

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Document Based Question



http://www.soldierstudies.org/index.php?action=webquest_1

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

The United States Civil War was fought between 1861 and 1865. In the end, the total number of deaths from the Civil War exceeds the number of deaths from all other U.S. conflicts combined. The most common and simple reason cited for this conflict is slavery. But is it really that simple? You will use our own background knowledge and the documents provided to determine whether or not slavery really was the most important cause of the Civil War. The five main causes we will investigate are:

- Economic differences
- Sectional differences
- Slavery (slave states vs. free states)
- Abolitionism
- Election of Abraham Lincoln

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Source 1

Source Note: Railroads were under construction in all states east of the Mississippi River by 1850. Most of the lines were concentrated in the Northeast, and many of them ran only short distances. A network of lines radiated from Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia. Railroads also linked cities in the Southeast.

Competition for trade spurred railroad construction in the East. By the early 1850's, four railroads had built rail lines that enabled them to haul freight between the Great Lakes region and the East Coast. New York's Erie Railroad opened between Piermont and Dunkirk on Lake Erie in 1851. In 1853, 10 small railroads along the Erie Canal merged to form the New York Central Railroad, which provided service between Albany and Buffalo. By 1852, the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Baltimore and Ohio had opened lines to the Ohio River, one of the most important trade routes in the country. The large railroads took over many smaller lines and so expanded rapidly.

During the 1850's, railroad lines connected Chicago with the Mississippi River, which was a major trade route. The Baltimore and Ohio reached St. Louis on the Mississippi in 1857. Both Chicago and St. Louis thrived as transportation centers. In 1850, Congress began granting federal land to develop railroads. Government leaders thought railroads would help attract settlers to undeveloped regions of the Midwest and the South. The railroad companies kept some of the land for right of way and sold the rest to pay railroad construction costs. The first grant helped build a railroad from the Great Lakes at Chicago to the Gulf of Mexico at Mobile, Alabama. Settlers poured into the area along the route after the railroad's completion in 1856.



RAILROADS, 1850 AND 1860

Source: <http://wps.ablongman.com/wps/media/objects/1483/1518969/DIVI241.jpg>

Answer the questions on the following page.

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Key vocabulary: Sectionalism: Placing the interests of one's own region ahead of the interests of the nation as a whole.

Source 1 guiding questions:

Please use the "Railroads, 1850 and 1860" map to answer the following questions:

1. Use an atlas to identify all of the states with railroad tracks and write their abbreviations on the blank map.
2. On the blank map, use a black pen to draw a line between free states and slave states in 1860. (Use textbook page 483).
3. Use source 1: Are the majority of railroad tracks in free states or slave states?

4. What are some reasons that railroads were used in the mid 1800s?

5. How might the difference in the amount of railroads increased sectional differences?

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Source 2A

Source Note: A view of New York in 1860. In the years leading up to the Civil War, the population in the Northeast surged; immigrants crowded into rapidly industrializing city centers.

<http://www.shmoop.com/causes-of-civil-war/botw/images.html?d=http://memory.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3b40000/3b41000/3b41700/3b41783r.jpg>



Source 2B

Source Note: View of a plantation house in Bishopville, South Carolina, 1857. In the years leading up to the Civil War, the population in the South grew slowly, and its agricultural economy thrived because of the slave production of cotton.

<http://www.shmoop.com/causes-of-civil-war/botw/images.html?d=http://memory.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3a40000/3a46000/3a46700/3a46770v.jpg>



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Key vocabulary: Urban or rural issues: To arise as a result of being in a highly populated or lowly populated area such as a city versus a farm.

Source 2A and 2B guiding questions:

Please use the images on the previous page to answer the following questions:

1. On the "Railroads, 1850 and 1860" map, trace New York and South Carolina with a purple crayon.

2. Write down everything you see in image 2A: _____

3. Write down everything you see in image 2B: _____

4. How does image 2A differ from image 2B? _____

5. What generalizations can you make from this information?

6. In the space below or on a separate piece of paper, fill in the diagram that organizes problems that arise from being urban or rural. Use both images 2A and 2B?

