

Unit 4: The U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction (1860 – 1877)

8th Grade Social Studies

18 Class Meetings

Revised May 2024

Essential Questions

- Does the idea of compromising help our government?
- To what degree did the Civil War resolve the disputes between the North and the South?
- Why is Reconstruction considered a failure?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: The root causes of regional tensions were not corrected by the series of compromises that ultimately resulted in the Civil War.

- Investigate the tensions that led to the southern states seceding from the union.
- Examine how the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln was the tipping point for the abolition of slavery and the catalyst for war.

EU 2: The U.S. Civil War was the result of two distinctly different sets of values, both economically and socially.

- Formulate an opinion for why southerners may have believed that their way of life and economic survival were at risk.
- Evaluate primary and secondary sources about major civil war battles, people, and events.

EU 3: With the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the path towards reconciliation and healing was impossible to achieve.

- Critique the approach President Johnson and the North took in healing the Union during Reconstruction.
- List the ways that the North tried to help recently freed slaves and incorporate them as free citizens.

Standard

CT Social Studies Frameworks Standards:

- INQ 6–8.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- INQ 6–8.15 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.
- INQ 6.8.11 Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequences, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.
- HIST 8.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in historical contexts.
- HIST 8.2 Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or

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continuity.

- HIST 8.3 Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- HIST 8.4 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time
- HIST 8.9 Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

Common Core State Standards:

- **RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- RH.6-8.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- W.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- WHST.6-8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” – Abraham Lincoln

- Predict how Westward expansion and compromises allowed slavery to continue and led to violence.
- Connect the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 and how it was a breaking point for southern states.

2. “War is the remedy that our enemies have chosen, and I say let us give them all they want.”

– Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman

- Analyze why loyalty to the southern way of life superseded loyalty to the country.
- Explain why the Union Army was vastly better equipped and had more men but was mismanaged on the battlefield.
- Argue how “Total War” is waged due to the industrialization of weaponry and communications.

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3. “*Sic semper tyrannis!*” – *John Wilkes Booth*

- Determine why the Assassination of Lincoln fundamentally changed the approach of Reconstruction.
- Investigate why the Freedmen’s Bureau was hampered by political forces it could not overcome.

Vocabulary:

- Antebellum, Jefferson Davis, General Robert E. Lee, General Ulysses S. Grant, Clara Barton, Army of the Potomac, Battle of Fort Sumter, The Army of Northern Virginia, Battle of Bull Run, Battle of Gettysburg, Ironclads: Monitor and Merrimack, Sherman's March to the Sea, The Emancipation Proclamation, Appomattox Court House, Lincoln Assassination, Reconstruction, 13th Amendment, Freedmen's Bureau, President Andrew Johnson, Black Codes, 14th Amendment.

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Language Arts – reading informational texts
- Mystic Seaport Partnership Whaling Lessons (one in class / one at seaport)

Daily Learning Objectives with *TWPS*

Students will be able to...

- Investigate the tensions that led to the southern states seceding from the union. **
 - *Lincoln famously said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” What do you think he meant by this? What issue was he referring to in this speech?*
- Examine how the 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln was the tipping point for the abolition of slavery and the catalyst for war. **
 - *The Civil War was a failure and success of national leadership. Please give an example of each.*
- Formulate an opinion for why southerners may have believed that their way of life and economic survival were at risk. **
 - *What were some economic reasons for the Civil War?*
- Evaluate primary and secondary sources about major civil war battles, people, and events. ***
 - *Why do think people fought so passionately for such a horrible cause?*
- Critique the approach President Johnson and the North took in healing the Union during Reconstruction. **
 - *How did the assassination of Lincoln change the years following the Civil War?*
- Identify the ways that the North tried to help recently freed slaves and incorporate them as free citizens. **
 - *List some reasons why Reconstruction is considered a failure.*
- Investigate the local maritime and economic history of Southeastern Connecticut. **
 - *Describe an event or cause for the decline of the whaling industry.*
- Apply concepts of Civil War people and events to present in a scholarly and professional manner. ***
 - *Please tell me the difference between a primary, secondary, and tertiary source.*

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Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Graphic organizers
- Cornell notes
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions

Differentiated Instruction for English Learners

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Graphic organizers
- Cornell notes
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals
- Anchor charts
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- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
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- Modified Assessments

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Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now – CNN10
- TWPS
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Completed guided notes
- Completed graphic organizers
- Revision worksheets
- Homework
- AIMS Web
- Performance Task – Biographical essay and Civil War presentation
 - Rubric 1: Literacy
 - Rubric 2: Accountable Talk

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- *House Divided* writing response - EU 1
- Edulastic Unit 4 Test – EU 3
- Performance Task – Biographical essay and Civil War presentation – EU 2

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: “*Civil War Battles, People and Events*” biographical essay and presentation.

Description: The unit task is broken up into two parts, equaling one-hundred points each. The students choose a person or topic randomly and write a three-paragraph biographical essay with primary and secondary sources provided. (EU1) (EU2) The presentation portion is a seven to ten google slides project that describes the person or event in more visual terms. Additionally, students take notes on a graphic organizer from their classmates’ presentation. (EU3)

Evaluation: Literacy Rubric, Accountable Talk Rubric, Civil War Presentation Scoring Guide.

Unit Resources

- Guided vocabulary notes handout
- Edulastic
- Excerpt of Lincoln’s House Divided speech
- Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address PBS with worksheet
- ["Letter from Frederick Douglas to Harriet Tubman"](#)
- Junior Scholastic – *Forever Free*
- Crash Course Reconstruction EdPuzzle
- PBS Ken Burns in the Classroom – Civil War
- *The American History Big Fat Notebook*
- *America: The Story of Us* episode 4 w/ notes

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- Revision worksheets