Updated: Unit 4 Causes and the Civil War (8th Grade)

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s):
Time Period: **MP4**
Length: **9 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Targeted Standards

6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.a	Prioritize the causes and events that led to the Civil War from different perspectives.
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.b	Analyze critical events and battles of the Civil War from different perspectives.
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.c	Assess the human and material costs of the Civil War in the North and South.
6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.a	Analyze the effectiveness of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution from multiple perspectives.
6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.b	Examine the roles of women, African Americans, and Native Americans in the Civil War.
6.1.8.HistoryUP.5.c	Explain how and why the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address continue to impact American life.
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.d	Assess the role of various factors that affected the course and outcome of the Civil War (i.e., geography, natural resources, demographics, transportation, leadership, and technology).
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.e	Compare and contrast the approaches of Congress and Presidents Lincoln and Johnson toward the reconstruction of the South.
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.f	Analyze the economic impact of Reconstruction on the South from different perspectives.
6.1.8.HistoryCC.5.g	Construct an argument that prioritizes the causes and events that led to the Civil War using multiple sources from different perspectives.
6.3.8.CivicsDP.2	Make a claim based on evidence to determine the extent and the limitations of First Amendment rights (e.g., U.S. Supreme Court decisions).
6.3.8.CivicsDP.3	Use historical case studies and current events to explain why due process is essential for the protection of individual rights and maintenance of limited government.
6.3.8.CivicsPR.1	Analyze primary sources to explain how democratic ideas in the United States developed from the historical experiences of ancient societies, England, and the North American colonies.
6.3.8.CivicsPR.2	Evaluate the effectiveness of the fundamental principles of the Constitution (i.e., consent of the governed, rule of law, federalism, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights) in establishing a federal government that allows for growth and change over time.
6.3.8.CivicsPR.3	Take a position on an issue in which fundamental ideals and principles are in conflict (e.g., liberty, equality).
6.3.8.CivicsPR.5	Engage in simulated democratic processes (e.g., legislative hearings, judicial proceedings, elections) to understand how conflicting points of view are addressed in a democratic society.

21st Century Skills: Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1	Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).

9.4.8.GCA.2	Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
9.4.8.IML.12	Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.
9.4.8.TL.3	Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.

Rationale/Goals

This unit helps students understand how political, economic, social, and moral conflicts over slavery and states' rights divided the United States and ultimately led to the Civil War. Students will examine the growing differences between the industrial North and the plantation-based South, recognizing that although the regions developed different economies, both benefited from systems connected to slavery. By analyzing the events and compromises that attempted to preserve the Union—including the Missouri Compromise, Compromise of 1850, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Dred Scott decision, and the election of Abraham Lincoln—students will evaluate why these efforts ultimately failed and why Southern states chose to secede.

Students will investigate the Civil War from multiple perspectives by examining the experiences of soldiers, enslaved people, women, African Americans, Native Americans, political leaders, and ordinary citizens. They will analyze how geography, industrialization, transportation networks, leadership, technology, population, and natural resources influenced the course and outcome of the war. Through the study of major battles, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the Gettysburg Address, students will evaluate how the Civil War transformed the nation and redefined the meaning of freedom and equality.

The unit also explores the challenges of Reconstruction and the lasting impact of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. Students will compare the differing approaches to Reconstruction under Congress and Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson while evaluating the successes, limitations, and long-term effects of rebuilding the nation after the war. By considering multiple perspectives, students will understand how Reconstruction shaped future struggles over civil rights, citizenship, and equality under the Constitution.

Essential Questions: Main Essential Question

How did conflicts over slavery, states' rights, and the powers of the federal government lead to the Civil War, and how did the war and Reconstruction transform the United States politically, socially, and economically?

Essential Questions: Guiding Questions

Topic 8 Lesson 1: Conflicts and Compromises

- Why did the issue of slavery create growing conflict between the North and the South?
- How did the Northern and Southern economies contribute to sectional differences?

- Why did Congress create compromises over slavery, and why did they ultimately fail?
- How did westward expansion increase disagreements over slavery?
- How did the Missouri Compromise, Compromise of 1850, and Kansas-Nebraska Act attempt to preserve the Union?
- How did the Dred Scott decision deepen sectional tensions?
- Could the Civil War have been avoided? Why or why not?

