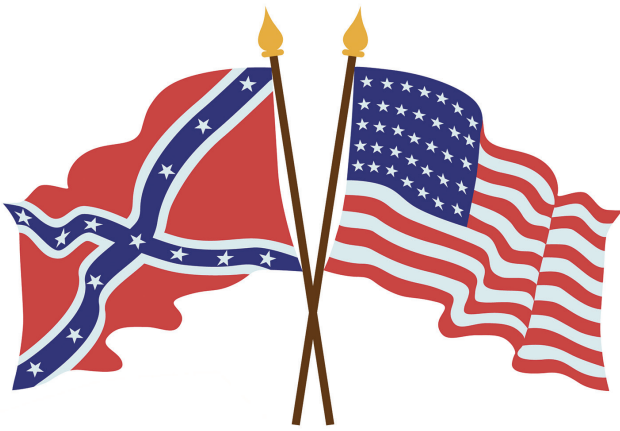


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## American Civil War: Background

The Civil War took more American lives than any other war in history. The war's terrible bloodshed left a heritage of grief and bitterness. How did slavery and other issues of the day lead to the Civil War? Why did some states secede from the Union? To learn about slavery and secession, let's start from the beginning . . .

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### Find It!

Find the answers to the questions below by using the "Search" tool to search key words. Since this activity is about the background of the American Civil War, you can start by searching the key words "American Civil War."

Write the answers on the lines provided or below the question.

- Historians have long debated the causes of the Civil War. Many of them maintain that \_\_\_\_\_ was the root cause.
- In 1861, the United States consisted of \_\_\_\_\_ free states, in which slavery was prohibited, and \_\_\_\_\_ slave states, in which it was allowed.
- The Founding Fathers of the United States had been unable to \_\_\_\_\_ slavery and compromised over it in writing the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Which 3 people did Abraham Lincoln defeat in the 1860 presidential election?
  - Northern Democratic candidate: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Southern Democratic candidate: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Constitutional Union Party candidate: \_\_\_\_\_
- Why did Southerners fear Abraham Lincoln's election?

\*Users of the Advanced database can find extension activities at the end of this webquest.

6. In December 1860, which state became the first state to secede from the Union?
7. What are 2 ways that the Compromise of 1850 made abolitionists happy?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
8. What are 2 ways that the Compromise of 1850 made proslavery people happy?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
9. How were issues of slavery decided in the territories Kansas and Nebraska?
10. Why did Dred Scott believe that he should no longer be a slave, but instead become a free man?
11. Go to the “Underground Railroad” article and answer the following questions.
  - a. What was the Underground Railroad?
  - b. Who was known as the “father of the Underground Railroad”?
  - c. What was Harriet Tubman’s contribution to the Underground Railroad?
  - d. Why did many escaped slaves flee to Canada and other regions outside the United States instead of just staying in the North?

## True or False

Write “True” if the statement about the Confederacy is correct. If the statement is not correct, write “False” and correct the statement in the space below.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Virginia was one of the states that seceded from the Union before Abraham Lincoln was sworn in as President.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. North Carolina fought for the Confederacy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. The supporters of states’ rights held that the national government was a league of independent states, any of which had the right to secede.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Alexander H. Stephens was the first president of the Confederate States.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Montgomery, Alabama, served as the capital of the Confederate States throughout the war.

17. Which antislavery senator was beaten unconscious in the Senate chambers in 1856?
18. Who was John Brown and what did he do in 1859?
19. About how many black slaves labored in the Southern States by 1860?
20. Why did many Southerners who did not own slaves support slavery?

## Sectional Differences

There were many differences between the Northern and Southern states when the Civil War began. Answer each question about the differences between the two sides.

21. What was the total population of each side?
22. What was the population of men from 15 through 40 years old for both sides?
23. Why was slavery more prevalent in the Southern part of the United States?
24. Which side rapidly developed a manufacturing economy?

## Union or Confederate?

For each of the following states, write “Union” if the state fought for the Union, or “Confederate” if the state fought for the Confederacy.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Arkansas
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Delaware
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Kansas
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Maryland
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. North Carolina
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. Oregon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. Tennessee
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. Texas



33. According to Chief Justice Roger Taney, why did the Supreme Court rule against Dred Scott?

34. For what two reasons did Taney's decision in the Dred Scott case anger Northerners?

### **Map It!**

Within the "Slavery" article, you will find the map "Slavery in the United States in 1860." Study the map and answer the following questions.

