

Civil War Cause Lesson Plan

Grade Level & Subject Area: 8th Grade Social Studies

Standards/Framework (State Standards, Content Standards, InTASC Standards)

- **Era5.2.8.1 Develop historical arguments and explanations of causes of the Civil War using a variety of sources from multiple perspectives.**

Theme/Series of Lessons:

- **This lesson would be the first part of a Civil War Unit. With the Civil War Unit, we will be looking at all things Civil War in the United States. We will be looking at what caused the Civil War, what specifically happened in the Civil War (battles, tactics, social/economic effects). And we will look at the legacy and aftermath of the Civil War.**

Time: This is a lesson that should take three class periods, meaning it should take 3 days of 50 minutes on each day.

What do the students already know? (This could be the Intro or they have learned information before starting this lesson):

- **Students should already know that the country is expanding rapidly and slavery is a big issue in the growing United States.**
- **Students should be familiar with some of the events that have already taken place such as the Missouri Compromise of 1820.**

Objective:

Students should be able to identify specific causes of why the Nation split into two countries and how it ultimately led to Civil War. Students should be able to identify and explain specific events/laws that were passed that ultimately led to The Battle of Fort Sumter.

Materials: Inspiration, White Board, Dry Erase Marker to write additional notes

Procedure:

- 1. Start by asking students what they think the causes of the Civil War were?**
- 2. Introduce the 4 broad causes of the war: Slave States vs Free States, Slavery in the Economy and Society, States and Federal Rights, and The Election of 1860).**
- 3. Over the next three days we will go over these 4 main causes and go into more detail.**
- 4. Introduce the uncompleted graphic organizer with the 4 causes.**
- 5. Start with Slave States vs Free States and eventually make it to the Election of 1860, and complete it as you go through the material. As you go into the more specific causes you will explain in more detail what each cause was. (This will take three days, each new day briefly recap)**
- 6. After graphic organizer is completed, students will be given a completed copy.**
- 7. Assign essay and allow students to begin working.**

Assessment (How will the students' show you that the objective has been met):

- Students will be asked to write an essay where they will be asked to explain 3 of the 4 main causes of The Civil War and give specific details into why they caused they led to The Civil War.**
- Student will have questions regarding the events that led up to the Civil War on the Civil War Unit Test.**

A Brief Description Of The Entire Lesson - Plus Any Additional Information to be Included:

- Start by explaining the new unit about the Civil War and the aftermath and then ask a couple students to tell you what they know about the Civil War.**
- After a few students have answered, tell the class that before we get into the specifics about the Civil War, we will spend the next two days looking at what caused the Civil War.**
- Introduce the graphic organizer that will aid them as they go through the material**

- Remind the Class they should already know what the Missouri Compromise of 1820 is and tell them it is under a bigger discussion for causes. This is the first main cause of the Civil War, the discussion of Free-States vs Slave States.
- Missouri Compromise
 - Many wanted to limit the addition of slave states,
 - Missouri wanted to be a slave state but was only admitted with the passing of a law that did not allow any states above the 36° 30' parallel (The Arkansas/Missouri State line.) with the exception of Missouri.
 - This compromise also maintained a balance in the amount of slave states and free states as Maine was admitted as a free state under this compromise as well.
- The Compromise of 1850
 - 5 separate bills that helped settle what to do with territories gained from The Mexican-American War.
 - California as a free state, and established present day borders of Texas.
 - Fugitive Slave Act, which that all escaped slaves be returned to their masters, no matter where they are found.
- The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854.
 - Repealed the Missouri Compromise by allowing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to allow slavery (they were not state's just yet).
 - This caused tension in the years leading up to the Civil War.
- Move on to Slavery in the Economy and Society. This will probably be on Day 2 so recap quickly on The Free-State vs Slave State Cause by briefly going over the graphic organizer filled out so far.
- Abolishment Movement
 - "Bleeding Kansas" a direct effect of the Kansas-Nebraska Act where there was much civil-unrest and even "border wars" between Kansas and Missouri.
 - Many immigrants moved into North came from countries that had already banned slavery
 - Slave labor was not needed as much in the North due to industrial booms
- Slavery was "critical" to the Southern economy.
 - Much of the economy was agricultural, and big plantations had slaves to have very little to no labor costs.
 - Basically, if slavery was abolished, then the south would be making less money.
- Introduce the 3rd cause: States and Federal Rights
- Nullification Acts

- Members of Congress tried to pass nullification acts that would allow state governments to declare laws that Congress pass unconstitutional, which would never pass
- States wanted more independence
 - One of the biggest hurdles of writing the Constitution was figuring out how to manage states' rights/laws from federal rights/laws
 - Many southern states were fed up with some of the laws regarding slave/free states, thought that should be up to the people of that state.
- Southern States did not feel respected
 - Most of the population was in the north, so they thought many laws being passed were not fair and did not represent what they wanted.
 - Basically, they felt controlled and taken advantage of by the north and Washington.
- Introduce the Election of 1860. This will probably be the 3rd day so briefly recap the past two days.
- Abraham Lincoln was Elected as the 16th President of The United States
 - Was a very contested election as Four Candidates Won Electoral Votes
 - Lincoln Barely had 180 electoral votes of the required 152 needed to win.
- Not a single Slave State voted for Lincoln.
 - Shows how divided the country was
- Lincoln Did not want to add any more slave states into the Union
 - Lincoln originally did not want to abolish slavery but halt the expansion of it.
- Many States seceded before Lincoln was even inaugurated
 - Felt Slavery was threatened by a Lincoln Administration
 - Went on to form The Confederate States of America.
 - Union Troops refused to leave Fort Sumter in South Carolina, which led the Confederates to attacking the Fort, starting the Civil War.
- Wrap up the lesson by pointing back to the main root of all these issues that ultimately led to the Civil War was slavery.
- After this pass out completed graphic organizers to help students study the causes as they will be tested on them on the Unit Test.
- Also assign the essay where students will have to explain 3 of the main 4 cause and give students time to begin working on it, if there is class time left.

