Jubilant crowd gathering on the streets of Havana, Cuba, on 1 January 1959 to celebrate Fidel Castro and his rebel army's victory in the Cuban Revolution.

Church Street, New York City, covered in ash and litter after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, a few blocks away, on 11 September 2001.
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– THE NATURE OF MODERN HISTORY

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New South Wales’ most trusted modern history series has been updated for the new Stage 6 Modern History syllabus. The first of a two-volume series, *Key Features of Modern History* offers complete support for Year 11 teachers and their students, providing unparalleled depth and coverage and a range of new chapter features that will give students of all abilities the best chance of achieving success in Modern History.

Key enhancements:
> All content has been explicitly aligned to the new Modern History Stage 6 syllabus (Year 11).
> Subject experts Bruce Dennett, Stephen Dixon, Bernie Howitt and Angela Wong have developed comprehensive, engaging and appropriately levelled content.
> Unambiguous language is used throughout the book, with plenty of visuals to engage students and support learning.
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‘Focus questions’, ‘Key concepts and skills’, and ‘Learning goals’ are clearly stated at the beginning of each chapter to guide teachers and students through the content.

Content includes up-to-date case studies, maps and rich visual and written source material.

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Margin glossary definitions help students to quickly and easily find the meaning of unfamiliar terms, to aid understanding.

**Political developments following the 1905 Revolution**

- Russia entered the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, which was fought on the Korean Peninsula with the aim of expanding Russian territory. However, Russian forces were defeated, leading to a change in the mood of the population. The October Manifesto of 1905 stated that the Tsar would consult with a Duma, and a new Constitution was promised.
- Despite this, the Duma was not given much power and was eventually dissolved.
- The events of 1905 have been called a ‘dress rehearsal’ for the Russian Revolution of 1917.

**The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

- The origins and significance of Palestine?
- What is the historical basis of any potential bias.
- How has taken a balanced approach.
- Conflict should be able to effectively communicate that it has taken a balanced approach.
- A successful investigation into any aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- Why does Britain play a role in the conflict?
- How have the French been involved in the conflict?
- Why France was not immune to the conflict?
- In the Arab-Israeli conflict?
- In the Arab-Israeli conflict?
- In the Arab-Israeli conflict?
Many chapters feature a ‘Profile’ which allows for more in-depth learning about a historically significant person, event or phenomenon.

‘Understanding and using the sources’ questions throughout each chapter enhance student understanding of how to use and critically analyse historical sources.

‘Check your learning’ questions are given for each topic.

obook assess

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- the ability to use their cloud-based obook anywhere, anytime on any device.

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- detailed course planners and teacher notes
- answers to every question in the Student book
- printable (and editable) class tests with answers
- the ability to set up classes, set assignments, monitor progress and graph results, and to view all available content and resources in one place.
8
The American Civil War

FOCUS QUESTIONS
1. What were the main causes of the American Civil War?
2. What were the reasons for Union victory?
3. What is the legacy of the Civil War?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources
The American Civil War was the first war where photographs emerged as historical sources, enabling a visual record of the war. However, photography was in its infancy and struggled to record movement. Therefore, it is vital that you investigate whether any photographs you are interpreting have been posed.

Historical interpretation
A civil war – that is, a war between differing factions in the same country – can be particularly brutal. Such a war can split families, and many people will have a strong emotional investment in the war and its outcome. Therefore, it is important that you consider the origin of any sources you use, and that you are aware of potential bias in sources.

Explanation and communication
As this is the first war where photographs can be part of the evidence you use to support an investigation, it is important that you reflect on how this may impact on the format you choose for your presentations. It is also important to realise that some images from the Civil War are quite graphic, so the appropriate and respectful use of these images becomes an important consideration.

LEARNING GOALS
> Understand the nature of the differences between the North and the South.
> Discuss the effects of slavery on the South and the rights of slaves.
> Outline the key battles of the war and reasons for Union victory.
> Understand the legacy of the Civil War in US history.

A soldier holding up the torn flag of the 8th Pennsylvania Reserve Colour Guard during the American Civil War.
8.1 Introduction

In this chapter you will investigate the causes and consequences of the American Civil War, one of the most critical episodes in the history of the United States of America. The Civil War was fought between two factions: the Union in the North (the Yankees) and the Confederates in the South (the Southerners), who sought to leave the Union and establish a separate country.

The Civil War almost destroyed the United States – if the South had won, there would be two countries occupying the area that is now the United States. It was also the bloodiest war in American history. During the Civil War years (1861–65), more than 600 000 Americans died. More Americans were killed in the Civil War than in the First World War (115 000) and the Second World War (318 000) combined. The leadership of the North, provided by the Republican President Abraham Lincoln, was one of the key reasons for the survival of the Union.

