Grade 8 - Unit 4 - Civil War

Unit Focus

If the Jacksonian Era had been interpreted by students as turbulent, coming of age years, the Civil War was a difficult moment of truth for the country. The war was a battle over the values that were to guide United States policy moving forward. At stake, was the political conflict of states' rights vs federal rights, an economic conflict of the industrial north vs the agricultural south, and a social conflict of urban reform vs agrarian tradition. Underpinning each of these conflicts was the elephant in the room, slavery. Seventy-one years of attempted compromise had failed. This unit begins with an in-depth study of slavery in an attempt to humanize a ghastly institution by investigating the harsh conditions as well as the forms of resistance exhibited by enslaved people. Students then trace the dramatic events of the 1850s that escalated and exacerbated tensions to a crisis level. Finally, students study the war itself with a particular focus on how the war impacted the institution of slavery. In addition to the continued use of Rod Franchi's Nineteenth Century American History for Teens, students also have the opportunity to examine an additional aspect of the war and refine their writing skills with our curriculums more extensive research project of the year.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards (2023)
Grade 8 - United States History II

- Explain how compelling and supporting questions represent key ideas in the study of United States History. (8.Inq.1.a)
- Develop compelling and supporting questions that are mutually reinforcing. (8.Inq.1.b)
- Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources. (8.Inq.1.c)
- Gather information from multiple sources and evaluate their relevance and intended use (e.g., origin, authority, structure, context, corroborative value, credibility). (8.Inq.3.a)
- Organize and prioritize relevant evidence from and among multiple sources to support claims. (8.Inq.3.b)
- 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. (8.Inq. 4.e)
- Analyze how secession sought to preserve the social, economic, and racial hierarchies throughout the United States (e.g., domestic labor, manufacturing, slavocracy, textiles). (8.His.1.d)
- Using multiple historical sources, identify individuals and groups during the Antebellum Period who sustained, promoted,

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
T1 Pose and pursue question(s) to better understand an issue and draw conclusions or seek patterns based on a synthesis of evidence.

Meaning

Understanding(s)

Students will understand that...
U1 Wars change societies in profound ways.
U2 The freeing of millions of enslaved people was complicated and occurred in different ways in different places.
U3 The stability of a democratic society relies less on total moral agreement and more on a collective trust in the fairness of the institutions and processes used to resolve conflict.
U4 Slavery is the "gravest crime against humanity"

Essential Question(s)

Students will keep considering...
Q1 When does compromise solve problems, and when does it make them worse?
Q2 Who had the power to decide the future of slavery: the states, the federal government, or the people?
Q3 Was the Civil War inevitable, or could it have been prevented?
Q4 How did the Civil War transform American Society?
Q5 How did Black people free themselves?

Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill

Knowledge

Students will know...
K1 The brutality of slavery.
K2 Resistance of enslaved people
K3 Differences of types of enslavement

Skill(s)

Students will be skilled at...
S1 Determine the central ideas or information of a secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

or challenged the institution of slavery (e.g., Frederick Douglass, Harriett Beecher Stowe, John C. Calhoun). (8.His. 12.b) • Evaluate the relative influence of political, economic, and social developments that contributed to secession (e.g., Free Soil Movement, Nullification, Dred Scott Decision, Harper's Ferry, abolition). (8.His. 15.a) • Compare historical means used by individuals and groups to promote, sustain, and dismantle discrimination in the Antebellum Period (e.g., Underground Railroad, Bleeding Kansas, American Anti-Slavery Society, American Colonization Society, Compromise of 1850). (8.Civ.14.c) • Explain how change and continuity in technology, infrastructure, and military strategies shaped the Civil War (e.g., rail, scorched earth, blockade, Colt Firearms, Sharps Rifles). (8.His.2.a) • Describe how policies related to military service shaped the events and outcomes of the Civil War (e.g., conscription, Emancipation Proclamation, draft riots, Connecticut 29th, Massachusetts 54th). (8.His.2.b) **Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate** • Inquiry: Posing, pursuing, and refining significant questions to deepen understanding about a topic or issue. (POG. 1.1)	**K4** Attempts at compromise prior to the Civil War **K5** The march toward war in the 1850s **K6** Controversies of the Election of 1860 **K7** The North and South entered the war with different strengths and weaknesses. **K8** African American contributions to the Civil War **K9** Complications of the Emancipation Proclamation **K10** Ways the Civil War transformed American society	**S2** Identifying competing points of view. **S3** Evaluating historical events and perspectives. **S4** Developing compelling and supportive questions. **S5** Evaluating sources that will answer compelling questions. **S6** Organizing and prioritizing relevant evidence from and among multiple sources to support claims. **S7** Explaining the many ways slavery dehumanized people. **S8** Recognizing forms of maintaining dignity through adversity **S9** Tracing how events of the 1850s were perceived as unfair by both sides **S10** Weighing the impact of the contributions of Black Americans to Northern victory in the Civil War. **S11** Critiquing the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation **S12** Researching ways the Civil War transformed American society