Problems or difficulties from
Being in an urban environment

Problems or difficulties that
urban **and** rural environments
share

Problems or difficulties from
being in a **rural** environment

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Source 3A

Key vocabulary: Emancipation Proclamation: An executive order issued by Pres. Lincoln on January 1, 1863, freeing all slaves in all seceded regions (the Confederate states).

Horace Greeley: Founder and editor of the New York Tribune. He was also one of the first members of the Republican Party and a strong abolitionist. His editorials were influential throughout the northern states.

"altered position": In the source note, this refers to Lincoln's change in position from emancipating (freeing) ALL slaves to emancipating ONLY the slaves living in Confederate territory. This angered many abolitionists including Greeley.

Source Note:



Horace Greeley
Library of Congress

Lincoln's Letter to Horace Greeley

Written during the heart of the Civil War, this is one of Abraham Lincoln's most famous letters. Greeley, editor of the influential New York Tribune, had just addressed an editorial to Lincoln called "The Prayer of Twenty Millions," making demands and implying that Lincoln's administration lacked direction and resolve.

President Lincoln made his reply when a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation already lay in his desk drawer. His response revealed his concentration on preserving the Union. The letter, which received acclaim in the North, stands as a classic statement of Lincoln's constitutional responsibilities. A few years after the president's death, Greeley wrote an assessment of Lincoln. He stated that Lincoln did not actually respond to his editorial but used it instead as a platform to prepare the public for his "altered position" on emancipation.

<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/greeley.htm>

Source:

August 22, 1862.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing" as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt. I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored; the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union, unless they could at the same time *save* slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *destroy* slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle *is* to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed *personal* wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,
A. Lincoln.

Source: <http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/greeley.htm>

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Source 3A guiding questions:

Please use the letter on the previous page to answer the following questions:

1. When was this letter written? _____

2. List three things Lincoln wrote that you think are important: _____

3. What is Lincoln's number one concern, according to his letter? _____

4. In your own words, what does Lincoln say about slavery in regards to the Union?

5. In the last sentence, why does Lincoln write about his *official* view on slavery and his *personal* view on slavery? _____

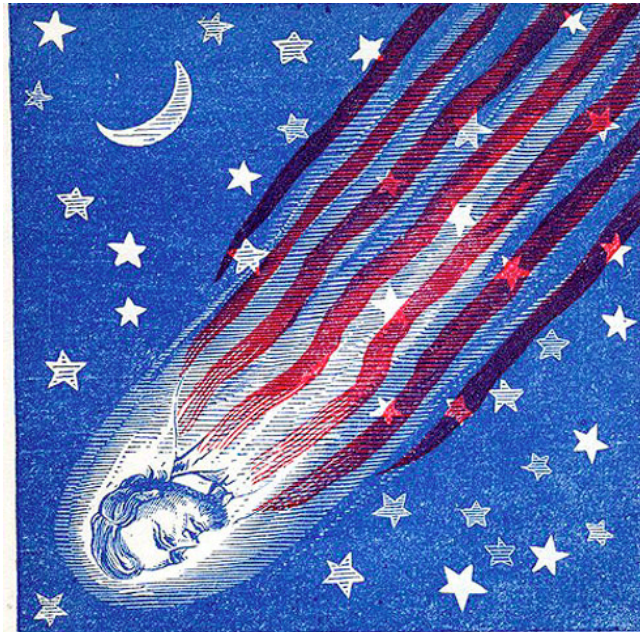
6. Write a question to Lincoln about something that's unanswered in this letter in regards to causes of the Civil War. _____

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Key vocabulary: Republican: (Civil War era only)- Formed in 1854 by opponents of the expansion of slavery in the territories.

Source 3B

Source Note: Abraham Lincoln is sworn in as President on March 6, 1861, 16th President of the United States. Lincoln as the "Comet of 1861," as an illustration from an envelope, 1861.