The Civil War remains the most widely studied and discussed historical issue in the United States. Books, films, television programs and re-enactments about the war remain popular, and for academic historians, this period redefined the American nation.

8.1a Check your learning

Refer to Chapter 5 (‘The Representation and Commemoration of the Past: Film, Television and History’) to better understand the power of memory and the influence of films in the study of history. View one of the film and television programs dealing with aspects of the Civil War, such as Ken Burns’ mini-series The Civil War (1990) or the films Gettysburg (1993) or Glory (1989).

Explain whether you think such representations of the Civil War are valid as sources of historical information. Discuss how a historian could use them.

SOURCE 1 Civil War enthusiasts taking part in a re-enactment of the Battle of Gettysburg on its 150th anniversary, 28 June 2013
The economic and social differences between North and South

The Northern states and the Southern states were not alike. The North was more industrialised and urbanised. In contrast, the South had fewer large cities and its economy depended more on agriculture. In 1860, about 80 per cent of the labour force in the South was involved in agriculture, compared with 40 per cent in the North.

The North favoured high tariffs, while the South wanted lower tariffs. Tariffs on manufactured goods imported from other countries meant that the South had to pay more for such goods; but tariffs did not affect the North, as it produced these goods itself. It was often cheaper for the South to pay a tariff on imported goods than to ship products from the North.

The South did not like the fact that most of the big banks were in the North; if Southerners needed to borrow money, they generally needed to do so from Northern banks, and so many felt controlled by the North. The North received more migrants from Europe – people with new ideas and dreams of a new way of life. Southerners were more conservative and preferred the old, agrarian ways. They feared that the more populous North, growing rich on trade and industry, would threaten their independence and their way of life.

The way of life for the White population in the South, and in particular for Southern landowners, depended on slavery. The issue of slavery, along with that of states' rights (see Section 8.3), was central to the causes of the Civil War.

After decades of increasing tensions and compromises between the Federal Government and the Southern states, the state of South Carolina seceded from the Union in December 1860. Other Southern states seceded in the following months, and war between the Union and the Confederates began in April 1861. Less than a century after the formation of the United States in 1776, it had started to split into two countries.

**Union States and Confederate States, 1863**

**Legend**
- Confederate states
- Union states
- Territories

**Source 2** This map shows the Union states and the Confederate states in 1863. Note that ‘territories’ refer to areas that had not gained a large enough population to become states.
### Key events of the Civil War

#### 1820
The Missouri Compromise: The pro-slave territory of Missouri applies to join the Union as a state in 1819. Until this time, pro-slavery and anti-slavery states had joined the Union in pairs to keep the balance in the US Senate. Missouri spoils the balance. The dispute is settled by letting the Northern ‘free’ state of Maine into the Union at the same time. The Missouri Compromise does not solve the problem; it simply postpones it for forty years.

#### 1831
The Nat Turner slave rebellion in Virginia: Turner (an enslaved African American) and a group of followers kill 60 Whites. After the rebellion is put down, Turner and a hundred others are executed. The state government in Virginia starts to talk about abolishing slavery.

#### 1832
South Carolina defies the Federal Government over a national tariff law citing states’ rights. President Andrew Jackson threatens to use the army to force South Carolina to accept the law, and the state backs down. This illustrates the views held by Southern states about their rights in relation to the Federal Government.

#### 1846
The United States goes to war with Mexico and gains land in the south-west.

#### 1850
The compromise of 1850: Land taken from Mexico creates new problems – should people in the new land be allowed to have slaves? The result is another compromise. California joins the Union as a ‘free state’, while the rest become territories and decide for themselves whether they will allow slavery. Again, the problem is put off until another time.

#### 1852
Harriet Beecher Stowe writes the novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, attacking slavery. It has great influence in the North and causes resentment in the South.

#### 1854
The Kansas–Nebraska Act: As people move west, arguments increase about whether slavery should go with them. The new territories of Kansas and Nebraska attract a great deal of attention. Stephen Douglas, a Northern Democrat who wants to be president, argues that the new territories should make the decision for themselves. This is called ‘popular sovereignty’. Pro- and anti-slavery groups flood the new territories with their supporters and this leads to violence.

The Republican Party is formed. The Republicans are outraged by the Kansas–Nebraska Act and oppose the idea of extending slavery any further. Abraham Lincoln becomes one of the early leaders of the new party.

#### 1857
The Dred Scott case: This case, heard by the US Supreme Court, holds that slaves are always the property of their masters, even if they are taken into ‘free states’ or territories. This decision is greeted with approval in the South, but with increased calls from the North to make slavery illegal.
1859

John Brown’s Raid: Brown, an anti-slavery campaigner, raids the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, to steal guns and start a slave rebellion. The Union army stops him and Brown is hanged.