Topic 8 Lesson 2: Growing Tensions

- How did abolitionists influence public opinion about slavery?
- Why were events such as "Bleeding Kansas" and John Brown's Raid turning points?
- How did newspapers, books, speeches, and political cartoons shape public opinion?
- Why did Abraham Lincoln's election lead Southern states to fear for their future?
- Why did Southern states choose secession instead of compromise?
- How did different Americans view slavery and states' rights differently?

Topic 8 Lesson 3: Division and the Outbreak of War

- Why did Southern states secede from the Union?
- What events officially began the Civil War?
- Why were the border states important to both sides?
- What strengths and weaknesses did the Union and Confederacy each have at the beginning of the war?
- How did geography, population, transportation, and industry affect each side's chances of victory?
- How did President Lincoln balance preserving the Union with ending slavery?

Topic 8 Lesson 4: The Course of War

- Which battles changed the course of the Civil War?
- How did military leadership influence the outcome of the war?
- How did geography affect military strategies and battles?

- How did technology and transportation change the way the Civil War was fought?
- Why was the Union ultimately able to defeat the Confederacy?

Topic 8 Lesson 5: Emancipation and Life in Wartime

- Why did President Lincoln issue the Emancipation Proclamation?
- How did the Emancipation Proclamation change the purpose of the Civil War?
- What roles did African Americans, women, and Native Americans play during the Civil War?
- How did the Civil War affect the lives of civilians in both the North and South?
- How did enslaved people respond to opportunities for freedom?
- Why are the Emancipation Proclamation and Gettysburg Address still important today?

Topic 8 Lesson 6: The War's End

- Why were the Battles of Gettysburg and Vicksburg considered turning points?
- What led to the Confederacy's defeat?
- What were the human, economic, and political costs of the Civil War?
- How did Lincoln's assassination affect the nation?
- How did the Civil War permanently change the United States?
- What challenges did the nation face after the war ended?

Topic 9 Lesson 1: Early Reconstruction

- What challenges faced the United States after the Civil War?
- How did President Lincoln and President Johnson differ in their plans for Reconstruction?
- How did the 13th Amendment change American society?
- Why was the Freedmen's Bureau created?
- How did the Black Codes limit the freedom of formerly enslaved people?
- What were the greatest obstacles to rebuilding the nation?

Topic 9 Lesson 2: Radical Reconstruction

- Why did Congress take control of Reconstruction?
- How did Radical Republicans' goals differ from President Johnson's?
- How did the 14th and 15th Amendments expand citizenship and voting rights?
- To what extent did Reconstruction improve the lives of formerly enslaved people?
- Why did many Americans disagree about Reconstruction policies?
- What successes and failures of Reconstruction continue to influence the United States today?
- How well did Reconstruction fulfill the promises of freedom, equality, and citizenship?

Vocabulary

People	Terms	Places/Events
Free-Soil Party	popular sovereignty	Missouri Compromise
Henry Clay	secede	Wilmot Proviso
John C. Calhoun	fugitives	Compromise of 1850
Daniel Webster	civil war	Fugitive Slave Act
Stephen Douglas	Border Ruffians	Uncle Tom's Cabin
Harriet Beecher Stowe	guerrilla warfare	Kansas Nebraska Act
John Brown	Republican Party	Dred Scott vs Sandford
Preston Brooks	arsenal	Election of 1856
Charles Sumner	treason	Union
Andrew Butler	martyr	Confederacy
Frederick Douglass	border states	Fort Sumter
John C. Fremont	ironclads	Battle of Bull Run (Battle of Manassas)
James Buchanan	54th Massachusetts Regiment	Battle of Antietam
Abraham Lincoln	copperheads	Battle of Fredericksburg
John Bell	draft	Battle of Chancellorsville
John C. Breckinridge.	habeas corpus	Battle of Shiloh
Jefferson Davis	inflation	Emancipation Proclamation
Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson	income tax	Battle of Vicksburg
George McClellan	siege	Battle of Gettysburg
Robert E. Lee	Reconstruction	Pickett's Charge
Ulysses S. Grant	amnesty	Gettysburg Address
William Carney	Freedmen's Bureau	Sherman's March to Sea
Mary Edwards Walker	assassination	Appomattox Courthouse