STAR OF THE NORTH, OR THE COMET OF 1861.

Source: <http://www.shmoop.com/causes-of-civil-war/botw/images.html?d=http://www.magicalcat.com/images-sec/hap00059.jpg>

Source 3B guiding questions:

Please use the image above to answer the following questions:

1. Whose face is on the comet? _____

2. Describe the image that you see: _____

3. Explain how an abolitionist would view this image: _____

4. Explain how a slave owner would view this image: _____

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Key vocabulary: Submission: To yield or surrender (oneself) to the will or authority of another.
Flagitious: Criminally wicked.

Source 3C

Source Note: This is an excerpt from an editorial of the Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury on October 11, 1860. The title of the piece is “The Terrors of Submission”

Before Messrs. (Mr.s) LINCOLN and HAMLIN can be installed in Washington, as President and Vice-President of the United States, the Southern States can dissolve peaceably (we know what we say) their Union with the North. Mr. LINCOLN and his Abolition cohorts, will have no South to reign over. Their game would be blocked. The foundation of their organization would be taken away; and, left to the tender mercies of a baffled, furious and troubled North, they would be cursed and crushed, as the flagitious cause of the disasters around them. But if we submit, and do not dissolve our union with the North, we make the triumph of our Abolition enemies complete, and enable them to consolidate and wield the power of the North, for our destruction.

Source: http://www.historians.org/projects/SecessionEditorials/Editorials/CharlestonMerc_10_11_60.htm

Source 3C guiding questions:

Please use the editorial above to answer the following questions:

1. When was the editorial written? _____

2. Use background knowledge, notes, or textbook to find out when the Civil War started. _____

3. Restate the meaning of this paragraph **in your own words:** _____

4. List three things the author said that you think are important: _____

5. Why do you think this editorial was written? _____

6. On a separate piece of paper, if necessary, explain which issue this editorial is *mostly* addressing. Choose **one** of the following: sectionalism, state’s rights, slavery, abolitionism, or the election of Lincoln.

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Key vocabulary: (Source 4B) Solicitous: Anxious or concerned.

Source 4A

Source Notes: Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin in 1852 in response to the Fugitive Slave Act that passed in 1850. 300,000 copies sold in the first year, the book was a bestseller and became an important dramatization for the abolitionist cause, helping the masses to understand the more emotive aspects of the debate over slavery. When Stowe visited President Lincoln in 1862, he greeted her by saying: "So, this is the little lady who wrote the big book that made this great war." Below are some famous quotes from the book.

"If I must be sold, or all the people on the place, and everything go to rack, why, let me be sold. I s'pose I can b'ar it as well as any on 'em."

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch. 5

"I have lost two, one after another,--left 'em buried there when I came away; and I had only this one left. I never slept a night without him; he was all I had. He was my comfort and pride, day and night; and, ma'am, they were going to take him away from me,--to sell him,--sell him down south, ma'am, to go all alone,--a baby that had never been away from his mother in his life!"

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch. 9

"I told you, Cousin, that you'd find out that these creatures can't be brought up without severity. If I had my way, now, I'd send that child out, and have her thoroughly whipped; I'd have her whipped till she couldn't stand!"

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch. 25

"Hark 'e, Tom!--ye think, 'cause I've let you off before, I don't mean what I say; but, this time, I've made up my mind, and counted the cost. You've always stood it out again' me: now, I'll conquer ye, or kill ye!--one or t' other. I'll count every drop of blood there is in you, and take 'em, one by one, till ye give up!"

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ch. 40

Source: http://classiclit.about.com/od/uncletomscabin/a/aa_unclequote.htm

Source 4B

"Fugitive Slaves." Marion Star. 11 May 1852. Newspapers on microfilm, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.

"...Can any one wonder, when such wholesale plunder of the South is of common occurrence, and when it so shamefully boasted of by a leading Northern journal, that the South exhibits some uneasiness, and that it squirms a little when undergoing such a skinning?"