John Brown (played by Sterling Hayden) on the gallows in the 1982 mini-series *The Blue and the Gray*

1860

The Democratic Party splits over slavery into Northern and Southern Democrats. This ensures the election of Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate, to the sixteenth presidency of the United States. When Lincoln is elected, South Carolina becomes the first of the Southern states to leave the Union.

1861

The South forms the Confederate States of America (also known as the CSA or the Confederacy) and leaves the Union.

Jefferson Davis becomes President of the Confederacy.

The Confederates fire upon Fort Sumter, the Union fort in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, and the Civil War begins.

The Battle of Bull Run is the first battle of the Civil War and the South wins. The North realises it will be a long war.

1862

Robert E. Lee is given command of the army of Northern Virginia.

The Battle of Antietam, repelling an invasion of the North by Lee, is called a Union victory, but at a great cost of lives.

At the Battle of Fredericksburg, the Union attacks at the strongest point of the Southern line, suffers heavy losses and is forced to withdraw.

1863

Lincoln announces the Emancipation Proclamation, which frees all slaves.

The Battle of Gettysburg is perhaps the last real chance of success that the South has in the war. Gettysburg is a Union victory.

1864

Lincoln appoints Ulysses Grant as general-in-chief of the Union Army.

Lincoln is re-elected President.

1865

The Civil War ends.

Lincoln is assassinated; Vice-President Andrew Johnson becomes President.

The 13th Amendment to the US Constitution makes the abolition of slavery official.

1866

Ulysses Grant, the most successful Union general of the war, is elected as the eighteenth President of the United States.

The Confederate cemetery, Vicksburg, Mississippi

8.1b Check your learning

Research two sources that provide evidence about the economic and social differences between the North and the South around the mid-nineteenth century. Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of each source in explaining why the Civil War occurred.

CHAPTER 8 THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR 117
8.2

Slavery and human rights

The noble statement made by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence about all people being equal was contradicted by the fact that slavery was legal in the United States. Many American politicians struggled with this contradiction – that their society was meant to be free and fair, but at the same time it allowed slavery.

The first Black slaves arrived in the United States around 1619. Slavery expanded as the plantation economy of the South developed. An estimated three million slaves were brought into the United States between 1619 and 1865 to provide cheap labour for the tobacco, sugar cane and cotton plantations. As the number of slaves grew into millions in the South, laws were adjusted to control slavery. By 1740 slaves had become ‘chattels’; that is, they were regarded as property that could be bought, sold and used as the owner pleased. The changes to the law produced what has been called the ‘peculiar institution’ of slavery in the Southern states.

Cotton production was the main reason why slavery flourished in the Southern states. A huge demand for raw cotton to feed the textile mills in Great Britain made cotton growing very profitable, and by the 1830s cotton was the most important crop in the Southern economy. Cotton farming was extremely labour intensive, and Southern planters came to rely on slave labour. The Yankees in the North had less need for slaves in their industries and farms, and slavery may have declined gradually in the South, as it had in the North, had it not been for cotton. This fundamental difference was one of the key causes of the American Civil War.

SOURCE 4 A slave family in a cotton field near Savannah, Georgia, 1860s

Declaration of Independence
the official document in which the United States declared its independence from Great Britain

plantations
large farms where slave labour was used to produce crops such as cotton, tobacco and sugar

peculiar institution
the term used by Southerners for the system of slavery

The Declaration of Independence is the official document in which the United States declared its independence from Great Britain.

SOURCE 4 A slave family in a cotton field near Savannah, Georgia, 1860s

peculiar institution
the term used by Southerners for the system of slavery

The peculiar institution is the term used by Southerners for the system of slavery in the Southern states.
The effects of slavery on the South

Not everyone in the South owned slaves. Out of eight million Whites, about 380,000 owned slaves in 1860. Nevertheless, the class of rich landowners with slaves, known as planters, controlled the South. Slavery might have helped the Southern economy in the short term, but some historians argued that it discouraged the development of new industry and new ideas.

Slavery was seen by many Southerners as the means to keep all Whites more or less equal. Without slavery, they argued, Whites would have to perform menial jobs; with slavery, the Blacks performed such tasks, keeping the Whites in a class above. Southerners were critical of developments in the North, where Whites did manual work in harsh conditions in factories, claiming this created inequality among Whites and was, therefore, contrary to American ideals.

Life for slaves

In the 1800s, slaves suffered the following conditions:

- They were regarded as ‘chattels’.
- They could be separated from their families and sold to different ‘masters’.
- The Whites tried to eliminate memories of their past and culture.
- By law, slaves could not own property, leave their master’s land without permission, be out after dark, join groups of other slaves (except on work gangs or in church), carry guns, ever hit a White person (even in self-defence), or learn to read or write.
- Whites could kill slaves without penalty.