Dorothea Dix	13th Amendment
Clara Barton	14th Amendment
Sojourner Truth	15th Amendment
George C. Meade	Radical Republicans
George Pickett	Reconstruction Act
William Tecumseh Sherman	impeach
John Wilkes Booth	
Andrew Johnson	
Thaddeus Stevens	

Skills

- use sources (primary and secondary)
- evaluate
- construct arguments
- research
- examine
- use of maps
- explain
- analyze
- make evidence based inferences and claims
- cite primary and secondary sources
- make connections
- identify
- define
- cause and effect
- assess

Learning Targets (examples)

Topic 8 Lesson 1: Conflicts and Compromises

- I can explain how differences between the North and South increased sectional tensions by comparing their economies, cultures, and views on slavery using maps, charts, and primary sources because understanding these differences helps explain why the nation became divided.
- I can analyze how the Missouri Compromise, Compromise of 1850, Fugitive Slave Act, and Kansas-Nebraska Act attempted to keep the nation together by examining the purpose and outcomes of each compromise because these events show why compromise became increasingly difficult before the Civil War.
- I can evaluate how the Dred Scott decision and popular sovereignty contributed to growing conflict by analyzing Supreme Court decisions, maps, and historical documents because these events helped push the nation closer to war.

Topic 8 Lesson 2: Growing Tensions

- I can explain how abolitionists influenced attitudes about slavery by examining speeches, letters, biographies, and primary sources from Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Harriet Beecher Stowe because individuals can inspire social and political change.
- I can analyze how events such as Bleeding Kansas, John Brown's Raid, and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates increased sectional tensions by investigating multiple perspectives through political cartoons, maps, and historical accounts because these conflicts made compromise more difficult.
- I can explain why Abraham Lincoln's election led Southern states to secede by evaluating election results, speeches, and Southern viewpoints because understanding secession explains how political disagreements led to the Civil War.

Topic 8 Lesson 3: Division and the Outbreak of War

- I can explain why Southern states chose to secede from the Union by analyzing declarations of secession and comparing Northern and Southern perspectives because understanding the causes of secession explains why the Civil War began.
- I can compare the strengths and weaknesses of the Union and Confederacy by examining maps, population data, industrial resources, and transportation systems because geography, resources, and leadership influenced the outcome of the Civil War.
- I can explain how the attack on Fort Sumter began the Civil War by creating timelines and analyzing primary source accounts because important events often become turning points in history.

Topic 8 Lesson 4: The Course of War

- I can analyze how major Civil War battles changed the course of the war by studying battle maps, timelines, and military strategies because turning points help explain why the Union ultimately won the war.
- I can evaluate the leadership of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Robert E. Lee by examining

speeches, military decisions, and historical evidence because leadership plays an important role during times of conflict.

- I can explain how geography, technology, transportation, and industry affected the outcome of the Civil War by analyzing maps, photographs, graphs, and primary sources because many factors determine the outcome of wars.

Topic 8 Lesson 5: Emancipation and Life in Wartime

- I can explain how the Emancipation Proclamation changed the purpose of the Civil War by analyzing the document and its impact on the Union and Confederacy because it transformed the war into a fight to preserve the Union and end slavery.

- I can examine the contributions of African Americans, women, and Native Americans during the Civil War by investigating biographies, letters, photographs, and primary sources because many different groups shaped the outcome of the war.

- I can explain how the Gettysburg Address continues to influence American ideals by analyzing Lincoln's speech and discussing its message because it reaffirmed the nation's commitment to freedom, equality, and democracy.

- I can describe how the Civil War affected the lives of soldiers and civilians by examining journals, letters, photographs, and historical accounts because war impacts both those who fight and those at home.

Topic 8 Lesson 6: The War's End

- I can explain why the Union was victorious in the Civil War by evaluating evidence about leadership, geography, industry, transportation, and military strategy because understanding multiple causes provides a complete explanation of historical events.

