

Race 8 – Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* Selection

Please read the selection from W. E. B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction*. Then consider the following questions:

1. Who were the “planters” or the planter class in 19th century Southern society? Look this up if you don’t know.
2. What interests do white and black laborers have in common according to Du Bois?
3. Why might it be advantageous for white and black laborers to unite politically? What goals would they share? Who would be their chief political opponents?
4. What method was developed to drive a wedge between white and black workers?
5. What is the “public and psychological wage” that white laborers received? What are some examples of it?
6. How did the division fostered between white and black laborers enable them to be “kept low?”
7. Why did labor organizers make so little headway in the South, according to Du Bois?
8. What was the effect of this social and political arrangement on Black Americans? Can you think of other effects it might have had on American society and history?