35. Which 5 states had over 400,000 slaves each?

36. Which part of Texas had the highest percentage of slaves?

37. Which was the only Northern state that still had slaves in 1860?

### **Extension Activity 1**

Write a 1-2 page paper about how the history of the United States would have been different if the North and South had split into two countries instead of fighting the Civil War. Things to consider include how the two countries would have dealt with westward expansion; what would happen if states tried to later secede from the Northern or Southern countries; how having two weaker (economically and military) countries instead of the one strong country would have affected such later historical events as the world wars; if and when the South would eventually abolish slavery; and whether the two countries would have later recombined.

### **Extension Activity 2**

Did the Confederacy have a chance of winning the Civil War? Consider the population differences, economies, leaders (both political and military), and any other factors that you know about for both sides. Create a short, persuasive paper that uses facts from World Book articles or other trusted resources to support your ideas.

### **Read more about the Civil War by visiting World Book's eBook collection:**

*American Civil War*. Chicago: World Book, 2014. Documenting History. *World eBook*. Web. 22 Oct. 2015. <<http://www.worldbookonline.com/wb/ebooks/mall/instt/catalog/urn:978-0-7166-2567-4/detail.do>>.

## Teacher Page

### Answers:

1. Historians have long debated the causes of the Civil War. Many of them maintain that slavery was the root cause.
2. In 1861, the United States consisted of 19 free states, in which slavery was prohibited, and 15 slave states, in which it was allowed.
3. The Founding Fathers of the United States had been unable to abolish slavery and compromised over it in writing the Constitution.
4.
  - a. Stephen A. Douglas
  - b. John C. Breckinridge
  - c. John Bell
5. Southerners feared that Abraham Lincoln would restrict or end slavery.
6. In December 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union.
7.
  - a. The slave trade was prohibited in Washington, D.C.
  - b. California was admitted to the Union as a free state.
8.
  - a. Slavery was allowed to continue.
  - b. The fugitive slave law required Northerners to return escaped slaves to their owners.
9. According to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the people of the territories were given the right to regulate matters related to slavery.
10. Dred Scott believed that since his master moved to a state and later a territory that did not allow slavery, he should become a free man.
11.
  - a. The Underground Railroad was an informal system that helped slaves in the southern United States escape to the northern United States, Canada, and other places that prohibited slavery during the mid-1800's.
  - b. William Still was known as the "father of the Underground Railroad."
  - c. Harriet Tubman returned to the South 19 times and helped about 300 enslaved people escape to freedom.
  - d. Many slaves escaped to Canada and other regions outside the United States because they could still be captured in the North and returned to slavery.
12. False. Virginia seceded after President Lincoln called for Union troops to regain Fort Sumter.
13. True
14. True
15. False. Alexander H. Stephens was the first vice president of the Confederate States.
16. False. Richmond, Virginia, became the capital of the Confederate States in May 1861.
17. Charles Sumner was beaten unconscious in the Senate chambers in 1856.

18. John Brown was an abolitionist who, along with his followers, attempted to start a slave rebellion by seizing the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). Brown was captured 28 hours later. Within a few weeks, he was convicted of treason and hanged.
19. About 4 million black slaves labored in the Southern States by 1860.
20. They believed that the South's economy would collapse without slavery and that blacks were inferior to whites.
21. The North had about 22 million people and the South had about 9 million, including 4 million slaves.
22. The North had about 4 million men between 15-40 and the South had about 1 million men between 15-40.
23. Slavery was more prevalent in the South because the South had a warmer climate and longer growing season ideal for raising tobacco and cotton. The crops required intense labor to plant, maintain, and harvest. Since Southerners did not have enough people to do the work, they turned to slave labor.
24. The North rapidly developed a manufacturing economy.
25. Arkansas - Confederacy
26. Delaware - Union
27. Kansas - Union
28. Maryland - Union
29. North Carolina - Confederacy
30. Oregon - Union
31. Tennessee - Confederacy
32. Texas - Confederacy
33. Taney said that Scott, as a black man, was not a citizen and therefore did not have the right to sue in a U.S. court
34. Northerners believed that Taney's ruling opened all the territories to the expansion of slavery and that it was an attempt to close off any further debate about slavery in Congress.
35. Virginia (491,000), Georgia (462,000), Mississippi (437,000), Alabama (435,000), and South Carolina each had over 400,000 slaves.
36. The eastern part of Texas had the highest percentage of slaves.
37. New Jersey (The state had 18 "apprentices for life" in 1860.)

**Extension Activities 1, 2:** Answers will vary.