There were, however, differences in how slaves were treated, depending on their age, gender, skills, location and luck. Some masters could be kind and thoughtful; others could be extremely cruel.

Occasionally, slaves did gain their freedom. Some managed to get extra work and save money to ‘buy themselves’ from their owners. Some slaves were set free in thanks when their owner died. For the most part, however, slaves gained their freedom by running away. Free Blacks and ex-slaves played an important part in the Civil War; for example, they made up 10 per cent of the Union Army. One of the most famous Black units was the 54th Massachusetts Infantry that was featured in the 1989 film Glory.

Slave-owners claimed ‘their Blacks’ were ‘happy’; however, this was not supported by the facts that slaves saw Abraham Lincoln as a hero, and that Whites were always on the alert for slave revolts or runaway slaves.

8.2 Check your learning

1. When did the first slaves arrive in the United States?
2. Why did slavery become important to the South?
3. To what does the phrase the ‘peculiar institution’ refer?
4. How many slaves were brought into the United States between 1619 and 1865?
5. How many Southern Whites owned slaves?
6. How was slavery meant to avoid inequality among Whites?

8.2 Understanding and using the sources

What insight does Source 4 give you into the condition and lifestyle of slaves in the South?
8.3 The causes of the Civil War

The debate among historians and writers about the causes of the Civil War has been going on for a long time. There is, however, general agreement about some of the causes:

> the different views of politicians in the North and South about states’ rights under the US Constitution

> the fear in Southern states that slavery would be abolished by the government

> the westward expansion of US settlement; as more territories became states, this created increasing tensions about the balance of states for and against slavery

> the catalyst, finally, was the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in the 1860 election.

The South and states’ rights

The differences between North and South, and the fear in Southern states that a powerful North threatened their independence and way of life, became evident in the differing views of each about the powers of the Federal Government. The Northern view was that the Federal Government was dominant and its authority was greater than that of the states. In the South, there was a strong belief in ‘states’ rights’: the idea that the rights of individual states were more important than the Federal Government. Southern politicians argued that if they disapproved of the Federal Government, they could leave the Union, because the states had joined the Union of their own free will and were therefore entitled to leave whenever they wanted.

States’ rights crisis in 1832

A clash between the state of South Carolina and the Federal Government about states’ rights erupted in 1832. The president at the time was Andrew Jackson, who believed that the interests of the people were best served by a strong Federal Government. Jackson made this clear during a dispute over a new tariff law.

South Carolina was against the new law; it did not have manufacturing industries and wanted to buy goods more cheaply from Great Britain. South Carolina claimed that the law favoured the Yankee Northern states, where most of America’s industries were located, but disadvantaged the Southern states. Political leaders in South Carolina argued that any federal laws that were not in their interests could be declared void or nullified by the state. South Carolina accepted the tariffs only after President Jackson authorised the use of armed forces against it if the tariff law was not enforced.

Slavery and the growth of the abolitionist movement

The argument about the significance of slavery as a cause of the Civil War has been ongoing since the 1860s. At times, historians have believed that slavery was the only real cause of the war, while at other times, they have felt it wasn’t really that important. In fact, slavery was a vital cause as it became the symbol of the differences between North and South.
The abolitionist movement had gained strength in the North during the 1830s. In the 1850s, the issue resulted in a split within the Democratic party into Northern and Southern Democrats and the emergence of a new political party, the Republicans. Clearly, the issue of slavery had a great deal of influence on events.

The South believed that slaves were needed to work their plantations. To Southerners, slavery was part of their way of life – it had existed for hundreds of years and it was legal. When people in the North started to speak out against slavery and demand that it be made illegal, Southerners saw this as another example of the North trying to tell them what to do.

The continuing tension between North and South was stirred up by events such as John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in 1859. Brown was a radical Northerner who believed that slavery was against the will of God. He staged an unsuccessful raid of the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, with the aim of stealing guns to arm the slaves for a massive slave revolt.

Westward expansion

When the United States was formed, it was made up of only 13 states, all on the east coast. The men who wrote the Constitution hoped that the problems of slavery would just go away with time, but as the United States grew, westward expansion kept the nation’s attention on slavery. People in the North did not want slavery to expand, while people in the South felt that since slavery was legal, they should be able to have slaves wherever they wanted and wherever they went. As the frontier moved west, there were arguments about whether slaves should be allowed in the new territories.

The problem was that the newly opened territories would eventually become states. Under the Constitution, each state had two senators. The Senate was the most important law-making and decision-making body in America. If the anti-slavery groups from the North acquired more senators, they could pass laws to make slavery illegal. If the pro-slavery South acquired more senators, they could maintain the status quo. Neither side wanted the other to gain the advantage. The result was a series of compromises that kept the balance between ‘slave states’ and ‘free states’, and therefore a balance between ‘slave senators’ and ‘free senators’.

