Reconstruction: What is Freedom?
**Problem-Based Learning**

1. Select a problem (e.g. selecting a plan for Reconstruction).
2. Discuss problem solving strategies.
3. Introduce the problem to the students (authentically as possible).
4. Have students clarify the problem (restate it).
5. Assign students to "stakeholder groups" or roles (e.g. President’s staff, Radical Republicans, Moderate Republicans, southern state leaders) to develop solutions or positions.
6. Move students to jigsaw groups comprised of every role (i.e. President’s staff, Radical Republicans, Moderate Republicans, southern state leaders) to try to reach an agreement or a solution to the problem.
7. Debrief.
Introduce the problem

Read “Statement of the Problem”
(handout)
Historical Context

- Dead: 620,000 (“The Republic of Suffering”).
- Cost: $20 BILLION!
- Southern sympathizer just killed the President (who preached “with malice toward none”).
Clarify the problem

Under what conditions should the Union be reconstructed?
Issues Related to Reconstruction

- **Readmission to the Union** – Under what conditions should the former Confederate states be admitted to the union?
- **War guilt** – Should the civil and military leaders of the Confederacy stand trial or be otherwise punished for their actions?
- **Disenfranchisement** – Should large numbers of southern whites be stripped of the right to vote?
- **Land Redistribution** - Should the land of wealthy plantation owners be redistributed to former slaves? If so, should planters be compensated for this land, and how?
- **Black citizenship** – Should former slaves be granted full citizenship with the associated right to vote?
- **Federal protection** – What measures should the federal government take to protect the legal and economic rights it grants to blacks from reactionary southern governments?
Assign participants to “expert groups"

**Groupings**
- All Role 1s sit together: Radical Republicans
- All Role 2s sit together: Moderate/Conservative Reps
  - All Role 3s sit together: President’s Staff
  - All Role 4s sit together: Southern state leaders

**Tasks**
- Learn what you want in your plan of Reconstruction.
- Formulate arguments for your position.
- Prepare to argue your position to those in the other groups.
Move to jigsaw groups

Groupings

Everyone with same letter move to your lettered table:

- Role 1a: Radical Republican
- Role 2a: Moderate/Conservative Republican
- Role 3a: Member of President’s Staff
- Role 4a: Southern state leaders

Tasks

Each person explains his or her position.  
Try to formulate a single plan (solution) for Reconstruction.
Inject a twist

Telegram arrives

Western Union
May 1866

Race riots erupt in Memphis, Tennessee and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Former Confederate soldiers organize the Ku Klux Klan. Klan terrorizing freedmen.
Present Solutions
Debrief

- What, if anything, did you not understand?
- What are some merits...concerns about PBL?
- To what extent might the lesson enhance your students’ understandings of Reconstruction?
- How might you adapt the lesson for your students (grades 4-5; 9-12)?