"...As to the negro paradise in Canada, we dare say that the fugitive slaves have discovered that liberty to freeze to death and starve to death is no great luxury after all. Greeley is particularly solicitous that they shall not stop in his neighborhood."

Source: <http://www.teachingushistory.org/lessons/fugitiveslavearticle1852.htm>

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Source 4A and 4B guiding questions:

Please use the sources on the previous page to answer the following questions:

1. When was Uncle Tom's Cabin published? _____

2. Give at least three examples of how slaves were treated according to Stowe. _____

3. Based on the four quotes provided in source 4A, describe a Northerner's impression of slavery based off of Uncle Tom's Cabin. _____

4. Why is the number of people who read Uncle Tom's Cabin important to the abolitionist cause? _____

5. After reading the two excerpts from source 4B, restate what the author is saying for **each** excerpt. _____

6. Using information from source 3A, what is the author in source 4B implying about Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune? _____

7. What examples can you find of the South justifying slavery in source 4B? _____

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Source 5A

Source Note: Published by J. Haven, Boston, 1850

Title: Slavery as it exists in America. Slavery as it exists in England



SLAVERY AS IT EXISTS IN AMERICA.



SLAVERY AS IT

EXISTS IN ENGLAND.

Description of top half

Southern slaves dance and play as four gentlemen--two Northerners and two Southerners--observe. First Northerner: "Is it possible that we of the North have been so deceived by false Reports? Why did we not visit the South before we caused this trouble between the North and South, and so much hard feelings amongst our friends at home?" Southerner: "It is as a general thing, some few exceptions, after mine have done a certain amount of Labor which they finish by 4 or 5 P.M. I allow them to enjoy themselves in any reasonable way." Second Southerner: "I think our Visitors will tell a different Story when they return to the North, the thoughts of this Union being dissolved is to [sic] dreadful a thing to be contemplated, but we must stand up for our rights let the consequence be as it may."

Description of bottom half

The second scene takes place outside a British textile factory. At left a well-dressed gentleman encounters a ragged, stooped figure, and asks, "Why my Dear Friend, how is it that you look so old? you know we were playmates when boys." The stooped figure responds, "Ah! Farmer we operatives are 'fast men,' and generally die of old age at Forty." Behind them and to the right an emaciated mother laments over her ragged children, "Oh Dear! what wretched Slaves, this Factory Life makes me & my children." Nearby stand a fat cleric, holding a book of "Tythes," and an equally fat official holding "Taxes." In the right foreground two barefoot youths converse. The first says, "I say Bill, I am going to run away from the Factory, and go to the Coal Mines where they have to work only 14 hours a Day instead of 17 as you do here." The second responds, "Oh! how I would like to have such a comfortable place. . . ." Near them another man sits forlorn on a rock, "Thank God my Factory Slavery will soon be over." In the distance a military camp is visible. This dismal picture of the lives of the working class in manufacturing towns comes from Chapter V, Book Second, of Edward Lytton Bulwer's "England and the English," first published in 1833. In the lower margin is a portrait of "[George] Thompson the English Anti-Slavery Agitator" and the quote "I am proud to boast that Slavery does not breathe in England," with reference to "his speech at the African Church in Belknap St." Thompson made a speaking tour of New York and New England in 1850-51.

GO ON TO SOURCE 5B ☺

Source:

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/picamer/paSlavery.html>

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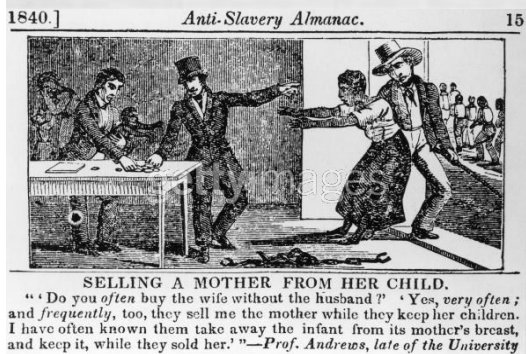
Source 5B

Source Note: "Illustrations of the Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1840" New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1840 Broadside. Each year the American Anti-Slavery Society distributed an almanac containing poems, drawings, essays, and other abolitionist material. This broadside groups together illustrations of the horrors of slavery that were used in the 1840 edition.