First came the Missouri Compromise of 1820, when Missouri wanted to be let into the Union. Missouri would have been a ‘slave state’, giving the South two extra senators. The problem was solved by allowing Maine to enter the Union at the same time. Maine was a ‘free state’ in the far North. This compromise lasted until 1850, when another set of compromises was needed over the land that had just been won from Mexico. These held until Kansas and Nebraska wanted to join the Union and yet another compromise, the Kansas–Nebraska Act, was passed in 1854.

Lincoln’s election and the start of the Civil War

The Republican candidate for the presidency in 1860 was Abraham Lincoln. His main opposition, the Democratic Party, had become so badly divided over slavery that they put up two candidates, one from the North (Stephen Douglas) and one from the South (John Breckinridge). Lincoln won the election with strong support from the North, even though he was hated in the South, where people feared that he would ban slavery.
The new president made it as clear as he could that he would not force the South to give up slavery, but the Southerners were in no mood to listen. As soon as Lincoln was elected, Southern states began to leave the Union. The first state to leave the Union was South Carolina, quickly followed by Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. They became the Confederate States of America on 4 February 1861, with Jefferson Davis of Mississippi as their president.

Lincoln took the view that although slavery was legal, breaking away from the Union was illegal and constituted a rebellion. He publicly stated that he would not abolish slavery, but would fight to keep the Union together; in other words, it was a matter of national unity.

When Southern forces, also known as rebels or Confederates, fired on the Union’s Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, the Civil War began. At this point, four more states – Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina – also broke away from the Union to join the Confederate states, bringing the total to 11.

SOURCE 6

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension …

… I declare that – I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.

… In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to ‘preserve, protect, and defend it.’

Excerpts from President Lincoln’s inauguration speech, 4 March 1861

SOURCE 7

[From the date of the adoption of the Constitution to 1860] the productions of the South in cotton, rice, sugar, and tobacco, for the full development and continuance of which the labor of African slaves was and is indispensable, had swollen to an amount which formed nearly three-fourths of the exports of the whole United States and had become absolutely necessary to the wants of civilized man. With interests of such overwhelming magnitude imperiled, the people of the Southern States were driven by the conduct of the North to the adoption of some course of action to avert the danger with which they were openly menaced.

Excerpt from Jefferson Davis’ address to the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 29 April 1861

8.3a Understanding and using the sources

1 Identify Abraham Lincoln’s view on slavery, according to Source 6.
2 Discuss why Jefferson Davis considers slavery to be indispensable, according to Source 7.
3 Explain how Sources 6 and 7 are useful for a historian investigating why the Southern states decided to leave the Union.
The states joined the Union of their own free will. If they change their mind and want to leave, they must be allowed to do so.

The Union, once made, cannot be broken up unless all the states agree. An individual state cannot make an individual decision to leave the Union.

The states existed before the Union and are the real basis of the government of the people. They are therefore more important than the Union.

To break away without the agreement of the other states is against the law and is therefore rebellion.

The government in Washington is too far away and doesn’t know what the people in each state want. State governments are closer to their people and have a better idea of what the people want, and the people want to leave the Union.

The nation as a whole has to be more important than any single state. The good of the nation is more important than the wishes of individual states.

The South has had slaves for hundreds of years. No matter what Northerners may think about it, slavery is legal. Some Northerners now want to stop Southerners taking their slaves – in other words, their property – with them wherever they go. This is typical of how the North tells the South what it should do. The South doesn’t tell the North to give its factory workers better pay or shorter hours.

Slavery is against the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and everything that America is meant to be. Lincoln cannot and will not make slavery illegal unless the Southern states agree. He is only against the idea that slavery be allowed to spread.

SOURCE 8 Arguments for and against the right of the Southern states to leave the Union, dealing with the themes of states’ rights and national unity. The arguments ‘for’ are like those presented by Confederate President Jefferson Davis. The arguments ‘against’ are similar to those used by US President Abraham Lincoln.

‘FOR’: THE SOUTHERN ARGUMENT

- The states joined the Union of their own free will. If they change their mind and want to leave, they must be allowed to do so.
- The states existed before the Union and are the real basis of the government of the people. They are therefore more important than the Union.
- The government in Washington is too far away and doesn’t know what the people in each state want. State governments are closer to their people and have a better idea of what the people want, and the people want to leave the Union.
- The South has had slaves for hundreds of years. No matter what Northerners may think about it, slavery is legal. Some Northerners now want to stop Southerners taking their slaves – in other words, their property – with them wherever they go. This is typical of how the North tells the South what it should do. The South doesn’t tell the North to give its factory workers better pay or shorter hours.