- I can assess the human, economic, and political costs of the Civil War by analyzing statistics, maps, photographs, and firsthand accounts because wars have lasting consequences for individuals and nations.

- I can explain how the Civil War changed the United States by examining the preservation of the Union, the end of slavery, and the nation's future challenges because the Civil War permanently transformed American society and government.

Topic 9 Lesson 1: Early Reconstruction

- I can explain the goals and challenges of Reconstruction by examining maps, primary sources, and historical accounts of the post-war South because rebuilding a nation after war requires political, economic, and social change.

- I can compare the Reconstruction plans of Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson by analyzing their proposals and evaluating their goals because different leaders had different ideas about how to reunite the nation.

- I can explain the importance of the 13th Amendment by examining constitutional amendments and historical documents because they helped shape freedom and opportunity for formerly enslaved people.

Topic 9 Lesson 2: Radical Reconstruction

- I can analyze how the 14th and 15th Amendments expanded citizenship and voting rights by examining the Constitution and historical evidence because these amendments continue to protect the rights of American citizens today.
- I can evaluate the successes and failures of Reconstruction by analyzing multiple perspectives, primary sources, and historical evidence because Reconstruction had lasting effects on civil rights, equality, and the role of government.

Evidence/Assessments

- chunked tests/quizzes
- Document Based Questions
- essays
- primary source analysis
- benchmark assessment
- image analysis

Interdisciplinary Connections

RL.CR.8.1	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections to strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RI.CR.8.1	Cite a range of textual evidence and make clear and relevant connections (including informational text features such as charts, graphs, and diagrams) that strongly support an analysis of multiple aspects of what an informational text says explicitly, as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.CI.8.2	Determine a theme of a literary text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RL.TS.8.4	Compare and contrast the structure of texts, analyzing how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning, tone and style.
RI.TS.8.4	Analyze and explain how an author organizes, develops and presents ideas, establishes a point of view or builds supporting arguments through text structure.

RL.PP.8.5	Analyze how an author conveys or develops their perspective or purpose in a text through the use of different perspectives of the characters and that of the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony).
RI.AA.8.7	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
RL.CT.8.8	Analyze and reflect on how the author's idea in fiction and literary nonfiction texts (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) is shaped by the author's emphasis on different evidence, advancing different interpretations of facts, or fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period.
RI.CT.8.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) two or more informational texts that provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
W.AW.8.1	Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
W.AW.8.1.A	Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
W.AW.8.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
W.AW.8.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
W.AW.8.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
W.IW.8.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
W.IW.8.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
W.IW.8.2.D	Use precise language and domain/grade-level-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Intersections of History

Blacks:

- The institution and expansion of slavery
- The experiences and daily lives of enslaved African Americans
- Resistance to slavery and the fight for freedom
- Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and other African American leaders
- African American soldiers in the Union Army, including the 54th Massachusetts Regiment
- The Emancipation Proclamation and the end of slavery
- African American experiences during the Civil War
- The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments
- Freedom, citizenship, voting rights, and equality during Reconstruction
- The challenges faced by formerly enslaved people during Reconstruction

- The impact of Black Codes and Reconstruction policies

Hispanics:

- Hispanic/Latino communities living in territories affected by westward expansion and the Civil War
- The experiences of Tejanos and other Mexican Americans following U.S. territorial expansion
- Hispanic/Latino soldiers and communities during the Civil War
- The role of Hispanic/Latino communities in the Union and Confederate border regions
- The impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on Hispanic/Latino communities
- The changing meaning of citizenship and political rights for Hispanic/Latino Americans

Women:

- Women's roles in the abolitionist movement
- Women's roles in the Underground Railroad and antislavery efforts
- Women's work and responsibilities during the Civil War
- Women as nurses, teachers, spies, writers, and supporters of the war effort
- Clara Barton and the development of wartime nursing
- Dorothea Dix and her work during the Civil War
- Women's experiences on the home front in the North and South
- The impact of the Civil War on women's roles in American society
- Women's continued struggle for political and voting rights after the Civil War