

# The Civil War

*Civil War and Reconstruction*  
*(1850–1877)*



A divided nation

Crisis of the 1850s

**The Civil War**

## Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

**Icons:** For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will know about the following aspects of the Civil War :

- Political and military leadership
- 19<sup>th</sup> century developments in warfare
- Major battles in the Civil War
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- The end of the Confederacy.



# Could war have been prevented?



Some say that civil war was necessary in order for the country to move ahead socially, politically and economically.

Others feel it could have been avoided through some form of political compromise.



Do you think the Civil War was inevitable?  
Why or why not?



# Leadership: Lincoln vs. Davis



## Abraham Lincoln

- acquired sophisticated sense of strategy
- skilled at balancing personalities
- realistic understanding of the war.



## Jefferson Davis

- detail-oriented
- unable to develop broad war strategy
- burdened by ineffective central government
- impersonal.



# War in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century



Some historians have called the Civil War the first "modern" war, due to the technological advances that had taken place in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These advances played a large part in changing the tactics of war on both sides. Can you tell the old aspects of warfare from the new?

Press **start** to begin.

**start**



What do you think is needed to fight a war?



The Northern strategy was to:

- blockade Southern ports to prevent export of cotton and import of resources
- seize control of the Mississippi Valley to bisect the Confederacy
- defeat Confederate armies in the field.



The most effective Southern strategy would have been defensive. However, Southern culture precluded such a passive approach. The laws of honor dictated that they take the war to the North. Consequently, the South had no “grand strategy” to speak of.

Why was control of the Mississippi important?

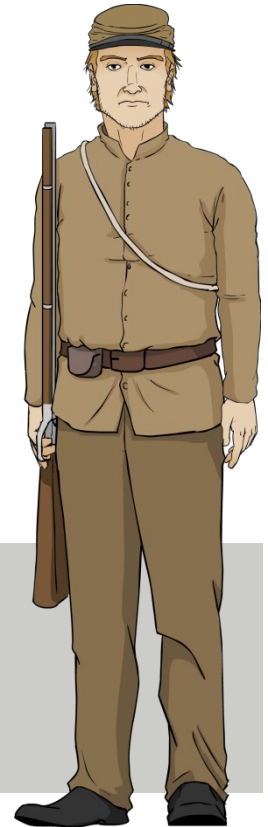
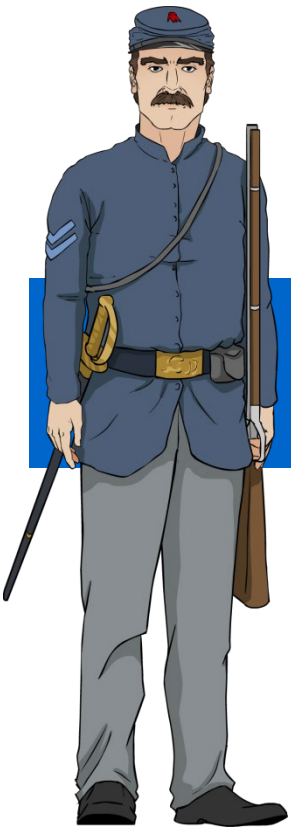


Both armies consisted mainly of young men from rural areas. Many resented the draft, particularly as the wealthy were able to avoid it.

Yet Union and Confederate soldiers alike felt that justice was on their side.

Most Union soldiers saw themselves as fighting to preserve the United States.

Most Confederate soldiers felt they were defending states' rights against centralized government.







Unlike many previous wars, the Civil War was not lost or won by a particular battle. Instead, many battles, campaigns and maneuvers all contributed to the outcome.

Press **start** to learn more.

start





# The Battle of Gettysburg



The Battle of Gettysburg is one of the best-known battles in the Civil War. It effectively ended the Confederacy's invasion of the Union. Press **start** to learn more.

start





The Civil War tested and honed the skills of several outstanding military leaders. Fill in the blanks in the following text about Civil War generals.

Press **start** to begin.

start





# The Emancipation Proclamation



In 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which officially freed slaves in all Confederate states. Press on each section of highlighted text to reveal more information.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Even after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, several Southern generals wanted to continue fighting a guerrilla war.

However, by 1865, the Southern economy was devastated. Many Southern cities, plantations and railways had been destroyed. Without slaves, the South had no hope of rebuilding.



Lincoln, Grant and Sherman's lenience with surrendering armies further undermined the Confederacy's will to continue fighting. With the war over, one very difficult issue remained: how to rebuild the broken Union.





Test your knowledge of the Civil War era  
with this quiz.

Choose the correct answer to each  
question to see how much you can  
remember about the Civil War.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Test your understanding of the Civil War by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary.

Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.

Press **start** to begin.

start

