

## Station #1: Politics in the Jim Crow South

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*Though the fifteenth amendment guaranteed African-American men the right to vote, as Reconstruction ended, many southern states began to find ways to limit African-American suffrage. Special poll taxes, literacy tests, property restrictions, and grandfather clauses (which limited suffrage to people whose grandfather's had been eligible to vote) were commonly used to disfranchise both African-Americans and poor whites. In addition, terror groups like the Ku Klux Klan used threats and intimidation to prevent many people from voting. As a result of these restrictions, voting rates for African-Americans plummeted and Republican governments found it difficult to maintain their power in the South.*

### **Document A: Louisiana Voter Registration Law (1898)**

Article 197] Sec. 3. He [the elector] shall be able to read and write, and shall demonstrate his ability to do so when he applies for registration, by making, under oath administered by the registration officer or his deputy, written application therefore, in the English language, or his mother tongue, which application shall contain the essential facts necessary to show that he is entitled to register and vote, and shall be entirely written, dated and signed by him, in the presence of the registration officer or his deputy, without assistance or suggestion from any person or any memorandum whatever, except the form of application. . . .

Sec. 4. If he be not able to read and write, as provided by Section three . . . then he shall be entitled to register and vote if he shall, at the time he offers to register, be the bona fide owner of property assessed to him in this State at a valuation of not less than three hundred dollars . . . and on which, if such property be personal only, all taxes due shall have been paid. . . .

Sec. 5. No male person who was on January 1st, 1867, or at any date prior thereto, entitled to vote under the Constitution or statutes of any State of the United States, wherein he then resided, and no son or grandson of any such person not less than twenty—one years of age at the date of the adoption of this Constitution, and no male person of foreign birth, who was naturalized prior to the first day of January, 1898, shall be denied the right to register and vote in this State by reason of his failure to possess the educational or property qualifications prescribed by this Constitution; provided, he shall have resided in this State for five years next preceding the date at which he shall apply for registration, and shall have registered in accordance with the terms of this article prior to September 1, 1898, and no person shall be entitled to register under this section after said date. . . .

## Document B: Adoption of Voting Restrictions

Adoption of Voting Restrictions in Southern States 1889–1908					
Year	Poll Tax	Literacy Test	Property Test	Grandfather Clause	Other*
1889	FL				TN, FL
1890	MS, TN	MS			MS
1891					AR
1892	AR				
1893					AL
1894					SC, VA
1895	SC	SC			SC
1896					
1897					LA
1898	LA	LA	LA	LA	
1899					NC
1900	NC	NC	NC	NC	
1901	AL	AL	AL	AL	
1902	VA, TX	VA	VA		VA
1903					
1904					
1905					
1906					
1907					
1908		GA	GA	GA	GA

### KEY

Alabama	AL
Arkansas	AR
Florida	FL
Georgia	GA
Louisiana	LA
Mississippi	MS
North Carolina	NC
South Carolina	SC
Tennessee	TN
Texas	TX
Virginia	VA

\*Registration, multiple-box, secret ballot, understanding clause.

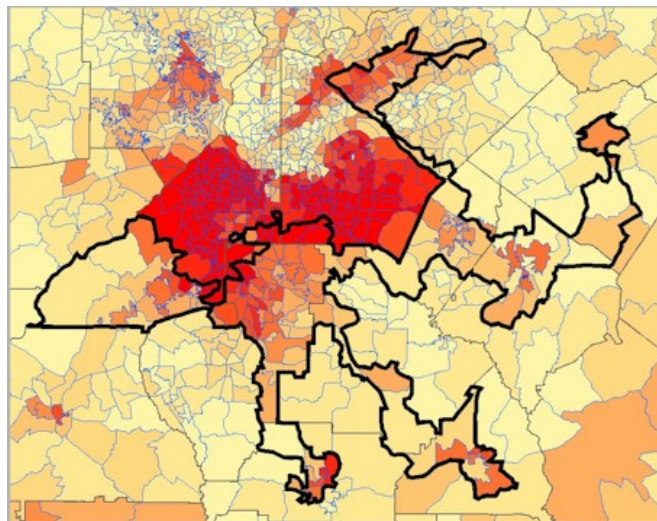
Source: *The American Record: Images of the Nation's Past, Volume Two*,  
edited by William Graebner and Leonard Richards (adapted)

## Document C: Gerrymandering

**Gerrymander:** The practice of arranging voting districts to favor the party in power or to achieve a district composed of desired types of voters. In the South, once white Democrats came to power after 1876, they sometimes "gerrymandered" voting districts so that they could be sure of getting an enhanced Democratic representation in the state and Federal legislatures. The Republicans did similar redistricting, too, during Reconstruction.

-“The History of Jim Crow,”

### A Gerrymandered District



EXCERPTS FROM THE CONSTITUTION

Part 1. In case of the removal of the president from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the vice-president, and the congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation or inability, both of the president and vice-president, declaring what officer shall then act as president, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a president shall be elected.

Part 2. In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a state shall be a party, the supreme court shall have original jurisdiction.

Part 3. In all the other cases before mentioned, the supreme court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations as the congress shall make.

Part 4. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

INSTRUCTION "C"

(After applicant has read, not aloud, the foregoing excerpts from the Constitution, he will answer the following questions in writing and without assistance:)

1. In case the president is unable to perform the duties of his office, who assumes them? \_\_\_\_\_
2. "Involuntary servitude" is permitted in the United States upon conviction of a crime. (True or False) \_\_\_\_\_
3. If a state is a party to a case, the constitution provides that original jurisdiction shall be in \_\_\_\_\_
4. Congress passes laws regulating cases which are included in those over which the United States Supreme Court has \_\_\_\_\_ jurisdiction.

I hereby certify that I have received no assistance in the completion of this citizenship and literacy test; that I was allowed the time I desired to complete it, and that I waive any right existing to demand a copy of same. (If for any reason the applicant does not wish to sign this, he must discuss the matter with the board of registrars.)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Applicant)