‘AGAINST’: THE NORTHERN ARGUMENT

- The Union, once made, cannot be broken up unless all the states agree. An individual state cannot make an individual decision to leave the Union.
- To break away without the agreement of the other states is against the law and is therefore rebellion.
- The nation as a whole has to be more important than any single state. The good of the nation is more important than the wishes of individual states.
- Slavery is against the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and everything that America is meant to be. Lincoln cannot and will not make slavery illegal unless the Southern states agree. He is only against the idea that slavery be allowed to spread.

SOURCE 9 Jefferson Davis (1808–89) – President of the Confederate States of America from 1861 to 1865

SOURCE 10
Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Many regard him as the greatest US president.

8.3b Understanding and using the sources

Examine Source 8. Think about the arguments presented and discuss them in a group. As a class, conduct a debate about whether the South should leave the Union, with one side arguing for and one against the proposal.
8.4 The course of the Civil War

At the start of the war in 1861, both sides were confident that the conflict would be over quickly.

> Many in the South believed all that was needed was a strong show of force to convince the North to leave them alone. Southerners also believed that European powers would intervene to help them. Southerners supplied much of the world’s cotton, and they thought that any attempt by the North to stop the export of this key material to Europe would result in Great Britain and other European nations joining the war.

> Northerners were confident of a quick victory because the North was more populous, had more industry and greater wealth, and controlled almost all the US Navy.

Both sides were wrong. The war turned into a long and bitter struggle that did not end until 1865. The American Civil War was the first industrial war, and was also one of the first wars that could be called a total war. Civilians on both sides felt its effects.

The key battles

Many vital battles determined the outcome of the war and each side had real chances to win.

The First Battle of Bull Run (1861)

This was the first major battle of the Civil War and was a setback for the North. It was fought in northern Virginia, not far from the Union capital, Washington DC. A Union army of 30,000, under the command of General Irvin McDowell, faced a Confederate force of 20,000, led by General Beauregard. Both sides were equally inexperienced and the battle could have gone either way. However, in the end the South won and the Union troops ran all the way back to Washington. This proved to be a great surprise to the civilians who had driven out from the Union capital with picnic baskets in order to watch. They were forced to flee with the Union army, and a few lucky members of the rebel army enjoyed the lunches that were left behind.

The Battle of Antietam (1862)

McDowell was immediately replaced as Commander of the Union Army by General George McClellan. In September 1862, McClellan’s army of 87,000 faced the invading Confederate army of 50,000, led by General Robert E. Lee, across Antietam Creek in Maryland. This was the bloodiest single day of the war – 24,000 men died, and it was possible to walk all the way across the battlefield on a carpet of corpses. During the battle, some of the wounded from both sides had crawled into haystacks to wait for help. As the battle raged, shells fired by the cannons started fires; these raced through the haystacks, and the wounded men – too weak to move – were burnt alive. The Confederate army withdrew, so the battle was technically a Union victory, but at enormous cost.

The next two commanders of the Union Army were General Ambrose Burnside and General Joseph Hooker. They were in turn replaced by General George Meade, as President Lincoln tried to find a general who might match the leadership of the South’s General Lee.
The capture of Vicksburg (July 1863)
In the west, the important Confederate town of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River fell to the Union after a long siege. Control of Vicksburg and a later Union success at Port Hudson in Louisiana gave the North command of the entire Mississippi River, cut Texas off from the rest of the Confederacy, and badly weakened the South's already poor supply and transport system. Along with other successes in the west, the capture of Vicksburg brought General Ulysses Grant to national attention.

The Battle of Gettysburg (July 1863)
This battle was fought just before the surrender of Vicksburg. The Southern commander, General Lee, moved north into Pennsylvania; he hoped that, by doing so, he might force the Union to take some of the pressure off Vicksburg.

Gettysburg was the bloodiest battle of a war filled with bloody battles, with more than 50,000 men killed or wounded during three days of fighting.

Gettysburg was also one of the key battles of the Civil War and probably the last real chance the South had to win. It was also perhaps the worst battle that General Lee fought. His decision on the last day of the battle, to order troops to charge across open ground in the middle of the Union line, proved to be a disaster. Known as 'Pickett's Charge', after one of the generals who led it, this assault resulted in 50 per cent casualties for the Confederates. Lee's army retreated and was on the defensive for the rest of the war.

Source 11: Casualties on the field at Gettysburg – artillery and the new Minié ball bullets (whose design dramatically increased range, accuracy, and speed of loading) made the open battlefield a lethal place.
The campaigns of 1864–65

By 1864, Lincoln had found the general he needed. Ulysses Grant was put in charge of all the Union armies. Some historians argue that Grant’s understanding of modern industrial war made him as good a general as – if not better than – Robert E. Lee. Grant believed that the key to winning was to wage war in a way that would hurt the Southern home front – Grant’s campaign in Virginia and General William Sherman’s campaign in Georgia were clear examples of this plan.