American Anti-Slavery Society

Assembling in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, abolitionists from all over the North founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in December 1833. They planted their faith squarely "upon the Declaration of our Independence" written 57 years earlier. They acknowledged that the U.S. Constitution forbade interference with slavery in the southern states. They committed themselves to a peaceful struggle, reliant on divine guidance, to liberate America's enslaved.



Source: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam006.html>

Answer the questions on the following page.

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Source 5A and 5B guiding questions:

Please use the images 5A and 5B to respond to the following questions:

1. Describe how slavery in America is portrayed in the top half of source 5A _____

2. Describe how slavery in England is portrayed in the bottom half of source 5A _____

3. Describe how slavery is portrayed in source 5B _____

4. Identify 5A as proslavery or abolitionist and explain your answer _____

5. Identify 5B as proslavery or abolitionist and explain your answer _____

6. Based on these sources, whose argument do you find more convincing? Why? _____

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Source 6A

Eli Whitney and the Cotton Gin

Eli Whitney and the Need for an Invention: As Eli Whitney left New England and headed South in 1792, he had no idea that within the next seven months he would invent a machine that would profoundly alter the course of American history. A recent graduate of Yale, Whitney had given some thought to becoming a lawyer. But, like many college graduates of today, he had debts to repay first and needed a job. Reluctantly, he left his native Massachusetts to assume the position of private tutor on a plantation in Georgia.

There Whitney quickly learned that Southern planters were in desperate need of a way to make the growing of cotton profitable. Long-staple cotton, which was easy to separate from its seeds, could be grown only along the coast. The one variety that grew inland had sticky green seeds that were time-consuming to pick out of the fluffy white cotton bolls. Whitney was encouraged to find a solution to this problem by his employer, Catherine Greene, whose support, both moral and financial were critical to this effort. At stake was the success of cotton planting throughout the South, especially important at a time when tobacco was declining in profit due to over-supply and soil exhaustion.

Whitney knew that if he could invent such a machine, he could apply to the federal government for a patent. If granted, he would have exclusive rights to his invention for 14 years (today it is 20 years), and he could hope to reap a handsome profit from it.

Eli Whitney Patents His Cotton Gin: In hopes of making a patentable machine, Whitney put aside his plans to study law and instead tinkered throughout the winter and spring in a secret workshop provided by Catherine Greene. Within months he created the cotton gin. A small gin could be hand-cranked; larger versions could be harnessed to a horse or driven by water power. "One man and a horse will do more than fifty men with the old machines," wrote Whitney to his father. . . . "Tis generally said by those who know anything about it, that I shall make a Fortune by it."

But patenting an invention and making a profit from it are two different things. After considering possible options, Whitney and his business partner, Phineas Miller, opted to produce as many gins as possible, install them throughout Georgia and the South, and charge farmers a fee for doing the ginning for them. Their charge was two-fifths of the profit -- paid to them in cotton itself.

And here, all their troubles began. Farmers throughout Georgia resented having to go to Whitney's gins where they had to pay what they regarded as an exorbitant tax. Instead planters began making their own versions of Whitney's gin and claiming they were "new" inventions. Miller brought costly suits against the owners of these pirated versions but because of a loophole in the wording of the 1793 patent act, they were unable to win any suits until 1800, when the law was changed.

Struggling to make a profit and mired in legal battles, the partners finally agreed to license gins at a reasonable price. In 1802 South Carolina agreed to purchase Whitney's patent right for \$50,000 but delayed in paying it. The partners also arranged to sell the patent rights to North Carolina and Tennessee. By the time even the Georgia courts recognized the wrongs done to Whitney, only one year of his patent remained. In 1808 and again in 1812 he humbly petitioned Congress for a renewal of his patent.

