12 Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments

1868 and 1870

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the US Constitution were passed to guarantee full civil and political rights to formerly enslaved African Americans.

Amendment XIV

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. . . .

Amendment XV

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

For Amendment 14, *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875; Statutes at Large, 39th Congress, 1st Session, 358*; for Amendment 15, *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875; Statutes at Large, 40th Congress, 3rd Session, 346*, Library of Congress.

PRACTICING Historical Thinking

Identify: Summarize the rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

Analyze: How do these two amendments differ? How are they alike?

Evaluate: Synthesize these amendments with the Emancipation Proclamation (Doc. 12.3) and the Gettysburg Address (Doc. 12.8). To what extent did these federal documents fulfill the promises that were made by the Declaration of Independence?

DOCUMENT 12.13

THOMAS NAST, "This Is a White Man's Government"

1874

In the 1870s, as Southerners sought to remove African Americans by force from participating in politics, many white Northerners lost interest in the pursuit of justice