**Grant’s campaign in Virginia**

Grant led the Union Army south into Virginia. He fought a series of bitter battles in May and June of 1864: the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna and Cold Harbor. Of these four battles, only Spotsylvania could be called a Union victory. However, Grant kept moving south, putting Lee under continual pressure.

Grant was in fact fighting a war of attrition. He knew that the North had more men and more resources, and therefore would ultimately win such a war. This is supported by the fact that when the war ended, the North had lost 359,000 men and the South had lost 258,000. The North won because it could afford more losses.

SOURCE 12 A dramatic Civil War battle re-enactment

SOURCE 13 The ruined city of Richmond, Virginia – the Confederate capital – after suffering a Union siege
Sherman's campaign in Georgia

Meanwhile, another Union general, William Sherman, was moving south into Georgia with a ruthlessness to match Grant's. A defeat at Kennesaw Mountain did not stop him. Sherman moved on. He captured the city of Atlanta in September 1864 and then set about destroying the economy of Georgia to diminish the provision of supplies to Confederate troops. Railway lines were torn up, crops and houses were burnt and livestock were killed. Sometimes, the Union troops got out of control, robbing and bashing civilians.

Sherman’s ‘march to the sea’ from Atlanta to the coast at Savannah was an example of total war. The purpose was to make war on the Southern home front. Sherman did not apologise for this. He blamed the Southerners for starting the war and felt they were simply being punished, saying ‘war is cruelty’.

Confederate surrender

As the war moved into 1865, Grant set up another siege, this time around Petersburg, Virginia. When Lee could no longer defend the town, he moved west. By this time, however, Lee's army was reduced to only 25,000 men, and on 9 April 1865 he surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, Virginia.

8.4a Understanding and using the sources

1 What evidence do Sources 12 and 13 provide about the nature of warfare in the Civil War?
2 What evidence does Source 13 provide about Grant’s beliefs in regard to the way that the war would be won?

The roles and experiences of different groups during the Civil War

The roles of different groups and the impact of the war upon them varied according to the location, class, age and gender of the people involved. Poor and working-class men, as is the case with most modern wars, did most of the fighting. Many industrialists in the North grew rich. Civilians in the South suffered more, with homes, crops and towns destroyed by advancing Union forces and retreating Confederate armies. Civilians in the South also suffered more in terms of food shortages and rationing due to the blockade imposed by the Union Navy on Southern ports.

The role of African Americans during the Civil War

African American men were given the chance to fight for the North and against slavery. More than 30,000 free Black men joined Union armies, and reports of Black regiments that fought well helped to change racial attitudes and opinions about the emancipation of slaves.

In September 1862, Lincoln's government issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which stated that slavery would not be affected in states that returned to the Union before 1 January 1863, but that any slaves in Confederate territories won by Union armies would be freed. The proclamation encouraged slaves to flee to Union lines, adding to the strength of the Union Army and reducing the manpower that slaves provided for the Confederate cause as farm workers and military labourers. By the end of the war, almost 200,000 Black men, mostly ex-slaves, had enlisted in the Union Army or Navy.
The role of women during the Civil War

In the South, a significant portion of the male population of fighting age left their homes to join the Confederate Army. This meant that women took on numerous tasks, both to feed their families and to support the war effort. They worked long hours as farm labourers and assumed new roles supervising slaves and managing plantations.

In towns in both the South and the North, women took on jobs normally done by men, such as secretarial and clerical work. More women also went to work in factories; in the North, an estimated one-third of factory workers were female, working mainly in the textiles and shoe-making industries.

Women took on nursing roles in large numbers for the first time during the Civil War. Nursing in hospitals was previously a role for men, as it was not seen as appropriate for women to nurse males outside of their families. However, with so many sick and wounded soldiers requiring care, thousands of women worked as paid or volunteer nurses in camps and field hospitals. Stories of wartime nursing changed society’s ideas about women in nursing, and after the war, formal nursing training developed and nursing came to be seen as a ‘women’s profession’.

SOURCE 14
A nurse caring for soldiers in a Union barrack in Pennsylvania, 1861

SOURCE 15
On the home front, women went to work in factories.
The reasons for Union victory

The primary reason for the Union victory was that the North had more men and more resources. It had a much larger population, and was able to field more than two million soldiers during the course of the war; more than double the number of Confederate soldiers. Its industries were able to manufacture weapons, clothing and other materials in much larger quantities than the South. The North also controlled almost all the navy vessels. The South could not compete in any of these areas because it was primarily agricultural. The steady, calculated and at times inspirational leadership of Abraham Lincoln was also an important contributing factor.