Continue reading on the next page

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The Effects of the Cotton Gin: After the invention of the cotton gin, the yield of raw cotton doubled each decade after 1800. Demand was fueled by other inventions of the Industrial Revolution, such as the machines to spin and weave it and the steamboat to transport it. By midcentury America was growing three-quarters of the world's supply of cotton, most of it shipped to England or New England where it was manufactured into cloth. During this time tobacco fell in value, rice exports at best stayed steady, and sugar began to thrive, but only in Louisiana. At midcentury the South provided three-fifths of America's exports -- most of it in cotton.

However, like many inventors, Whitney (who died in 1825) could not have foreseen the ways in which his invention would change society for the worse. The most significant of these was the growth of slavery. While it was true that the cotton gin reduced the labor of removing seeds, it did not reduce the need for slaves to grow and pick the cotton. In fact, the opposite occurred. Cotton growing became so profitable for the planters that it greatly increased their demand for both land and slave labor. In 1790 there were six slave states; in 1860 there were 15. From 1790 until Congress banned the importation of slaves from Africa in 1808, Southerners imported 80,000 Africans. By 1860 approximately one in three Southerners was a slave.

Because of the cotton gin, slaves now labored on ever-larger plantations where work was more regimented and relentless. As large plantations spread into the Southwest, the price of slaves and land inhibited the growth of cities and industries. In the 1850s seven-eighths of all immigrants settled in the North, where they found 72% of the nation's manufacturing capacity. The growth of the "peculiar institution" was affecting many aspects of Southern life.

Epilogue: While Eli Whitney is best remembered as the inventor of the cotton gin, it is often forgotten that he was also the father of the mass production method. In 1798 he figured out how to manufacture muskets by machine so that the parts were interchangeable. It was as a manufacturer of muskets that Whitney finally became rich. If his genius led King Cotton to triumph in the South, it also created the technology with which the North won the Civil War.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/cotton-gin-patent/>

Complete the table about Eli Whitney on the following page:

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Read source 6A to complete the following table:

How did Eli Whitney change the South?

Who was Eli Whitney?	What are some things he invented?	What difference did that make to the South and the nation?	What do you think happened because of that?

Use the space here if you need more room:

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Source 6B

http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/history/hs_es_cotton.htm

Table 2: Price of Cotton

Between 1800-1857

Table 1: U.S. Production of All

Types of Raw Cotton, 1790-1860

Year	Pounds
1790	1,567,000
1795	8,359,500
1800	36,572,500
1805	73,145,000
1810	88,819,000
1815	104,493,000
1820	167,189,000
1825	266,457,500
1830	365,726,000
1835	530,355,500
1840	673,116,000
1845	902,111,500
1850	1,066,925,500
1855	1,608,708,500
1860	1,918,701,000

Year	Price Per Pound of Cotton
1800	37¢
1801	44¢
1802	19¢
1805	15¢
1818	32 ½ ¢
1819	14¢
1837-1848	Under 10¢
1857	15¢

Table 3: Population of the South 1790-1860

Year	Free White Population	Slave Population
1790	1,240,454	654,121
1800	1,691,892	851,532
1810	2,118,144	1,103,700
1820	2,867,454	1,509,904
1830	3,614,600	1,983,860
1840	4,601,873	2,481,390
1850	6,184,477	3,200,364
1860	8,036,700	3,950,511

Continue to the following page.

