

SSUSH9 The student will identify key events, issues, and individuals relating to the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War.

This standard will measure your understanding of the cause of the Civil War, its course from start to finish, and its consequences. The Civil War was one of the defining events in U.S. history, so your knowledge of it is an essential part of your understanding of American history.

a. Explain the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the failure of popular sovereignty, Dred Scott case, and John Brown's Raid.

Kansas-Nebraska Act

In 1854, Congress again took up the issue of slavery in new U.S. states and territories. This time, the territories were Kansas and Nebraska, and Congress approved the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and gave the settlers in all new territories the right to decide for themselves whether they would be a free or a slave state. This made a proslavery doctrine, **popular sovereignty** (rule by the people), and the law of the United States. Pro- and antislavery groups hurried into Kansas in attempts to create voting majorities there. Antislavery abolitionists came from Eastern states; proslavery settlers came mainly from neighboring Missouri. Some of these Missourians settled in Kansas, but many more stayed there only long enough to vote for slavery and then return to Missouri. Proslavery voters elected a legislature ready to make Kansas a slave state. Abolitionists then elected a rival Kansas government with an antislavery constitution, established a different capital city, and raised an army. Proslavery Kansans reacted by raising their own army. The U.S. House of Representatives supported the abolitionist Kansans; the U.S. Senate and President Franklin Pierce supported the proslavery Kansans. Violence between the two sides created warlike conditions. Popular sovereignty had failed.

Dred Scott

In 1857, the U.S. Supreme Court issued the *Dred Scott* decision, settling a lawsuit in which an African American slave named Dred Scott claimed he should be a free man because he had lived with his master in slave states and in free states. The Court rejected Scott's claim, ruling that no African American—even if free—could ever be a U.S. citizen. Further, the Court said Congress could not prohibit slavery in federal territories. Thus, the Court found that popular sovereignty and the Missouri Compromise of 1820 were unconstitutional. The *Dred Scott* decision gave slavery the protection of the U.S. Constitution. Proslavery Americans welcomed the Court's ruling as proof they had been right during the previous few decades' struggles against abolitionists. In contrast, abolitionists convinced many state legislatures to declare the *Dred Scott* decision not binding within their state borders. The new Republican party said that if their candidate were elected president in 1860 he would appoint a new Supreme Court that would reverse the *Dred Scott* decision.

John Brown

One famous abolitionist, John Brown, decided to fight slavery with violence and killing. In 1856, believing he was chosen by God to end slavery, Brown commanded family members and other abolitionists to attack proslavery settlers in Kansas, killing five men. In 1859, he led a group of white and black men in a raid on the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (in modern-day West Virginia). They seized federal weapons and ammunition, killing seven people. Brown's plan was to deliver the weapons and ammunition to slaves, who would then use them in an uprising against slaveholders and proslavery government officials, but the raid failed, and Brown was captured by U.S. Marines led by U.S. Army Colonel Robert E. Lee. Eventually, Brown was convicted of treason against the state of Virginia and executed by hanging. Many Americans thought Brown was a terrorist killer. Others thought he was an abolitionist martyr.

b. Describe President Lincoln's efforts to preserve the Union as seen in his second inaugural address and the Gettysburg speech and in his use of emergency powers, such as his decision to suspend habeas corpus.

Preserving the Union

Republican Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860. South Carolina voted to secede (separate from) the United States, followed by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and then Texas. They formed a new country called the Confederate States of America (the "Confederacy"). When they attacked the U.S. Army base at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, in April 1861, the long-feared Civil War had begun. President Lincoln believed preservation of the United States (the "Union") was the most important task for any U.S. president (see **Gettysburg Address, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address,**). He did not believe the southern states had the right to secede from the Union and thought they were merely rebelling against the government. He never considered the Confederacy a separate country. When Lincoln

called for a large volunteer army to preserve the Union, more states—Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee—seceded to join the Confederacy. Although Lincoln had often stated he only wished to restrict the spread of slavery instead of abolish it, over time he did embrace the idea of ending slavery in the United States

Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

Abraham Lincoln was reelected president in 1864. When he delivered his second Inaugural Address, Union victory over the Confederacy was certain, and Americans foresaw an end to slavery. Instead of boasting about that victory, Lincoln expressed sorrow that the states had not been able to resolve their differences peacefully. However, he clearly stated that slavery was such an evil that the North was right to have gone to war over the issue. Nevertheless, he urged Americans not to seek revenge on slaveholders and their supporters and military. Instead, he urged reconstruction of the South “with malice toward none; with charity for all.” Now at the end of the Civil War, Lincoln formed what would become the popular memory of why the war was necessary. He said it had been fought to preserve the Union as an indivisible nation of citizens who would no longer profit from “Wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces”—from taking their earnings from the labor of unpaid slaves.

