

THE PERIODIC TABLE OF THE PRESIDENTS™

The Fourteenth Amendment

Introduction:

The Fourteenth Amendment is a Civil War amendment, but it remains relevant today. After enslaved people were freed by the Thirteenth Amendment, the Fourteenth Amendment granted them citizenship and guaranteed equal protection of the laws. This amendment differs from many others as it requires due process and equal protection from the state governments. Today, it is used in a wide range of court cases involving many facets of equality.

The text of this amendment begins, “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.”

Questions:

1. What does the Fourteenth Amendment protect, or guarantee?
2. What year was the Fourteenth Amendment ratified?
3. How is citizenship defined in the Fourteenth Amendment?
4. What did the Reconstruction Act of 1867 require of the Confederate states in order to rejoin the United States?
5. What was a Jim Crow Law?
6. What was the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896)?
7. What does the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment guarantee?
8. What was the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954)?
9. What is the difference between seeing the country as “The United States,” instead of “These United States”?
10. What might be another application of the Fourteenth Amendment that applies to the U.S. today?