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Source 6B continued

Key vocabulary: **Dire:** extremely urgent, dismal, **Transatlantic:** crossing across the Atlantic Ocean,

Interregional: between (in this case between states), **Domestic:** relating to one's own country

Export: goods sold and sent to another country or state, **Import:** goods bought from another country or state

Interstate: existing between two or more states, **Coffles:** groups of slaves chained together for sale

Cultivate: to care for the growth of something (in this case, cotton), **Complimentary:** working well together

Mistress: the female head of a household, **Manufacturing:** To use raw materials with machines to produce finished goods for sale

Cotton and Slavery

Cotton changed the dynamics of the southern economy rapidly with **dire** consequences for people of African origin. Small-scale farmers did not need slaves to grow cotton, but large-scale operations (already accustomed to using slave labor on rice, tobacco, and indigo plantations) immediately resorted to slave labor. The demand for additional slaves to put acreage into cotton production was met in part by the **transatlantic** slave trade and mostly by the **interregional** domestic slave trade. The United States imported approximately 300,000 slaves between 1778 and the end of the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, almost as many as had been brought to the British colonies of North America from 1619-1778. In the single year of 1791, British traders carried 38,000 Africans to the United States. Most slaves were brought into the ports of Charleston and Savannah and put to work on cotton plantations. In South Carolina, the average price of slaves rose by nearly 80 percent (from \$215 to \$381) between the 1790s and the decade of 1800-1809.

Nonetheless, the **domestic** slave trade supplied planters with most of the slaves who worked on cotton plantations. As early as the 1760s, northern states were **exporting** slaves to the South; by the 1790s, the Mid-Atlantic States also became suppliers of slaves domestically. George Washington was aware of the rising **interstate** slave trade (already 22,000 sold in the 1790s in Virginia) and, in his will, stated, "I do hereby expressly forbid the Sale, or transportation out of said Commonwealth, of any Slave I may die possessed of, under any pretence whatsoever." Between 1800 and 1860, Virginians sold over 480,000 slaves to other states, primarily to cotton and sugar growing regions to the West. At least ten slave states exported more slaves than they **imported**; by 1860, an estimated 1.2 million enslaved persons were sold within the United States. Most domestic slaves were sold by marching them overland from market to fair to courthouse as the trader attempted to sell them. Slaves were often chained in "**coffles**" of 50, although some traders forced groups of 300 slaves to trek up to 600 miles for up to two months. Some coffles traveled on riverboats and the railroads in segregated facilities. Ocean-going vessels would carry loads of up to 150 slaves out of the coastal Chesapeake region on voyages of up to a month in duration.

Slave Labor in Cotton Country: "Incessant Throughout the Year"

Cotton, as cultivated in the 19th century, required a great deal of human labor. Slaves could not pick as much cotton as they could **cultivate**; therefore, slave owners typically grew corn as well as cotton. Corn and cotton have **complimentary** growth cycles, so slaves would plant and harvest corn around the slack seasons in the cotton cycle, midsummer when cotton required no more weeding, and winter prior to the start of plowing. In 1802, A. Michaux, a traveler visiting North Carolina described a plantation:

"In eight hundred acres of which it is composed, a hundred and fifty are cultivated in cotton, Indian corn, wheat and oats ... Seven or eight negro slaves are employed in different departments, some of which are only occupied at certain periods of the year. Their wives are employed under the direction of the **mistress** in **manufacturing** cotton and linen of for the use of the family."

In 1820, the *American Farmer*, an agricultural magazine, estimated that a single slave could tend six acres of cotton and eight acres of corn; by the time of the Civil War, most slaves worked ten acres of cotton and ten acres of corn.

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Source 6B guiding questions:

1. From Table 1, what is the trend between the year and the pounds of cotton produced?

2. Compare Table 1 and Table 2. What happens to the price of cotton as more cotton is produced? _____

3. Use Table 3 AND a calculator to determine the percentage of the slave population to the free white population in 1800, 1830, and 1860. Write down the percentage of the slave population for all three dates and any trends that you see in the data. _____

4. Using a map of the United States from your textbook, locate and mark on your blank map, Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina.

5. How many slaves did the U.S. import between 1778 and 1808? _____

6. In your own words, what did George Washington say in his will about his slaves? _____

7. Explain why corn and cotton were grown together. _____

8. List the jobs observed by A. Michaux, who visited a plantation in 1802. _____

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Final Written Assignment The Persuasive Essay!