Gettysburg Address

In November 1863, Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was another event by which he shaped popular opinion in favor of preserving the Union. The occasion was the dedication of a military cemetery at the Gettysburg battlefield four months after 51,000 people were killed in the battle there. Most of the ceremony was performed by famous orator Edward Everett, who spoke for two hours, as was the manner at that time for an important event. Then Lincoln rose to speak, starting with his famous words “Four score and seven years ago.” He spoke for just two minutes in what is now considered one of the greatest speeches in the English language. His address helped raise the spirits of northerners who had grown weary of the war and dismayed by southern victories over the larger Union armies. He convinced the people that the United States was one indivisible nation.

Habeas Corpus

Not all northerners supported President Lincoln’s efforts to preserve the Union. Some were Confederate sympathizers (just as some southerners were Union sympathizers). Throughout the war, in some states Lincoln suspended the constitutional right of *habeas corpus*—the legal rule that anyone imprisoned must be taken before a judge to determine if the prisoner is being legally held in custody. The Constitution allows a president to suspend habeas corpus during a national emergency. Lincoln used his emergency powers to legalize the holding of Confederate sympathizers without trial and without a judge agreeing they were legally imprisoned. Over 13,000 Confederate sympathizers were arrested in the North.

c. Describe the roles of Ulysses Grant, Robert E. Lee, “Stonewall” Jackson, William T. Sherman, and Jefferson Davis.

Key Leaders of Civil War

The political and military leaders of the Union and the Confederacy represented the different beliefs and values that separated the North from the South. The northern leaders thought it was illegal for the southern states to secede from the Union. They considered the Confederates outlaws, not citizens of a separate country. On the other hand, the southern leaders put loyalty to their home states above everything else. They fought for the Confederacy to protect their homes, even though they may have had misgivings about secession.

President Abraham Lincoln

- U.S. representative from Illinois
- President of United States of America, 1861-1865
- Appointed Gen. Ulysses S. Grant commanding general of Union armies
- Issued Emancipation Proclamation
- Promoted 13th Amendment to Constitution

Jefferson Davis

- Graduated from U.S. Military Academy, West Point
- U.S. senator from Mississippi
- U.S. Secretary of War
- President of Confederate States of America, 1861-1865

- Appointed Robert E. Lee as general-in-chief of Confederate armies

Ulysses S. Grant

- Graduated from U.S. Military Academy, West Point
- Won first Union victories
- Captured control of Mississippi River in Siege of Vicksburg
- Appointed commanding general of Union armies by Lincoln
- Accepted surrender of Confederate Gen. Lee to end Civil War

Robert E. Lee

- Graduated from U.S. Military Academy, West Point
- Fought larger Union armies to standoff at Battle of Antietam
- Defeated at Battle of Gettysburg
- Appointed general-in-chief of Confederate armies by Davis.
- Surrendered to U.S. Gen. Grant to end Civil War

William Tecumseh Sherman

- Graduated from U.S. Military Academy, West Point
- Served under Gen. Grant during Siege of Vicksburg
- Destroyed Atlanta, ended Confederate ability to fight
- Accepted surrender of all Confederate armies in Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida

Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson

- Graduated from U.S. Military Academy, West Point
- Won First Battle of Bull Run
- Fought under Confederate Gen. Lee at Antietam and Second Bull Run
- Died in battle

d. Explain the importance of Fort Sumter, Antietam, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, and the Battle for Atlanta.

Key Battles of the Civil War

Union and Confederate forces fought many battles in the Civil War’s four years. Land battles were fought mostly in states west of the Mississippi River; sea battles were fought along the Atlantic Coast and in the Gulf of Mexico; and river battles were fought on the Mississippi. Review the following details of four major Civil War battles.

Fort Sumter

When southern forces opened fire on Union forces at Fort Sumter, they began a war that would last four years and take the lives of 821,000 soldiers.