8.4b Understanding and using the sources

Discuss how Sources 16 and 17 can be used to help explain why the Union won the Civil War.

8.4 Check your learning

1. Outline the role of slaves in the Civil War.
2. Explain the consequences of the Emancipation Proclamation for the South and the North.
3. Identify ways the role of women changed during the Civil War.
4. Research three sources that provide evidence about the roles of women during the war. Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of each source in explaining the way women’s roles changed.
The immediate consequences and legacy of the Civil War

The immediate consequences of the war were the preservation of the Union and the emancipation of four million slaves. More than 600,000 men had died during the war, with hundreds of thousands more left wounded or disabled.

Immediate consequences for the South

When the war ended, Confederate soldiers returned to their home states, and women returned to their roles in the home. The South now faced a massive task of rebuilding, as the occupation of Southern land had left cities ruined, railways damaged and crops destroyed. However, the Federal Government did not treat the Southern rebels harshly. The President pardoned Southern leaders, and returned land that had been confiscated during the war.

The end of slavery

In January 1864, the US Congress passed the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery. However, the abolition of slavery did not ensure equal civil rights or an improvement in social status for Black Americans.

The 15th Amendment to the Constitution, introduced in 1869, gave Black males the right to vote. It declared that the right to vote could not be denied based on ‘race, colour or previous condition of servitude’, but this was not always enforced in the Southern states.

After the war, some ex-slaves moved north, but most remained in the South and became ‘sharecroppers’. They lived and worked on plots of plantation lands as tenants, paying their landlords a share of the crops they produced. Their day-to-day lives were free from White supervision, but in reality, debts to their landlords meant they were not economically independent. Cotton prices fell in the 1870s, so many sharecroppers were perpetually in debt.

Segregation of Black and White communities in the South continued, with separate churches, schools and hospitals, and Black people were still treated as second-class citizens. It was not until the mid-twentieth century that African Americans achieved basic civil rights.

A united nation

Before the war, ‘the United States’ was a plural noun, meaning separate states that had chosen to ‘unite’. After the war, ‘the United States’ became a singular noun, with the emphasis on the ‘union’ of ‘states’. The shift of power to the Federal Government, and dominance of Northern values of innovation and equality, accelerated the nation’s development towards an urbanised and industrialised society, which would become a world power in the twentieth century.

8.5 Check your learning

1. Explain why the system of sharecropping has been described as ‘slavery by another name’.
2. Use a graphic organiser to summarise the legacy of the Civil War.
THE ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Due to his leadership during the most critical domestic crisis in America’s history, Lincoln is widely regarded as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of the US presidents. His death at the hands of an assassin, on 15 April 1865, only six days after the end of the war, helped reinforce his status. He had won the Civil War and ended slavery. By dying in office, his reputation would never be tainted by the difficulties of reconstructing a divided nation.

Lincoln was shot in the head at close range as he sat with his wife and two guests in the presidential box at Ford’s Theatre in Washington. He died the next morning. The assassin was John Wilkes Booth, an actor who sympathised with the Confederates. Booth and his fellow conspirators planned to kill not only the President, but also the Vice-President Andrew Johnson, and the Secretary of State William Seward.

Following the shooting, Booth suffered a broken leg jumping down to the stage, but he managed to escape capture in the theatre. On 26 April 1865, however, federal troops tracked him down and cornered him in a barn, where he was shot and killed.

8.5 PROFILE TASKS

Research the circumstances of Lincoln’s assassination:
1. What motivated Booth and his co-conspirators and what were they trying to achieve?
2. The plot also involved killing the US Vice-President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of State William Seward on the same night. Write a news article based on your knowledge of the Lincoln assassination and the events that followed.
The Civil War dominates America’s history. Historians continue to debate both the causes and the legacy of the war that cost the United States more lives than any other war, before or since. What isn’t mentioned as often is how close the country came to dividing into two. It is an unanswerable question, but historians can pose the hypothetical question ‘What if the South had won?’ and create endless debates about what the world would look like today.

Many of the issues that divided Americans in the Civil War have continued to bubble away throughout the past 150 years. Consider ongoing tensions and movements concerning inequality, class and race in America today. It is up to you to consider just how much the Civil War solved and achieved in American history.

SOURCE 19 The Confederate Memorial Carving in Stone Mountain, Georgia, depicts three Confederate heroes of the Civil War: President Jefferson Davis and Generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. ‘Stonewall’ Jackson. The carved surface is larger than a football field.
Jubilant crowd gathering on the streets of Havana, Cuba, on 1 January 1959 to celebrate Fidel Castro and his rebel army's victory in the Cuban Revolution.

Church Street, New York City, covered in ash and litter after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, a few blocks away, on 11 September 2001.