Instructions:

1. Write a persuasive essay about the main cause of the Civil War.
 - a. Choose from the following five causes:
 - Economic differences
 - Sectional differences
 - Slavery (slave states vs. free states)
 - Abolitionism
 - Election of Abraham Lincoln
2. Support your answer using AT LEAST three sources from the source packet.
3. If you quote directly from a source, you must then use your own words to explain why it is an important source that proves you are correct.
4. Be sure to include an introduction and a conclusion to earn full credit.
5. Please carefully review the rubric before starting your essay and again before handing in your essay.

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Persuasive Essay Grading Rubric

Student Name _____

CATEGORY	4 - Above Standards	3 - Meets Standards	2 - Approaching Standards	1 - Below Standards	Score
Position Statement	The position statement provides a clear, strong statement of the author's position on the main cause of the Civil War. Must choose ONE main cause of the Civil War.	The position statement provides a clear statement of the author's position on the main cause of the Civil War. Must choose ONE main cause of the Civil War.	A position statement is present, but does not make the author's position clear on the main cause of the Civil War.	There is no position statement or the author did not choose just one main cause of the Civil War.	
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence from the DBQ sources that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence from the DBQ sources that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence from the DBQ sources that support the position statement.	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence from the DBQ sources that support the position statement.	
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	
Sources	All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are from the DBQ and are explained in the student's own words.	All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are from the DBQ and most are explained in the student's own words.	Most sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are from the DBQ and most are explained in the student's own words.	Many sources are from the DBQ and but are not explained in the student's own words.	
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the writer's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The author's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The author's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.	

Was slavery the most important cause of the Civil War?

Note to Teachers

This document-based question was taught in April 2011 to 8th grade students at Dayton Intermediate School. It took about two weeks with 50 minute class periods. This also includes two days of pre-teaching where I used primary sources and questions on abolitionism. I did not use any sources from this DBQ because I wanted the students to be responsible for all of this content. To pre-teach how to think and answer about the questions, we viewed and discussed four sources as a whole class and then answered the questions alternating between small group (two or three) and then sharing answers to the whole class until I felt the class was ready to tackle this DBQ independently.

The questions for each source are arranged from lower order thinking to higher order thinking. Do not allow students to not answer questions! I had several students who did not attempt the last two questions on each source so I had to explain (again) to them the purpose of the questions and the importance of answering all of the questions but especially the last questions. These students also required more one-on-one scaffolding for many sources. Source 3C was the most difficult source for most students. Teaching this one as a whole class is probably the most successful way. Students also struggled with the percentage questions from table 3, source 6B. Many of them attempted in their small groups but ultimately we did this as a whole class as well.

The final activity before writing the persuasive essay was to get in groups of three (no larger), and “bucket” each source to a specific cause. I used Styrofoam cups labeled in Sharpie brand pens. Each group of three had 5 “buckets” (cups) and each cup was labeled with one of the main causes of the Civil War (listed on the first page of the DBQ). I had pre made typed slips of paper with each source on them (laminated and taped for strength). Each source was one slip of paper except for sources 2A and 2B- they were together on the slip of paper. Each group of three received one set of all the sources. They then reviewed each source from the DBQ and decided together the best place to “bucket” that source. At the end of the activity (about 15 or 20 minutes), we came together as a whole class and students were randomly selected to share where their group had chosen to “bucket” a particular source. Then I asked, “what other groups put that source in that bucket?” Then I asked, “Did another group put that source in a different bucket?” Then that group shared with the class why they put that source in a different bucket.

To prepare students to write the paper (they had one class period to write it), I told them that the “bucket” with the most sources is probably their main cause of the Civil War. This gave them a good point to start from for the writing assignment that they knew they would have the next day in class.

This DBQ gave students a strong understanding of the causes of the Civil War. Once we began studying the Civil War itself, the class still refers back to sources in the DBQ to help them understand some of the details of the Civil War. I will probably continue to adjust questions as needed but as a whole, I absolutely loved using this DBQ in my classroom and I hope you will too.