Antietam—September 1862—Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee marched his forces to Antietam Creek, Maryland, where he fought the war’s first major battle on northern soil. It was the deadliest one-day battle in American history, with over 26,000 casualties. Neither side won a victory. As Lee withdrew to the South, Union forces might have been able to end the war by going after the Confederates—Union soldiers outnumbered them two-to-one—but they did not follow Lee. The significance of the Battle of Antietam was that Lee’s failure to win it encouraged Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

• **Gettysburg**—April 1863—Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee—marched north to Pennsylvania, where he was met by Union troops at Gettysburg. In a three-day battle, as many as 51,000 were killed. It was the deadliest battle of the American Civil War. Lee failed to show Britain and France they should assist the Confederacy, and he gave up attempts to invade the Union or show northerners that the Union troops could not win the war. Four months later, Lincoln delivered his **Gettysburg Address** at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery. Vicksburg, Mississippi, because the army that controlled its high ground over a bend in the Mississippi River would control traffic on the whole river. After a seven-week siege, Grant achieved one of the Union’s major strategic goals: He gained control of the Mississippi River. Confederate troops and supplies in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas were cut off from the Confederacy. This Union victory, coupled with the Union victory at Gettysburg, was the turning point of the war.

• **Atlanta**—July-September 1864—Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman besieged Atlanta, Georgia, for six weeks before capturing this vitally important center of Confederate manufacturing and railway traffic. Sherman burned Atlanta to the ground, and then marched to the Atlantic Ocean, destroying the railways, roads, and bridges along their path, as well as the crops and livestock his troops did not harvest and butcher to feed themselves. Now the South knew it would lose the war, and the North knew it would win. Lincoln easily won reelection against a candidate who wanted a truce with the Confederacy.

e. Describe the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln used his emergency powers again to issue the Emancipation Proclamation. It emancipated (freed) all slaves held in the Confederate states. Lincoln did not expect Confederate slaveholders to free their slaves, but he thought news of the proclamation would reach southern slaves and encourage them to flee to the North. Lincoln believed one reason southern whites were free to join the Confederate Army was because slaves were doing war work that, otherwise, the whites would have to do. Encouraging slaves to flee north would hurt the southern war effort.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not free slaves held in the North, it was warmly welcomed by African Americans living in Union states. They understood the proclamation announced a new goal for the Union troops—besides preserving the Union, the troops were fighting for the belief that the United States would abolish slavery throughout the nation.

f. Explain the importance of the growing economic disparity between the North and the South through an examination of population, functioning railroads, and industrial output.

North versus South

When southern forces opened fire on Union forces at Fort Sumter, they began a war that would last four years and take the lives of 821,000 soldiers. From the start, the Confederacy was at a serious disadvantage. The southern economy differed greatly from the economy of the northern states, and, in the end, the numerical and industrial superiority of the northern economy proved too much for the South to overcome. Review the following breakdown of economic issues that separated northerners and southerners to understand each position and how it influenced their opinions and actions.

Foundation Industry and trade Agriculture

Population 71% of U.S. population; 99%

free, 1% slave; large enough to assemble an army capable of defending the Union 29% of U.S. population; 67% free; 33% slave; too few free men to assemble an army capable of defending the Confederacy

Manufacturing Resources

92% of U.S. industrial output; generous resources to produce weapons and other military supplies and equipment 8% of U.S. industrial output; minimal resources to produce many weapons and other military supplies and equipment

Employment & Property-Ownership

Many citizens worked for someone else and owned no property. Even in large-scale farming regions, machines began reducing the need for agricultural workers. Though most Southerners owned slaves, the economy of the South as a whole depended on the production of cash crops such as cotton, corn, rice, and tobacco, which required human labor and depended on slavery.

Exports &

Views on Tariffs

34% of U.S. exports; favored high tariffs on imported foreign goods to protect northern industries and workers' jobs 66% of U.S. exports; favored low (or no) tariffs on imported goods to keep the prices of manufactured goods more affordable

Food Production More than twice as much as the South produced Less than half as much as the North produced

Railroads 71% of U.S. railroad network; efficient railway transport system. Ready capacity to transport troops and their supplies, food, etc. 29% of U.S. railroad network; inefficient railway transport system. Poor capacity to transport troops and their supplies, food, etc.